

## SECTION III: ENTRY GUIDELINES AND AWARDS

### TEAM ENTRY GUIDELINES

1. School and all-star teams may compete in the following styles: Pom, Jazz, Hip Hop, Kick, Team Performance, Military, Lyrical (subject to restrictions outlined below), and Open (subject to restrictions outlined below). DTU may choose, in its discretion, to offer School divisions in Contemporary, Prop or any other style of dance depending upon demand in a particular region. **Teams may not enter the same routine in more than one style at the same competition.**
2. DTU will offer Solo and Officer divisions at all competitions, including the National Championship. Additionally, DTU will offer a Duo/Trio division at Regional Competitions only. The following additional rules will apply:
  - a. **There is no limit to how many Solo, Duo/Trio, or Officer routines a team may enter at our Regional Competitions, or how many Solo or Officer routines a team may enter at our National Championship.**
  - b. **At our National Championship, a virtual preliminary qualifying round will be held to determine which schools qualify a group of officers to compete in our Officer Finals, which will be held in person during the National Championship. A team may enter as many Officer routines as it wishes in such qualifying round; however, only one routine per team may compete in Officer Finals. 50% of teams entering at least one Officer routine in the preliminary round will qualify a group of officers for Officer Finals.**
  - c. **A minimum of four (4) dancers is required to compete in the Officer division, but no maximum number of dancers. All dancers competing in the Officer division must be the official leadership team, captains, officers or seniors of the team. DTU reserves the right to request additional information (including from school administration) to verify compliance with this requirement.**
3. DTU will offer an Exceptional Athlete division at all dance competitions it hosts. The following guidelines will apply to Exceptional Athlete dancers and teams, notwithstanding any other rule in these rules and regulations to the contrary:
  - a. **Exceptional Athlete teams may enter any style or styles of dance and will be judged on the same score sheet as any other team, but will be in a separate division for Exceptional Athletes.**
  - b. **Any group of 4 or more Exceptional Athletes may enter as a team. For groups less than 4, we welcome Exceptional Athletes to compete in DTU's Solo or Duo/Trio divisions (where they will also compete in a separate Exceptional Athlete division).**
  - c. **Coaches should contact DTU in advance of the relevant event to discuss any specific accommodations that may be needed for an Exceptional Athlete team and/or dancer (for example, wheelchair ramp, lighting or sound modifications, etc.).**
  - d. **Coaches may elect for any Exceptional Athlete team, Solo or Duo/Trio to compete as an exhibition (without verbal critiques and/or scores). The default if a coach does not**

indicate a preference will be for the team/dancer to be judged just like any other team/dancer in any other dance division.

- e. Except as set forth above, all rules and regulations set forth in this publication apply to Exceptional Athlete teams, dancers and coaches, including all safety regulations and entry guidelines.
4. Teams may not enter multiple routines in the same division or subdivision **of the same style** when all of the dancers in both routines are the same. If a team wishes to enter multiple routines in the same division **of the same style** and all dancers are **not** the same in each routine, then the team must designate different team names (e.g. West HS Blue Team and West HS Gold Team), and the following shall apply:
    - a. If there are one or more overlapping dancers in the routines, then only the highest scoring routine will advance to finals and receive a placement in the final awards.
    - b. If there are no overlapping dancers in the routines, then all routines are eligible to advance to finals and receive a placement in the final awards.

The foregoing rule also applies to a team entering two different subdivisions within the same division of the same style (i.e., a high school enters one routine in Medium Varsity Jazz and one routine in Large Varsity Jazz).

DTU reserves the right to disallow a team from entering multiple routines of the same style in the same division, or to move one or more of the multiple routines to another division for which the team/routine is qualified, in its sole discretion.

5. The following team size guidelines will apply **for all divisions other than Solo, Duo/Trio and Officer**:
  - a. Team size will be determined as of the registration date.
  - b. At least 5 dancers must be registered to perform in each team routine. A team will still be allowed to compete if they drop to fewer than 5 dancers at performance time, but at least 5 dancers must be registered and paid for in order for the routine to compete.
  - c. Teams may use a different number of dancers in each routine subject to the minimums above.

### **ELIGIBLE TEAMS**

1. REGIONAL COMPETITIONS: College, Varsity, JV, Middle School, Elementary, **Exceptional Athlete** and Studio/All-Star dance teams may compete.
2. NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP: Varsity, JV, Middle School, Elementary, **Exceptional Athlete** and Studio/All-Star dance teams may compete.
3. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL TEAMS
  - a. Each team must be an official school dance team at the team's school (or from the same cooperative school or group of schools if not disallowed by their state), either under

athletics or as a club sport or fine arts program. Home school students may compete with a school team.

- b. For high school programs, a team is considered Varsity if the team's school recognizes the dancers as Varsity members, regardless of the ages of the dancers. A team is considered Junior Varsity if the team's school recognizes the dancers as Junior Varsity members or "B" Team members, regardless of the ages of the dancers.
- c. A team is considered Middle School if not more than 49% of the dancers on that team are in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and no dancers are in 10<sup>th</sup> grade or higher. If a team from a state-recognized middle school or junior high school has 50% or more 9<sup>th</sup> graders then they will compete in Junior Varsity or Varsity, depending on their preference.
- d. A team is considered Elementary School if (i) all dancers are in 6<sup>th</sup> grade or below, and (ii) all dancers attend the same school (or from the same cooperative school or group of schools if not disallowed by the team's state).
- e. An All-Star team for which all performing dancers are from the same school (or from the same cooperative school or group of schools if not disallowed by their state) may choose to compete in either All-Star divisions or school divisions.
- f. A dancer will be allowed to compete on different school teams (such as in both the Middle School and the Junior Varsity divisions or the Middle School and Varsity division), if that is how the dancer is allowed to compete within the rules of the team's applicable state association.
- g. At Nationals, school teams may not enter any All-Star division.
- h. The following additional rules will apply to the Jazz, Lyrical and Open divisions:
  - i. Unless otherwise determined by DTU in its discretion, DTU will place any team's first contemporary, jazz or lyrical entry into the Jazz division ("Jazz" = a broad category at DTU that encompasses all of these styles in one).
  - ii. Teams may enter a routine in Lyrical only if they have already entered Jazz in accordance with the previous sentence.
  - iii. Teams may enter a routine in Open only if:
    1. the style of the routine is not offered as a style (e.g., prop, novelty, show production, character, etc.) OR
    2. the team has already entered a routine in the applicable style and there is no other division (including Officer) in which the routine at issue could be entered in accordance with DTU's entry guidelines OR
    3. The team has already entered a routine in the applicable style and entering an additional routine in such style would subject it to the limitations set forth in section 4(a) or (b) in the TEAM ENTRY GUIDELINES section of these rules.

DTU will require all teams entering school Open to verify the style of dance being entered and provide a video of the routine in order to confirm compliance with these requirements.

*Example: East HS is a Varsity program and wishes to bring three lyrical-style routines to the National Championship. East HS would enter its first lyrical routine in Varsity Jazz (per section (e)(i) above) and its second lyrical routine in Varsity Lyrical (per section (e)(ii) above). For its third lyrical routine, East HS may be given the following options by DTU:*

- A. Enter it as an additional Varsity Jazz or Varsity Lyrical routine, both of which are permitted under section 4 on page 5 of these rules and regulations (subject to the restrictions found in that section).*
  - B. Enter it in the Officer division, if it meets the definition of an Officer routine (see section 1 on page 4 of these rules and regulations).*
  - C. Enter it in Varsity Open, upon submission of a video to DTU and confirmation that such entry meets the guidelines in this section.*
- i. A school team may compete under any name - either its school name or any other name the school team chooses - and still compete in the school divisions.
  - j. A registered team will be permitted to change its number of competing dancers until the date of the live draw for performance order (generally mid-January prior to nationals). After the live draw, teams may change their number of performing dancers in any routine only in the case of documented injury or documented school disciplinary action, and DTU reserves the right to request written evidence sufficient to substantiate same to its satisfaction (in its sole discretion).
  - k. Teams from outside the United States may compete in Regional or National events in the division at or above the division they would compete if their team was from the United States.
  - l. In the event that DTU chooses to group teams at a regional or national competition by team size and there is an unanticipated change to the team size (e.g. due to illness or injury) for one or more routines after registration, the team must notify DTU in writing immediately. If the new number of dancers on the floor for a routine would qualify the team for a different division than its previously assigned division, then the following will apply:
    - i. If it is at least 24 hours prior to the start of the competition, then DTU will notify all competing teams in writing of the change and the team will change divisions.
    - ii. If it is less than 24 hours prior to the competition, then the team will not change divisions.
    - iii. **In the interest of fairness to other teams who have prepared to compete based on the schedule and divisions published by DTU, we reserve the right to disqualify any team that fails to provide immediate written notice of size changes in accordance with this provision or dances a different number of dancers than are registered to compete in a routine. Coaches are responsible**

**for ensuring that the team's information (including how many dancers will perform in each routine) is accurate at the time of registration.**

4. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT SOLOS/DUOS/TRIOS/ALL-STAR/STUDIO TEAMS

- a. Subject to subsection (d) below, solos, duos and trios will compete in the following divisions based upon grade:

Senior (grades 11 and 12)  
Junior (grades 9 and 10)  
Youth (grades 6, 7 and 8)  
Mini (grades 3, 4 and 5)  
Tiny (2nd grade and under)

- b. The age/grade (as applicable) of the oldest dancer on the floor for a given **all-star** routine will determine which division the duo, trio or group competes in for that routine. Age/grade will be determined by birth year, as follows:

**Open – Born on or before December 31, 2010**  
**Senior – June 1, 2005 and after**  
**Junior - 2008 and after**  
**Youth - 2011 and after**  
**Mini - 2014 and after**  
**Tiny - 2017 and after**

- c. An All-Star team for which all performing dancers are from the same school (or from the same cooperative school or group of schools if not disallowed by their state) may choose to compete in either the All-Star division or the school division for any style of dance in which it enters.
- d. DTU may permit or require a dancer to compete in a different solo division if their age is different than the typical age range for the grades in any division, in DTU's sole and final discretion.

**COMPETITION DIVISIONS**

Teams may be grouped within each style into separate divisions (example: Small, Medium and Large Varsity), based on the number of dancers entered for each team competing in such style. Any split between divisions will be determined by DTU based upon the number of entries received for each competition. DTU may elect to have a semifinal round depending upon the number of entries.

At any event, DTU may choose to combine categories (such as Jazz and Lyrical or All-Star and school divisions), or add additional categories, in order to increase competitiveness or for any other reason at its discretion.

At our National events, DTU may also split a division into multiple preliminary groups at its sole discretion. DTU may elect to seed any or all divisions at its sole discretion, including (without limitation) where there are multiple preliminary groups and DTU determines seeding would

increase fairness and competitiveness. Additional information about seeding procedures may be provided in advance of any event where seeding is utilized.

### ***“COMPETING UP”***

Any school or All-Star team may elect to compete in any more senior division of its choosing within a style of dance, for any one or more routines, at its discretion. For example, a Junior Varsity team may elect to compete in a Varsity division for one or more of its routines, or a Mini All-Star team may elect to compete in the Junior All-Star division for its Pom routine and the Youth All-Star division for its Hip Hop routine. The team need not make this choice for all of its routines - for example, a Middle School team may compete in Middle School Jazz and Junior Varsity Team Performance.

Teams may not move laterally across divisions within a style of dance. For example, a Small Varsity team may not choose to compete in Medium Varsity, or vice versa.

### ***NO SINGLE TEAM DIVISIONS (NATIONALS)***

At our National events, DTU will combine any division that contains only one team into any other division at its discretion. This may result in divisions that include multiple age groups in a single style (e.g. Middle School/Elementary Team Performance) or multiple styles in one or more age groups competing in an Open division. No single team divisions will be permitted at Nationals **unless DTU determines in its sole discretion that there is a division that cannot reasonably be combined with any other division.**

### ***REGIONALS AWARDS***

1. Trophies will be awarded to at least the top 50% of teams in each division for each style.
2. One Grand Champion award will be given to the most outstanding routine of the day, as determined by DTU in its discretion. **The Grand Champion need not be the highest scoring routine in the competition, as scoring levels may be affected by different judging panels, differences in score sheets, scheduling and other factors.** The Grand Champion will receive a partial nationals bid. A team may be selected as Grand Champion at multiple competitions throughout the season; however, a team winning multiple Grand Champion awards in a single season will only receive one partial nationals bid for that season. Solos, Duos/Trios, Officer and Spirit Showdown entries are not eligible to be named Grand Champion.
3. Additional specialty awards may be awarded at the discretion of DTU.

### ***NATIONALS ADVANCEMENT AND AWARDS***

1. The following rules will apply to advancing teams from preliminaries at Nationals:
  - a. Including teams advancing from any Semifinal pursuant to the next sentence, at least 50% of teams that compete in the preliminary round **(up to a maximum of 20 finalist teams, unless otherwise approved by DTU in its sole discretion)** will ultimately advance to finals.

- b. DTU will determine whether or not to hold a Semifinal for a division at Nationals in its sole discretion based on the number of teams in the division and other scheduling factors.
- c. For divisions with Semifinals:
  - i. The determination of which teams advance directly to finals and which teams advance to compete in the Semifinal will be made by DTU for each preliminary group independently of all other preliminary groups, because different judging panels may score different preliminary groups of the same division of dance (example: Small Varsity Pom A and Small Varsity Pom B). There is no specific qualifying score or placement in the preliminary round that guarantees advancing directly to finals.
  - ii. All teams not advancing directly to finals will be invited to dance again in the Semifinal. Teams may opt out of competing in the Semifinal by notice to DTU given in accordance with instructions provided by DTU prior to Nationals.
  - iii. If there are four or more preliminary groups in a division (example: Medium Varsity Jazz A, Medium Varsity Jazz B, Medium Varsity Jazz C and Medium Varsity Jazz D), then the Semifinal will be broken into two Semifinal groups (example: Medium Varsity Jazz A/B Semifinal and Medium Varsity Jazz C/D Semifinal). Otherwise, all teams will compete in one Semifinal per division.
  - iv. The highest scoring team(s) in each Semifinal will advance to finals. If the Semifinal for a division is split into multiple groups pursuant to subsection (iii) above, then the highest scoring team from each group will advance to finals. The total number of teams advancing to finals from a Semifinal will be determined by DTU in its sole discretion, but at a minimum enough teams will advance to finals so that the total number of teams competing in finals meets the requirements of Section 1(a) above. If there are multiple groups in a Semifinal (example: Medium Varsity Jazz A/B and Medium Varsity Jazz C/D), there is no guarantee that the same number of teams will advance to finals from each group beyond the one team per group guaranteed to advance pursuant to the second sentence of this subsection (iv).
2. Finalists in categories with six or more finalists will compete in sub-groupings with lowest scores competing first, based upon their scores from the previous round, but within each sub-grouping, teams will draw for random order. Finalists in categories with five or fewer finalists will compete in reverse order of their preliminary scores.
3. All finalists will receive trophies. In addition, all national champions will receive banners, jackets, and rings. In recognition of the tremendous success of each national champion, no Grand Champion award(s) will be given at nationals, except that a Grand Champion award may be given in the Studio/All-Star division only.

### **THE BATTLE ROUNDS**

DTU will hold two Battle Rounds at the National Championship: a Junior Battle (including selected teams from the Elementary, Middle School, Junior Varsity, Tiny All-Star, Mini All-Star,

Youth All-Star and/or Junior All-Star divisions) and a Senior Battle (including selected teams from the Varsity, Senior All-Star and Open All-Star divisions). The primary purpose of the Battle Rounds is to promote a fun, supportive environment for selected teams in various styles of dance to showcase their routines for each other and the viewing audience. DTU will conduct the Battle Rounds in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Battles within each Battle Round will be divided by dance style. The number of Battles and groupings of styles will be announced by DTU prior to the National Championship.
2. No scoring or critiques will be done by judges in the Battle Rounds. Judges will view all routines in each Battle, collaborate and announce a Battle champion shortly after the conclusion of the applicable Battle. Each judge will be asked to vote for a winner based on overall performance quality, showmanship, and best representation of the style(s) presented. Battle champions will receive a Battle Cup (and bragging rights until next year's National Championship!).
3. In the interest of allowing teams to see and cheer on all other participating teams, **no team may perform more than once in the Battle Round.**
4. DTU may invite teams to participate in a Battle Round beginning after the conclusion of all preliminary routines for teams eligible for that Battle Round, and invitations may continue to be issued throughout finals for that group of teams. For example, if preliminaries for all divisions eligible for the Senior Battle conclude Saturday at 5:00 pm, and the Senior Battle is scheduled to begin Sunday at 7:00 pm, then DTU may issue Battle Round invitations at any time between those times, based on either preliminary or finals performance, in DTU's sole discretion.
5. Preliminary round scores and finals performance quality will be a factor in determining Battle Round invitees; however, these will not be the only determining factors. DTU may also consider factors such as entertainment value, showmanship, creativity, appropriateness for a "dance battle" atmosphere, and/or judge recommendations in issuing invitations. No team is guaranteed to participate in the Battle Round by virtue of having the highest score in its preliminary group, and a team with a lower score may be invited to the Battle Round if it meets one or more criteria set forth above.
6. A schedule for each Battle within the applicable Battle Round will be published in advance of the National Championship with start times for each Battle category; however, a specific performance time for each participating team will not be published in advance.
7. **Battle Round invitations and results are completely independent of the official results of the National Championship.** Battle Round results are based solely on the team's performance in the Battle Round, in accordance with the Battle judging criteria set forth above. National Champion results are based solely on the team's performance in Finals for its style and division, in accordance with the score sheet for such division.