

Prospective parents and dancers,

We are very pleased that your dancer is considering auditioning for the 2025 - 26 Sweet Sixteen Dance Team. This experience will be full of opportunities to make new friends, develop dance ability, and expand each dancer's knowledge and understanding of what it means to be a truly committed, responsible, and positive dance team member.

The Sweet Sixteen Dance Team must be considered the dancer's extra curricular priority during their chosen performance season. With that said, many of our team members are involved in numerous enriching activities and clubs in addition to the dance team including the school play and musical, choir, band, orchestra, student council, athletics in the off season, outside dance classes, and many more. We believe involvement in these activities is critical to each dancer's overall development, so long as it doesn't create a burden on their studies.

The Sweet Sixteen are dedicated to performing at the highest level each time we take the field or the floor, bringing entertaining, challenging routines for our crowds to enjoy. The long tradition of excellence, set by teams that have come before us, motivates us to 'practice hard, dance harder' throughout our season, working as one TEAM. Some of our top priorities include supporting our marching band, athletic teams, cheerleaders, and exhibiting what it means to be a 'Sweet Sixteen' on and off the field. We are all part of the Ashland Arrows family together.

Being a Sweet Sixteen is so much more than performing dances at school and community functions. In addition to halftime performances, parades, and competitions, the team may participate in community service and/or social events, and attend other teams games or competitions to support our school. We also find time to bond as a team through fun activities several times during the year.

Being a part of the Sweet Sixteen Dance Team is not only a commitment on behalf of the dancer, but on behalf of the dancer's family as well. Although our parents may not be displaying their talents on stage, their time and skills are vital to the success of the team. Before each dancer auditions, you should also be aware of our values. This is not a "win at all costs" team. All members will strive for their personal best but with the understanding that we all have different abilities. We value dancers that are willing and eager to learn, passionate about their craft, and dedicated to being a positive, involved, and committed team member. ***Regardless of your chosen performance season, Sweeties is a year-long commitment, so please read the handbook carefully before deciding if the Sweet Sixteen Dance Team is for you and your dancer.***

We invite you to get to know a bit more about our program by exploring the information provided in this packet as well as on the band website, the Sweet 16 Facebook page, or Sweet Sixteen Instagram. If you have any questions at all about our program, please don't hesitate to let us know. And, if you're ever at a game or event, please introduce yourself. We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Melissa K Merkel

Melissa Merkel, Director
ashlandsweet16@gmail.com

Zoe Jenkins

Zoe Jenkins, Assistant Director/Choreographer