

# ACADEMY OF DANCE ARTS PERFORMING COMPANY PROGRAM

## A Guide for Students and Parents About This Handbook

FOR MORE THAN TWO DECADES our school has been a leader in dance education. We believe that our success comes as a result of providing solid training and quality service, along with an underlying belief in the strength of our organization. We have created this handbook to offer our dancers and their parents a clear understanding of their commitments and responsibility to the Performing Company Program and the school.

➤ Dates and/or expenses listed in this handbook are subject to change. Please check the Performing Company bulletin board each week for updates.

### For Our Dancers

Congratulations! You have been accepted into the Performing Company Program. The first step to becoming a successful dancer is making a solid commitment to your classes, rehearsals, and performances. Strong technique is a key ingredient and class is where you develop that technique. Come to each class prepared to learn and without personal distractions. Class time is your chance to focus on yourself, so try to leave your concerns or worries at the studio door. True progress is made when you look at each class, rehearsal, or performance as an opportunity to become better at what you love to do. Dance full out, stretch a little further, become more aware of your technique, and make the most of every class.

Respect for the teachers and choreographers you work with is essential. Listen to each correction given, whether it's directed to you or another dancer. A correction is an honor; it shows you how much a teacher cares about your progress as a dancer. Always say thank you when a teacher or choreographer offers you constructive criticism. Nothing can stop those students who apply themselves in every class and appreciate their teachers' knowledge and experience.

All rehearsals are dedicated to choreography or "cleaning" the choreography. A dancer who misses a rehearsal holds back the progress of the entire group. Repeating the choreography from a previous session for those who were absent takes up valuable rehearsal time, which could result in a performance that is not up to par. When we clean choreography, we may also change it. Dancers who miss a cleaning session may not be properly prepared for the upcoming performance and could end up letting themselves, their team, or the school down.

Performances and competitions are your opportunity to show the world the results of your dedication and hard work. To make the most of this opportunity:

- Arrive at performances at least one hour prior to the scheduled time, unless otherwise advised by your teachers.
- Be sure you are properly warmed up.
- Present yourself in a professional manner, with costumes pressed, shoes cleaned, and all accessories accounted for.
- Go out there and show the audience how much you love to dance!

- True progress is made when you look at each class, rehearsal, or performance as an opportunity to become better at what you love to do.

## For the Parents: *“We’re in this together”*

We believe that children’s success depends on the support of their parents or guardians. Because your commitment to the process makes an enormous difference, we encourage you to be a part of your child’s dance education.

Our program relies on a positive atmosphere for our faculty, dancers, and their parents; it promotes a positive learning experience for all involved. Cooperation between all parents is expected. Showing respect for the other parents, along with the students and faculty, makes an important impression on the children. You are a role model for your child in how to interact with others in a professional setting.

Your child’s presence at all classes, rehearsals, and performances is imperative. The spirit of teamwork and the lesson of dedication are a big part of our school’s educational process.

Parents and teachers may look at a child’s learning from different perspectives. However, they share a common goal: to assure that every child receives the best possible training, both physically and mentally. Mutual respect between our faculty and our dancers’ parents provides the children with the ultimate care and education.

### **Understanding Dance Education**

As a parent, the financial support of your student is important, but of equal—perhaps even greater—value is your emotional support. Encourage your child to be the best that he or she can be without regard to what others may achieve. Dance is an individual art form; each child needs to achieve at a pace that’s comfortable for him or her. No two students will progress at the same rate, even if they experience the exact same training. It’s important to encourage the children to focus on themselves, give their all, and be satisfied with their own accomplishments.

Dance education encompasses far more than technique or the steps your children will learn. We believe the discipline of dance training gives young people a better understanding of commitment by offering them the chance to learn, experience the spirit of teamwork, and understand what hard work can accomplish. Our goal is to educate the minds, bodies, and souls of our students, to teach them the skills needed for a successful life, whether or not they stay involved in dance.

- The financial support of your student is important, but of equal—perhaps even greater—value is your emotional support.

### **Class or Choreography Placement**

The studio faculty meets regularly to discuss the students' progress and/or placement. It is our policy to offer appropriate opportunities to every child.

Placement decisions are derived from many years of teaching experience. Often a child is placed in a particular group or class where he or she will feel confident, in order to promote the development of self-esteem. Some dancers who are placed in a higher level become discouraged, only to lose their passion for dance. Others respond to the challenge of being in a class with dancers who are more proficient by pushing themselves to work harder. Placement is highly individual and the factors that go into the decision are complex. Please see Miss Emily, the artistic director if you have questions or concerns about your child's placement.

### **Dos and Don'ts**

Some parents may compare their child's progress or class or choreography placement to that of others in the program. Watch for this behavior in your children as well, and encourage them to focus on their own accomplishments. Looking to others for inspiration is a good thing; however, a negative focus or comparison distracts from the energy that could be focused on becoming a stronger dancer. In addition, speaking negatively about your child's teachers, fellow dancers, or other parents in front of your child—or other students—could result in problems far beyond your original concerns. Often children will react to their parents in a way that imitates the parent's behavior with other adults or authority figures.

Children learn important lessons from their teachers and parents, acquiring important behavior patterns through their example. Our school's faculty takes that responsibility seriously. It's our philosophy to encourage our students to feel, think, and act respectfully to their peers, the adults in their lives, and themselves.

If you have questions or concerns about your child's dance education, don't panic—and please don't talk only with other parents when questions arise. Make an appointment to speak directly to your child's teachers or Miss Emily. Please conduct all communication through the school office rather than approaching your child's teacher or the director between or during classes or calling them at home.

If you do request a conference, please listen carefully to what your child's teachers have to say. They spend a significant amount of time with your child and can offer expertise in the field of dance education.

- Class placement of students is highly individual and the factors that go into the decision are complex.

## For Dancers and Parents

### Image

The children and parents involved in the Performing Company Program participate in many outside activities, each of which becomes a reflection of the school's philosophy.

Please keep the following in mind:

- We never speak negatively about teachers, dancers, or parents from other schools.
- We never create conflict with the directors or judges of events in which we participate.
- We never recruit dancers from other schools.
- Miss Emily handles all communication with the directors of our outside activities.

No parent or dancer may call or question the directors of any event. If you have a concern, please contact the director of our school.

### **TIPS: DRESS CODE REQUIREMENTS**

**GIRLS:** Solid black leotard with pink tights for ballet and light suntan tights for tap and jazz.

**BOYS:** Sweatpants and a plain, white T-shirt. Boys ages 13 and over may be required to wear tights for ballet class.

All team participants must have the following items:

- ✓ Neoprene tan jazz boot
- ✓ Tan "tap on" Tap or Black split sole tap oxford (depending on level)
- ✓ Pink ballet shoes (split sole or full sole depending on level)
- ✓ Black ballet shoes (boys)
- ✓ Troupe Jacket
- ✓ Dance bag
- ✓ Garment bag

Additional shoe styles may be required; please check the performing company bulletin board. Each dancer should have two pairs of each kind of shoe, one for class and the other for performances.

- **Intensive dancers are required to wear appropriate shoes for all classes and rehearsals. Make sure shoes are clean and polished for each performance.**

### **Classes**

All dancers are expected to attend their regularly scheduled classes in addition to all rehearsals and performances. A total of five class days per season may be missed. Any team member with poor attendance will be dismissed from the program.

Dancers will receive a class schedule in September. The program includes a mandatory ballet class. Optional tap, jazz, pom, hip hop and lyrical. There may be additional classes, including master classes, in which it is expected that all team members will participate. There may be an additional charge for some master classes.

All dancers must show respect for their teachers at all times. Inappropriate behavior could result in dismissal from the program.

## **Rehearsal and Other Information**

Rehearsals are an important part of the commitment to the Performing Company Program. All dancers are expected to work hard and arrive early enough to give themselves time to warm up.

Additional rehearsals may be scheduled at the discretion of the teacher/choreographer. All dancers are required to participate.

Rehearsals for the national competition will take place **the last week of classes**. All dancers must attend.

No company dancer may miss more than three rehearsals for bi-weekly routines and no more than five rehearsals for routines that practice weekly during the season. A season starts in September and ends after the national competition in June. There will be no exceptions to this rule. Dancers who need to be excused are required to notify the school 24 hours prior to the scheduled rehearsal. Any dancer excused from a rehearsal is responsible for learning any missed choreography prior to arriving for the next rehearsal. All company dancers must attend rehearsals in proper dance attire and appropriate shoes. Female team members are required to wear their hair pulled back for all rehearsals. Ballet rehearsals require a black leotard and pink tights for the girls and black pants and a white T-shirt for the boys.

➤ **It is expected that all dancers will be on their best behavior during rehearsals and work as team players at all times.**

## **Tuition and Expense Policy**

Part of the commitment to the Performing Company Program is being up-to-date with all accounts related to participation.

In an effort to offer all young people the opportunity to experience the Performing Company Program, we offer a scholarship to all dancers who pass the audition process.

➤ **Entry fees for competitions or conventions are due 30 days prior to each event. Please refer to the competition schedules included in this handbook.**

➤ **All costumes must be paid for in full prior to the first performance of the season.**

## **The Focus Is Not Simply on Competition**

Since it is our goal to instill a passion for performing rather than merely the desire to win awards, Performing Company dancers have performance opportunities other than competitions. There are lecture-demonstrations at local schools and other similar performance opportunities. We believe the lessons learned through concert performances are just as valuable as the competition experience.

Our solid reputation for quality reflects our attitude toward competition and our goal to develop in each student a genuine respect for dance as an art form. We consider participation in competitions not simply part of our students' training as dancers; it's also an important part of how we influence them as people. With the right focus, the experience gained in competition can be an excellent source of self-confidence. If the dancers feel good about a performance and understand that they become better each time they go

onstage, they are truly growing through the competition experience. Hitting that stage and doing the best they can is what it's all about; whether they win—or which award they win—is secondary.

Through participation in competitions, we hope to instill in our students an appreciation for other dancers and schools. We are not out to beat anyone; instead, we hope to motivate both students and faculty by exposing them to the highest caliber of talent available. Only then can we produce the best dancers and teachers possible. For us, competition is an education!

➤ **We believe the lessons learned through concert performances are just as valuable as the competition experience.**

## ABOUT COMPETITIONS

### Attendance

When a competition runs over the entire weekend, we expect our dancers to attend the full event whether or not they are competing on a particular day. We work as a team, always available to support each other.

### Independent Entries

No dancer may compete in any competition as an independent entry without the permission of the school director.

### Cash Scholarships

Soloists will receive a school credit for the amount of any cash scholarship awarded. It will be applied to lessons, costumes, entry fees, or other expenses related to dance training.

Cash scholarships awarded to dancers who perform duos, trios, or ensemble pieces will be deposited in the Performing Company Dancer treasury to be utilized for master classes, guest choreographers, and other activities.

### Activity Agenda (subject to change)

DATE	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	TIME
August 14-15	Hot Tot Intensive	ADA	TBA
August 18-22	Company Intensive	ADA	5:00-9:00
September 21	First Parent Meeting	ADA	6:00
December 6	Holiday Cabaret	TBA	3:00
March 13-15	Applause Talent	Grand Rapids	Entire weekend
April 18	New Member Information Meeting	ADA	3:00pm
March 27-29	Kids Artistic Review	Grand Rapids	Entire weekend
May 2-4	Dancexplosion	Kalamazoo	Entire weekend
May 16	Auditions	ADA	2:00-
June 12	Dress Rehearsal	Vicksburg High School	4pm arrival 5pm start
June 13	Recital	Vicksburg High	2 PM arrival

		School	3 PM start
June 8-11	National Rehearsals	ADA	Entire Week last wk classes
TBA	In-house Convention	ADA	TBA
June 22	Summer Classes Begin(company members week off)	ADA	See Schedule
June 15-20	National Finals	Myrtle Beach SC	Entire week
August 13-14	Hot Tot Intensive	ADA	TBA
August 17-21	Company Intensive	ADA	5:00-9:00 Entire Week

- Please attend all meetings and read all newsletters and postings to keep updated about any additional commitments.

### Competition Entry Fees

Comp.	Solo	D/T	S. Group	L. Group	Class	Prod.
Applause	\$72	\$82	\$28	\$30	-	-
KAR	\$85	\$102	\$32	\$32	-	-
DXP	\$80	\$90	\$30	\$35	-	-
KAR Nationals	\$85	\$95	\$40	\$40	-	-

- Entry fees are due in the school office 5 weeks prior to each event. (All competitions are open to the public at no charge.)

### Additional Fees

Due Dates	Fees	Detail
8/14-8/22	\$35.00/Routine	Intensive fees
8/14 50% of Security Deposit	\$75.00/Routine max \$150.00	This is returned 30 days after last performance.
8/14 Admin Fee	\$10.00 per dancer	
9/15 Balance of Security Deposit	\$75.00/Routine max \$150.00	
9/30 Choreography Fees	\$20.00/Routine	
12/6 Holiday Cabaret	TBA	Will depend on venue
6/13 School Recital	\$6.00 adults & children	No admission without a ticket
In-house Convention	\$75.00 student	
5/16 Audition Fee	\$35.00 student	

## **Costumes**

Costume payments are the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian. Team members compete in lyrical, tap, pom, hip hop, and jazz. The average cost of a costume is \$75 to \$100. A deposit of \$50 per costume is due October 15. The balance due for costumes must be paid in full by November 15th. **THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY.**

If a company dancer is dismissed or leaves the program, an understudy will replace him or her. The student leaving the team is expected to turn in all costumes to the school office; they will be returned to the student after the last performance of the season.

### **TIPS: COSTUME COMMON SENSE**

- ✓ Always have a second pair of tights available.
- ✓ Place costumes in a garment bag for travel.
- ✓ Carry hats in a hatbox or container to prevent them from damage.
- ✓ Hang and press costumes before each performance.
- ✓ Place your name in all costumes and shoes.

## **Summer Program**

The Summer Program is a mandatory activity for all Intensive dancers. Master and guest teachers, in addition to the school's faculty, will offer a 7 week program. Classes will take place at the school.

➤ **All Summer Program tuition is due on June 15th.**

## **Fund-Raising**

The performing company offers several optional fund-raisers for Intensive dancers to defray their expenses. Dancers receive the proceeds from their own fund-raising. The treasurer will keep an accounting of all funds raised.

## **A Final Note**

WELCOME TO THE PERFORMING COMPANY PROGRAM! We look forward to an exciting, rewarding season!