



# DAKOTA STAR GYMNASTICS

## **Team Handbook**

### **2019 - 2020 Edition**

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### **Our Mission Statement**

*"It is our mission at Dakota Star to provide a gymnastic curriculum which enhances awareness, hand- eye coordination, flexibility, strength, self-confidence, and a positive self-image in a safe and enjoyable atmosphere for the youth in our community."*

At Dakota Star Gymnastics, we believe the sport of gymnastics is beneficial for every child's physical and mental development and that all children have the right to achieve at their own level of excellence. Our program provides a safe and enjoyable atmosphere, which allows every child to experience personal success in the sport, beginning with simple motor skills, promoting spatial awareness, and hand-eye coordination eventually resulting in strong self-confidence and a positive self-image. Our gymnastic curriculum is designed to meet the needs of each child's ability, and each child is encouraged to set their own goals with the help of their coach; whether it is to accomplish a cartwheel, earn a spot on the competitive team, or reach the coveted USAG Level 10.

# Order of Importance in Team Level Training at DSG

- #1 **SAFETY:** We consider the physical and mental safety of our athletes to be our primary focus.
- #2 **LIFE LESSONS & SPORTSMANSHIP:** Responsibility, respect, resilience, perspective, cooperation, problem solving, time management, teamwork, multi-tasking, consequences for poor choices or actions, dealing with disappointment, etc.
- #3 **Gymnastics skills**

## Annual Meeting “Homework” Due September 12:

### PRE-TEAM:

**Forms:** Please submit these forms to hasten registration for competition upon obtaining Level 3 Team requirements. No fees will be charged until your gymnast advances to Level 3.

- Dakota Star Gymnastics Team Family Contract
- Dakota Star Gymnastics Season Competition Contract
  - This information is immediately submitted to relevant meet hosts when your child moves to Level 3. Notify office by email of any changes ASAP.
    - If a cancellation is not officially made before DSG pays for a meet, you will be charged and responsible for fees for each meet as marked on the contract.
    - If you do not request to be added to a meet until after the host's deadline, be aware that your child is not guaranteed a spot in that meet and you will pay a late fee to the host club if accepted into the meet.
    - As of the 2019-20 season, the mobility deadline to compete for DSG is January 1 as the majority of meet host's deadlines have passed at this point. Gymnasts may still move up to and practice at their new level after the deadline, but they will not compete at the new level until the next season.

### LEVELS 3-10:

#### Forms:

- Dakota Star Gymnastics Team Family Contract
- Complete ONLINE USA Gymnastics Membership Application (Contact the office ASAP if you did not receive an email invitation from USA Gymnastics within 7 days of the Annual Team Meeting.)
- Dakota Star Gymnastics Season Competition Contract
  - Meet registrations will be sent in immediately after the due date. Notify office by email of any changes ASAP.
    - If a cancellation is not officially made before DSG pays for a meet, you will be charged and responsible for fees for each meet as marked on the contract.
    - If you do not request to be added to a meet until after the host's deadline, be aware that your child is not guaranteed a spot in that meet and you will pay a late fee to the host club if accepted into the meet.
    - As of the 2019-20 season, the mobility deadline for DSG is January 1 as the majority of meet host's deadlines have passed at this point. Gymnasts may still move up to at practice at their new level after the deadline, but they will not compete at the new level until the next season.

#### Fees:

- **\$45** TO DSG for leotard rental fee. This will be charged after the due date via your DSG Parent Portal unless other arrangements are requested. (Fees for other items, such as the warm-up leotard and jacket, will be billed upon order.)
- **\$61** ONLINE TO USA GYMNASTICS for USA Gymnastics membership fee. This will be paid by you directly to USAG when completing your child's registration via the link sent to your email by USA Gymnastics.

### HIGH SCHOOL DROP-BACKS

- Because of the new ND-USAG registration rules DSG must follow, we require our High School drop-back athletes to follow the same timeline requirements as athletes who will participate in USAG competition the entire season. Athletes who do not submit their forms and fees may not be able to participate in USAG following the NDHSAA season.
- Officially beginning the 2019-2020 season, Braves team athletes will no longer be allowed to drop back to Compulsory levels; Compulsory level routines will not be practiced at the Optional Level classes.
  - 14 year old and 9<sup>th</sup> grade athletes or older are allowed to “petition” to an Optional or Xcel level. This requires a video of your athlete highlighting all USAG special requirements for the desired level to be submitted by the Head Coach to the ND-USAG Advisory Committee.
  - High school level gymnasts are encouraged to practice year-round in our Optional level classes, whether they compete USAG or not, to continue improving their skills for the next season and building comradery with their Braves and USAG teammates.

## Payments to Expect Throughout the Year

### PRE-TEAM:

### Dakota Star Gymnastics Mandated

- DSG Club Membership: **\$20** per gymnast due annually on your family's iClassPro anniversary date.
- DSG Pre-team Uniform: **\$35-\$40** warm-up/show leotard (wear this for all performances and Team pictures)
- DSG Club Tuition: Dependent on number of days attended and paid monthly before services are received. Make-up classes might be possible, but there is no refund for days missed.
- Fundraising Requirements: Up to **\$240** payment ONLY if requirements on pg 5 are not met by September 1st.

## LEVELS 3-10:

**USA Gymnastics Mandated** (Pre-Team ONLY pays these fees upon official promotion to Level 3 prior to the deadline)

- ND-USA Gymnastics Membership: **\$20** per gymnast paid at the conclusion of the season.
- USA Gymnastics Membership: **\$61** per gymnast paid at the time of ONLINE registration.
- Meet Registration Fees
  - Level 3-5 regular season meets generally cost **\$40** each, Level 6-7 meets **\$50** each, Level 8-10 meets **\$60** each. Prices are subject to increase at the discretion of the meet host or ND-USAG.
  - Meet fees will be billed with tuition for the month of the meet. Total tuitions and fees for the season, including State Meet fees, must be paid in full by March 1 in order to be registered for the State Meet. Gymnasts WILL NOT be registered for the State Meet until a family's account is in good standing.

### Dakota Star Gymnastics Mandated

- DSG Club Membership: **\$20** per gymnast due annually on your iClassPro anniversary date.
- DSG Team Uniform: **\$45** Team leotard rental, **\$35-\$40** warm-up/performance leotard, **\$50-\$75** team jacket.
- DSG Club Tuition: Dependent on number of days attended and paid monthly before services are received. Make-up classes might be possible, but there is no refund for days missed. Adding an "extra" practice costs \$10 per class; we do not guarantee availability.
- Fundraising Requirements: Up to **\$240** payment ONLY if requirements on pg 5 are not met by September 1st.

## Competition & Eligibility Information

### USA Gymnastics Mandated

1. Each gymnast must have a current athlete member number from USA Gymnastics; the athlete membership must be renewed by the parent each season using the link sent to the parent's email address. It is recommended by USA Gymnastics that the athlete have their current membership card with them at each meet in the event of a technological error.
2. Each gymnast must arrive to meets wearing the proper attire as a deduction can be applied for not having the required competitive uniform. She will wear either the DSG short-sleeve warm-up leotard or long-sleeve competitive leotard for the warm-up period depending on the format; if you aren't sure what format the meet is in, ask your coach at practice the week of the meet or arrive early enough to change leotards if needed. (See pg 8 for uniform details.)
  - a. Appearance should be tidy and hygienic:
    - i. Clean uniforms (both leotards and correct jacket/pants). **IMPORTANT UNIFORM WASH INSTRUCTIONS:** Please wash all items inside out with like colors (hand washing is preferred) and DO NOT dry them in the dryer. Do not wash in hot water or with new, darkly colored, or red clothing as the dyes may transfer to the uniform. The cost of replacement will be billed to you for any damaged or discolored DSG property.
    - ii. Hair completely secured away from the face (ponytail, headband, braids, hairspray = no bangs or flyaway hairs).
    - iii. No visible undergarments. Sports bras and panties/briefs must not show when worn with the competition leotard; both garments should be the same color as the leotard or skin in case they accidentally become visible. Sports bras need to be supportive and must be low cut in the back with no racerback or bralette styles.
    - iv. No jewelry of any kind, colored finger/toe nail polish, or body art (henna, temporary tattoos, marker drawings, etc).
    - v. No hard casts may be worn on any body part during competition; certain braces are acceptable.
3. Each gymnast must accept the received score without negative/self-demeaning comments, exhibiting self-control and good composure after a fall or mild injury. Tantrums and tears can result in team score deductions or removal from the competition.
4. Each gymnast and parent must be respectful and polite to all meet officials, coaches, hosts, competitors, volunteers, spectators and their associated persons. Failure to show respect, including approaching a judge before, during, or after competition, may result in the athlete or family being immediately removed from the meet.
5. Award earning at qualifier meets:
  - a. Levels 3-4 will receive achievement ribbons based on their scores, not by age groups or numeric places against other gymnasts. Please do not use phrases like "first place" to describe your gymnast's accomplishment at these levels; the goal is for them to compete against themselves and instill self-motivation at this stage in their competitive experience.

Blue Ribbon	-	34.000-40.000 AA; 9.000 on individual events.
Red Ribbon	-	32.000-33.975 AA; 8.500 on individual events.
White Ribbon	-	30.000-31.975 AA; 8.000 on individual events.
Yellow Ribbon	-	28.000-29.750 AA; 7.500 on individual events.
Green Ribbon	-	26.000-27.975 AA; 7.000 on individual events.

- Participation - 25.975 and below AA; 6.900 and below on individual events.
- b. In Levels 5-10, the top scoring 50% of children in each age group receive numeric placement awards based on their scores vs other gymnasts' scores. Award age groups are determined by your gymnast's age as of the last possible meet of their season (State for Levels 3-7, Regionals for Level 8, Westerns for Level 9, Nationals for Level 10):
    - Levels 3-7 - age as of the last day of State Meet
    - Level 8 - age as of the last day of the Regional meet
    - Level 9 - age as of the last day of the Western division meet
    - Level 10 - age as of the last day of the JO National meet
6. To qualify to the State Meet, your gymnast must earn the score required for her level by USAG / ND-USAG at least once:
    - Levels 3-7 = 30.000 AA
    - Levels 8-10 = 32.000AA
  7. Award earning at the State Meet:
    - a. The levels may be split into separate sessions by age group instead of by team for the State Meet. For example, there may be DSG Level 3 gymnasts competing in three or more separate sessions during the meet and team awards will be given after the final session of the level. This is not always true, but is a possible scenario.
    - b. The top scoring 50% of children in each age group in ALL levels receive placement medals based on their scores vs other gymnasts' scores; Levels 3-4 gymnasts who are not in the top 50% will receive their appropriate achievement awards as they would at a regular season meet. Age groups are the same at the State Meet as qualifier meets.

### **Dakota Star Gymnastics Mandated**

1. Each gymnast and their families must be exceedingly kind to all DSG members, regardless of level, athletic ability, competition division, meet results, school attended, city lived in, financial situation, etc. All gymnasts practicing at DSG are DSG gymnasts, period.
  - a. Rumors, hazing, derogatory comments, segregation, etc will not be tolerated by any member of our club. Please report incidents to DSG administration immediately; if possible, you and your child will be kept anonymous.
  - b. In extreme cases, parental bans or discontinuance of membership may be employed to protect our athletes.
2. Each gymnast and their families must keep their tuition account in good standing, complete all USAG / DSG requirements, and follow all USAG / DSG rules in the DSG gym and at away competitions, camps, etc.
3. Each gymnast must be able to complete full routines for all events at practice throughout the entire season.
  - a. If a gymnast cannot present full routines at practice, she should not compete the incomplete event(s) at the next meet. She has the option to completely opt out of the next meet, but will not receive a refund of meet fees or travel expenses. Please understand that this recommendation is for the safety and well-being of your athlete. Embarrassing an athlete in front of a crowd is not our preferred method of motivation.
4. Each gymnast must be with the coaches in the competition area 10-15 minutes before stretch is scheduled to begin and remain in the gymnast area until their coach permits them to exit for any reason, including bathroom breaks or talking to family members.
  - a. Contact your coach ASAP if you will be late. If your gymnast arrives more than 15 minutes after the scheduled "open stretch" period, she will not compete in that meet and you will not receive a refund of meet fees or travel expenses. Please understand that this requirement is for the physical safety of your athlete.
  - b. Please do not call your gymnast away from the competition area to bring them beverages, give medication, etc. These things must be addressed before releasing your gymnast into the competition area.
  - c. If your athlete is injured during competition, please wait as calmly as possible outside of the competition area within clear sight of your child's coach; the gymnast will likely already be stressed and frightened, and will rely on you to be their strong emotional support system. Your child will be brought to you as soon as possible.

## **Requirements for Advancing to the Next Level**

### **USA Gymnastics Mandated**

1. Each gymnast must have achieved the mobility score required by USAG and ND-USAG at the previous level.
  - Level 4 = 34.000 AA
  - Levels 5-7 = 32.000 AA
  - Levels 8-10 = 34.000 AA

The mobility score is determined by the All Around (AA) score earned at qualifier meets. The AA is the collective total of the scores earned on the four competitive events during a meet, Vault (V), Uneven Bars (UB), Balance Beam (BB), and Floor Exercise (FX); if you do not compete all four events in the same meet, you cannot receive an AA or mobility score.

2. Each gymnast must reach the minimum age required by USAG for her desired level. Her birthday must be on or before the first day of the first meet she competes:
  - Level 3 - 6 years old
  - Levels 4-7 - 7 years old
  - Levels 8-9 - 8 years old
  - Level 10 - 9 years old
3. In order to petition to "skip" levels, a gymnast must be at least age 14 or a 9<sup>th</sup> grader. This requires a video of the athlete highlighting all USAG special requirements for the desired level to be submitted by the Head Coach to the ND-USAG Advisory Committee.

## Dakota Star Gymnastics Mandated

1. Each Level 3-5 gymnast must achieve and consistently perform all of the skills included in the USAG compulsory routines for her desired level along with the dance routine as listed in the Compulsory Code (the gymnasts know this as "The Book"). These skills must be performed safely and up to the technique/execution expectation of the DSG coaches.
  - a. The only exception to this rule is for Level 3, where we allow the gymnasts to be missing one single skill when they begin competing, provided they are safely attempting the skill at practice.
  - b. At DSG, we require our Level 3 athletes to earn a minimum of 32.000 AA at least once before moving to Level 4, even if all other requirements are met. The USAG mandated mobility score for Level 4 is the same at Levels 8-10!
2. Each Level 6-10 gymnast must achieve and consistently perform an optional skill or combination of skills that fulfills all of the USAG Special Requirements for her desired level. These skills must be performed safely and up to the technique and execution expectation of the DSG coaches.
3. Gymnasts may advance to the next level at any point during the season or off-season once all requirements are met.
  - a. Especially once competitions have begun, official testing days become less frequent as the training focus is on refining and repetition throughout the season. However, when a gymnast can perform a needed element twice in a row within a reasonable timeframe, she will still be able to receive a mark for any element on any day.
  - b. DSG does not have control over whether or not a meet host will allow us to change levels for their competition once our registration has been sent. Usually, meet hosts have contracted judges in anticipation of a specific number of gymnasts per level and *truly cannot* make exceptions for us due to contractual obligations. In this case, the gymnast will continue competing her previous level until the next possible meet allowing us to adjust levels.
    - i. As of the 2019-20 season, the competition mobility deadline is January 1 as the majority of meet host's deadlines have passed at this point. Gymnasts may still move up to and practice at their new level after the deadline, but they will not compete at the new level until the next season.
  - c. If a gymnast has accomplished all basic skill requirements for the next level, but does not know or cannot consistently perform the routines for that level, she will not be allowed to compete that level at that time.
  - d. Remember: Safety is #1 at DSG, "chucking" is not the same as "performing," and the Head Coaches' decision is final.

## Team Membership Requirements

Because the competitive Team's tuition does not nearly cover the total expense of the Team program and is supplemented heavily by fundraising efforts, each gymnast is asked to participate in a certain amount of volunteer opportunities at your choice of various fundraising events throughout the year. Please note the following requirements for this season per the DSG Board of Directors.

### Volunteer Requirements:

- Pre-team and Team gymnasts who participate in the program beginning in September are required to:
  - Volunteer for a minimum of twelve (12) SignUp.com volunteer slots, including at least one Starstruck Meet specific spot and other opportunities such as hauling the equipment trailer to performances, selling tickets at the 50/50 raffle, taking admissions, working concessions, working a booth, setting-up/tearing down at a special event (like National Gymnastics Day, Spooky Spectacular, the Starstruck Meet, etc).
- A \$20 value per volunteer spot has been declared by the board of directors as a promise from each family to fulfill their volunteer requirements.
  - If your family does not meet the volunteer requirements by September 1, a \$20 fee per missing requirement will be charged to your account and is due within 30 days. These fees act as a donation from your family to the success of the club. Please be aware that if none of the volunteer requirements have been completed, your family would be responsible for a total of \$240 in volunteer fees on September 1.
  - If your family signs up for a volunteer slot but does not arrive for the slot or provide a replacement volunteer, a \$50 "no-show" fee will be applied to your account and is due 30 days from the date of the missed volunteer slot. If a family no-shows twice during a season (September 1-August 31), they are responsible for the entire volunteer fee balance of \$240 plus the \$50 no-show fee per incident.
- Pre-team and Team gymnasts who are participating in the program during meet-prep months (November through January) are required to volunteer for at least one SignUp.com volunteer slot or donation category for the Starstruck Meet. Starstruck volunteer slots DO count towards your twelve required slots. Donations do not count as volunteer slots, but are greatly appreciated and are integral to the success of the event.
- Volunteering for the 50/50 raffle and hauling performance equipment during the summer months counts as TWO (2) SignUp.com slots! For example, if you cannot volunteer at all in the fall, winter, or spring, you would only need to sign up for and complete six (6) raffle events or summer shows to fill your twelve SignUp.com slots.
- Only slots filled by adults and children over the age of 14 count towards the SignUp.com slot requirements. The 50/50 Raffle is credited once PER FAMILY per date; please only sign your one family up for one slot per day.
- Please sign the "Notice of Discontinuance" form included in this handbook if you choose to end your child's time at DSG. You are responsible for all fundraising requirements during the fundraising season (September-August) whether your child is actively participating in classes or taking time off, unless she has a documented injury preventing participation or she has officially left our club by submitting this form. Please see the form for details.
- Pre-team and Team gymnasts who join the program later in the season will follow the above requirements, but their volunteer slot requirement will be pro-rated to reflect the number of months remaining in the gymnastics year (September through

August). For example, a gymnast who moves up to Pre-team in December would need to fill nine (9) SignUp.com volunteer slots plus the Starstruck meet.

- Braves team members and their families are not technically DSG Team members during the official high school season. However, those who practice with the DSG Team during the eight months outside of the NDHSAA winter sport season (March-October) will follow Team volunteer requirements; their volunteer requirements will be prorated for the months they are participating in NDHSAA gymnastics. Braves members have their own in-season meet and volunteer requirements to complete during their season as listed in their MHS Gymnastics Team handbooks; these exist as a thank you to the DSG club for making it possible to hold high school practices and meets without a great burden to the local school district.

### **Tuition Payment**

- Tuition must be paid in full before services are received (i.e. before practice is allowed each month). Payment will automatically be made via the online registration system on the last Friday of the month prior and can be viewed in your Parent Portal ledger along with the days and times of your child's practice schedule.
  - If you want to change your child's practice days, please contact the office by or before the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior.
  - If your autopay information is expired or inactive, we will contact you ASAP and you will be given a one week grace period to change the information; late payments for tuition and other items will incur a \$10 per day late fee.
  - If an athlete attends any practices during a month, no tuition will be refunded for that month.
- Gymnasts with limited practice schedules may feel the need to add an "extra" practice during the week of a big competition or for other personal reasons; requests to add "extra" practices must be made to the office at least 36 hours in advance. Each single day added to a gymnast's weekly schedule is considered an "extra" practice and a \$10 fee will be charged per each "extra" practice day added; please note that "extra" and "makeup" days will only be possible as ratios allow. If an additional day is desired for the entire monthly session and the office is notified of the addition before the last Sunday of the month, normal tuition rates will apply.
- Snack Shop Charges: Pre-team and Team gymnasts are allowed to "charge" their snack purchases in the office for before, after, and break time snacks when they forget to bring their own. Each snack is \$0.50 and will be recorded by the office assistant or coach. Each month, snack charges will be billed with tuition in the Parent Portal. Please discuss snack charging with your gymnast to make sure they understand your expectations and how much you will allow them to charge; DSG will not police your child's snacking habits.

### **Meet Fee Payment and Refunds**

- Meet fee payments will automatically be made via the online registration system at the same time as tuition for the month in which the meet is scheduled.
  - If a meet is cancelled by the host for any reason, they are only required by USA Gymnastics to refund up to 80% of meet fees to help them defray costs already incurred. We will credit your account for the amount received from the host.
  - All tuition and meet fees, including for the State Meet, must be paid in full by March 1<sup>st</sup> in order for your gymnast to be registered for the State Meet; families with delinquent accounts will receive a warning near the due date, but will not be registered until payment is received.
- Meet fee refunds are possible only before DSG submits payment for a competition, which is usually 10-12 weeks before the competition date. We highly recommend booking hotels with the option to cancel to minimize any possible loss.
  - If you have questions about a competition, contact the parent acting as Team Coordinator or Head Coach immediately.
    - The Team Coordinator is a Team parent who has volunteered to work with Team families on staying at the same hotels, possible carpooling options, finding activities for the athletes outside of competition time, etc.
    - Per protocol, contact with host clubs is made by DSG's official ND-USAG contact person; parents are not allowed to call other gymnastics clubs, coaches, or judges asking about competitions or for refunds.

## **Practice Expectations and Requirements**

### **Attendance Expectations for Practice**

- Please do not arrive more than 15 minutes early for class, unless the child is at least 12 years old or will be supervised by an accompanying adult from the time of drop off to beginning of class. Please note that the coaches are not required to arrive earlier than 15 minutes for class and have duties to complete before class begins; we do not have daycare staff present at any time.
- All DSG Team levels are offered four class day options. We consider it imperative that a compulsory Level 3-5 gymnast practice a minimum of two days per week and an optional Level 6-8 gymnast practice a minimum of 3 days per week.
  - It is highly recommended that all gymnasts attend most, if not all, offered practices with their appropriate level group year-round. This ensures that they maintain the proper level of flexibility, strength, and endurance throughout their growth spurts and hormonal changes, allows them to properly refine the skills necessary to compete at their current level safely and successfully, and increases the likelihood that they will progress to the next competition level.
  - Keep in mind that the amount of time practiced, especially during puberty, will directly affect your child's progress and performance. The level of focus your child employs during practice time is also extremely noteworthy.
    - Please do not compare your child's progress, particularly out-loud, to any other child's as your child is very unique in many ways. Their goal should be to beat their own selves, not their teammates or opponents.

- Please do not belittle your child's progress to them or others. Carefully choose words of affirmation that highlight their efforts and encourage them to strive for their potential; negativity breeds apathy.
- When observing other teams' performances, it is important for parents and gymnasts to understand that each gym's practice requirements are different. For example, some teams require 3-4 hour practices 4-5 days per week for their compulsory teams and some only ask for a 45 minute practice twice per week. DSG falls in the middle of the practice length spectrum and we also choose to recommend rather than mandate the number of practice days because we understand that each family has their own priorities and abilities regarding their time and finances.
- For those considering the high school team option, be mindful that gymnasts who join the Braves team will be required to attend three hour practices up to 5 days per week along with 1-2 meets nearly every weekend for 12 weeks with no exceptions; please increase practice time as much as possible before Braves season begins to adequately prepare.
- Absences from practice:
  - All absences should be emailed to the DSG email address ([dakotagym@hotmail.com](mailto:dakotagym@hotmail.com)) with the specific reason for the absence: For example, "Suzy Gymnast won't be at Level 3 practice today because she has a dentist appointment."
    - This tells the coaches that the parents know and approve that their child wasn't at practice. Note that teens may be truant or we may not be aware of complex family situations that may result in skipping class without the knowledge of the primary guardian.
    - This lets the coaches know if there is something they should be aware of, such as a health concern, family issues, mild-severe injury, problems at school, excessive homework, etc. This information may aid in the way they coach your child until the gymnast is back to 100% physically and/or mentally.
    - Please DO NOT text your coaches about absences; contact the office so that we have an official record.
- To maintain safe practice at their level, Team gymnasts should allow themselves no more than the following absences per month during season for any reason including illness, school events, or family functions:
  - Enrolled in 4 practices per week (16 p/mo.) = 4 absences MAXIMUM (Equivalent of 1 full week missed)
  - Enrolled in 3 practices per week (12 p/mo.) = 3 absences MAXIMUM (Equivalent of 1 full week missed)
  - Enrolled in 2 practices per week (8 p/mo.) = 2 absences MAXIMUM (Equivalent of 1 full week missed)
- The weekly event rotation order is set up to ensure that each athlete has a fair chance to practice each event an even amount of times per month; note that this does not mean they will get the same amount of practice as someone who attends more practice days. There are three events practiced per class, which we rotate through Olympic Order (Vault, Bars, Beam, Floor). For example, if we practice V, UB, BB on Monday, we will practice UB, BB, FX on Tuesday, and so on. If your athlete misses a practice, a make-up day is encouraged but she will not receive the exact class missed.
- We encourage parents to view practices the week of a meet as mandatory. If your child is too physically or emotionally injured, ill, weak or stressed to practice, she is also too injured, ill, weak or stressed to compete that weekend.
  - Responsibility for this decision and its outcome is entirely that of the parent; DSG will not be liable for injuries that occur due to a parent's decision to have their child practice or compete while in poor physical or mental health and DSG's coaches will not actively force a gymnast to perform beyond her abilities.
  - DSG's Team staff members have general education regarding many medical issues that commonly affect young gymnasts. However, they are NOT licensed medical professionals and will NOT give medical advice or make medical decisions regarding your child. Please do not ask them to do so in any capacity.
- The gymnasts have three full weeks of "off time" scheduled throughout the year to rest, recover, socialize, and take vacations: "Spring Break" is usually the week following Mandan High School Graduation, "Fall Break" is usually the week that school begins for the Mandan Public School District, and "Post Season Break" has been added as of the 2019-20 season to be held the week after the State Meet.

## Practice Attire

### DO

- Wear a leotard (with or without tight-fitting shorts).
- Wear hair securely away from the face, including bangs and short hairs. Wear a headband or use hairspray if needed.
- Gymnasts may wear small stud earrings in piercings in the face or ears. Fitness wristbands are allowed.
- Practice good body hygiene (including regular showers, use of deodorant, and use of feminine items when necessary).

### DO NOT

- Do NOT wear a t-shirt/tank top, unless a health condition requires you to do so. Contact the office before wearing this inappropriate attire to practice; note that your condition may make you ineligible for participation that day.
- Do NOT wear loose fitting sweatshirts, t-shirts, sweat pants, hooded shirts, etc into the gymnastics area for any reason.
- Do NOT wear dangly/hoop earrings, dermal piercings, belly button piercings, necklaces, bracelets, anklets, ect.

# Meet Expectations and Requirements

## Attendance Expectations for Meets

- Absences from meets:
  - If your athlete will not be attending a meet as indicated and there are no more practice days before the competition, call your coach ASAP. If the coach(es) is(are) travelling at a certain time/day specifically for your child's meet session and you

do not notify them more than 24 hours before the event that you will not be attending, you will be responsible for any extra travel expenses incurred by DSG, such as mileage, travel time, hotel, meals, session pay, etc.

- This is the only acceptable use for your coaches' personal phone numbers.
  - Regardless of the situation or its perceived urgency, please do not use a coach's personal number between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. with respect for their private time.
- If you discover that your athlete cannot attend a meet weeks before it is scheduled, contact the office ASAP and your child will be removed from the competition roster.
  - If DSG has not yet paid for the meet, you will not be charged.
  - If DSG has already paid for the meet, contacting the office will prevent any additional fees incurred by the coaches' travel in expectation of your child's attendance, however, the meet registration fee is non-refundable.

### Meet Attire

#### DO

- Arrive 10-15 minutes before the scheduled start time wearing the appropriate leotard for the format of that meet. **Traditional format meets:** wear warm-up leotard, bring Team leotard to change into later. **Modified Traditional meets:** wear Team leotard. Shorts may be worn over the warm-up leotard only.
- Arrive wearing your clean uniform jacket and pants.
- Arrive with hair securely away from the face, including bangs and short hairs. Wear a headband or use hairspray (no glitter) if needed.
- Remove ALL jewelry with the exception of medical jewelry, and leave it with your parents. Medical jewelry will need to be taped to the gymnast's body before the session begins.

#### DO NOT

- Do NOT cut the Team leotard's tag out! It's a rental!
- Do NOT arrive when "Open" is scheduled to start, arrive 10-15 minutes early for last minute changes.
- Do NOT wear shorts over your Team leotard.
- Do NOT use glitter hair spray.
- Do NOT wear jewelry, with the exception of medical jewelry only. A deduction is applied at each event.
- Do NOT wear undergarments that are visible around your leotard when you move. Panties/briefs and sports bras may be worn, but must be nude or the same color as the leotard (no neon or flower prints) and should NOT be cut differently than the uniform. Example: We wear a U-cut leotard, so your bra should have a U-style back; no racerback allowed.

### Attire Purchase and Rental:

#### REQUIRED FOR PRE-TEAM:

- Warm-up leotard **\$35 to \$40** - Order from the office. Uses: meets upon mobility, performances, Team pictures, etc.

#### REQUIRED FOR LEVELS 3-10:

- Warm-up leotard **\$35 to \$40** - Order from the office.
- Team leotard **\$45 – Rent** from the office. **DO NOT CUT THE TAG!!!** These are used by the Team for 4-5 years.
- Jacket / Pull-over **\$50 to \$75** – Order from the office. Price may vary depending on DSG's cost from the vendor.
- Pants are to be obtained on your own: They must be full length, all-black tight-fitting athletic pants or athletic leggings with an all-black waist band. NO capri/cropped pants, joggers, or colors/designs; an up to 1"x1" brand logo is acceptable.

Rented items must be returned in ideal condition to the office within two weeks of the State Meet. Late items will be assessed a \$10 late fee and an additional \$10 per week after the due date. If your rented DSG Team leotard is damaged or lost, the following fee schedule applies:

- 1<sup>st</sup> year in circulation (2017): You owe 100% of the original cost of the leotard (\$166).
- 2<sup>nd</sup> year in circulation: You owe 100% of the original cost of the leotard (\$166).
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year in circulation: You owe 75% of the original cost of the leotard (\$125).
- 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year in circulation: You owe 50% of the original cost of the leotard (\$83).

Needed items must be ordered through the office by the deadline in this handbook or obtained on your own at least one week before the first meet; failure to obtain needed items will disqualify your athlete from competition until the uniform is complete. Purchased items are yours to keep following the competition season or may be consigned at DSG for an account credit.

#### NON-REQUIRED, ACCEPTABLE ACCESSORIES:

##### Supports, Braces, and Grips

- Supports and braces for weak, recovering, or injured body parts are allowed at practice and during competition, excluding boots, casts, and splints. If your athlete needs a restricted support or brace, they are not allowed to compete and will be severely limited in their allowance to practice.
- Grips are a privilege earned and are not a required piece of personal equipment (there are collegiate athletes that compete without grips). DSG does not allow the use of "training grips." DSG Team policy for dowel grips is as follows:
  - Must obtain straight arm kips on both the high and low bar before purchasing.
  - Must have coach measure hands and recommend the type of dowel grip purchased based on the athlete. Generally, the office will order the grips, have them sent to the gym, then place a charge in the Parent Portal.
  - Possible exceptions made at the discretion of the coaches:



- Freshman in high school or older.
- Heavier set build and weak hand muscles.
- 5'5" or taller.
- Was allowed to wear dowel grips at a previous club before transferring to DSG.

## Information to Note

### DSG Team Practice "Seasons"

As with all sports, gymnastics has a "pre-season," "in-season," and "off-season." Different than many sports, gymnastics generally practices year-round due to the immense difficulty and aggressively progressive nature of the activities. Each season is imperative to your athlete's development, with the "Competition" and "Major Strength and Skill Upgrades" seasons arguably being the most important regarding practice attendance.

Note that approximately 33% of our Team level athlete's year is spent focused specifically on the refining and repetition of skills and routines used in their competition level, with another 25% spent prior to this working on initial clean-up of skills and routines learned in anticipation of competition; this means that over half of your athlete's training year is spent primarily preparing and competing their current competitive level. The remainder of their year is spent focused mostly on developing strength and technique for skill upgrades to hopefully advance to the next level safely. To be clear, all of the represented focuses are employed in some amount during every single practice, but the main focus area changes depending on the time of year.



### DSG Coaching Philosophy

DSG believes that our coaches' jobs are to safely instill a love of gymnastics and fitness while encouraging each child to be a positively contributing member of society. We expect our coaches to do their best to motivate each athlete to reach their individual potential, whether it be learning a basic cartwheel, earning the coveted Level 10 status, or simply being able to participate and contribute in a group activity setting. Our coaches are not here to force any child to do gymnastics, project our personally held religious or political beliefs onto any child, or intentionally put any child at risk of physical or emotional trauma. Our staff is advised to adhere to USA Gymnastics' Safe Sport policy. You can view this policy in its entirety here:

[https://usagym.org/pages/aboutus/pages/safesport\\_policy.html](https://usagym.org/pages/aboutus/pages/safesport_policy.html)

### Private Lessons

Private lessons may be possible depending on coach availability. Team level private lessons are charged at a rate of \$35 per hour. They are recommended for working through a fear, overcoming a plateau, or choreographing an optional level routine.

- Private lessons at any level are not offered as a replacement for regular classes nor should they be used to excess. Typically, an honest review of the gymnast's use of regular practice time or attendance may make more of an impact on her advancement than a 1:1 session.
- Floor routine choreography slots with DSG staff are available in July and August for Optional/Braves level gymnasts needing their first personalized floor routine or who have an expired floor routine (competed for at least two seasons); choreography slots are not guaranteed once the school-year begins, so please plan accordingly.
  - Floor music must be purchased/obtained and sent to the Head Coach in MP3 format BEFORE your first choreography session to ensure the music used at the time of choreography is the music you purchase/obtain for competition.
  - You are welcome to use a choreographer who is not DSG staff, but please note that our agreement with Parks & Rec does not currently allow 3<sup>rd</sup> parties to work in our facility, so routine creation would need to take place off-site. Routines created by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party choreographer are subject to change by the coaches to fit the competitive needs of the gymnast and philosophies of the team.

### Public Hour

Public Hour can be a great tool for athletes who want to spend more time on certain skills or events due to personal preference or a desire to improve in a specific area. However, Public Hour should NOT be used to learn skills that are not already safely learned at practice or for practicing compulsory dance routines.

- Floor music will not be played at these events and full Floor routines should not be performed with respect to other participants' safety.
- Gymnasts should not be teaching each other skills or routines at these events and are not permitted to spot each other on skills or routines. It is extremely important to note that actually being a gymnast is much different than being a coach and athletes who are not also specifically trained to coach the skill level in question should not be coaching another athlete at that skill level. Parents are also discouraged from coaching their athlete unless they are specifically trained to coach the skill level in question with current knowledge of the requirements; considerations should be taken by parents or coaches who have not actively coached within the last four years as the rules and techniques are constantly changing.
- Public Hour is not a private lesson. The coaches may give short observations with corrections and minor spotting, but should be evenly distributing their attention throughout the gym. It is important to note that Public Hour coaches generally are recreational coaches who are not specifically trained at the Team level, thus they should not necessarily be spotting, giving skill corrections, or offering advice regarding Team level elements.

### **Break time during practice**

Because of the length of their practice and the difficulty of their skill set, Optional Team practice participants may receive a 5-10 minute snack break after their second event depending on the coaches' assessment of their focus and effort. This break is a privilege and may not be awarded due to poor group behavior such as wasting time or being disrespectful to staff/each other. We recommend that each gymnast bring a healthy snack with high protein content and minimal sugar. USA Gymnastics suggests using ChooseMyPlate.org to help plan your child's meal and snacking needs to ensure they have the energy to get the most out of their school day and sports practices. Snack items are available in the office but often may not contain the fuel a Team level athlete requires.

### **Email Contact, the DSG "Mail Box", Social Media, & Photo Release**

- The vast majority of important information will be sent via email from the Parent Portal to the primary address listed on your DSG registration account. Please note that if your child is not enrolled in classes or if you have "opted out" of DSG emails, you will not receive the important emails sent through the Parent Portal. Sending email messages eliminates the challenges associated with lost notes and children not being present the day the notes are distributed. If you do not check the primary email address listed on your account, please change the primary email address to one that you or someone you trust to relay the information does regularly monitor. Please understand that DSG is not responsible for you not being informed due to not checking these messages.
- All DSG Pre-team and Team gymnasts have a mail box in the lobby where they may receive invoices, meet schedules, fundraising packets, etc. Please discuss with your gymnast whether they are responsible for bringing the notes to you or if you will collect the mail yourself. If the notes placed in your box do not make it home to you, please understand that DSG is not responsible for you not having been informed.
- Please follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for fun updates on events in the gym and on SnapChat to enjoy your child's activities at practice. If your child has reached Level 3 or above, we recommend joining the "Dakota Star Team" Facebook group run by the volunteer Team Coordinator for communication about upcoming competitions and gym reminders. Often, reminders and notes that we email or put in your DSG mail box will also be posted on social media.
- Please note that you have electronically signed a photo release through your Parent Portal account allowing us to use your child's image for club promotional purposes.

### **Health and Medication**

- If your child claims to be injured or sick, the DSG coaches and staff will not allow them to continue practice. The child will be removed from class for the day and a guardian called for a ride home. It will be left up to the parent to decide whether the child is being truthful about their ailment and to take action towards the behavior outside of the gym; DSG will not be liable for forcing a child to practice in poor health or against their will.
  - DSG will follow the NDHSAA Concussion guidelines for recognition and removal from play. You can view the Concussion Management sheet and Parents Guide to Concussions In Sports on their website: [https://ndhsaa.com/files/1011\\_Board\\_09\\_14\\_10\\_item\\_13.pdf](https://ndhsaa.com/files/1011_Board_09_14_10_item_13.pdf) and <https://ndhsaa.com/files/A%20Parents%20Guide%20to%20Concussion%20in%20Sports.pdf> You can also view a "Know the Risks" video embedded on the Mandan Braves website: <https://vimeo.com/170957020>
- DSG's staff members will not dispense medications of any kind to any gymnast. No medications should be kept in your child's locker or with her personal items in the gym. Your child should take all necessary medications before arriving to the gym in cases of diabetes, disease, sicknesses, aches, etc; a fast-acting inhaler or EpiPen are obvious exceptions.
- If your child has health conditions for which a doctor has been seen or has prescribed medications, please let us know so that we can be prepared in the event of an attack. The health and success of your gymnast is very important to us.
  - Beginning in the 2019-2020 season, all DSG Team and Pre-Team athletes will officially be required to submit a sports physical prior to the beginning of each season; this is the same physical form obtained for each year's school sports programs. This is a growing trend among youth sports groups and is in the best interest of your child's health.

### **Team Recognition: Pictures, Banquet, Apparel**

- DSG Pre-team and DSG Team pictures will be taken towards the end of the season; this ensures that all girls who moved up to Pre-team or to a new Team level mid-season are photographed with the correct group. Pre-team gymnasts will wear the warm-up leotard and Team gymnasts will wear the long-sleeve competitive leotard.
- The Team banquet is usually held the same day as pictures for the convenience of our families. Location/theme is TBD.
- Team apparel should be made available towards the beginning of season, though we don't guarantee it to be available before the first meet. Team apparel is fun and a great way to show off your DSG spirit, but it sometimes takes a backseat to other urgent Team related business. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

### **Switching Gymnastics Clubs**

If you have chosen to switch to DSG from another club or choose to switch from DSG to another club, we know that you have reasons that you believe are in the best interest of your family. Please understand that this choice will impact your child's progression through the sport no matter the reason for the change. Every gym coordinates their practices, drills, and philosophies differently, every gym has different gymnasts in attendance at practice, and every gym has different coaches with different personalities leading their teams – all of these things generally take time for your athlete to adjust to before she can assimilate. It may take a while to make new friends and learn to trust new coaches; this is normal.

It is important to also note that if the gym you are switching to has more strict mobility rules than your former club, your child will likely repeat her previous level; if the gym you are switching to has more lax mobility requirements than your former club, your child may be moved up rapidly in accordance with their policies. If your child is uncomfortable with something in her new gym, please ask as many questions as you can and provide as much information to her new coach as possible to help the transition.

### **We LOVE Questions - Please ask them!**

If you are unsure of a policy, procedure, or anything pertaining to the gym or gymnastics, please ask a Team coach or administrator! If you don't know how something is supposed to work, please ask us so that we can teach you. If you are frustrated with something that is or is not happening, you hear a rumor from your child or another family that is concerning or confusing, or you observe something that you don't feel comfortable with, please contact us ASAP. If we are aware of an issue, we have the opportunity to either address the situation immediately or explain it in detail. We will not be angry with you for asking questions and we will NEVER "take it out" on your athlete. Please help keep DSG a drama-free zone!

### **Safety Policies During "Extreme Situations": Severe Weather, State of Emergency, Facility Danger, & Child Abduction**

- If Mandan Public School or Mandan Parks & Recreation indoor activities are cancelled due to severe weather, DSG will not be open; watch Facebook and your primary email for official updates.
  - If severe weather develops after school and park hours, DSG will send closure notification by Facebook and your primary email address.
    - If DSG officially cancels classes, tuition credits will be given.
    - If notification is not posted or received, we are open. It is ultimately your decision whether or not to attend class.
  - If there is severe weather while your child is already in class:
    - Building administration will meet to quickly devise the best evacuation plan for the current situation, then all families will be contacted via social media and your primary email address with specific instructions and timelines.
    - During a tornado, all athletes and personnel will assemble in the hockey locker rooms on the lower level.
- A state-of-emergency will be handled as the situation dictates and information will be released as it becomes available.
- In the event of danger in the facility, such as a fire, we will evacuate to the main parking lot on the west side of the building. DO NOT leave with your child without first notifying the most senior staff present to ensure that she is accounted for and that no one unnecessarily risks their life to save her. Your child's safety, as well as that of our staff and first responders, is very important to us.
- In the event of a child abduction, all existing classes will be secured in the south east end of the gymnasium seating area and all exists to the facility will be secured by DSG and SSC staff. No one will be allowed to exit until the child is found.
- If you are aware of sexual misconduct being perpetrated by any DSG staff or club member against any DSG athlete, you have a moral and legal responsibility to report the incident(s) to the appropriate authorities: Local law enforcement and the DSG Program Director. Visit the USAG parent website for more information: <http://www.usagymparents.com/>

## **Standards and Expectations Explanations**

These standards and expectations for both athletes and parents are meant to reinforce our #2 goal of instilling important life lessons and sportsmanship qualities in each athlete and family that participates in our program: (Responsibility, respect, resilience, perspective, cooperation, teamwork, multi-tasking, consequences, dealing with disappointment, no one is perfect/everyone is different, etc). We do not teach with the "because I told you so" mindset; we believe the "why" is important. Respect towards coaches means...

- ...following direction the first time it is given, without argument, complaining, negotiating, back-talk, rolling of eyes, or sassy remarks. Respectful questions are encouraged.
  - Our Team coaches are constantly researching new training methods and attend annual training conferences to be up-to-date with USA Gymnastics requirements and standards. Because industry-preferred gymnastics techniques

and strategies change often and no two gymnasts are completely alike, it should be expected that the coaches will be continually adding to or adjusting assignments, drills, and practice set-ups with the goal to create the best possible training environment available.

- Being timely after a direction is given shows responsibility, initiative, drive, and commitment to becoming a better athlete. This is an important skill to have as a student and as a future employee.
- Being polite and agreeable in the face of a disliked activity shows maturity, understanding of the complexity of the sport, and suggests that the child will be a positive, hard-working addition to the work-force someday. Rude or obstinate athletes will not be given the opportunity to sully the experience of the athletes who are willing to work, and will be asked to leave the gym for the remainder of the class.
- ...being humble and patient when challenged by a new skill, a desired level change, or any unforeseen variable in the gym.
  - The Team coaches have the final say in any gymnast's advancement, regardless of skills accomplished, scores achieved, or time spent in a certain level. Variables used to evaluate gymnasts are USAG skill requirements, strength, focus, attitude, willingness to work, and respect for coaches. Patience and hard work are important in a difficult sport like gymnastics, and an upgraded level status must be earned by exercising both of these qualities.
  - Even though an athlete may practice skills and routines for the next level, she will not compete at that level until the coaches determine that she meets all of the DSG standards and can compete the desired level safely and successfully. After time off due to illness, injury, other sports, or personal reasons, the competitive status of the athlete must be reevaluated by the coaches.
  - Some gymnasts may take years to move through levels while some athletes may move through multiple levels in one season; some gymnasts work extremely hard with little gain while some athletes may advance quickly with little effort. Though this doesn't seem fair, that is the unfortunate reality of physical sports.
- ...conducting one's self with discretion, consideration, and poise when in the DSG facility or dealing with DSG staff, particularly in front of children (your child, children in your child's class, or other bystanders).
  - DSG does not support physical aggression, verbal abuse, defamation of character, belittlement, or poor manners directed at ANYONE, DSG affiliated or otherwise. Profanity is NEVER acceptable in the gym.
  - If you have developmental concerns about your gymnast or want an update on her progress, please discuss this with the Head Coach directly; she will meet with you in a private setting if desired.
    - The team coaches employ requirement testing sheets throughout the year, and are certainly willing to discuss your child's progress at any time. Often, your gymnast will be able to answer the majority of your questions as we discuss their progress and requirements with them on a regular basis.
    - Because other parents and the Board of Directors do not coach your gymnast, all practice questions and concerns should be brought directly to your coaches. We highly recommend personally watching your child's class when a concern arises, prior to any impulsive or negative reaction.
  - If you have a problem with a coach, please follow the appropriate chain of command to ensure the problem is resolved. Approach the coach in question privately first to make them aware of your concern, then the Rec Coordinator with recreational coach issues, or the Head Coach or Program Director with Team coach issues, then, as a last resort, you may contact the Board President with issues that have not been addressed or resolved by the heads of staff. Please be aware that if you choose not to bring issues to the attention of the people involved or who in a position to remedy the problem, the issues cannot be properly addressed and you inadvertently become an enabler of the problem. Please help us make DSG a better place.
- ...trusting in the coaching philosophies of DSG's coaches.
  - Please trust that the coaches will not force anyone to do anything they are not physically or mentally ready to do; often, a child is physically ready far before they are mentally prepared. If the coach decides they are truly not ready, understand that it is for your child's safety. Forcing a child to do a dangerous skill before they are ready can cause, at best, a bad experience that creates a mental block preventing them from trying it again and, at worst, a catastrophic injury that could physically prevent them from living a normal life.
  - Please contact your coach with questions before voicing concerns or negative feelings in front of your athlete. If it is insinuated to a child, or they overhear a conversation you have with someone else, that their coach is "not good enough," she will not trust her coach and her gymnastics will suffer. Be mindful of the conversations that take place around your child or that your child has access to (your phone, email, etc).
  - Please be aware that all clubs and coaches are different, and so are all gymnasts and parents. There are often many different but still correct answers to the same question. If the coaching philosophies of DSG and its staff are in strong contrast to your vision for your athlete and she agrees with you, please consider exploring other options that may suit you and your gymnast better, whether that be another gymnastics club or another sport. We ask that you respect our differences. We may not be the right match for you, but that doesn't mean our coaches or philosophies are wrong.
- ...reserving the coaches' private phone numbers for urgent, meet related situations only.
  - It is not appropriate to contact your coaches on their personal number for make-up days, changing practice days, tuition questions, Public Hour questions, routine questions, fundraisers, Team apparel, etc. It is appropriate to contact them personally if you will miss a meet occurring within the next 24 hours, if your child is severely injured outside of class, or if there is something unsavory happening in class that requires a private meeting.

- If your athlete will not be attending a meet last minute and there are no more practice days before the competition, call your coach ASAP. If the coach is travelling at a certain time/day specifically for your child's session and you do not notify them that you will not be attending within 24 hours of the event, you will be responsible for any travel expenses incurred, such as mileage, travel time, hotel, meals, session pay, etc.
- If the situation/question can wait until the next practice day, please leave a message in the office, send an email to the gym's address, or stop in the club during office hours.
- Please be aware that we are a small club, meaning that our coaches are responsible for multiple levels/teams and they attend more practices and meet sessions than the ones in which your child participates. They will often work 7 days per week for multiple weeks on end. This leaves little time during the 4 month season for their personal lives. We ask that you please respect their private time.

#### Respect towards each other means...

- ...supporting all teammates, regardless of skill level, days practiced, social status, parental involvement at DSG, town lived in, school attended, etc. Each member of our Team deserves equal respect from each Team gymnast and family. Everyone is to encourage and support each other in becoming the best athlete that each individual can become. Never critique, compare, or criticize any gymnast's performance, including your own, anywhere in the DSG facility or at meet locations.
- ...never quarreling, name-calling, or making crude remarks to anyone in our facility, at home, in public, or on social media. As our mission statement claims, we strive for an enjoyable atmosphere at DSG and intentionally disrupting that enjoyment for any other person is unacceptable. Any person caught committing a bullying offense against a DSG member at the facility, at school, at home, in public, or on social media, will be required to give a public apology to the victim.
- ...never intentionally create a dangerous situation or cause injury to another DSG member through action or inaction. Any attempt will result in severe disciplinary action, which may include the offending child's permanent removal from the club (NO REFUNDS for tuition, competitions, or other payments will be given in this case).

#### Respect towards the club and facility means...

- ...when making comments at meets or stands at practice/camps, whether they are hosted by DSG or another club, you are aware of the people around you and are speaking respectfully. As representatives of DSG, your family's comments may influence how others view the DSG program. Everyone should be positively inspired by DSG members and spectators.
- ...parents and spectators are not allowed to enter the DSG gymnastics area during or after practice unless invited to do so by the coach for a specific reason. If you need to communicate with your child or the coach during class, please ask the office assistant or another employee who is not working with a class to assist you without distracting classes.
- ...gymnasts are not allowed in the gymnastics area without their coach. While in the gym, they should respect the space and equipment as if they purchased it with their own money.
  - Do not intentionally damage or irreparably mark the equipment, carpet, paint, etc.
  - Make sure equipment used by you is returned to its proper "home," unless someone else is using it immediately after you. If you don't know where it belongs, ask your coach.
  - Do not leave water bottles, grips, supports/braces, headbands, or used tape, pre-wrap, or icepacks in the gym. Throw them away, take them home, or put them in their designated space. The staff is not responsible for what happens to these items if the gymnasts do not take care of them.
  - Do not waste the expensive pre-wrap, tape, or chalk provided for the gymnasts by making jewelry, balls, pictures, or marking things/taping themselves without permission. Disregard for moderation will result in the loss of pre-wrap/tape/chalk privileges, requiring the offending child to provide their own supplies for their own use.
- ...parents and gymnasts are not allowed in the DSG office unattended. If you need something, please ask the staff to help you. Particularly when we host events, please do not remove supplies (tape, scissors, chairs, etc) without replacing it in its correct spot immediately after use.

#### Respect towards the Team means...

- ...parents and DSG affiliated spectators attending meets at DSG or hosted by another club must observe good sportsmanship and respect towards the host club, meet officials, host and travelling coaches, and other spectators. If negative behavior is expressed, the meet hosts, meet officials, or your coaches may ask you to leave the meet site. Rude and obnoxious spectators can cause team deductions, which is not fair to the athletes who worked hard to compete well in that competition. Examples of inappropriate behavior:
  - Boing judges or talking to judges/meet officials about the meet during or after competition - Do NOT approach a judge for any reason! Asking your coaches to speak to a judge about a score is not allowed.
  - Screaming/cheering so loudly that the officiating process is disrupted or gymnasts are distracted.
  - Being in the competitive area (any area that is designated for gymnasts, coaches, and judges, which is generally near the competitive equipment and warmup area). Do not approach your gymnast or her coach unless they are in the spectator area or the coach signals you to enter the area.
    - This includes the unfortunate event that your athlete is injured. Please stay calm and wait for the coach to call you over or bring your athlete to you. Our reactions often dictate the reaction of the injured athlete.
  - The use of flash photography, as this is dangerously distracting and sometimes blinding for the gymnasts. It is strictly prohibited at meets, and we also do not allow it during practices at DSG.

Respect towards the process means...

- ...understanding that the amount of practice days signed up for, attended, AND the level of participation your gymnast puts forth is directly proportionate to the number of months it will take for your gymnast to reach her goals. Even with a high level of participation and determination, a large portion of your child's advancement also depends on her natural athleticism, ability, and both mental and physical maturity. A certain amount of linear time in a level does not mean that a child should be ready to or has earned the right to move to the next level. Please note that, under the supervision of current Team coaching staff at DSG, being able to "chuck" a skill does not mean that a child "has" that skill; if the staff deems the child's performance unsafe, they will make the child rework the skill into a safe and acceptable version.
- ...understanding that each athlete is responsible for her own gymnastics. The coaches are here to give direction, guidance, correction, and to physically assist the athletes who are actively interested in learning. The coaches are not here to force children to be gymnasts. If your athlete chooses not to follow direction or complete their assignments, they are choosing to slow their advancement. The consequences of these choices are an important life lesson that children should learn at an early age, before they enter the "real world."
- ...employing healthy eating habits. This doesn't mean that kids can't have treats, but that treats and unhealthy food options should be consumed in moderation to keep our athletes safe and healthy.
  - Encourage healthy snacks such as fruit, vegetables, and yogurt to avoid unnatural weight gain. Avoid fat-free, low fat, low carb, and low calorie snacks as athletes do need those things, but make sure they are not empty calories or "bad" fats found in cheap snack items, greasy chips, and fast foods.
  - We try to keep our workouts tough enough to combat the natural weight gain that comes with puberty, but be aware that each athlete is different and there are some things that you simply cannot out-train. Girls will already struggle with balance and awareness when they gain height, hips, and hormones, so keeping their diet healthy will help minimize their struggle with their weight. Heavier athletes have a harder time lifting, moving, and spinning themselves.
  - Please be aware that under-eating is just as dangerous, or even more so, than over-eating. In worst-case scenarios, this can lead to severe eating disorders or body dysmorphia, which are unfortunately not uncommon in girls' sports. Refusing food or purging can cause weakness, fatigue, and brittle bones/joints, which can lead to serious injury.

**POST THIS PAGE ON YOUR FRIDGE OR SOMEWHERE CONSPICUOUS**

## 2019-2020 Meet Schedule:

- **December:**
  - 7-8 Dickinson Dickinson High School
  - 13-15 Fargo Fargo South Gymnastics Training Center
  - (Volunteer opportunity: Braves meet at DSG 12/21)
- **January:**
  - 10-12 Bismarck Bismarck Gymnastics Academy
  - **25-26 HOME Starstruck Qualifier** (Volunteer opportunity: Braves home meets on Thurs/Fri)
- **February:**
  - 8-9 Minot Gymagic Gymnastics
  - 22-23 Jamestown Jamestown Middle School (May also be held at Jamestown High; watch for changes.)
- **March:**
  - 6-8 Watford City
  - 13-15 Grand Forks Red River Valley Athletics
  - 20-22 Fargo ND USAG State Championships at American Gold Gymnastics/Fargo South High School

## Holiday Closures — NO PRACTICE!

DSG is closed for ALL classes and regularly scheduled events, including Pre-team, Team, and Braves classes, Public Hour, etc.

Sept. 2	Labor Day	Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Sept. 27	Homecoming	Jan. 23-26	Starstruck Meets
Oct. 31	Halloween	April 10-13	Easter Weekend
Nov. 28-29	Thanksgiving	May 25	Memorial Day
Dec. 20	Braves Meet	July 3	Independence Day Eve
Dec. 24-26	Christmas	July 4	Independence Day
Dec. 31	New Year's Eve	July 5	Independence Day Travel Day

## School-year Practice Schedule

### Pre-Team:

Monday 3:45-5:45  
 Tuesday 3:45-5:45  
 Wednesday 5:30-7:30  
 Thursday 6:15-8:15

### Compulsory:

Monday 3:45-6:15  
 Tuesday 3:45-6:15  
 Wednesday 5:30-7:30  
 Thursday 6:15-8:45

### Optional/Xcel/Braves:

Monday: 5:45 p.m. - 8:45 p.m.  
 Tuesday: 5:45 p.m. - 8:45 p.m.  
 Wednesday\*: 3:45 p.m. - 5:45 p.m.  
 Thursday: 3:45 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.

### Optional/Xcel/Braves ONLY:

School-out practices will be held from 1:30-4:30 on the following dates: 12/23, 12/30, 1/20, 1/21, 2/17

## Abbreviated Volunteer Requirements:

Volunteer for a minimum of twelve (12) SignUp.com volunteer slots, including at least one Starstruck Meet specific spot

- A \$20 value per volunteer spot has been declared by the board of directors as a promise from each family to fulfill their volunteer requirements.
  - If your family does not meet the volunteer requirements by September 1, a \$20 fee per missing requirement will be charged to your account and is due within 30 days. These fees act as a donation from your family to the success of the club. Please be aware that if none of the volunteer requirements have been completed, your family would be responsible for a total of \$240 in volunteer fees on September 1.
  - If your family signs up for a volunteer slot but does not arrive for the slot or provide a replacement volunteer, a \$50 "no-show" fee will be applied to your account and is due 30 days from the date of the missed volunteer slot. If a family no-shows twice during a season (September 1-August 31), they are responsible for the entire volunteer fee balance of \$240 plus the \$50 no-show fee per incident.





- Volunteering for the 50/50 raffle and hauling performance equipment during the summer months counts as TWO (2) SignUp.com slots! For example, if you cannot volunteer at all in the fall, winter, or spring, you would only need to sign up for and complete six (6) raffle events or summer shows to fill your twelve SignUp.com slots.
- Only slots filled by adults and children over the age of 14 count towards the SignUp.com slot requirements. The 50/50 Raffle is credited once PER FAMILY per date; please only sign your one family up for one slot per day.

## Team Family Discontinuance Notice

If your family decides to discontinue with our gymnastics services for any reason, please submit this notice to terminate any fundraising or other commitments after your child's final day with us. We hope this day does not come, but understand the reality that all of our gymnasts must move on at some point. This document allows you to terminate the current season's Team Family Contract.

### Please note:

- This document should not be signed if you intend only to take a few months off and return to our team practices.
- This document should only be signed when the decision to permanently discontinue gymnastics services at Dakota Star Gymnastics has been made by the family.
- This document should be dated as of the last official practice day the child plans to attend and requirements that would have been incurred following that date will be waived. Remember that any team requirements or tuition are non-refundable if your child attends any practices during the month to which the requirement or tuition are relative.

### Parent:

"I have thoroughly read and understand all of the rules, policies, and fundraising requirements listed in the Dakota Star Gymnastics Competitive Handbook, both those directed at me and those directed at my gymnast. I am aware of and understand the fundraising contributions my family is responsible for. I understand that I signed the Team Family Contract, and by doing so stated that I, my gymnast, and any immediate or extended family that become involved with DSG on behalf of myself or my child agree with and fully intend to follow those rules, policies, and requirements throughout that year (September-August). I also understand that I waived my right to dispute any fees, rules, policies, and requirements listed herein.

As this Notice of Discontinuance was included in the Team Handbook referenced above, I also agreed to all terms and conditions on this document when I signed the Team Family Contract and waived my right to dispute its contents."

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**Parent/Guardian's Name (Please print clearly)**

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian's Signature**

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

**2<sup>nd</sup> Parent/Guardian's Signature**



# 2019-20 Team Family Contract

**DO NOT sign this contract unless you have read the entirety of this season's handbook, understand all of the fees, policies, expectations, and fundraising requirements therein and fully intend to abide by these rules. Being informed helps to eliminate issues that could come up during the season. If you have questions, please ask the Head Coach before the due date.**

**Gymnast:** "I have read and understand all of the rules, policies, and fundraising requirements listed in the Dakota Star Gymnastics Competitive Handbook. I understand that these rules and policies are in place so I can enjoy gymnastics with my friends and coaches as well as to ensure my safety and success at practice and at meets. I fully intend to follow these rules, policies, and requirements throughout the upcoming year."

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**Gymnast's Name (Please print clearly)**

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

**Gymnast's Signature**

**Guardian:** "I have thoroughly read and understand all of the rules, policies, and fundraising requirements listed in the Dakota Star Gymnastics Competitive Handbook, both those directed at my gymnast and those directed at my family. I am aware of and understand the fundraising contributions for which my family is responsible. I also understand that by signing this contract, I am stating that I, my gymnast, and any immediate or extended family that become involved with DSG on behalf of myself or my child agree with and fully intend to follow these rules, policies, and requirements throughout the upcoming year. I also understand that I am waiving my right to dispute any fees, rules, policies, and requirements listed herein."

**Gymnast Uniform Order Information:**

- GK Brand Leotard size for competition (Circle one) = CS CM CL AS AM AL AXL
- Needs new 2019-20 tank leotard? (Circle one) = YES NO
  - If yes, what size? Note: not GK! (Circle one) = CS CM CL AS AM AL
- Needs new 2019-20 warm-up jacket? (Circle one) = **YES** NO
  - If yes, what size? (Circle one) = CS CM CL AS AM AL

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**Parent/Guardian's Name (Please print clearly)**

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian's Signature**

**DUE SEPTEMBER 12!**