

Ellensburg Dance Ensemble
Cast & Crew/Volunteer Expectations & Opportunities

Polar Express

December 14-17, 2023

(SIGNATURE PAGE/ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND COMMITTEE CHOICE REQUIRED FOR ALL CAST & CREW)

Welcome to the cast and crew of Polar Express! We are thrilled that you have decided to join Ellensburg Dance Ensemble's dynamic version of this fabulous production!

We will all work together to bring this show to the stage at the Morgan Performing Arts Center. Ellensburg Dance Ensemble (EDE) has been producing Nutcracker and other shows for nearly 20 years and is a non-profit pre-professional dance company that also owns and operates The Studio in downtown. The Studio has classes for all ages and dance styles open to community members.

EDE works to ensure that we create a supportive community dance production with high expectations. We work together to create a professional production while enjoying the excitement and learning experiences of a community-based, supportive endeavor. We expect that this production will be positive and of the highest quality in every way. Please read this document thoroughly so you understand our commitment to you and so can fulfill your commitment to us.

Polar Express Production Team

Jill Scheffer, Producer – jill.scheffer@ellensburgdance.org 509-551-8807

Gillian Redman, Artistic Director – gillian.redman@ellensburgdance.org 425-246-3743

John Durham, EDE President – john.durham@ellensburgdance.org 509-730-9417

Choreographers – Gillian Redman, Alyssa Gregor

Costume Lead - vacant

Hair & Makeup Design - vacant

Props Master - vacant

Quick Change & Chaperone Lead – *vacant*

Front of House Lead – *vacant*

Communication and Scheduling

Good communication is the bridge between confusion and clarity. Our commitment to you is that you will receive clear and frequent communications about expectations, creative and collaborative feedback from our production team, clear and efficient communications and guidance from choreographers, and supportive listening throughout the production. In return, the production team asks that you share any concerns, update us on any issues or scheduling problems early, read emails and other notes, be ready for rehearsals, assist with promoting the show, and be responsive to requests for information.

TO DO: ACCEPT INVITATION FROM JILL FOR THE SLACK APPLICATION – YOU CAN USE SLACK ON YOUR PHONE OR ON THE COMPUTER



Most communication will be distributed via SLACK. Schedule updates, rehearsal changes, and general information about the show will be sent out via SLACK. Be sure to accept the invitation!

Please also:

- Commit to checking daily for email updates
- Refer to calendars/handouts/emails frequently to avoid missing deadlines or creating schedule conflicts for your performer/family
- Communication with other volunteers may be necessary for publicity, concessions, and other production areas. Please be considerate and do not make others chase you down.

REHEARSALS

- Rehearsals are Friday evenings after 5pm for lead roles and Saturday afternoons (likely between 11am and 5pm)
- Not all roles are needed for all rehearsals – schedule will be sent out via SLACK the Monday prior to the following weekend's rehearsals
- **We WILL rehearse over the Thanksgiving weekend.**
- We will likely perform a few scenes during Moments to Remember at The Studio as a teaser for the full show. We will let cast members know well ahead of time.
- **Rehearsal absences will not be allowed after November 7 without special approval. We will be rehearsing over the Thanksgiving Weekend - November 25 & 26.**

- Families with younger dancers will mostly likely have more flexibility. We will do our best to make sure everyone has as much notice of rehearsal calls as possible.

Attendance

Attendance at rehearsals is critical and required for the success of the show. The following attendance expectations must be followed:

- Rehearsal calls will be sent via SLACK each Monday evening.
- Be sure to check who is called – not everyone will be called for every rehearsal.
- Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every rehearsal. Our rule is: **early is on time, on time is late, late is unacceptable**. You will need time to change into dance shoes – so give yourself a buffer.
- Please be respectful of the choreographer's time and your fellow scene mates time...we all deserve to have a fun time and it is hard when people are perpetually late or unprepared.
- STAY HOME if you feel sick and notify the Producer or Artistic Director as soon as possible of your absence. Make good decisions and do not share your germs with the rest of the cast and crew please 😊.
- Please be sure we are aware of any challenges, health concerns, or other circumstances that could affect your full participation with the show. Such information is kept confidential, on a need-to-know basis, and allows us to support you in the best way we can.
- You must be prepared with footwear appropriate to your role. If you are dancing tap or *en pointe* we will try to help with performance shoe costs. Please let the producer know if this is a hardship for you, and we'll talk with you about needs.
- Rehearsal absences will not be allowed after November 7 without special approval.
- We will be rehearsing, and possibly performing some scenes, over the Thanksgiving Weekend - November 25 & 26.
- Tech Week will be December 8th through to our first show on December 14th. Tech week is rough for everyone! We will be rehearsing and running the show every night. You will get tired and frustrated. This is a long week. Please be prepared to stay on the train for the whole week – we are all in this together!
- Shows are December 14th at 7pm, December 15th at 7pm, December 16th at 2pm and 7pm and December 17th at 2pm.
- Load in to Morgan is December 11th and is mandatory for all dancers and volunteers.
- Load out from Morgan is December 17th after the matinee and is mandatory for all dancers and volunteers.

Volunteer and Parent Committee Requirements

To create a successful production, all cast and crew and family members are required to volunteer in different pre-production and production areas. When you or your dancer is cast, you will be required to sign up for at least one committee (we love help though...so you are welcome to help with more!). Committees will have their own **SLACK** channel and will communicate details and needed help through **SLACK**. If you are on a production committee (hair & makeup, or quick change/chaperones for example) we will make SURE you can see your dancer on stage at LEAST once...so please do not panic 😊 .

Pre-Production Committees are:

- **Costume Committee** – assistance with sewing, repairs, acquisitions, and fittings are needed.
- **Props** - During pre-production, help with gathering, purchasing, and creating props for the show. Creative and crafty people are needed! During the show, props committee members make sure props are in the places they need to be backstage, and they repair or replace broken props when needed.
- **Promotions and Sponsorship Committee** – help us find sponsors for the show (this means visiting businesses and asking for money!), helping plan outreach and fundraising events (Halloween Candy handout in costume, Farmers Market little kiddos in costumes promoting the show, etc), and more. This is a critical committee to the success of our show and we need you!

Production Committees are:

- **Hair & Makeup Design Committee** – Each dancer will have a specific style! We need someone to help with the overall look of the show and then to corral a stable of helpers during show week. We will need A LOT of backstage help during dress rehearsals and shows. Are you good with makeup, talented with hair styling, willing to learn and help? We will need you!
- **Quick Change & Chaperone Committee** – are you fast with your hands and good with stress (often in the dark backstage?), we need you. We will also need parent chaperones to help keep the younger dancers occupied, focused, and making sure they are not eating food in costume.
- **Front of House Committee** – help with gathering food donations from families, purchasing water bottles for each show, making the front of house look lovely and welcoming, collecting and tracking money, and more. Are you good with math and like chatting with audiences – we need you!

Some General Rules & Guidelines

- This production is open to lovers of dance and performance from all backgrounds. All are welcome and all are encouraged to participate.
- Everyone in our cast and crew as well as family members will support one another without bias or discrimination.
- Professional, respectful, and safe behavior is always required and expected. It is important that we all listen to and respect the crew or any other staff or volunteers. This includes student stage managers. Follow all directions and rules given.
- Kindness to other cast members or production staff is an expectation and requirement. Cruelty of any kind (including gossip) will not be tolerated. This applies to all electronic communication as well.
- Please address all immediate concerns regarding this production to the Producer. However, also please be aware that all members of the EDE Board are available to you at any time to share concerns you may have with any aspect of this production specifically or EDE as an organization in general.

Make-up/Hair

FIRST AND FOREMOST, DO NOT CUT, COLOR, OR CHANGE YOUR HAIR IN ANY WAY AFTER CASTING WITHOUT A CONVERSATION WITH the Artistic Director and Hair & Make up Director!

Each cast member will be required to provide their own makeup (please do not share makeup...especially eye makeup...yuck) and hair ties/bobby pins/bun covers. Regular street makeup does not work on stage. We will send out product recommendations prior to the show.

If this is a hardship for you or your family, please talk to Jill. There is assistance available if money is a concern.

Additionally, all cast members will be asked to provide personal items such as cold cream, cotton balls, and make-up sponges. This list will be distributed later.

Costumes

Please be aware that dressing and costume needs for a stage production are completely different than dressing and clothing needs for every day. YOU ARE PORTRAYING SOMEONE ELSE. Many factors affect costuming choices. The director and costumer work together to make sure you will look your best on stage as your character dictates. You may be asked to wear something that you do not agree with or personally like. An actor's responsibility is to communicate if a costume does not fit or is restricting or painful in any way.

Your acceptance of a role in this production indicates that you understand this and are willing to accept the costumer's decisions. Together we will make sure you look your best on stage. Also, please respect that we will require that we always costume you with at least one other person in the room. This is to prevent any uncomfortable situations. Your privacy will be always taken into consideration.

Everyone is expected to take proper care of the costumes assigned to them to protect the items from being damaged. This includes properly hanging up all items after each rehearsal and performance.

More information about costume etiquette is below.

Props and Set Pieces

- Props are to only be touched by the cast member who uses them on stage and the Prop Crew member assigned to organizing them.
- The greatest care must be taken with all props, costumes, and set pieces as many are borrowed from generous community members.

Things We Forgot to Mention

There are invariably things that we have missed in this expectations sheet but we have tried to be as detailed as possible. Overall, we are hopeful that everyone will:

- Join us wholeheartedly with the intense level of commitment we expect to make this the best show possible.
- Remember that flexibility is mandatory – if these last few years have taught us anything, it is that anything is possible and we must all give grace and be ready to pivot.
- HAVE FUN! Performance is a family and we are happy you are joining our EDE family!

COSTUME ETIQUETTE

As a performer, your costume is very important. It tells the audience the story of your character, adds to the mood of the production and contributes to the overall look of the show.

Your Costume Team's (CT) job is to make sure you are comfortable and the costume does its job. It is important to us that we communicate and our expectations are clear.

As such, there are some important rules that you must respect when it comes to your costume.

- Inform a member of your CT as soon as possible if you do anything in the show that might require costume adjustments including, but not limited to, physical feats such as high kicks, tumbling, stage combat or a *quick-change* (from costume to costume or even for changing to a different character). The Costume Designer has read the script and anticipated these concerns, but it's always good to remind the CT because they'll be working with a large number of costumes.
- Inform your CT in advance if you cannot wear certain fibers/fabrics for whatever reason. Some people cannot wear wool because they are allergic to it.
- Once your costume is assigned and approved by the Costume Designer and Director, it's in the show. The Artistic Director and Costume Designer have a specific vision for the show, and your costume is one aspect of it. You must wear the costume the way the Costume Designer instructs. You can certainly talk to the Costume Designer, but please know there is an overall "Costume Plot" and your outfit is part of the plan.
- Wear appropriate undergarments. Ladies must have flesh-colored underwear and bras. In addition, a Spanx brand (or similar approved style) neutral stretch Camisole as well as dance shorts, dance tights, or briefs may be required. The style of undergarments may vary according to actor and/or costume and will be discussed on an individual basis.
- *In addition: please* wear appropriate deodorant and shower before coming to dress rehearsals and the shows before putting on your costume. Do not wear perfume or cologne because the chemicals can damage or stain the fabric.
- No self-tanning lotions or obvious tan lines. If you choose to use a professionally applied spray tan, it must be done several days before the first dress rehearsal. Tanning lotion rubs off onto clothing and costumes are not washed before or in between rehearsals and productions.
- Appropriate footwear and socks or tights are a must and will be discussed on an individual basis with all cast members.
- All correct undergarments such as tights/socks and approved shoes must be worn by the first dress rehearsal unless other arrangements have been made with the Costume Designer.
- Except for approved snacks, *NO* eating in costume! You don't want to risk spilling anything or staining your costume. You will need to eat your lunch/dinner *before* you get into costume. Also, foods not on the approved list below *must* be eaten in a designated area away from all costumes and other cast members in costume. If you are in costume, you may NOT hang out at the tables where other people are eating foods not on the approved list. No food (even approved snacks) may be consumed in the Costume Room or the Green (hair and make-up) room
- You may eat from the following *suggested* list (or ask a member of the CT about a different food): clean, crisp veggies and fruits (carrots, celery, cauliflower, apples, etc., *no oranges, any type of berry or other juicy items*), simple crackers (Saltines, no cheesy

powdered or BBQ, no chips of any kind), pretzels, cheese and breads (no soft cheeses, butter, oils or any dipping sauces). Also, clear liquids only. Even some clear liquids leave a stain, so please be cautious about what you bring in for consumption.

- If something happens to your costume, inform a Costume Team member immediately. Many things can and do happen during a production, zippers break, hems fall, buttons come off, etc. Please tell your CT right away so they are able to fix it. Also, keep your costume pieces together and always make sure everything is accounted for before you leave each day. Each cast member will have a garment bag for storing personal items. Costumes will also provide a storage bin for collecting and keeping shoes used for the production. Please make sure you label your shoes.

Signature Page, Acknowledgements & Committee/Volunteer Choice

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Cast & Crew expectations for Polar Express, that I have executed this agreement voluntarily, and that my signature indicates my clear commitment to the success of the show.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone Number: _____

Dancers Name(s): _____

Dancers Age(s): _____

For families of younger dancers (under 12), you are required to Chaperone rehearsals AND shows. The Chaperone Lead will schedule everyone so that all families can still watch their kiddos on stage for at least 2 shows. Please also select an additional committee.

Committee Selection(s):

- ☐ **Costume Committee**
- ☐ **Props Committee**
- ☐ **Promotions & Sponsorship Committee**
- ☐ **Hair & Makeup Committee**
- ☐ **Quick Change & Chaperone Committee**
- ☐ **Front of House Committee**

Do you have special skills/talents you are willing to share?

- ☐ Photographer – help us with dancer shots during rehearsals, videos for social media, etc
- ☐ Program designer – help us create the program to handout during the show
- ☐ I own a business and want to sponsor the show
- ☐ I want to personally sponsor the show
- ☐ Other? _____