

The Ballet Theatre of Maryland's Conservatory of Dance Handbook

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Artistic Director
Conservatory Director



The Official School of the
Ballet Theatre of Maryland

Maryland's Premier Professional Ballet Company

www.balletmaryland.org

Ballet Theatre of Maryland is a tenant and resident company of Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts and a tenant at the Merritt Annex building located off of West Street in Annapolis. Artistic and Conservatory Director, Nicole Kelsch and the faculty can be reached through either office. All messages will be returned as soon as possible.

Disabled Access

Both Maryland Hall and the Merritt Annex are barrier-free facilities with handicap parking, a wheelchair ramp and an elevator serving all floors. Handicap seating can be arranged for all performances.

Statement:

Ballet Theatre of Maryland's Conservatory of Dance offers classes for students age two through adult who enjoy dancing as well as for those who wish to pursue a professional career. Ballet Theatre of Maryland's Conservatory of Dance is a non-profit 501c3 organization.

Ballet Theatre of Maryland's Conservatory of Dance reserves the right to change without notice any statement in this handbook concerning, but not limited to, rules, policies, tuition, admission, evaluations, and curricula.

Notice of Non-Discriminatory Policy

Ballet Theatre of Maryland's Conservatory of Dance admits students of any race, color, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin in administration of its education policies, admission policies, scholarship programs or any other school administered programs.

Mission and Purpose

Ballet Theatre of Maryland (BTM) was founded in 1978 to provide Maryland with rich traditional and innovative programs that educate, inspire, enlighten and entertain through a language more powerful than words – the language of classical ballet and contemporary American dance. BTM's mission is to provide Maryland with a fully professional ballet company and training academy by:

- *Educating the community to the beauty, joy and discipline of dance as an art form and as an enhancement to their lives.
- *Creating programs that make ballet more accessible to the underserved.
- *Performing known and original works of artistic integrity.
- *Creating new eclectic works that express both American and Maryland culture and values.
- *Preserving the tradition of the classical form, while promoting the continual evolution of dance as an art.

Vision of The Conservatory:

BTM's Conservatory offers a complete curriculum for the aspiring professional dancer as well as for the dancer seeking good solid dance training for pure enjoyment. Our curriculum is designed to provide anatomically sound training, while providing an increasing variety of classes and performance opportunities.

BTM's Conservatory is the only school in Maryland that offers a fully comprehensive ballet training program for the beginner student up to Trainee and the professional dancer. A focus on the healthy body aesthetic (healthy body types and healthy monitoring) is a hallmark of BTM's Company and Conservatory. In addition to training students of all ages with differing interests for learning the discipline of dance we also take great responsibility in our goal to train fine professional dancers and share this vital art form with our community. It is central to the mission of the school to expect the very best effort of each student, whether or not he/she chooses the professional track. We provide professional faculty and the best possible instruction to serve the dance needs of all of our students. Our instructors give each of the students the care and attention they deserve in the hopes that they will become self-confident young adults and artists.

Values

While teaching students the art of ballet is important at BTM, it is equally important to the staff and director that the students learn the life skills and values necessary to help them grow into successful citizens and strong leaders. As parents and teachers, we share this goal in common.

Code of Conduct for Parents

- 1. Please respect the expertise and decisions of the Ballet Theatre of Maryland Staff and Faculty.**
2. Support your dancer at all times.
3. **Be attentive to people who are around you as you comment.** Young dancers are very sensitive. **Negative comments can turn the most positive time into a negative time.** Instead, attempt to develop positive solutions and avoid gossip.
4. If you have major concerns, see the administrator so an appointment to address your concern can be scheduled.
5. Be courteous.
6. Encourage your dancer to enjoy their training and to have fun.
7. Think about the benefit your dancer(s) receives from their ballet experience.
8. **Ballet is not a dance discipline that should be left within the walls of the studio.** It needs expression in our daily lives. **The parent can be a healthy part of this process** by exposing children to it in its various forms by attending or

participating in a professional BTM productions, reading dance related books, or by watching dance movies together.

9. **Any questions** you may have regarding your dancer's placement or progress or concerns regarding training **should be directed to the School Principal or the Artistic Director.**

Code of Conduct for Students

It is the policy of Ballet Theatre of Maryland's Conservatory of Dance to maintain a positive, healthy, and productive learning and working environment for all students, staff and dancers. BTM students are supported by a dedicated faculty and administration.

As part of their training, BTM students are expected to behave in a responsible and disciplined manner and to adhere to the Conservatory's rules and regulations, both inside BTM's facilities and outside in the greater community as representatives of BTM. Students are expected to treat BTM staff with respect and maintain a positive attitude. BTM strives to ensure that all rules are clear and reasonable, and students are expected to observe the established Code of Conduct. BTM reserves the right to suspend or dismiss any student whose conduct or attitude is found to be unsatisfactory. **Please respect the expertise and decisions of the BTM School faculty and staff.**

The following are absolutely forbidden at Ballet Theatre of Maryland's Conservatory of Dance:

- Physical intimidation or injury, verbal harassment
- Theft, destruction of Conservatory property or property of others
- Verbal abuse; lewd, vulgar conduct; profanity
- Sexual harassment or coercion
- Possession of drugs and/or alcohol
- Smoking: The Merritt Annex and Maryland Hall and their surrounding grounds and parking lots are non-smoking facilities
- Firearms or weapons of any kind
- Self-destructive behavior
- Willful destruction or misuse of BTM School or another person's property
- Improper use of cell phones or the internet

Any of the above actions will be reported immediately to the Conservatory Director, who will decide the appropriate disciplinary action. Penalties may include (but are not limited to):

- Dismissal from the Conservatory
- Suspension from classes
- Referral to counseling
- Fines
- Probation

Important Guidelines

These guidelines have been developed to assist our school in functioning efficiently. The Director and our faculty ask for your consideration with regard to the following issues

- When entering and leaving the building, students must wear appropriate clothing over their dance attire (slacks, skirts, shirts and shoes). During cold weather students are to wear warm clothing (i.e., jackets & coats.)
- For security reasons students are to wait inside the building, not on the street, for parent pick up.
- In-between classes, students are asked to keep the sound level low when in the lobby or hallway, so other classes are not disrupted.
- At the Maryland Hall Studios, please bring all of your belongings into the studio and pick up after yourself.
- At the Annex Studios, please place all items in the lobby. Do not leave personal items in the lobby overnight. Be respectful of our studios and lobby and be sure to clean up after yourself.
- Students are to enter the classroom promptly and are encouraged to bring water bottles, but not food or other types of drinks, into the studio.
- All students are encouraged to stretch before class, especially those in levels Classical Ballet 4 and above.
- We reserve the right to suspend or dismiss students from class for inappropriate behavior; we reserve the right to dismiss any student from the school who consistently displays inappropriate behavior.

Admission and Enrollment

Lower School classes, which include all Creative Movement classes, Pre-Ballet, and Classical ballet 1 have an Open Enrollment policy. Please note classes may fill quickly and are on a first-come, first-served basis. Students enrolled in Pre-Ballet classes are evaluated in the Spring by BTM faculty, in consultation with the School Principal, for suitability to the demands of Classical Ballet 2 in the Middle School. Advancement from one level to the next is not automatic.

Enrollment in the Middle and Upper School levels (Classical Ballet 2-Classical Ballet 6) is by evaluation and placement by the School Principal and BTM Faculty. Please contact the BTM office for placement in these levels.

Students age 14+ who wish to be considered for **BTM's Trainee program** should attend one of the company and summer intensive auditions held in March if they meet the following criteria:

- 1) At least 4-5 years of classical ballet training

- 2) Minimum of two years of pointe work
- 3) Currently studying 8.5-14 hours per week.

Promotions, Evaluations, and Conferences

Formal evaluations are held each year for students in Classical Ballet 2 through Classical Ballet 6 (Students in Classical Ballet 1 and below do not receive a formal evaluation). Students will be evaluated by their teacher(s) and another member of the faculty. These evaluations address effort, attendance, technical development, strengths and weaknesses, conduct, potential, and will include suggestions for improvement. It is important that parents discuss these evaluations with their child to ensure that there is a shared understanding of the student's progress. **Advancement from one class level to the next is not automatic.** It is not uncommon for students to spend two to three years in a level. At BTM's recommendation, students may be mixed in two class levels until they are ready to fully move into the higher level.

Individual conferences are held for students in the Trainee program and for other students by request. Conferences last approximately 15-30 minutes and involve the student, parent(s) or guardian if desired, and the Conservatory. Students are expected to take notes in their class journal (see below) during the conference to use as a reference during the year.

BTM faculty, in consultation with the Conservatory Director evaluate each Pre-Ballet student for their suitability to the demands of classical ballet in Classical Ballet 1. All students enrolled in the Lower School levels receive written confirmation of class placement for the following year in June at the School Show or during the final week of classes for the Spring Semester if not in a level that performs at the School Show.

Class Journal

All students in Classical Ballet 4 and above are strongly encouraged to keep a class journal to record corrections. We recommend that at the end of each class, each student record all corrections made to them personally or to the class in general. **This list should be reviewed daily** to remind the student what to think about and work on in the studio.

Class Observation and Written Exams

We allow our parents to observe classes twice a year, in November for the fall semester and in May for the Winter/Spring semester. Families will be notified when observation weeks are scheduled. Visitors are asked to restrict observation of classes to designated

Students in Classical Ballet 5 and above, will take written/oral and physical exams each May. This helps the faculty evaluate the students and determine if they have fully mastered each level of the syllabus before moving to the next.

Outside Dance Instruction

Each class level follows a carefully planned curriculum each year, requiring students to attend a specific number of hours of class each week throughout the school year. For consistency and clarity of ballet training, it is best to remain with one school. Therefore, BTM strongly encourages students to only train with our instructors.

The Programs

Ballet Theatre of Maryland's Conservatory Dance is divided into three divisions designed to challenge the physical and technical abilities of each student. The Conservatory's syllabus, establishes classroom curriculum and defines how it is to be taught, thus assuring consistency within the Conservatory. The syllabus is periodically reviewed by the Director and faculty with the objective of offering the finest possible ballet training. The Syllabus was reconstructed at the start of the 2020-2021 school year to better meet the levels of technique with our current students. Please refer to the class schedule for information regarding day, time, and location of classes.

The Lower School:

Creative Movement Ages 3-4

Creative Movement classes, from the Tap- Ballet Sampler to Story-time consist of preliminary instruction that touches on dance, music appreciation, creativity and imagination to teach students the development of basic axial motor and locomotor skills to entice students to use their bodies in an expressive way. The Creative Movement courses allow students to develop age appropriate "formative" skills as a precursor to more arduous dance classes at the transitional or formative years.

Pre-Ballet- Classical Ballet 1

Ages 5-8

Pre-Ballet continues to promote creativity, imagination and exploration but the instruction is backed with more ballet technique. In Classical Ballet 1, students will use everything they learned in Pre-ballet in conjunction with becoming acquainted with posture, barre work, focusing attention longer, and elementary French ballet vocabulary. Students will also be introduced to the art of listening and hearing music tempos and rhythms and to begin to understand their bodies.

The Middle School:

Classical Ballet 2- 4

Guideline Ages 8-12

From the beginning of Classical Ballet 2, the entire course of study should cover a minimum of 9-10 years. But from Classical Ballet 2 – Classical Ballet 6 there are only 5 levels of training. That is because the training from Classical 2-4 takes approximately 5 years on average to complete, if the student is taking classes a minimum of 2-3 days per week. Proper body and leg alignment is introduced at these levels and is essential to achieve for the health and longevity of the student along with the continuation of learning new vocabulary, steps, and types of movement.

In Classical Ballet 3, students are introduced to pre-pointe strengtheners (physical therapy exercises) to prepare them properly for the difficult demi-pointe and pointe work which **may** begin in Classical Ballet 4. At this stage students must take a minimum of 3 technique classes per week to build the strength necessary to begin pre-pointe work safely and prepare them for demi pointe work. Cross-training is also introduced and encouraged for attaining muscular balance. Advancement into demi-pointe or pointe shoes happens after the class has been taken in ballet slippers at the discretion of the teacher. The school principal will accompany students to be fit in demi-pointe and pointe shoes.

The Upper School:

Classical Ballet 5-6

Guideline Ages 12-18

These are the most important, critical years for the development of the young dance student. At this stage, beginning in Classical Ballet 5, demi-pointe, pointe and boys or men's work are added to the daily regimen of technique classes. In these levels, students are required to take ballet classes 4 days a week, and at least one cross -training class in jazz as well as at least 2 demi-pointe classes per week. In Classical Ballet 6 the requirements of classes increases incrementally, and the level of instruction is considered to be advanced. Partnering classes are also added in Classical Ballet 6.

Trainee Program:

Ages 17+

A Trainee program is at the top of any comprehensive classical or contemporary program of dance. Students in these programs are graduates from high school and or solid college dance programs. Students in the Trainee program are transitioning between the school and Company. A portion of their training takes place in specific Trainee class while the rest of their training occurs during the day with the professional company.

Adult Division:

Ages 16+

These classes are designed for the Beginning to Intermediate/Advanced students, who want to experience ballet as exercise, or who want to continue developing their skills as dancers. Students may sign up for anywhere from 1-4 classes per week. Annex classes maybe paid by the semester or per class. The drop in rate is \$20 per 1 hour class, \$25 per 1.5 hour class and \$30 per 2 hour class. Maryland Hall classes must be paid by the semester.

Cross-Training Division:

Ages 7+

Students may sign up for these classes as individual classes or with no requirements or may add them as cross-training for the ballet program. Students may also customize these classes with adult or other ballet to prepare them for musical theatre, or maintenance work in jazz or modern.

Summer Intensive:

Students in Classical Ballet 4. and above are highly encouraged to audition and participate in a professional 5 week Summer Intensive. Ballet Theatre of Maryland's Summer Intensive is a 5 week program that allows students to develop themselves as both athletes and artists in a comprehensive training program that meets the national standard for good dance training and for excellence. In addition to daily technique, pointe or pre-pointe classes, students also experience jazz, musical theatre, anatomy, Pilates, modern, character dance, acting for dancers, choreography, rehearsals and an end of the program performance. In addition, they explore dance history, nutrition, resume writing, literature, music and more. Auditions for the BTM Summer Intensive are held at the Merritt Annex the first two Sundays in March.

Faculty

Ballet Theatre of Maryland's **faculty is comprised of instructors who are current and previous professional dancers. Many are current Ballet Theatre of Maryland company dancers and some have also completed a university degree in dance education.** They are dedicated to the success of each student. All school faculty members adhere to the Conservatory syllabus, while bringing their unique backgrounds to the studio, giving students a broad dance background designed to meet the eclectic needs of dance companies today.

Performance Opportunities

***The Nutcracker* and Other Company Productions:**

The Nutcracker and selected company productions are open by audition to all eligible students age six and above. **One of the greatest opportunities afforded students in a good, professional school** is the chance to **work with top rate professional choreographers who coach and develop the performance technique appropriately in the young dancer** and challenge them to be the best they can be. It is also a **privilege to be able to dance alongside professional dancers** who serve as good role models and also **mentor them** and help them to strive for excellence. Through performance opportunities, **students learn the value of teamwork, commitment, follow through and community service. Productions like *The Nutcracker*** require a long term, intense commitment. Rehearsals for some roles begin during the 5 weeks of our Summer Intensive. Some roles for *The Nutcracker* will audition in the Fall. **Other mainstage company productions** require 3-4 weekends of rehearsals plus 4-5 days in the theatre during the week of the show.

The Annual Conservatory Show

All students in Creative Movement 2 and above are eligible to participate in our end of year annual performance, the first weekend of June. The Annual Conservatory Show takes place at Maryland Hall and is a wonderful opportunity for students to familiarize themselves with performing all while showing off their commitment and accomplishments that they gained that year in classes.

Rehearsals will take place during the last 15-20 mins of class as not to disrupt the aspects of training. Classical Ballet 5-6 will perform a Classical piece and rehearse on Friday nights from 7-10pm and a contemporary piece on Saturday afternoons from 1:30-5pm beginning the month of May. The Adult ballet piece will also rehearse on Saturday afternoons from 1:30-3pm beginning in May. All of these rehearsals outside of class time will take place at the Annex and you will be given notice prior to the start date.

Due to the limited rehearsal time, there is a strict policy regarding absences for students participating in the show. **After April 30, there will be no absences allowed. Missing class or rehearsal may result in the student being removed from the performance.**

Students are required to fulfill their full class requirement for their level in order to be eligible to participate in the school show. **The school advises parents and students that a decision to participate in the annual school performance is a commitment to faculty and classmates, and should be made only after carefully considering a student's ability to attend all required classes and rehearsals.** Absences due to mandatory school trips and/or camps must be submitted in writing as far in advance as possible; students may be asked not to participate in the performance, depending on the length and time of absence.

There is an annual costume fee and production fee for each participating student. The annual school performance is a ticketed event. Tickets are purchased through BTM's box office at Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts.

Class Registration

Students must register on-line at www.marylandhall.org for all Maryland Hall classes and must register online through the school's online Jackrabbit program, in person or over the phone for all classes held at The Merritt Annex. All students must be registered by the end of the first week of classes for all of their classes for the semester. If a student is not registered for their classes by this time, they will be asked to sit out and watch class until they are fully registered. If there is need for a payment plan, please speak to the School Principal prior to the start of classes for the semester.

Payment Plans

Payment plans are available for classes held at the Merritt Annex and only by permission of the School Principal and/or the Director. For all financial aid concerns, please make an appointment to speak to the Director.

Late Fees

A **\$25 late fee** will be charged by BTM in the first month of classes for those who did not register and make payment prior to the end of the first week of class at Maryland Hall or the Annex. A **5% fee of the total** amount owed will be charged after the first month of late payment. A **5.5% fee of the total** tuition owed will be charged after the second month of late payment. A **6% fee will** be charged after the third month of late payment.

Tuition Waiver and Scholarships

Maryland Hall does offer tuition waivers each semester. Recipients are selected by Anne Arundel County Public Schools Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Please contact Maryland Hall's main office or Anne Arundel County Public Schools Guidance Offices for more information and applications. The Ballet Theatre of Maryland has a limited number of scholarships for classes at the Merritt Annex available to students who meet financial based eligibility requirements. Applications can be acquired from the staff at the Merritt Annex.

Withdrawing

Students who decide not to continue for the second half of the school year must formally withdraw (via written notification) before January 30th. Should a student need to be removed from a class due to illness or another unavoidable emergency, the office should be contacted immediately. If a student must be withdrawn from a class at Maryland Hall, the Maryland Hall main office must be contacted.

Student Tickets

All new students will receive two tickets to the BTM Company show of their choice at Maryland Hall. Any current student who refers two new families to BTM will also be eligible for two tickets to the BTM Company show of their choice. Tickets can be requested through the BTM School Office.

Policies and Procedures

BTM has developed Policies and Procedures as a guideline to help students and parents understand what to expect from our school. Questions concerning these Policies and Procedures should be brought to the attention of our staff.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. Students or their families must report all absences to the School prior to class time in order to be excused. **Students who are injured are expected to observe classes and take notes.** Attendance is critical to consistent progress and advancement in the School. Poor attendance may jeopardize a student's placement, participation in productions, or promotion.

In case of any absence, parents or guardians are asked to contact the instructor through the BTM office. If the student has been kept home from academic school because of an illness, it is recommended that they not attend BTM classes on that day. However, if the student has attended academic school but is not feeling well enough to do physical activity, it is suggested that they observe dance class.

If a student knows of a scheduling conflict in which they will miss class, the instructor should be notified in advanced. If there is a conflict with a rehearsal, a release form must be filled out and signed by the Conservatory Director . Not all requests for release will be approved. These forms are available at each office.

In cases of extended absence for any reason, for the physical safety of the student, they may be asked to return at a lower level until further assessment can be made. Make-Up

Classes

If a student misses a class for any reason, they may take any class in the same level or lower as a make-up class. The student must inform the instructor of the regularly scheduled class and the make -up class and clear it through the Conservatory Director. If a class needs to be canceled for any reason, BTM will make other arrangements.

Instructor-Student Contact

The Ballet Theatre of Maryland strives to offer teaching that is individual and “hands-on”. It is appropriate for a member of the faculty to manually and physically position a pupil to expound a point of instruction or to pinpoint an individual flaw in their technique. The Conservatory neither condones nor tolerates any touching of students by instructors that is harmful, professionally reckless, or that violates generally accepted tenets of propriety. *In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, hands- on instruction and corrections will not occur. *

Arrival

Students are to arrive on time and be properly dressed (see dress code). Parents or guardians of any student 12 and under must sign them in and out for each class in any location. For the safety of all of our students, we ask that the parent or guardian drop the student off and pick the student up from outside the classroom rather than at the front door. If an exception needs to be made, please contact your student’s instructor and the school administrator. If a student in Creative Movement through Classical Ballet 4 levels is more than 10 minutes late, they will be asked to observe the remainder of class. If a student in Classical Ballet 5 or higher is more than 10 minutes late, they will be asked to observe and take notes on the remainder of class.

Behavior

Students are expected to demonstrate respect towards their instructors, other adults and other students at all times. Disruptive behavior will lead to disciplinary action including asking the student to observe the remainder of class. In extreme cases, BTM may schedule a conference between the student, parent, instructor, and the Conservatory Director and if necessary, the student may be dismissed from the class and/or the Conservatory.

Electronic Devices

Students are prohibited from using electronic devices while in the studio during class time this includes cell phones. The use of electronic devices is disruptive to the student's focus and disrespectful to the instructor.

Conflict/Resolution

Students and parents who experience difficulty with other students or with an instructor should try to resolve the issue with the instructor first. If a resolution cannot be reached, or if you feel uncomfortable discussing the conflict with the instructor, please contact the Conservatory Director for assistance or to arrange an appointment.

Inclement Weather Policy

If Anne Arundel County public schools are closed, BTM will also be closed. If public schools have a 1/2 hour delay, morning classes will be canceled but evening classes will take place. If public schools are dismissed early, evening classes will be canceled at the discretion of Maryland Hall.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

In the event of an emergency, all students and staff will exit via the side stairway closest to the studio at Maryland Hall and proceed away from the building. They will remain there until given the clear to return to the building or they are picked up by parents. At the Annex, exit via the front or rear door, whichever is closest.

In the case of a hurricane or tornado, Maryland Hall staff will direct students and faculty to the gym area on the first floor. At the Annex, students and staff will go to the back office that has no windows.

Restroom Policy

Parents are requested to make sure their child uses the restroom prior to class to minimize interruptions. In levels Classical Ballet 2 and below, a parent volunteer will be asked to escort students to the restroom. If a parent volunteer is not available, the instructor will take the entire class.

Lost and Found

All missing items can be dropped off or picked up at either office; however anything remaining at the end of each month will be donated to charity.

Safety and Security

At the beginning of each semester, students and their parents are asked to complete an emergency contact sheet. This is kept on record at both offices in case of emergency. For safety purposes, we ask that students not roam the building in any location. An instructor or the Conservatory Director must know where each student is at all times.

Dress Code

Ballet:

Girls- Black leotard, pink tights, pink ballet shoes/pointe shoes, no jewelry with the exception of stud earrings. Hair must be neatly pulled back, away from the face, into a clean bun or ponytail if hair is too short.

Boys- White t-shirt, black tights and white or black ballet shoes.

Adult/Teen:

Comfortable ballet/dance attire, ballet shoes.

Jazz:

Girls- Any solid colored leotard, jazz pants or tights, black jazz shoes.

Boys- T-shirt, jazz pants or sweats, black jazz shoes.

Tap:

Girls- Black leotard, tights or socks, shorts are optional, black tap shoes.

Boys- T-shirt, pants or shorts, black tap shoes.

Modern:

Girls- Black leotard, black tights, bare feet.

Boys- T-shirt, pants or shorts, bare feet.

For all dance supplies, BTM dancers and students often use the following:

Dance Supplies, Etc.
556 Governor Ritchie Hwy.
Severna Park, Md. 21146
www.dancesupply.com
800-90-Dance

Discount Dance Supply
www.discountdance.com

Additional Dress Code Guidelines

No Shirts, legwarmers skirts, etc., may be worn.

Jewelry should be minimal; small earrings at the teacher's discretion. Shoes should be neatly sewn with like colored thread. Pointe shoes must have ribbons.

Dancewear is to be kept laundered and in good repair. Any holes should be mended with same color thread.

Please mark clothing, shoes, and dance bags with the student's name and class level.

Dress code must be adhered to in all Company rehearsals.

Do not use fabric softeners when laundering dance attire; it damages studio floors.

Health Issues

Injuries

All student injuries and accidents in and out of ballet class must be reported promptly to the Conservatory office. School staff will document the student's condition and any medical guidelines for activity. If an injury occurs, please do the following:

- Notify appropriate faculty immediately so that proper documentation can be made
- Have your doctor fax a report on you injury to the office in order to facilitate your recovery
- We must receive written permission from your doctor allowing you to resume classes.
- Any student with an injury requiring limited participation in class or a significant leave of absence from BTM must meet with the Director to set up a recovery plan before returning to classes.

Allergies and Pre-Existing Conditions

Please make the instructor aware of any allergies or pre-existing conditions that your child Has. Make sure these are also indicated on the emergency contact form.

Weight Loss

The Ballet Theatre of Maryland promotes good nutrition and a healthy body esthetic for all our students. Students who need help in this area may consult with the Conservatory Director. Students who exhibit signs of eating disorders will be provided with information and referrals to see health care specialists to ensure their health and safety.

Notices and Messages

Changes and important notices are emailed through the School's Jackrabbit software and posted on social media platforms. Please be sure to "Like", follow, and subscribe to all social media platforms.

Photography/ Videography

A photo/ video release form will be required from each student giving BTM permission to take photos of students in classes and/or performances to use for purposes of promoting Ballet Theatre of Maryland. Students may NOT take any photos/videos on the BTM premises without prior permission from the School staff.

Tickets/Attending Performances

We encourage all students to attend BTM Company performances. The live theatre experience provides an essential and enriching component to the education of our students. Tickets for all BTM performances at Maryland Hall may be purchased in person at BTM's Box Office at Maryland Hall, BTM Subscriptions are available and offers a 35% discount on tickets. BTM students are expected to behave in a responsible, respectful, and disciplined manner when attending the ballet. Be mindful of other patrons seated nearby and remember you are representing BTM.

Donations

As a non-profit organization, tuition covers less than 70% of the cost of operating Ballet Theatre of Conservatory of Dance. Gifts from BTM parents, both past and present, are encouraged and are vital and appreciated to continued operation of the school. Visit balletmaryland.org/supportbtm to view ways to donate. There is no correlation between parent's personal gifts to the Conservatory and a child's progress in BTM classes or in the casting of BTM productions.

FAQ's

1. How do I know when my child is ready to move up?
Your child's level promotion is entirely based on improvement, not age. Students in all levels are evaluated twice annually and the Conservatory Director will discuss level placement for all students with the faculty at each semester's end.
2. For first-time students, how do I know what level to place my child in?
Students in Creative Movement, Pre-ballet, Classical Ballet 1, and Tiny Toes may sign up based on age guidelines. Students with no previous dance experience may sign up for Jazz, Tap, Modern, or Adult classes based on their age as well. Students who are new to BTM but who have had previous dance experience should also contact the Conservatory Director for a level evaluation.
3. Why must my child take 3 technique classes per week in order to take pre-pointe, demi-pointe or pointe classes? How will I know when they should get demi-pointe/pointe shoes?
At the pre-pointe level of development, students must take a minimum of 3 technique classes per week to build the strength and alignment necessary to

begin pre-pointe, or continue demi-pointe or pointe training safely. 3 classes per week follows the “rule of 3” determined by sports & Dance Medicine Specialists required to develop the musculature necessary to minimize soft-tissue displacement, stress fractures and improper alignment in the legs, spine, knees or ankles that can lead to back, knee and other neuromuscular problems when students reach their 30’s. If trained properly with enough strength building repetition, pre, demi and pointe work will be safe and a healthy, beneficial strengthener for your child-correcting neuromuscular and alignment problems rather than displacing or causing them.

After the student has completed at least one to two semesters in demi-pointe shoes or a pre-pointe class in ballet slippers, their instructor will determine if they are ready to start working in demi or full pointe shoes. The requirements of strength, control, proper alignment increase incrementally to prepare students to safely meet the increasing demands of the art form and begin working on demi or full pointe.

4. Why does BTM strongly recommend Jazz and/or Modern as a cross-trainer?

Cross-training with Jazz and/or Modern is strongly recommended from Classical Ballet 4 and up. When the young dance student begins to intensify their training in these other forms, they also strengthen and stretch opposite muscular groups which creates more of a balance in the development of the dancer. This helps to minimize risks for potential overuse injuries.

5. My child is only interested in Jazz, Tap or Musical Theatre. Why should they take ballet?

Ballet helps form the base technique for musical theatre, jazz and modern dance as it is the foundation for each of these other forms. Students who wish to focus on these forms may contact the conservatory director to discuss a schedule that meets their desired interests.

6. My child is never going to dance professionally. Why should they have to take all the required classes?

Students at every level should strive for excellence and to be the best they can be regardless of whether or not they plan to dance professionally. Until they are fully done growing, it is not possible for a young dance student to be able to maintain the strength and alignment in the legs or spine, etc., that is required to execute the increasing demands of the Ballet Syllabus safely or properly. As the classes increase, the amount and difficulty of jumps, turns, and pointe work increases proportionally.

7. Why is Summer Intensive recommended when my child reaches Classical Ballet 4?

For students, Classical Ballet 4 and above, it is essential for the training and development of the young student to attend summer intensive session in order to develop the strength, stamina and athletic skills necessary for them to maintain their level and ultimately progress to an Advanced level status.



Nicole Kelsch
Artistic Director

I have read and understand Ballet Theatre of Maryland Conservatory of Dance's handbook and agree to abide by its policies and guidelines.

Date: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Parent's Printed Name: _____

Student's Name: _____

Student Signature (Beginning Ballet III and above): _____

*Please detach and return to either BTM office at your earliest convenience.

Thank you,
BTM School Administration

