



The Student & Parent Handbook

A Note from The Owner:

Welcome to Ballet in the Country, LLC that comprises two schools: The Medina Ballet located in Hondo, Texas and The Wilson Ballet located in Floresville, TX. At our schools, we take dreams and turn them into a reality. Through a professional, structured and formal environment we educate the young mind using dance to enhance students mentally, physically and emotionally to mature through the fine arts and build a confident and healthy lifestyle. As the county's premier ballet school, we provide a multitude of opportunities in our county and neighboring counties that showcase the fine arts and exhibit our student's talents in a production school setting.

Introduction:

This handbook serves as a how-to guide to the many aspects of our school so that you may be informed and use this as a reference for you and your students as they grow. This handbook does not serve as a replacement for a one-on-one conversation with your child's school director but will help guide you through the policies, and rules to keep your child safe and you, knowledgeable. This handbook is the property of the school and at any time may not be duplicated, copied or given to anyone not a student or parent of a student currently enrolled.

Enrollment

Season Schedule

The school year consists of the Fall Semester which begins in August; the Spring Semester which begins in January; Summer sessions begin after the May/June performance and may include special camps class and intensives. At times, we use the public school system as a guideline for holidays and breaks, a scheduled of school closures can be found on our website, and on our social media pages. In the event of an instructor absence/sickness or severe weather, our online class portal will be their source of instruction.

Schedule

At times, instructors will attend professional development seminars, classes and certification courses to better serve the students of the school, and a possible rescheduling of classes is necessary for the continuous development of the teacher and we thank you for your cooperation and understanding. We believe that the majority of class time is for technical training. In doing so, we will have rehearsals for performances periodically so the student is adequately prepared for showtime. We do our absolute best in scheduling those times with as advanced notice as possible.

Attendance Policy

Students are placed in class levels according to their present ability, and their potential to progress, within the current year through attendance at all scheduled classes. Repetition and consistency are essential to training. Absences that have not been made-up affect a student's progress. Students who are injured, or ill but able to observe their class, will be counted as present.

If only 1-2 students attend class, there will be a modification of the class instruction time or rescheduling of the class. If the student will be absent or late, the parent needs to send an email, not text message, is to be sent to the School Director, as early as possible prior to the class starting.

A student is "checked in" to the school only after the student enters the school's lobby (not hallway, for example).

If the student is more than 10 minutes late to class, they will be asked to sit and watch class/take notes. It is vital that the student is safely warmed up prior to class in order to prepare for their instruction.

Once class has begun, if a student must use the restroom and if music and/or the teacher is speaking, we ask the student to wait at the doorway until the instructor invites them back in.

Rehearsals are mandatory. Please note that if the student misses rehearsal for any reason, they may be recast. If a dancer misses a dress rehearsal they will likely will not be allowed to perform.

Tuition

The investment of the best quality education is one of the primary goals of a parent. We understand that your most prized possession is your child, and we take the education of your student very seriously. This is why we offer the best technique and equipment possible for your child, and the best training of the teachers who instruct your student.

The Fall and Spring semester payment schedules are set up in installments with payments due the first day of the month, payment in non-cash form or you may pay in full before the semester starts. All accounts are to have a credit card on file that must remain updated at all times. In the event this is to be updated, the documents to complete are on our website: www.balletinthecountry.com.

Tuition is paid in installments to secure placement of your student in their respective classes. Payment is paid on time with a late fee of \$15 if payment is not received on the first day of the month for the appropriate installment. If check is not received by mail by then, the credit card will be processed. At no time will the studio be accepting tuition unless during designed enrollment periods. Tuition is to be paid for the child to attend class. There are no exchanges or refunds for any class that is missed, regardless of attendance of the student.

Students in Pre-Primary I & Adult Ballet do have the choice at the beginning of enrollment to either decide to go by semester (Fall & Spring OR the whole Season (August - May/June.)

If any class falls under the required number of students to have the class, a combination of the same level will be necessary. If you have any questions feel free to email us. You may either pay by auto debit or mail your payment to be received no later than the first of the month to: 10902 Faxon Park Dr. SA TX 78249.

Rules of Facility

All students, family members and family friends need to follow the rules set by the landlord and the school director for the safety of all involved.

No gum.

No food, snacks, candy.

A water bottle is allowed with a secured top.

Shoes and a cover up must be worn for any individual walking into the building and school.

Students are not leave the school lobby unless directed by the school director, it is not be the responsibility of the instructors to locate their parent or guardian.

Parents/Guardians must physically come into to the school to pick up their child.

Bathroom: please throw away all trash and leave the bathroom clean after use. The key must be returned to the school for others to use. The refrigerator is for sole use of the instructors unless otherwise directed. Only students of the designated class or rehearsal are to enter the dance floor, with their appropriate clothing and shoes.

Social Media Policy

Remain mindful that your behavior on Social Media remains in keeping with the school's rules.

Any comments or posts perceived to be obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful towards faculty, students, or families; may subject the individual to disciplinary or legal action. Should you wish to engage on Social Media while identifying as a ballet parent, volunteer, or faculty; you may only do so with integrity, respect, and adhere to the privacy and confidentiality policy. Any content revealing or referring to sensitive studio information is not allowed to be shared online.

We ask for discretion from parents, students, and instructors from becoming 'friends' or 'followers' on Social Media. We consider all studio members to be family and as such feel the obligation to respect personal boundaries.

School Level Description & Guidelines: Instruction & Promotions

- To ensure the correct instruction and facilitate the appropriate growth for each student, each classroom level is designed as a two-year program as a minimum, some students may need more than two full years in a level and are not guaranteed a promotion
- Promotion of the student: will be based the three fundamentals of our school: emotional, mental, and physical readiness for the next level. Promotion of each student is solely at the discretion of the School Director
- Makeup Classes: if a child is sick and therefore misses class, a doctor's note documenting the illness will be required to qualify the student to attend a makeup class. Makeup classes are to be completed within the same month they have missed
- End-of - The-Year & Mid-Year Promotions: are determined by the School Director and are done at the conclusion of the Fall Semester during the month of December and at our Spring Production, the conclusion of the season in a production setting
- All Primary II students & Company Members are to attend class/camp/intensives during their summer break to maintain their training level
- We value the training that can be given when visiting other schools and studios. We want to keep consistent with their training during the regular school year/season. The child's development is very important to us; a request of outside training in writing to the school.
- Students who are promoted are to attend class/camp/seminar/convention during their summer break to maintain their study to their new level

Recreational Division: (non-performance)

Pre-Primary I & II: 45 minutes; 1 class a week

A fun and inviting class structured around sensory, colors and awareness of self and others. This classroom setting will be, for most their first experience as an independent student in a classroom setting. Class is designed to introduce students to the very basics of dance, i.e. basic movement,; ballet and tumbling exercises. Once they demonstrate skill level proficiency, and maturity, a promotion to the Children's Division would be then discussed with the school director. Select Primary II students may be invited to perform for the Christmas and/or the Spring production.

Adult Ballet: 60 minutes; 1 class a week

Designed for dancers of all different skill levels ages 18 and up. This class is an introduction or reintroduction into the fine art of Classical Ballet. The class will show all ballet skills, with a focus on continued flexibility, strength training, and musicality in a fun and progressive manner. This class is an exciting, challenging and engaging way to exercise for all adults.

Children's Division: "Back to the Basics"

Primary I: 2.5 hours a week; class twice a week: 2/3 ballet; 1/3 PBT. This class is for the true beginner in dance and who have met the requirements of Primary II. The basics of classroom etiquette will be instructed and three ballet positions taught (first, second and fifth). At the end of their second year in Primary I students will have mastered those positions without instruction from memory: group work, balance, stretching, working with others and confidence is the main focus of this class, and a set of vocabulary as well as preparing them for their first and/or

second live performance on stage (i.e. spacing, facial expressions, exiting the stage). In their second year of ballet in Primary I, the student will be able to move across the dance floor with a partner and have the ability to now perform at a degree that is not stationary.

Primary II: 3 hours a week; class twice a week: A combination of ballet, PBT and other genres of dance. The concentration of this class will be ballet. This student has completed Primary I and has demonstrated proficiency in the above said basic positions, is now comprehending how the body works, what to look for to correct and understands and can execute all classroom etiquette. This level will complete the instruction of the basic five ballet feet positions, begin mastering the ballet positions of ballet and have knowledge of an expanded vocabulary. The student will also master several jazz movements and tap steps and can memorize a series of them without assistance at the completion of Primary II. Students in this level understands and knows how to take notes and choreography as required in their ballet journal given by the school. Students may reach their commitment and physical potential level in Primary II. A student in this level will continue to grow in their technique and receive excellent training if they decided to stay in said level and audition to be in the Pre-Professional program.

Pre-Professional Company: “Empowering The Dancer”

Levels I & II: (3.5 - 4.5 hours a week instruction). A company level dancer will always be a student who will develop a more comprehensive knowledge and sense of the art as they progress to this pre-professional level.

We begin with a majority of time spent reaching the next level in PBT and time at the barre, then progressing with center work. The students then will complete the class with variations performed by memory across the floor. Continuous study in ballet is a prerequisite for any additional classes, a company member contract is to be signed by student and parent(s).

Pre-pointe & pointe students are to take at minimum 2 classes a week, in order to attend their pointe class

Tap:

Students enrolled in Tap, will be increasingly mastering a series of tap steps and choreography with music in a classroom format that teaches the student to work together as a class. Mastering those techniques that are very specific for progression to the next level with proficient progress and confidence will advance or develop the student. These include musicality, concept of beats and patterns of the art of Tap.

Jazz:

Acceptance in Jazz is an option for those students who have shown high proficiency and understanding of ballet and/or other forms of dance. The skills sets taught will be as followed but not limited to: Jazz Pirouette – outside & inside turns with parallel passé, isolations, developpé, Jazz pas de bourrée, chainée turn, Jazz square, fan kick, leg tilt and front leap. The expectation in the advanced class is to perform multiple of these skill sets and to then embrace the essence of choreography within the classroom.

Hip-Hop:

A high-energy class is to be expected for students who are interested and are up for the challenge. Hip Hop infuses the latest styles of street dancing, breaking, popping, and locking. Classes will encourage students to step outside their comfort level by bringing their own individual style and personality to the movements. Hip Hop dance requires students to have the strength and stamina to successfully perform moves. Therefore class includes upper and lower body conditioning as well as a rigorous warm-up to help prepare students for more intense movements.

Musical Theater:

Students Musical Theatre will focus on development of acting, singing and movement skills in a variety of musical theatre performing styles. This class lays the foundation for musical theatre basics, song performance through learning to analyze the lyrics and to find out how to communicate the story through vocal and physical expression. They will learn to develop the character in order to bring the character to life through both singing and acting. Students will also develop auditioning skills. Primary II & Company Level students may utilize singing, acting and movement skills necessary to perform with maturity and confidence, both as an ensemble and in solo work. Class material will focus on numbers with contemporary and traditional musical theatre repertoire. Students will learn and utilize scenes and songs from Broadway musicals as well as build their own repertoire.

School Dresscode:

Dresscode

"Dress for the job you want, not the job you have." At our school, we set our students up for success. We believe that proper attire keeps our students focused and minimizes distractions in class. A standardized dress code also allows our instructors to visually see and adequately correct children who have improper form, which increases safety and decreases risk for our developing dancers. As a change of leotard/shirt color indicates which level dancers are in, this provides a reward for students as they are promoted through our school.

- A clean leotard, tights without holes, and clean shoes are required
- Hair will be placed in a classical ballet bun with no "bun tools", a matching hairnet, and bobby pins to secure the bun in place. Use of hairspray and/or gel is needed to keep all hair in place. Students who do not have the necessary items for class may purchase those items (subject to availability) at the school prior to the start of class.
- Tights for students in lower and upper school will serve as their undergarment. Creative movement students may wear the appropriate diaper/pull-ups as needed with their dress code.

Resale of Dresscode

We understand that school dresscode is an investment. Therefore, we have implemented a resale program. If at any time your student has outgrown his/her shoe, leotard, and/or shorts/pants, those items may be resold at our school. Lightly used/mint condition items are to be washed and placed in a secured clear bag with index card stating who the seller is, the product item and at what price you are willing to sell. The seller and buyer will then make their exchange, and the school is not responsible for any items or the transaction.

Costumes

Costumes accentuate a dancer's skill set, character they are portraying, and enhance aspects of the performing arts. The detail and decision making that goes into the design and selection is thought through very carefully. The makeup and costumes are a part of dress code when performing. Students must be in full dress code with hair, makeup, and costume to perform. Costume, makeup, and hair decisions are final. At times students may wear a flesh color leotards and tights underneath their costume, however that is decided upon the school director.

Casting

Performing level students are invited to perform in several productions and performances throughout the year. Special consideration and an enormous amount of planning goes into the development of all designs, costumes, characters, sets, and props for the best possible level of success for all involved. Students will be cast into a character role based upon the needs of the school and chosen production.

Performances

As a student attending a performing arts school, students are expected to learn their specified rolls and participate in performances. These important responsibilities including attending and fully participating in rehearsals, home practice time, and if necessary, private lessons. Due to the nature of the production setting, all students are to be committed to the learning process and expected to fulfill all requirements in the classroom. When a student skips or quits it not only disrupts the learning process for the student but also the class and the school as a whole.

Private Lessons

Private lessons are available for selected students in a case by case basis. Private lessons are structured for an hour to an hour 1/2 long. Package private lessons are also available. If a student misses 1 of their private lessons it can be rescheduled, after their 1st missed private lesson then they forfeit their time in the studio. ALL private lessons that are purchased during the school year are to be utilized during that school year, same for the summer months.

YAGP Lessons

Qualifying students have the opportunity to prepare with the director to attend competitions. This will include a series of lessons that sole focus on the training of the material for YAGP, this may include knowledge of the storyline, character analysis, specific skill sets for the choreography and rehearsing their piece. We expect that a continued study of the above material is done at home and is ready to showcase in the following rehearsal.

Instructors/Guest Artists/Guest Teachers/Guest Students

It is a privilege to have the opportunity to work with a guest artist/guest teacher within our school. Guests are to be treated with the upmost respect and a high standard of behavior is expected from all students and their families. Any and all contact with guest artist/teachers will be solely through the school director and at no time will they contact via email or phone directly a student and/or parent without written permission from the school. At times we will need host families and/or transportation assistance so we may bring the absolute best training from guest artists to visit our school.

Fundraising

In order to successfully host many events and special performances and to continue the training of the Fine Arts, we ask our ballet families to participate in fundraising, which could be ordering photos, selling advertisement in our programs, or sponsoring an event if they are able to do so.

Volunteer

To make all of the dreams of our school to happen, we are only as successful as our volunteers and the many hours they give to the school and of their resources. We ask each of our family to complete the volunteer form and to make time during the school year to assist in way you are able to do so.