

2023-'24

# Dream Allstars

2023-'24 INFORMATION PACKET

ANDREA NEEDLE

7516 LINDBERGH DRIVE  
GAITHERSBURG, MD 20879

## **Welcome families!**

Thank you for your interest in our program. We are looking forward to an exciting 2023-'24 season, and we would love for you to be a part of it! Below you will find some important dates and information to facilitate a seamless transition into the new season.

## **About Our Program**

Dream Allstars was formed by Andrea Needle, a mother of two (and later three) young cheerleaders who wanted an experience for her children that would teach them sportsmanship, teamwork, confidence and values. In forming this organization, Andrea developed the following Mission Statement:

“Dream Allstars is an organization predicated on the belief that the greatest value of sports lies within its ability to enhance the character, self-esteem, and physical well-being of its participants. While advocating the honorable pursuit of victory, Dream Allstars is dedicated to the creation of a sports environment that promotes and protects each of its athletes. Dream Allstars is unwavering in its commitment to excellence and has designed a program intended to produce athletes of unparalleled skills, and young men and women with unequalled character and spirit.”

20 years later, we stand by that Mission Statement. We want to excel, but we also want to create a safe space for our athletes and foster a family environment where each athlete will develop not only elite cheerleading/tumbling skills, but, more importantly, excellent character.

## **Our Ideal Family**

Our ideal family is comprised of people who:

- love cheer and dance;
- want to be a part of a team where the sum of the parts is greater than the individual;
- want to be part of an even larger family;
- want to win but recognize that the experience is as much the journey as the result.

## Offseason Dates

### [Bring-A-Friend Week: May 8-11](#)

This is an opportunity to come to a practice or two and work with our staff, meet some potential teammates and friends, and see what it's like to *LIVE THE DREAM!*

No friend? No problem. Head over to our website and fill out our "Open Practice Week" Form so we can let you know what day to join us.

### [Free Tumbling Clinic: Friday, May 12](#)

- Session 1 (levels 1+2): 5:30 – 7:00
- Session 2 (levels 3+): 7:00 – 8:30

Come tumble with our top-notch tumbling staff for FREE! Sign-ups are first come, first served and are available on our website under our 23-'24 Season tab.

### [In-House Evaluations: May 15-20](#)

Current athletes will attend their normal practice day and times, with half their practice reserved for evaluations. Interested athletes may request to come in during our in-house evaluations if unable to attend our tryouts.

### [Tryouts: May 20-21](#)

- Saturday, May 20: 10:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
- Sunday, May 21: 11:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Our tryout process is streamlined to make the experience quick, easy, and low-stress. Athletes will be expected to perform their highest standing tumbling pass, running tumbling pass, jumps, and a motion sequence. Dancers will be asked to show their most difficult turns, leaps, and tricks. Athletes with no prior experience will be led through the tryout process by a coach. Leveled working group placements will follow the grid below.

<u><a href="#">Intro to Cheer</a></u>	<u><a href="#">Level 1</a></u>	<u><a href="#">Level 2</a></u>	<u><a href="#">Level 3</a></u>	<u><a href="#">Level 4</a></u>
All tiny-aged athletes (4-7) All 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> year mini-aged athletes (7-9)	No specific skills required	RO BHS Standing BHS	RO BHS Tuck Standing 3 BHS Toe Touch BHS	RO BHS Layout Standing 2 BHS to Tuck Standing Tuck
Athletes who perform RO BHS Full, 2 BHS to Full, and Toe Touch Tuck cheer tuition free!				

### Parent Meetings: May 24-25

- Wednesday, May 24: 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, May 25: 7:00 p.m.

We will cover the gym policies, financial obligations, and other important program information. **At least one parent per family, both new and returning, must attend a parent meeting prior to their athlete's participation in the program.**

### **Summer Plans**

#### Leveled Working Groups: May 30-July 9

- Practice 2x/week – once on a weekday and once on Sunday
  - Weekday practices will include 1.5 hours of tumbling training and 1.5 hours of cheerleading training.
  - Sunday practices will consist of cheerleading training for the entire 3 hours.
- Athletes designated as “flyer in training” will be required to attend a 1 hour stretch class on Fridays.
- Level 4+ working group will have a mandatory 1 hour conditioning class on Fridays.
- Athletes can elect to crossover to a 2<sup>nd</sup> leveled working group, but note they are only eligible to cross down a level.

During the first 5 weeks of the ‘23-‘24 season, we will build the foundation that will last for the duration of the season. The focus is to build athletes’ foundations *up* to their corresponding level. Coaches will all follow the same curriculum, starting with level 1 skills. As athletes demonstrate mastery of each skill, coaches will begin introducing skills of increasing difficulty. Tumbling coaches will work on perfecting athletes’ current skills and proceed to teach combos appropriate for the level of their working group.

The goal of this 5-week period is not to level every athlete up, but to improve and acquire skills at their current level. If an athlete stops performing skills demonstrated at tryouts, he/she can be moved down a level. Similarly, if an athlete acquires a new set of skills consistent with a higher leveled working group, he/she may have the option to join that other group.

### Team Placements: July 5

Team placements will be sent out via email. We will use the scoresheet and skill expectations set forth by USASF to determine what divisions and levels we will have. All placements will be made with the team's success in mind *first and foremost*. Factors that will play into the decision will include the athlete's:

- Age
- Tumbling skill level
- Stunting position and experience

Once our divisions and levels are set, we will begin to look at team needs to finish filling out the roster. At this point, we will place individuals who wish to crossover on to a secondary team. Additionally, athletes with a specific skillset may be contacted if they can fulfill a role on a second team.

### Team Practices: July 10-August 22

- Practice 1x/week – only weekday practices (new schedule)
- Flyers will continue to attend Friday stretch class
- Teams level 4 or above will continue to attend Friday conditioning

Focus of team practices for the remainder of July will be to cover level-appropriate skills. This way, all athletes will receive the same training on the fundamental skills prior to attempting advanced and elite level skills.

In August, coaches will look to introduce more advanced skills to identify potential stunt sequences, as well as to finalize stunt groups for our routines. Tumbling coaches will be consulted on potential sequences and passes for all athletes. Our goal is to provide our choreographers with direction so our teams are able to begin run-throughs as soon as possible and hone in on technique.

### Choreography: August 23-28

- Teams' days and times will be sent as soon as they are finalized.

We will be bringing back two highly acclaimed choreographers with whom we have worked before for several of our teams. Both bring their own style and a great deal of knowledge of the scoresheet that set our teams up for success. We can't wait to work with them again!

Choreography is generally a two-day process that can last approximately 8-10 hours. Breaks will be provided assuming the athletes move through the content quickly enough. Choreographers tend to move quickly and can be intense, so make sure your athlete is well-rested and ready to work!

Some of our younger, lower-level teams will receive in-house choreography. In-house choreography, done by members of our staff, is used for teams that are better served by a choreography process that does not demand mastery of a routine in just a handful of hours over two days. In-house choreography takes place over a greater number of days for fewer hours at once so that athletes have increased time to work on a smaller amount of material to aid memory and mastery.

## **Policies and Expectations**

### [Attendance Policy](#)

Given the collaborative nature of cheerleading, if even one athlete is missing, the entire team is compromised—stunts can't go up, formations are off, and the productivity of practice is severely compromised. Therefore, in fairness to the entire team, we will allow and excuse absences only under the following circumstances:

1. **A required school activity that results in a grade** (outdoor ed, for example). This does not include a heavy homework load, or studying for an exam – we expect all athletes to manage their time as necessary to fulfill their obligations to both schoolwork and cheerleading on a daily basis. Nor does it include, for example, the talent show, a play, a dance, or any other school activity that is optional.
2. **Serious illness that is highly contagious and virulent, and/or vomiting.** Headaches, stomach aches, colds, etc., are NOT considered a serious illness and are not reasons for absences. Similarly, if your child is injured, he/she must still attend practice if only to watch.
3. **A religious observance involving the athlete or her/his immediate family.** This does not extend to observances for extended family or friends.

In fairness to the team, compliance with this policy is required. If your child has unexcused absences, she/he may not be allowed to compete with her/his team at the next competition or may be dismissed from the program.

While we recognize that your child cheers or dances for fun, please remember that we are a competitive, not a recreational, program. If you or your child cannot make the requisite time commitment or comply with our attendance policy, you should reconsider your participation in our program.

### Extra Practice Policy

While our goal is always to ensure each team utilizes practices to their fullest potential, there are occasionally times when a team will need to be brought in for extra practice prior to competition. These additional practices will always be scheduled with as much advance notice as possible. Just like regularly scheduled practices, these extra practices are mandatory.

### Late Policy

Athletes must arrive at practice on time. While there is no gym-wide policy regarding handling tardiness, each coach will implement a consequence for athletes who arrive late. In previous years, coaches have implemented consequences such as tumbling skills or exercises per minute. Coaches will send out an email prior to the first practice covering their individual policies.

### Social Media Policy

All parents and athletes reflect Dream and, as such, must represent the gym in a manner consistent with our principles. To maintain our desired reputation, all parents and athletes must refrain from the following:

- Speaking on behalf of Dream
- Implying organization endorsement of personal views
- Disclosing organization information
- Engaging in negative conversations about athletes (Dreamers or outside athletes) and parents
- Acting in a way that undermines the reputation or integrity of Dream, or brings discredit upon the organization.

### Dream Logo, Image, and Likeness

Members are prohibited from commercializing or reproducing Dream's logo without prior approval of the owner.

### Competition Expectations

Competition days are always exciting, but they are also demanding and come with a strict set of expectations that are implemented to help the day run as seamlessly as possible. We want our athletes to have the best possible competitive experiences and that begins with families complying with the protocols we have put in place that minimize competition-day stress and help set the teams up for maximum success.

Once a competition company has sent out its final schedules, we will send an email that includes each team's arrival time, performance time, and awards time. Our expectation is that all parents read their email *thoroughly* with the following points in mind:

- Arrival – arrival times are mandatory! Athletes are to be in the arena, at our designated meet spot, with a coach by arrival time. Please take into account potential traffic, parking difficulties, and trouble navigating the arena when planning your competition day schedule.
- Appearance – this year we will provide all athletes with the necessary eyeshadow and lipstick. Athletes will be able to use the blush, eyeliner, and mascara of their choice. We will do a tutorial and circulate pictures of our expected look. Please practice prior to competition day to ensure uniformity.
- Behavior – athletes and parents are representatives of our program, particularly when in uniform or Dream gear, and must behave in an appropriate manner.
- Awards – awards are mandatory. Athletes must be competition ready—including lipstick and shoes—when we attend award ceremonies.

Competition days are long and draining, but please remember staff members routinely show up earlier and stay later as they have numerous teams and responsibilities. We will never ask you to do something we are not already doing!

## **Finances**

### Program Cost

Monthly fees are determined by each team's number of hours in the gym and number of competitions.

### Associated Costs

In addition to the cost of our program, there are associated costs with allstar cheerleading. Athletes will be responsible for their USASF Fee, crossover fee (if applicable), uniform, bow, shoes, makeup, and travel expenses\*\*.

\*\*Certain competition companies have implemented a “stay-to-play” policy, which requires all athletes and coaches to reserve rooms through a travel agency of the company's choice. When required to do so, we will make best efforts to reserve blocks at moderately-priced hotels.



## Fundraising

We know that cheerleading can be an expensive sport! In an effort to help offset costs and make the program more accessible to a greater number of people, we offer fundraising opportunities throughout the year (additional fundraisers may be added). Proceeds from your fundraising efforts go directly to your personal account and may be used for the program cost of your choice.

- Double Good Popcorn – 50% profit
- Boons Bags – 40% profit
- Charleston Gift Wrapping – 40% profit

## Discounts

We also offer the following discounts with your registration:

- Refer A Friend: Tell a friend about Dream and receive a \$100 credit when they join our full-year program. If you are not currently a member of our program but are joining with a friend, you may split the \$100 credit.
- Sibling Discount: If you have two or more athletes in our program, you receive 50% off the 2<sup>nd</sup> (and every successive) athlete's tuition.
- Level 6 Discount: Have an athlete with a two-to-full, running full, and jump to back? He/she will cheer TUITION FREE for the first two months, and then receive 50% off tuition for the remainder of the season.
- Pay in Full Discount: Pay your entire program's cost upfront and receive 10% off tuition (due by 1<sup>st</sup> practice).

## **Schedules**

### Gym Closures

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Events</b>
July 1-4	July 4 <sup>th</sup>
September 2-4	Labor Day
November 23-25	Thanksgiving
December 24-January 1**	Winter Break**
January 15	MLK Day
March 25-April 1	Spring Break

\*\*Coaches reserve the right to schedule practices over Winter Break except for 12/24-25 and 12/31-1/1\*\*

## Important Dates

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Events</b>
May 8-11	Bring-A-Friend Week
May 12	Free Tumbling Clinic
May 15-19	In-House Evaluations
May 20-21	Tryouts
May 24-25	Parent Meetings
May 30	First Leveled Working Group Practice
June 19-22	School's Out Intensive
June 26-28	Tinies Clinic – Coach Carly and Coach Kim
July 10	Team Practices Begin
July 10-12	Jump and Stretch Clinic – Coach Jourdan
July 12-14	Dance Clinic – Coach Anna
July 17-19	Tumbling Clinic – Coach Ryan
July 29-30	Coed Stunt Clinic – Coach Braedan, Coach Ryan, and Guests!
August 21-26	Choreography
September 10	Sunday Practices Resume

**\*\*Additional clinics will be added at coaches' discretion\*\***

### **Contact Information**

Andrea Needle, Owner

[Andrea@dreamallstars.com](mailto:Andrea@dreamallstars.com) | (240) 464 4109

**Thank you for considering our program!**