

Dear Students and Parents,

This letter contains information about the Nutcracker. It is important that everyone takes time to read through this letter carefully, before committing students to be in *The Nutcracker*. After you have read this letter, if you would like your child to participate in The Nutcracker, please login into the CURRENT STUDENT LOGIN on our webpage and sign up to be in The Nutcracker.

Every year the professional company of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet invites students from the School of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet to participate in this joyous holiday tradition. This is an incredible experience for our young students to work side by side with world class professional dancers. *The Nutcracker* can be a fun, challenging and amazing performing experience for all involved.

1. The Nutcracker will take place in Aspen on December 18th and 19th with a matinee and evening show each day. Most students will share parts and will get to perform in one show. A few will be invited to perform in more than one show.
2. Students must be 5 years of age by October 1st to participate. Students who's birthdays fall between October 1 and December 1 will be added to a wait list.
3. Students must be registered for and participating in classes by October 1. Students who enroll after October 1 will be added to a wait list.
4. The following will be mandatory rehearsals:
 - a. October 30th for Mice, Soldiers, Party Girls and Boys.
 - b. November 27th and December 11th for Blocks, Mice, Soldiers, Toy Soldiers, Toys, Party Girls and Boys
 - c. The week of December 13th. After school rehearsals most evenings.
5. There is a \$40 Nutcracker fee to participate. This is not a costume fee. Students do not purchase their costumes. All costumes remain property of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet.
6. There are no auditions. The Artistic and Executive Directors of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet will chose parts for dancers based on what they are looking for to best suit the show as a whole. Some students may do the same part for many years before the Directors feel they are ready for a different part. Being in a certain level of ballet does not guarantee a specific part in the Nutcracker.
7. Students must attend all rehearsals. Each student is allowed to miss ONE non-mandatory rehearsal. Mandatory rehearsals must not be missed for any reason. Rehearsals are not cancelled due to inclement weather. Students who have been cast in the same part as a previous year need to attend all rehearsals to make sure they know any changes. Parents are asked to help students be adaptable and to understand that changes, or a lack of changes, are a large part of live theater.

Please remember, that unlike the School's Spring Recital at the end of May, this is a professional production in which our students are invited to join. This is not a showcase of students' achievements and progress, but an opportunity to work with professional dancers. There are a limited number of roles available and most students will share a role with another student. Many dancers will repeat the same role as a previous year depending on their size, age and ability. Please help students understand that there are no small parts, and every roll is important. Students below level 1A will most likely be Bees, Blocks or Toys. Students in 1A and 2 might be Candy Canes, etc. Students who have made a commitment to their formal training and have achieved level 1A or above can expect more responsibility within their roles.

We still rely on the help of volunteers to make every performance a success. If you can help with rehearsals or performances, please email me to let me know. Thank you and we look forward to a fun and successful series of performances.

Melanie Dorskocil
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Aspen Santa Fe Ballet
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