

Letter for first time Hot Shoe Show parents

I know many of you have questions about our upcoming show. I hope I can cover most of them in this letter. This has become second nature to us, but it can be overwhelming the first couple of times. I believe that sharing information will make this a more enjoyable event for all of us.

The first rehearsal your child has at the auditorium will be “block rehearsal,” which happens class by class so each level has time to work on stage. The students run through their dances in regular dance clothes. This time is used to get the students comfortable on stage. Please remember to arrive at least 15 minutes before the time listed, so that your dancer is ready to go at their time. After their time on stage, we will show you and your dancer the backstage dressing area and we will have a briefing to answer any question you may have.

The next rehearsal is dress rehearsal. This time is used to make sure the costumes are properly lighted and stage cues are correct. At dress rehearsal on Friday, All dancers will arrive dressed for opening number, HSS shirt and any type of black bottoms. Tan tights should be put on first and will be worn during the entire show. If your dancer’s first dance is ballet, they will come with their pink tights worn OVER their tan tights, which act as underwear so no one is ever fully naked. Dancers should not wear their best pair of tights for dress rehearsal, as we do not want them dirty or snagged for the actual show. All other costumes (including the tights that will be worn on Saturday) need to be in a box or basket labeled with your dancer’s name. The dancer’s name also needs to be on EVERY single piece of costume, as well as tights and shoes, in a place that is not visible when being worn, so that we can find the rightful owner of anything that becomes misplaced. Please arrive with hair and make up already done. The dress rehearsal will run longer than the actual show. Therefore, we will try to run the basic 1 out of sequence so we can let them go home early. We make every attempt to stay on schedule, but when working with 100+ people, sometimes our best intentions just don’t work out. Your patience is appreciated. Also remember food is not allowed backstage. Please be sure your dancer has had a good breakfast, we will not be breaking for lunch.

If your dancer needs food to help with blood sugar issues please let us know.

Only those who have purchased a ticket will be permitted to watch the dress rehearsal. During dress rehearsal is the time to take pictures and videos of your dancer on stage, as photography of ANY kind is prohibited during the real performance on Saturday evening. I know you want photos of your dancer on stage, and in their costumes; the time to take these is dress rehearsal. We are trying to give the show a big-time, production feel, and teach the students about theater etiquette. We teach our students about proper audience behavior, such as: no filming, no photography, turning cell phone ringers & all other sounds OFF and no getting up/moving to and from seats during a routine (with the exception of to remove crying babies) as these things can all

Letter for first time Hot Shoe Show parents

disrupt the performance. All of these things can distract dancers and will undermine all of their hard work. Please help us by setting a good example.

You may send crayons and coloring books to help entertain your dancer between their numbers. We also do not allow food backstage, it can ruin costumes, and it's the auditorium policy. That being said, water and cheerios will be available to dancers, but it's important that dancers eat a good meal prior to their arrival for dress rehearsal and the show on Saturday evening. We will have "room leaders" to help dress the children, and they will have older dancers as buddies to help keep each other company. Only parents who volunteer to be room leaders will be allowed backstage during dress rehearsal and the show. Having others backstage increases the anxiety level of the children, and there is simply not enough space. It is important to us that your dancer looks good and has a great time, so please help us prepare them by letting them know that mom lets you off at the back door and then goes around to the front to her seat. We are very good at calming nerves, but occasionally one of the dancers will need some extra attention, if this happens we will come get you. If you have any concerns about these arrangements, please talk to us ahead of time so we can make everyone comfortable.

We will have a videographer filming the night of the show. He will set up at the back of the auditorium. Dancers love to watch themselves over and over and enjoy learning the other dances. You can place orders at the studio. Out of respect for others and for the safety of our dancers, please DO NOT film or take pictures during the actual performance, if you would like pictures of your child on stage, those must be taken at dress rehearsal on Friday.

We never really know just what young children are going to do when faced with a large audience. Most of the time they enjoy themselves and do what we have practiced, but some can be frightened by all the people or be afraid of making a mistake. We work very hard to help them with these fears and try to make the experience an enjoyable one, but please remember that children often pick up on the anxieties of the adults around them, so try to be positive about their performance, even if it is less than what you expected. In a few years they will have learned to face an audience with ease.

The show will run about 3 hours, including intermission. In fact, it is such a long show that we discourage very young children from attending. We ask that you buy a ticket, even for a baby, to be respectful of the comfort of those around you. On the night of the show drop your dancer off in the back at their designated time, as our room leaders may not be there yet. This causes a problem because someone then has to watch your child. Check the dress rehearsal schedule for your dancer's arrival time. The dancers will remain backstage for the entirety of the show, and participate in the final number.

I hope this has helped to answer some of the questions you may have had. As always, we are here to help with any other needs or questions. We are very excited about the show and are very glad that you and your dancer are a part of the legacy of Rockport!