



AMBASSADORS OF DANCE

Guide for Students and Parents

As a condition of enrollment at Ambassadors of Dance, students and their parents or legal guardians, agree to abide by all the policies set forth by Ambassadors of Dance, its director and staff. Ambassadors of Dance reserves the right to terminate any student's enrollment at any time, without refunds or credits, for misconduct or inappropriate actions by either the student or his or her parent(s).

Welcome!

Ambassadors of Dance is committed to providing quality dance classes to enhance the overall development of the dancer. Dance education is more than movement, it develops confidence, strength, and character. Along with improving coordination skills and developing muscular awareness, dance classes give students the freedom to express themselves. We are committed to helping each student reach their goals by offering guidance and training. The staff at Ambassadors of Dance are lifelong learners who continue to educate themselves through certification programs, teacher-training schools, conferences, classes, and other learning opportunities.

A Note to students:

The first step to becoming a successful dancer is making a solid commitment to your classes. 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 as an opportunity to become better at what you love to do. "Dress for Success" by following the dress code. The dress code is in place to assist the teacher in viewing proper alignment and allow for ease of movement. Dance full-out, stretch a little further, become more aware of your technique, and make the most of every class. Respect for teachers and classmates is essential. Your classmates are your team. Learning to dance with other class mates is a skill of itself. It takes time and practice. Listen to each correction given, whether it's directed at 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. Students can also learn from watching, helping, and encouraging other students.

A note to Parents/Guardians:

We believe that children's success depends on the support of their parents or guardians. Your commitment to the process makes an enormous difference, we encourage you to be an active part of your child's dance education. Please make every effort to arrive at class ten minutes early so the dancer is prepared and ready for class and not in a "last minute" rush. Late arrivals create a distraction and prevent the dancer from reaping the full benefit from the class. Warm-up is a very important part of the class as it gets the muscles ready to dance and helps prevent injury. Cooperation between all studio parents is expected. Showing respect—for other parents, the students, and the faculty—makes an important impression on the children. You are a role model for your child about how to interact with others in a professional setting. Your child's presence at all classes is important. Please try to limit absences to absolute necessities. Your dancer will be a part of a team of dancers on stage and their practice within their team is part of the dance education process. Parents and teachers may look at a child's learning from different perspectives. However, we believe they share a common goal: to ensure that every child receives the best possible training, both physically and mentally. Mutual respect among our faculty and our students' parents provides the children with the ultimate care and education. We recommend that children be encouraged to practice at home but not forced to do so.

Understanding Dance Education

One of the primary goals of our faculty is to teach life lessons and skills that offer children the best chance for success. Dance education encompasses far more than technique and the steps your children learn. We believe the discipline of dance training gives young people a better understanding of commitment through learning, experiencing the spirit of teamwork, and discovering what they can accomplish through hard work. Our goal is to educate the minds, bodies, and souls of our students, teaching them the skills needed for a successful life, whether or not they stay involved in dance. We also hope they will develop lasting friendships with classmates in a mutually supportive atmosphere.

Class Placement

While our classes may be identified on the schedule by Age Group, age is truly not the most important determinant in class placement. A 12 year old beginner will likely not be able to join a 12 year old class immediately. They may need to start in a lower level to acquire the basic skills and then progress accordingly. The length of time required to "catch up" varies with every student – it could be weeks, months, or years. Our instructors and/or the Studio Director can help guide you to correct class placement for your dancer. Class placement of students is highly individual and the factors that go into the decision are complex. If you have any concerns about where to place your child please ask to meet with the director to discuss appropriate placement

Classroom Observation

Parents may observe classes via classroom monitors. Parents may also be invited throughout the year to observe their child performing a small routine. Please refrain from disrupting class by speaking to your child, shouting instructions or distracting your child in any way when observing class. Unless invited into the classroom by the instructor please remain in the lobby.

Medical Information

Parents must notify the director/and or teachers regarding children who have allergies, use an inhaler, or who may require medications during their time at Ambassadors of Dance. It is also important to inform the director and/or teachers about your child's existing medical conditions or learning disabilities at the time of registration and throughout the school year. Our teachers are anxious to work with all children and personalities, and the more we know about your child, the better the dance experience will be for all involved. All information about our students is confidential.

Dos and Don'ts

Some parents may compare their child's progress or class placement to another child's. Watch for this behavior in your children as well and encourage them to focus instead on their own accomplishments. Making negative comparisons distracts children from focusing on becoming stronger dancers. In addition, speaking negatively about your child's teachers, faculty, fellow students, or other parents in front of your child, other students or parents, could result in problems far beyond your original concerns. Often children will imitate a parent's behavior with other adults or authority figures. It's our philosophy to encourage our students to feel, think, and act respectfully toward their peers, the adults in their lives, and themselves.

If you have questions or concerns about your child's dance education, please make an appointment to discuss them with your child's teacher or the director. Talking to other parents can lead to misinformation and confusion. Please email us to set up an appointment; do not approach your child's teacher or the director between or during classes as we are on a tight time schedule. 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 offer expertise in the field of dance education.

STAYING INFORMED

We work hard to make the dance experience organized and fun. Keeping you informed is one of our primary goals. EMAIL IS OUR PRIMARY MODE OF COMMUNICATION for newsletters and other school information. Please add ambassadorsdance@gmail.com to your contact list so that our emails don't wind up in your Spam folder. It is your responsibility to keep informed by reading emails, checking our message boards and bulletin boards, and checking for any paper handouts we may produce. Newsletters and important updates are emailed to the email address that you provided on the waiver form when you registered. Please be sure we always have a valid, current email address for you. Our Calendar noting studio shut-downs for holidays is posted on our website, and we also try to post a status on our Facebook page to remind you about up-coming closures or other studio events. We have a Message Board at the studio where we post important info each month and we often post other information on our various Bulletin Boards. Please come into the studio at least once a month to check for information. We also send a mass email at least once a month, sometimes more, with information we feel you need. If you have additional questions after checking these sources, we encourage you to contact us via email for the quickest response.

Weather Cancellations

Class cancellations due to severe weather conditions will be posted on our Facebook page by 2 pm for evening classes and by 9 am for morning classes. We will also try to send email indicating our closure status. Please note that we RARELY cancel classes, even if the schools were closed for the day.

Holiday Closures

Halloween: If this falls on an evening we have classes, those classes will be cancelled.

Thanksgiving: We close Thursday-Sunday.

December Holidays: Our closure dates vary

Winter Break: We loosely follow Farmington Schools.

Spring Break: We generally follow Farmington Schools.

Memorial Day: We take only Monday off.

We DO NOT close for any other holidays (including MLK Day, Presidents Day, Valentine's Day, election days, etc.)

DRESS CODE REQUIREMENTS

Ambassadors of Dance enforces a dress code, which is essential to the learning process. The dress code encourages concentration and professionalism and promotes a sense of inclusiveness (variations in attire can be distracting and contribute to feelings of inequality). Uniformity in proper dancewear allows the teachers to assess how well the students are implementing the technique being taught, problems with alignment, and allow for comfort and mobility required for dance movement. It helps students to focus on their dance training rather than on their clothing. Students must wear the proper required dance shoes in all of

their classes at all times (see Dress Code Specifics). Teachers are authorized to excuse inappropriately attired dancers from class.

General Policies

- Students should carry their dancewear, shoes, and other belongings in a dance bag. Please print your child's name on the bag as well as on all of its contents.
- Dancewear is to be kept in good repair and laundered on a regular basis.
- Jewelry is not permitted in class, with the exception of post earrings.
- Dance shoes should never be worn outside. The shoes listed on the Dress Code are also required for the annual Recital. Dance shoes should be cleaned regularly.
- For all dance classes except ballet, female students should wear their hair tightly secured and styled away from the face (pony tails are great).
- For all ballet classes (regardless of dancer age), a neat bun is required due to the special discipline and demeanor expected in a ballet class; no exceptions. If hair is too short to put into a bun, please secure hair away from the face with clips, bobby pins, etc.
- Students are expected to observe good personal hygiene habits. Deodorant is required for students age 10 and older.

Dress Code Specifics

- Tap students: leotard and tights, or close-fitting dance pants/shorts and a tank. Black slip on or tie tap shoes for Ages 10 & Up. Black Mary Jane style shoes with buckles or elastic (no ties) for Ages 3-9.
- Jazz, Hip Hop, and Acro students: leotard and tights, or close-fitting dance pants/shorts and a tank with a sports bra underneath (can be built in). Black hip hop sneakers or black jazz oxfords (slip on preferred) are the required footwear. Students in Acro will be barefoot due to hazard of slipping on mats in socks or footwear.
- Ballet students: Plain color leotard and tights (preferably pink). May also wear a small skirt, if desired. Pink LEATHER ballet shoes with the ties tucked into the shoes. Hair MUST be in a bun and secured firmly, using bobby pins, hairspray, etc.
- Modern and Lyrical students: Close fitting dance attire, dance paws or bare feet.
- Guys: Close fitting dark dance/athletic pants/shorts and white tee. No jeans or other street clothes are permitted. Dance belts required for Ages 13 and up. Dance style appropriate footwear in black.

Please note that blue jeans and street clothes are never permitted. We also request NO baggy shirts or pants. Our instructors cannot properly teach technique if we can't see the dancer's body. Dance pants must be an appropriate length so we can view the feet. Close fitting sweaters or shrugs are OK to wear for the warm up of class.

STUDIO POLICIES

Decorum

- Dance students and their families are expected to behave in a respectful manner, both in and out of the classroom. Neither dancers nor their siblings should be disruptive in the hallways, waiting areas, etc. There is to be no running or loud vocalizing and we expect parents to control their children. Parents and dancers are also expected to pick up after themselves in the waiting areas (putting trash in the garbage can, returning books/magazines/crayons/videos, etc. to their proper location). Everyone must take extra care when using the restrooms to be sure that the toilets are not overstuffed with paper and that the toilet has flushed properly. Any toilet issues need to be reported immediately to an instructor or other faculty member

Classroom

- In the classroom, students are expected to follow the instructor's directions. Those that don't may have to sit out or be removed from class.
- Talking should be at a minimum. Dancers are expected to give their full attention to the instructor at all times. Students should always listen to and incorporate any corrections or instructions given to any other dancer.
- Any inappropriate or disrespectful comments directed at the teacher or another student are grounds for dismissal from the studio.
- We ask that all students use the restroom prior to the start of class as it is disruptive to the flow of the class if they need to leave once we have started.
- Students may bring water bottles into the classroom. However, no other beverage, food, or gum is allowed (unless the teacher has OK'd a special event). Students may not leave the room to get water unless the teacher has granted permission.

Attendance

- Consistent attendance is vital to your child's dance education. They can't learn if they aren't there! Please contact us if your child is absent two classes in a row to let us know why and when we can expect them back.
- When classes are missed, it is incumbent on the dancer to work extra hard the following class to learn the material that was missed. Please do not expect the teacher to devote the following class to teaching missed material to an absent student. This would not be fair to the rest of the class. If your child misses more than 2 classes in a given month (Jan-May), you must schedule and pay for a private make-up class at a cost of \$30. Occasional absences for illness, inclement weather, or conflicting activities may be made-up by attending a similar class on another day/time. Feel free to ask for help in determining a make-up class or select your own. You do not have to call ahead of time, simply advise the instructor you are there for a make-up class. No credit is given for missed classes.
- If your dancer is missing class due to frustration (too easy/hard) or dislike of the style or instructor, please contact us to discuss changing classes. We will work with you to place your child in a class that is enjoyable and the appropriate level. Our faculty has varied teaching styles and there is no "one size fits all" mandate.

Scheduling Changes

- Rarely, we may cancel a class due to low enrollment. In this case, we will work with any affected students to find an alternate class.

PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

Annual Recital

- This is traditionally held on the Saturday following Memorial Day. Dress Rehearsals take place Tuesday – Friday evenings after Memorial Day. Dress Rehearsal is mandatory for all Recital students, unless the Studio director has authorized a student to miss it. We currently run three shows – an Early Show featuring our youngest dancers (approximately 1-1.25 hours long), a Mid Show featuring a mix of ages (approximately 1.5 hours long), and a Late Show featuring our older dancers (approximately 1.5 hours long).
- Costumes are required for the Recital and must be purchased through the studio. Prices range from \$50-\$65 for single use costumes. Combo costumes start at \$70. Costume payments in full or a minimum \$75 deposit is due on or before November 15th. Any balance is due on or before February 15th. Once costumes are ordered, they cannot be cancelled and full payment must be made, regardless if a student drops the class. New dance shoes may be required for Recital due to foot growth and/or for class uniformity.
- Costume pictures (individual and group) are taken at the studio prior to recital. Purchase is optional. We also have a videographer who sells (optional) DVD's of the entire show. Parents are not allowed to videotape the Recital or take flash photography at Recital.
- Ticket prices are as follows:
 - \$13 Each for single tickets online
 - \$15 Each for single tickets purchased day off at the recital
- Parents may place business ads or dancer messages in our Recital Program for a fee. We also offer the opportunity to purchase a bouquet for your dancer(s).

Holiday Community Service

Each December, we try to visit Senior Care Facilities and present a 45 minute Holiday Show. While we cannot involve every student in these events due to space and time, we randomly select a number of classes to teach holiday routines to and then offer students in those classes the opportunity to perform in one or both events. The performances generally take place on Saturday afternoons early in December. The studio provides costumes and/or accessories for this performance (students may be requested to wear a certain color

leotard or tights of their own). Parents may attend with the dancer but we try to limit other guests as space is sometimes tight at the facilities. We may also schedule additional performances at other times of the year.

Festival of the Arts

Each April, the Farmington Arts Council presents Festival of the Arts at the Costick Center. We have the opportunity to perform at this event and have used it as a prequel to our Dress Rehearsal for the Recital. Again, we cannot involve every student/class due to time and space. We try to select a variety of classes to participate. The students perform their Recital Routine(s) in full costume/hair/makeup. Parents and guests are welcome to attend.

Founders Day Parade

In mid-July, the City of Farmington puts on this annual parade and we are invited to participate. We will hold two rehearsals to teach the marching pattern. These generally take place in late June, early July. We try to schedule them for weekday evenings or Saturday. We do not perform dance routines, just a simple marching pattern and all of our dancers are welcome to take part. If the dancer is too young to learn the marching pattern, they can follow behind the group and/or hand out candy down the parade route. There is no costume to be purchased. We generally ask participants to wear their own shorts/pants (which we will specify) and the studio provides a tee shirt of some kind and/or accessories.

Competition Teams

The team is for more serious dancers and require high levels of commitment to class and other events. Any student interested in competing should review the Competition Team contract (found on the website) to learn the details on competing at Ambassadors of Dance. Any dancer 6 years or older is welcome to join the team, as long as they are willing to make the required commitments.

ADHERENCE TO THE ABOVE POLICIES

When registering for classes, you will be required to sign an agreement to abide by all the policies delineated above. Please be sure you have thoroughly read and understand this document.

We look forward to dancing with you!

Ambassadors of Dance

Elizabeth Boggon

Director/Owner