

# BACKSTAGE DANCE CENTER

## Parent / Student Handbook



300 Eliot St Ashland Ma 01721 (508) 881-8226

[www.backstagedance-theater.com](http://www.backstagedance-theater.com)

E-Mail Us! [bdc@backstagedance.comcastbiz.net](mailto:bdc@backstagedance.comcastbiz.net)

REVISED \*\*\* 2011/2012

Each new year you will receive the new calendar and tuition rates separately. Everything else in the handbook will remain the same unless otherwise noted. Please keep your handbook for future years. Please refer to your handbook when you have questions, many of your answers are right here in this book.

## **\*\* TUITION RATES\*\***

Tuition / fees are Non-refundable & non-transferable

Tuition rates will be sent separately with each new season

**Annual registration fees : \$20 per child - \$40 per family**

Tuition is based on a yearly fee and includes 2 emergency/snow days (these classes can be made up by joining another class, schedule permitting).

- \* Tuition rates over 1.5 hours reflect a 10% to 15% discount (per student)
- \* Additional classes over 5 hours (per student) are free of charge
- \* **Costume fees will be billed and payable in October (50% deposit) and November (50% balance)**
- \* Sibling discounts are available
- \* Work study programs are available for students age 13 and up



# Class Uniform Requirements

All class uniforms can be ordered through Dance Gear Outlet (at the studio) to avoid discrepancies in color/style of dance shoes and attire.

Shoe sizing and dance wear orders will take place during Open House in August.  
(Dates will be posted on our web-site)

Throughout the year order forms will be available at the front desk along with sizing kits (at this time shipping charges may apply).

## Why Dress Code is Important

1. It teaches students discipline.
2. It helps with overall focus and energy.
3. By "dressing the part" dancers feel like dancers.
4. It creates Unity among the dancers instead of causing a few to stand out, much like a school uniform.
5. Students are more likely to concentrate on instruction rather than fidget with their clothes.
6. Dress code goes a long way in minimizing distractions and helps give classes a unified look.
7. Dress code ensures that the teacher will be able to see a dancer's alignment and positioning.

**\*Students that come to class out of dress code will be asked to observe class or they may borrow a studio leotard (please wash it before returning it the following week).**

**\* Hair must be in a "ballet" bun for all ballet classes/ short hair, off face and neck w/ low ponytail and headband.**

**\* NO jewelry (except small earrings), gum, candy, cough drops or Street Clothes.**

# **STUDIO POLICIES**

## **Waiting Room**

If you are eating in between classes PLEASE pick up after yourself and be careful with your drinks...Water is always the BEST choice ☺ No food or drinks allowed in the studios (except for water).

Backstage Dance Center is not responsible for students before/after class.

**You are responsible for staying up to date with info posted in the waiting area and on our web-site**

Students are not allowed in the dance room until their class is called.

Please be respectful of studio property.

Do not let children play with studio merchandise, decorations, or office supplies.

Please be on time for class and for dismissal.

Please have your child use the bathroom BEFORE class begins.

Please pick up after yourself and your child (no diapers in the basket please).

## **Class Observation**

Parents/Siblings /friends are not permitted in the studio unless invited during "Peek Week".

Parents / siblings / friends may observe from the waiting area.

Please be respectful of our teachers - do not disturb or interrupt their classes.

## **Studio Calendar**

Classes will follow the studio calendar that is provided to you with each new season.

The studio calendar is also available on our Website. If you are not sure whether a class is running please check our website.

### **Breaks / Studio In-service**

While students are off on breaks, the studio is hard at work with the "behind the scenes" planning for classes and our show. We are busy writing scripts, creating choreography ordering/sorting costumes, producing tickets/programs , sets/ props editing music. This preparation time is essential for an organized, creative and professional production.

### **Class Cancellations**

Classes are not held if Ashland High school closes or cancels afterschool activities due to bad weather. In the event of bad weather - school closings will be on the news. We will also leave a voice message at the studio and a post on Facebook .  
(We will not call students).

The studio can NOT reschedule classes cancelled for bad weather or teacher illness. Two "emergency" days (per class) are incorporated in the tuition - to be used for this purpose. It is your responsibility to make up any cancelled class in another class within 30 days (call ahead to arrange).

### **Picture Day**

Picture Day is a time honored tradition in the dance industry!

During this special week a professional photographer will be at the studio to take pictures of each student in their full costume and make up.

This is an optional service that we provide for anyone who wants them.

Picture Day dates and schedule will be announced in the spring (also on the website).

## **Class Enrollment**

Classes with low enrollment or attendance may be shortened, merged or cancelled.

Minimum of 5 students are required to run a full class. Classes with less than 5 students will be replaced with a 45 minute lesson. Classes with just 1 or 2 students can make try to make arrangements with the studio for a private or semi private lesson (additional fees apply).

## **Class Attendance**

Students need to be present in class each week to grow and progress as dancers. Dance is an individual & team activity. When students are absent it affects the entire class. Students with poor attendance may be denied participation in the recital.

Too sick for school? Then too sick for dance!!

**For the health and safety of our staff and students- Students who stay home from school - may NOT attend dance that day.**

You may make up 3 missed classes in another class within 30 days.

## **Class Placement**

Proper class placement is important to ensure that students are successful.

Students are placed by age then by ability once they are old enough for technique.

The first few weeks of class are considered a trial, and instructors may recommend a student be moved to higher/lower level class based on their observation.

## **Withdrawal**

When you enroll in a class you are making a September-May commitment.

And just as you would cancel your phone or cable - you must notify us if you no longer want our services or you will continue to be billed for your space, regardless of your attendance.

**Withdrawal for any reason, requires notifying the office in WRITING - 30 days in advance.**

You are responsible for tuition / fees through the end of a full 30 day withdrawal period.

Tuition will NOT be pro-rated if you withdraw in the middle of a billing cycle.

No refunds awarded if you withdraw before the spring performance.

## **Backstage Dance Center**

Reserves the right to deny class/performance participation (without refund) for the following:

**\* Accounts in arrears      \* Excessive absenteeism      \* Negative attitudes of Student/Parent      \* Improper attire      \*Inappropriate behavior      \*Unwillingness to abide by studio policies**

## Spring Performance

Each spring Backstage Dance Center invites all its students to participate in the end of year production to demonstrate their new skills. Unlike many other studios our performance is about 1 1/2 hours (with a mix of music, dance & theater. Although performing is an important part of a dancer's /actor's education, our PRIORITY is on education. Class time is spent building skills and technique not solely rehearsing a "show"

Each class will perform ONE number in the show. Students who take more than one class per week will perform a number for each class. Students desiring more performance opportunities are encouraged to take multiple classes.

*One costume is required for each number.*

**Costumes are ordered December 1<sup>st</sup> - Students who join late will only be able to perform if we are able to get a costume in time - rush delivery fees may apply.**

### Multiple Performances

To accommodate all of our supportive fans, Backstage Dance Center may present more than one show. Most students will perform in just one show, but some students may be required to perform in multiple shows. Company Prep, Jr. & Sr. Company students will perform in all shows as well as our acting classes. This will be determined each year by the needs of our program. You may purchase additional tickets for additional shows or consider being a volunteer.

### Siblings

We know it can be difficult to schedule activities for multiple children, and we try our best to make it as easy as possible for you! When we have one child with multiple classes we try to place them in one show first. Next we look at our siblings and try OUR BEST to get them all in the same show. Please know that this can be an impossible task sometimes.

Please keep this in mind BEFORE you order your costumes.

### Performance Updates

As our season progresses, additional info or updates will be posted on the board in the waiting area and on our web-site. Make it your responsibility to stay informed. It is our goal to make the performance experience organized and exciting for all involved. It's a team effort - students, parents and Backstage Dance.

### Home Study

To ensure that the students feel comfortable about their performance, we ask parents/guardians to encourage them to rehearse their choreography/lines on a regular basis. A copy of your child's dance music and printed copy of their choreography is available - a charge of \$4 per CD is required to cover expenses.

### Costumes

Many hours are spent determining the correct costume for each class. They are always age appropriate and fit our theme. Unless told otherwise, costumes include all accessories (head piece, gloves, etc.)

### Distribution

Costumes are distributed when all outstanding balances for the season ( including all tuition, Late fees...) are paid in full. Students should NOT wear their costumes, tights or accessories prior to pictures, rehearsal or the show. **Deadline for all balances is Dec 1st.**

### Sizing

Costume measuring begins in November during class time. Each child is measured to determine his/her proper costume size. Two inch allowances for growth are made for all students. If you do not think your child will fit in a standard child/adult measuring chart - Please Contact us! If you feel your child will not grow 2 inches in 4-5 months and would prefer we do not add 2 inches you must let us know. **Upon request parents may choose the size from the sizing chart and let us know which size they would like us to order.**

### Alterations

Although rare, if alterations are needed after the costume has been distributed, they will be the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian. Alterations may be made for size only - adjustments may not alter the overall design of the costume.

### Costume Care

Please put your child's name on all costumes, shoes, accessories and tights. Store your child's costume in a costume bag and place all accessories in a clear plastic bag. Steam costumes prior to the rehearsal, hanging it in the bathroom with the steam from the shower works well to get out the wrinkles (for tutus hang upside down). DO NOT wash costumes in the washing machine: dry clean only (After the show).

### Tights

To ensure that there are no discrepancies in color and style, ONE pair of tights will be included. Please do not wear them before Dress Rehearsal. Costumes with pants will NOT include tights, but tan tights should be worn underneath. It is recommended to order an additional pair of tights incase of runs/rips.

**We will accept orders for additional tights up till March 1st**

### Shoes

Students must have proper color/style shoes for their class for the performance. These requirements are outlined in the dress code policy.

**We will accept orders until March 1st**

### Withdrawal

No refunds will be made if a child withdraws from the program prior to the performance. If a costume has been already ordered - parent/guardian may pick it up the last week of class (week after the show). Costumes left behind after the designated pick up time, will be considered studio property.

### Makeup

Stage make-up is part of show business! Without makeup the bright stage lights will "wash out" your child's face and you will not be able to see them as well on stage or video.

Makeup should be applied heavier than day-to-day use.

**All female students should wear red lipstick, blush, neutral/browns eye shadow and mascara for the dress rehearsal and show.**

### Hair

All hair must be neatly pulled off the face and neck in a bun or short ponytail - unless otherwise notified. Long bangs should be secured back. All items used for securing hair (barrettes, clips, bobby pins, elastics) must blend in with the color of your child's hair. Other than assigned head piece - additional decorative items (beads, bows, etc.) are NOT permitted. Be sure to secure head pieces tightly - practice securing and moving around with head piece ahead of time. Lots of hairspray.

### Pre-Planning

Gather your costume (s), accessories, shoes, tights and makeup several days in advance so you know if something is missing or isn't right. Make a check list of all the items needed and check it before you leave for the theater.

Some additional items you may want to bring: Extra Tights, Safety Pins, Hairspray, Comb, Extra bobby pins, Baby powder for itchy costumes, sewing kit.

### Recital Tips

Teachers will write out Recital tips for each class prior to the show as a reminder of how to wear hair, makeup, accessories etc.

## Dress Rehearsal at Ashland High School

**Students must arrive in full costume, hair and makeup (dance shoes should be brought to the theater and not worn).** Students with multiple numbers should be dressed in their first number's costume. The dress rehearsal allows the students to become familiar with their performance, costume and being on stage. Lighting, music cues, scene change, microphones and all other logistics for an organized and professional performance are rehearsed so that students can make the best possible impression. We run an organized and timely dress rehearsal (provided we have no technical difficulties!) Your help with this process will guarantee a professional production. **Participation in the dress rehearsal is MANDATORY-no exceptions.** Please arrive on time.

### Green Room (dressing room) Etiquette

Please do your best to keep classes organized, occupied and Clean! NO FOOD or DRINK (other than water) is allowed in the green room. Students must respect each others space and property in the green room. Backstage Dance Center reserves the right to dismiss any student who exhibits inappropriate behavior.

### Costume Changes

All costume changes must be made in designated areas, NOT in the bathroom stalls.

### Finale

All students will participate in the finale, which we will rehearse in class if needed. Each class mom will escort their class onto the stage to blow a kiss, curtsy/bow and circle around to take their place on stage.

(class mom's please wear all black for your stage debut with your kids ☺)

### Drop off & Pick up - Dress Rehearsal & Show

**For the Dress Rehearsal** - All students will arrive at the school 30 minutes prior to their "STAGE TIME" (these times will be sent to you in the spring) in full costume and makeup. Classes will be lined up in the hallway leading to the stage. Please stay near the information table so you know when your child's classes will be headed down to the stage. Once they are on their way to the stage ONE parent/guardian may sign in (using **account name**) at the main entrance of the auditorium. NO SIBLINGS are permitted into the auditorium for Dress Rehearsal. **PLEASE ASSIST US BY ADHERING TO THIS IMPORTANT POLICY.** If you cannot make child care arrangements for siblings, you may wait in the lobby until your child has finish his/her number.

### **DRESS REHEARSAL is a CLOSED REHEARSAL!**

It is for students, teachers, tech & backstage crew and ONE parent/guardian ONLY. This is our only chance to put an entire show together in just one day. We desperately need this time alone with no added distractions. We hope that you will give our students and teachers your support and understanding with this matter.

For the **SHOW**-One parent/guardian (female) should bring the student to the **GREEN ROOM** where they will be checked in by the "class mom". **Parents/guardians and guests are NOT allowed in the green room.** Parents then proceed to the auditorium to take their seat. Students are dismissed to the green room at the end of the show. After the show **ONE** parent/guardian (female) will go to the green room to sign out their child and then escort them to the lobby to greet their fans ☺. The green room can get very crowded so please bring your **STAR** out to the lobby as quickly as possible. The lobby is the place to hand out flowers and gifts... not in the green room.

### **CAMERAS at Rehearsal ONLY**

Videos and photography are **ONLY** allowed at the Dress Rehearsal!! No electrical outlets will be provided, so be sure your batteries are charged. **Absolutely NO Video or Cameras of any kind are allowed the day of the show.** Just like any other performance you may attend...there is a reason why cameras are not allowed - **it is dangerous for the performers** to be looking out into the audience and have a **FLASH** go off in their eyes. It can cause blurred vision which could cause a dancer to fall! We expect our performers to act in a professional way and we expect our audience to do the same ☺.

### **Auditorium Rules**

No Food, Drink or smoking allowed.

### **NO COSTUMES IN THE AUDIENCE**

Performing students are **NEVER** allowed in the auditorium at any time during the rehearsal or show. (Unless it is part of the show) Students who are not performing must bring a change of clothes to watch another show (and they must have a ticket).

### **NO CELL PHONES/ PICTURE PHONES**

All Cell or Picture phone signals interfere with our wireless microphones. Even in "silent" mode, cell phones will cause our microphones to cut out. Please turn your cell phone completely **OFF**. Please remind your guests of this important rule as these microphones are very expensive to use and students deserve to be heard.

## **THEATER CLOSED BETWEEN SHOWS**

All guests must vacate the theater immediately after the show. This time is needed to clean up, reset props, rehearse etc. The theater will re-open 30 minutes prior to the next show. Saving seats for the next show is not permitted.

## **TICKETS**

**TICKETS ARE NOT LIMITED** - please read the following information carefully.

- 1) **We do not accept any personal checks** for Tickets or outstanding balances after March 1st. **Money orders or cash only.** Tickets will be sold at the studio in advance and at the door if there are any tickets left.
- 2) Tickets are sold on a first come basis...we **STRONGLY** urge you to purchase your tickets early.
- 3) **TICKET SALES** will be available at the studio for the month of March & April on Saturdays from 10:00-1:00 pm ...**EXCLUDING VACATION WEEKS.**
- 4) Tickets will also be available on **PICTURE DAY** at the studio (date to be determined).
- 5) Seats are not reserved by number - please arrive early to line up for entry to the auditorium.
- 6) **EVERYONE** age 3 and up **MUST** present a ticket at the door. Children age 2 and under **MUST** sit on a parent's lap or present a ticket at the door.
- 7) Backstage Dance Center is **NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST or UNUSED TICKETS.**

**Please remember that we try our VERY BEST (as stated on our website and brochure at time of registration) to arrange all students and siblings in the same show. Sometimes this can be an impossible task and we may get only 30 out of 35 siblings together. PLEASE take this into consideration BEFORE you commit your child to the performance. If you believe this will cause you major problems and discomfort we prefer that you not sign up for our performances and attend dance for the Education rather than subject an uncomfortable scene for our employees and staff. And to all of the parents who have been separated in the past and stood by us **WE THANK YOU!!!****

\*\*\* If you have been separated the previous year please inform the office early so that we can give your children PRIORITY when we cast the shows.  
If you need help to defray the cost of tickets..Sign up to be a volunteer ☺

### Parent Volunteers

Volunteers WILL be able to watch their child perform from the audience! There are jobs for men and women, including security, distributing programs, stage hands and "Class Moms". The performance weekend is a busy time: all volunteers must work in a cooperative manner at all times. Our backstage crew works very hard to put a system in place that works! We ask all volunteers to rely on our experience and follow instructions.

All volunteers will receive an Identification badge which MUST be worn at all times while in the theater. This badge serves as your \*TICKET. **Do not bring guests, including children with you while you are volunteering.**

### CLASS MOMS

Class mothers are needed for each class to supervise the dancers backstage. They will have a FRONT ROW seat reserved for them in the audience to watch their child's number. Class moms must ensure that each child in their care is safe and accounted for AT ALL TIMES. They are responsible for signing students in and out at the show, making sure each child is in their proper costume, shoes and accessories. They must line the children up properly and assist them quietly to the wings of the stage at the appropriate time. They will enter the auditorium and watch from their reserved seat. After the number is over, they will return their class to the green room. Volunteer positions will be filled first come first served. If more moms volunteer for your class than needed you may be asked to help with another class. If you volunteered the previous year THANK YOU!

If you have not yet volunteered...please consider giving the others who have volunteered the opportunity to sit this one out!

### QUESTIONS?

This handbook covers everything you need to know about class, tuition, performance and rehearsal etc... please read it carefully. If you have any further questions: the best way to reach us is through email, where we can respond quickly and efficiently. Reach us at

[bdc@backstagedance.comcastbiz.net](mailto:bdc@backstagedance.comcastbiz.net)

Putting together a show takes a great amount of organization and preplanning. Please appreciate our efforts to provide a positive and professional experience for all involved. With your help and cooperation, we can have a FUN and successful show, where every child can shine!

## RECITAL CHECK LIST!!

Read PARENT HANDBOOK! (Performance policies!) I am happy to answer questions, but **FIRST check your handbook** you may get your answer quicker! - It covers most questions. It will also be posted on line!

**Pay all outstanding balances! (no personal checks)**

**Get your costume & Tights!**

**Get your Tickets ! ( no personal checks)**

**Review Recital Tips and Parent handbook.**

**Sign up for Picture Day!**

**PRE-order your Flowers!**

**Order your DVD!**

**MANDATORY DRESS REHEARSAL** - Check in 30 minutes prior to your stage time.

**SHOW!!** - Check in 30 minutes prior to show time. Check out immediately following each show- theater closes between shows to be cleaned and reset. **Reserving seats for the next show is not permitted.**

**THEATER RULES!** Please explain these rules to all your guests ahead of time. **NO CELL PHONES, FOOD, DRINK, SMOKING CAMERAS /VIDEOS (at the show) NO ONE ALLOWED BACKSTAGE (except staff, students & volunteers)**

**Check the website after the show for some GREAT CANDID PHOTOS!**

**PRE REGISTER FOR FALL CLASSES!**

**SIGN UP FOR SUMMER DANCE CAMPS/CLASSES!**

\*\*\* KEEP THIS HANDBOOK FOR YEARS TO COME! We will not issue yearly.