



## **THE OSA SCHOOL OF DANCE WAY OF LIFE**

### **Three Words That Will Change Your Life** by Alex Green

Talk about a model prisoner...

In 1985, Fleet Maull began serving a 14-year sentence for drug trafficking. During his incarceration, he completed a Ph.D. in Psychology, authored a well-received book, became an ordained priest, founded a prison hospice program and launched the Prison Dharma Network, a non-profit organization that supports prisoner rehabilitation through contemplative spirituality.

Today Maull works as a peace activist and personal effectiveness coach, lecturing at leading universities, in corporate boardrooms, in high-risk areas like Rwanda and the Middle East, and in what he calls “the forgotten world” inside our jails and prisons.

Maull has plenty of wisdom and experience to share. But he sums up his core message in a single phrase: Radical Responsibility.

Maull believes we create everything that’s happening in our lives, good and bad. It’s only when we accept complete responsibility that we take the giant step from childhood to adulthood. Self-responsibility is the key to personal effectiveness in every sphere of life.

Yet many choose to embrace the psychology of helplessness and victimhood, preferring to explain all their struggles in terms of the actions of others.

Like you, I meet many middle-aged men and women who are still grumbling and complaining about earlier unhappy experiences, who are still blaming their problems on other people or “the breaks.” They’re angry with their parents, fuming at an old boss, still simmering over their ex-spouse. They’re trapped in the past and can’t get free.

Yet the great enemy of success and happiness is negative emotions. Fear, self-pity, envy, jealousy and anger hold us back, tie us down and suck the joy out of life.

Studies show that there are four root causes of these emotions. Once you identify them, you can begin to banish them:

- **Justification.** You can be negative only as long as you convince yourself that you are entitled to be angry. Unhappy individuals will always be found explaining and elaborating on the profound unfairness of their situation.
- **Rationalization.** Rationalization is self-deception, an attempt to create a plausible explanation for a socially unacceptable act. (As in, “If I turn this in six weeks late, no one will care anyway.”)
- **Blaming.** There is no quality more closely associated with unhappiness than the habit of blaming others for our difficulties.
- **Poor Self-Esteem.** Low self-esteem is generally characterized by a hypersensitivity to the opinions of

others. No one wants to lose the respect of others, but conscientious people don't need to fret about what other people think.

Management consultant Brian Tracy points out that there's a simple antidote to these factors that create negative emotions. You need only say three words: I am responsible.

Whether your problem is joblessness, addiction, overspending, obesity, or a damaged personal relationship, you move closer to a solution the moment you say, "I am responsible."

It's impossible to say these words and still feel angry. The very act of taking responsibility short-circuits and cancels out negative emotions.

As Tracy says, "Every time you blame someone else or make excuses, you give your power away. You feel weakened and diminished... Without the acceptance of complete personal responsibility, no progress is possible. On the other hand, once you accept total responsibility for your life, there are no limits to what you can be, do and have."

Yet many would rather train for the Boston Marathon in three feet of snow than say these words. Why? Psychologists say human beings have a natural propensity to accumulate pride and shun regret. Whether we recognize it or not, we tend to take responsibility for the positive developments in our lives and attribute unfavorable developments to others or circumstances.

This is not to say there aren't times when our lives are significantly influenced by outside forces. Maybe you're a great worker who lost her job due to a corporate downsizing or the poor economy.

Maybe your parents really were poor role models. But victims don't create change. It's only when you choose to focus on what you can do and how you should act that you gain power.

Businesses and other organizations today are looking for people who are willing and able to think, who are self-directing and self-managing, who respond to problems proactively rather than merely waiting for someone else's solutions.

A study done in New York a few years ago found that people who ranked in the top 3% in every field had a special attitude that set them apart from average performers in their industries. It was this: They chose to view themselves as self-employed throughout their careers, no matter who signed their paychecks.

These are people who set goals, make plans, establish measures and get results.

Radical responsibility changes everything. It means you own your thoughts, impulses, feelings and actions. You are accountable for the consequences they bring and the impact they have on others.

This is not a burden, incidentally. It's a privilege and an honor to take ownership of your actions. It creates freedom and control. It gives meaning to life.

Self-reliance is the great source of personal power. We create ourselves, shape our identity and determine the course of our lives by what we are willing to take responsibility for.

Want to change your life and solve your problems, starting today?

Say three simple words:

***I AM RESPONSIBLE.***

# **OSA SCHOOL OF DANCE EXPECTATIONS**

PARENTS AND STUDENTS: The School of Dance training program, with its high standards and expectations, is designed to allow the student to prepare for college and university dance programs and to point the student in the direction of a career in dance. We, the teachers of the School of Dance, recognize a bigger and broader dance world and will do our best to encourage and to bring in guest teachers in other dance forms besides Ballet, Contemporary, and Jazz. But remember that the main thing remains the main thing and that is to get your child ready to be able to compete to get into college/university dance programs and/or to be pointed in the direction of a professional dance career and to be able to compete in that world.

## **Remember:**

**The School of Dance is a dance TRAINING program, not a dance enrichment program and your student will be graded on this.**

## **ARTISTIC ADVISEMENT**

The OSA School of Dance recognizes the value of clear and frequent communication between its students, parent/guardians, and faculty, and the importance of mentoring students (and educating parent/guardians) in the learning, training, and artistic process.

To that end, students (particularly High School students) are expected to clearly communicate their artistic/life goals and intentions to the School of Dance Faculty, in a timely manner (i.e. do not come to SoD Faculty only weeks before an audition to ask for advice and counsel; students should be preparing at least months in advance, if not years, for auditions/etc.), and to seek counsel and advisement from the School of Dance Faculty on how to best prepare for their goals and whether or not they are even ready for their stated goals.

Students should be open to hearing the open and honest feedback that School of Dance Faculty have to give to the student, based on what they have observed of the student's actions and behavior in classes and rehearsals, on whether these goals align with the student's talents, strengths, weaknesses, abilities, work ethic, work habits, and approach. As School of Dance Faculty, we take our responsibility to be honest with our students and where they stand in relation to their goals very seriously. It is not a responsibility we take lightly and any information given to the student in relation to where the School of Dance Faculty perceives the student to be, is meant to be real, honest, and truthful. The intention of open honest feedback and communication will never be to hurt the student's feelings and will only ever be intended to give the student a "reality check" so that the student can then make an informed decision about whether they have the will, drive, and desire to change their habits and approach to meet the goals they want for themselves or whether they are not willing to put that type of work in and might want to reassess what their goals for themselves might be.

With that, students who are contemplating auditioning for and/or attending certain programs (Summer Intensives, College/University programs, Pre-Professional Training Programs, etc.) should clearly communicate their intentions to the School of Dance Faculty and should seek advisement/counseling from the School of Dance Faculty about whether these goals/intentions/etc. are realistic and what they might need to do to reach their goals or whether the School of Dance might suggest different programs that might be a better fit, etc.

Students should receive the feedback from instructors as suggestions and a conversation and not as something that is meant to be punitive. We are not looking for a fight. We are looking to help.

School of Dance Faculty members make themselves readily available, upon request, to speak to students (and parent/guardians) to help advise and mentor them on artistic, procedural, and personal concerns.

- **LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION:**

Students are expected to understand that teacher letters of recommendation are an **EARNED privilege**, not a right, meaning: **TEACHERS DO NOT HAVE TO WRITE LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION. WE CAN SAY "NO"**.

A Dance Recommendation should truthfully reflect what the program is about and what the program represents. An untrue recommendation that is not honest and forthcoming about a particular student undermines future applicants to that particular school/program, who may be well deserving of a Dance Recommendation. We must be very protective of the School of Dance reputation.

**For students to earn and deserve a letter of recommendation from the School of Dance, they should consistently demonstrate exemplary behavior, work ethic, attitude, approach, and citizenship throughout the entirety of their time in the Dance Department and MUST FULLFILL ALL AUDITION REQUIREMENTS (including prep work and follow up work) FOR THEIR GRADE LEVEL, as detailed in the Grade Level expectations** (see “School of Dance Technical Objectives” below).

Students who do not fulfill all audition requirements, which include thorough, conscientious, and high quality preparatory and follow up work, to the satisfaction of School of Dance Faculty, (this includes students who go on the required number of auditions, but who do not properly prepare for said auditions and do not complete high quality follow up assignments [i.e. “phoning it in”]), are not considered eligible to receive Letters of Recommendation from School of Dance Faculty.

Student behavior, attitude, and work ethic throughout their years in the School of Dance will be taken into consideration when determining whether a letter of recommendation has been earned and is deserved.

The Dance student should always reflect upon themselves: Have they truly done the work? Have they truly reflected upon the values and expectations of the Dance Department?

Remember: When we write letters of recommendation, we are putting our reputations as dance teachers and the reputation and standard of the OSA School of Dance department on the line. We cannot afford to be careless when making decisions about whether or not to write letters of recommendations for students. We must continue to uphold the standards of the OSA School of Dance department so that all letters of recommendation, both present and future, actually hold weight and value, and accurately reflect the OSA School of Dance standards and values, to the colleges/universities or programs that are receiving them from the student.

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**School of Dance STUDENT LIFESTYLE/WAY OF LIFE**

• **STUDENT ACTIONS/BEHAVIOR/CITIZENSHIP:**

**On campus behavior, in and out of the classroom, is extremely important, for Dance is not about just the studio and the stage, it is about a way of life.** And here at OSA, the School of Dance is proudly held to a higher standard.

No loud, boisterous, unruly behavior in or around the halls, classrooms, OSA campus, Dance Studios, and Dressing Rooms.

**Students are expected to behave in a mature manner and to address all OSA teachers, staff, and students in a respectful manner.**

When in doubt, if the student can't be a leader, **the student is expected to be quiet and respectful in each of their teacher's classrooms.**

When in a situation that involves disagreement, the student is expected to respectfully cede to the teacher and to inform parents/guardians, High/Middle School Principals, and if need be, Administration, so that said disagreement can be addressed appropriately while avoiding, as much as possible, giving to the teacher a negative impression of the student.

**Physical altercations and fighting will NOT BE TOLERATED. Any participation in fighting on the part of the dance student can and will be used against said dance student, when determining appropriate consequences, including but not limited to removal from shows/performances.**

**Any dance student who is aware of any fighting or potential/impending fights involving another dance student is expected and HAS A RESPONSIBILITY to report fighting or anticipated fighting to any school personnel (a teacher, principal, security guard, administrator, Mr. Savage or Ms. Hurley, etc.). If a dance student is aware of fighting or impending fighting and does not report it to school personnel, that student will be held up to the consequences of not helping/supporting a fellow dance student, and that student is at risk**

**of being ineligible to perform/choreograph.**

**Students exercising poor judgment with regards to their behavior online (Facebook, Twitter, SnapChat, etc...), including sending emails, posting pictures/videos, comments, “status updates”/etc. with the intent of scaring, hurting, harassing, dissing, denigrating, outing, discriminating, belittling, intimidating, disrespecting, physically or emotionally harming, and/or threatening the safety of any person, including students, teachers, staff and the greater OSA Community, is at risk of being ineligible to perform and/or whatever consequences OSA and its teachers, staff, and administrators, deem fit.**

**\*We want students to learn about character and integrity to handle competition and life in a mature, professional, and self-respecting way.\***

**There will be no disrespectful attitudes towards instructors, fellow students, and OSA Faculty and Staff: Respect everyone in class, on campus, and in the community.**

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• **POSTURE:**

Parents/guardians: you must help us in reminding your student that posture and the understanding of body alignment are major concerns for their development as Dance students and to help them see posture as a way of life, a way of carrying yourself and presenting yourself to the world. Posture is important because it is your first impression on choreographers, dance teachers, judges and panelists at auditions. How you carry yourself affects how the world perceives and receives you; Whether you plan on becoming a dancer, doctor, or a lawyer, how you present yourself to colleges, potential employers, on interviews, etc. can affect the types of opportunities that are made available to you. Good posture can truly help separate yourself from the rest of the pack and help to open up doors and opportunities, as it implies that you care about who you are, where you come from, and where you want to go.

**Posture habits cannot be fixed by solely focusing on them in the Dance studio—students MUST be aware of their posture throughout their everyday lives and activities.**

**Staying pulled up (stomach in, chest lifted, shoulders down) will be a CONSTANT requirement during all dance classes.**

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• **STUDENTS’ RESPONSIBILITY TO THEIR BODIES:**

Students must remember that dancers and dance students are at least part athlete and that eating nutritiously (Parents/Guardians, please help your child in this), staying hydrated, and taking care of and being responsible for the health and wellness of their bodies, including keeping up on personal conditioning and stretching programs, **adequately stretching and warming up for class**, staying warm and ready to dance during rehearsals, icing tender body parts at home, is each student’s individual responsibility.

**School of Dance Faculty cannot be responsible for students who incur injuries by neglecting the responsibilities they have to their bodies.**

Students need to exercise the self-discipline and responsibility toward their art to **consistently:**

- **Come to class in time to give your body a proper warm up and stretching time (and stay focused on yourself and your body during this time—no side conversations or distractions)**
- **Keep up on personal stretching and conditioning programs, and technical work at home**
- **Take, apply, retain, and work on corrections which are there to help keep you injury-free**

## **We cannot help students who do not help themselves.**

- **DANCE TARDIES:** As stated above, students who neglect their responsibilities to their bodies by not giving themselves enough **FOCUSED** (NOT socializing/conversational) time before class to properly and thoroughly warm-up and stretch out their bodies, are putting themselves at higher risk of injury. This is a very basic, “Dance 101”, type of responsibility—this is NOT going above and beyond the “call of duty” for dance students. In light of this very basic but **essential** habit and responsibility, the School of Dance has the following policies:
  - **Middle School: Students** are considered Dance Tardy if they are not on the floor stretching/warming up by 10:05am (Tuesday-Friday; students should expect class to begin by 10:10am) and 9:35am (on early release Mondays; students should expect class to begin by 9:40am)
  - **High School: Students** are considered Dance Tardy if they are not on the floor stretching/warming up by 1:25pm (Tuesday-Friday; students should expect class to begin at 1:35pm) and 11:45am (on early release Mondays; students should expect class to begin by 11:50am)

**Excessive Dance Tardies increase the risk of injury to the student and also point to the lack of seriousness toward Dance on the part of the student.**

**All Dance Tardies will be noted in the teachers’ records and excessive Dance Tardies will indicate to us that said students’ priorities, attitude, and approach do NOT align with the priorities, seriousness, approach, standards and expectations of the School of Dance. Excessive Dance Tardies will count toward student assessment.**

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## **IN THE STUDIO**

In the study of dance, students are not merely learning a technique. They are learning a discipline and an art form, which possesses a rich history and a set of established traditions. It is most important that students are aware of these traditions, or protocol, since most instructors will automatically assume that they have an understanding of them. Failure to comply with the established policies is unacceptable and will be reflected in the student's grade. The dance faculty expects all students to maintain proper dress and behavior in all classes throughout the school day. The following rules and guidelines will help you to meet our expectations:

- **COME PREPARED:** Students must come to class prepared **EVERY DAY**: dance bag, water, notebook, writing utensil, and a great attitude **EVERY DAY**. **STUDENTS MUST BRING DANCE CLOTHES to school EVERY DAY.**  
**ALWAYS ASSUME THAT YOU ARE DANCING, EVERYDAY; COME TO CLASS PREPARED TO DANCE, EVERYDAY. DO NOT ASSUME ANYTHING, ESPECIALLY ANYTHING HEARD FROM OTHER FELLOW STUDENTS. IF YOU DID NOT HEAR IT FROM A SCHOOL OF DANCE TEACHER, YOU DID NOT HEAR IT.**
- **No chewing gum in the studio**
- **ENERGY:** Students are expected to bring a sense of energy and focus to the class, **EVERY DAY**: REMEMBER they, the student, and you the parent, wanted and **auditioned** to attend OSA—so act accordingly **EVERY DAY**.
- **URGENCY:** Time is of the utmost importance: students must get to class quickly and quietly; there is only time to get dressed and warmed up for class.\*  
**\*ALL MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO COME TO SCHOOL WITH THEIR HAIR ALREADY UP AND READY FOR DANCE CLASS.** There is not enough time for them to properly do their hair, according to dress code, and stretch and warm up, between the start of the school day and the beginning of dance class, for Dance class begins at 3<sup>rd</sup> period, in the beginning of their day. So to start it off right, they should have their hair up. They are more than welcome to wear their hair how they would like after class is over.

- **FOCUS:** Gossiping and horseplay will not be tolerated before, during, and after class. The student must get dressed quickly to use any remaining time they have to warm up and focus on the task at hand: dance class.
- **PERSONAL BELONGINGS:** Keep Dressing Rooms and Studio areas neat and clear at all times. All personal belongings are to be put *into* students' dance bags when not in use: **Students are not to leave belongings by dance bags, along the sides or in the middle of the studio, or in the Dressing Rooms.** All items found in these areas will be put into the Studio Lost and Found bin, which is emptied on a regular basis, without warning. **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PERSONAL ITEMS BEHIND. YOUR CHILD IS RESPONSIBLE FOR *THEIR* DANCE GEAR.**
- **MANNERS:** Always address the teacher with Sir/Ma'am/Mr./Ms. at the beginning/end of your sentences
- **No cell phone use in class:** This means no texting, talking, facebooking, emailing, web surfing, tweeting, etc.
- **Students must stay pulled up during class.** Students' awareness of proper posture and the understanding of body alignment are major concerns for their development as Dance students. Posture habits cannot be fixed by solely focusing on them in the Dance studio—students **MUST** be aware of their posture throughout their everyday lives and activities. Staying pulled up (stomach in, chest lifted, shoulders down) will be a **CONSTANT** requirement during all dance classes.
- **Students are not allowed to lay/lean on the barre during class**
- Once class has begun, students are not allowed to stretch on the floor during class unless specifically ok'd by the teacher (they may do standing stretches [i.e. barre stretch, heel in hand, etc.] as long as they are clearly still paying attention to and focused on the teacher)
- Students must have their eyes on the teacher when the teacher is speaking and/or demonstrating: **ALL EYES ON THE TEACHER.**
- **Students are not allowed to have their hands on their hips**
- **There will be no talking amongst students unless ok'd by the teacher**
- **Students must raise their hands (no blurting or shouting out) to ask questions**
- **DOWN AND AROUND:** Students must come down to the front of the studio and go around after they finish combinations
- **READINESS:** Students must end all activity/talking and be ready to dance when they hear the words "Music up" or "Places"
- Students must develop the discipline and understanding of how to use their mental capabilities to work out individual problems. One of the most important facets of technique class is concentration. Students must pay attention to the total movement, focusing on sequence, quality, and details.
- **CORRECTIONS:** Corrections are essential to improvement in all dance classes. Corrections are not criticisms. Understanding that corrections in class are given as an aid to progress is crucial to progressing in dance, both technically and artistically. As a Dance student, considering all "general" corrections and corrections given specifically to another dance student as if they applied to you alone is one of the fastest roads to progress. Constructive corrections/notes on student's technique, student's choreography, and student's performance comes from a knowledgeable and experienced faculty that is personally invested in each Dance Student's progress and growth, and is always intended to aid in the student's technical and artistic progress. **Students are expected to acknowledge the correction with a positive response. Students are expected to apply the information given, even if they are not the one receiving the correction.** Often the situation will call for students to repeat the movement attempting to put the correction into effect. If the student does not understand the correction, they are expected to ask for further clarification.
- **DISCIPLINE:** The student is in class to learn discipline as well as technique.
- **LEAVING CLASS:** No leaving class without asking the instructor's permission.
- **COVER-UPS IN HALLS:** Students must be dressed in street clothes, sweat pants, or other cover-ups when out in the hallways on breaks, going to the bathroom, or even rehearsing in the hallways.
- **No eating or drinking anything in the Dressing Rooms;** This is where costumes and other dance supplies are stored. We do not want to have a pest control issue where students must wear costumes that have come into contact with pests and other unhygienic conditions. Costumes are purchased with School of Dance

funds and we must keep and maintain the longevity of the costumes so as not to unnecessarily be wasteful with limited funds. School of Dance costumes and materials are communal, and are expected to be treated as School of Dance property, not personal property, to be respected, kept clean, and returned to their proper place for use by other students, both present and future.

- **CLEAN UP:** Students are expected to fully clean up after themselves, including sweeping/wiping up floors of crumbs and spills, and throwing away garbage, after lunch. It is a privilege to be able to eat lunch in the Dance Studio, not a right. Most Dance Studios have a no food/eating inside the studio policy (and with good reason: maintaining the marley dance floor is essential to the safety of dance students). All students who eat in the Dance Studio are responsible for cleaning up after themselves. The privilege of eating in the Dance Studio can be (and has been) revoked at any time if students show that they are not mature enough to handle the responsibility of cleaning up after themselves.

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**DRESS CODE: We MUST be able to see the students' bodies--**Help us help your child...

- **LADIES:** are required to wear leotards (no loud/garish colors; no sparkles/rhinestones) with black footless or convertible tights (pink and/or flesh tone convertible tights are required for Mock Audition days/etc) or unitards, (no ripped tights, no shorts, no shorts on top of or under leotards, no bra tops, no belly shirts, etc.); Undergarments must be neatly concealed under dance clothes (bra straps, only to be worn if deemed necessary, must be pinned to leotards—as per Ailey School Dress Code)
- **GENTLEMEN:** are required to wear [form-fitting black or white t-shirts](#) or [short-sleeved black or white leotards](#) and black footless tights or nylon/lycra unitards [short-sleeved](#) or [tank](#) (no ripped tights, no baggy shirts, no baggy shorts) and dance belt
- **FOOTWEAR: Ballet shoes MUST be worn in Ballet class**, bare feet (no socks) in Modern class (at teacher's discretion); **SOLID COLORED (BLACK, WHITE, or FLESH-TONED)** socks **may** be allowed at certain times, **at teacher's discretion**
- **HAIR:**
  - **Ladies:** Hair must be worn up, in a neat bun, **secured with bobby pins and hair net**, and all stray hairs slicked back (with hair gel and/or barrettes) and pulled away from face and neck (no excessive braids); if hair is too short to be pulled into a bun, hair must be pulled away from face and neck and presented in a neat and professional-looking manner
  - **Gentlemen:** Hair must be cut short, cropped close to the scalp (no mohawks, fauxhawks, specialized shavings in hair, etc...); keep hair in accordance to guidelines set forth by Ailey, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Juilliard, and University of North Carolina Schools of the Arts
  - Hair for both Ladies and Gentlemen should be kept within natural hair color hues, no outlandishly unnatural colors
- **ACCESSORIES:** Students are not allowed to wear any jewelry or accessories (no necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings [small studs are ok], watches, etc.)
- **NAILS:**
  - Must be kept short (cut down to the tip of the finger—longer nails present a hazard to student safety in dance class)
  - For the sake of professionalism and the expectations of university dance departments and professional companies, and auditions for the aforementioned, students are to adhere to a no nail polish policy.

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**REQUIRED MATERIALS:** If student resides in more than one household, there must be required materials at each residence—no excuses.

- A Brain, a Heart, and Courage
- A Smile and a sense of positive energy in class, in performance, and in auditions makes such a big difference—we can't say it enough and the students can't do it enough!
- LADIES:
  - Leotard(s) (~5-7 per year) \*LABELED WITH STUDENT'S NAME
  - Black Tights (~5-7 pairs per year) \*LABELED WITH STUDENT'S NAME
  - Pink or Flesh toned Tights (convertible) (~1-4 pairs/year for Auditions/Mock Auditions) \*LABELED WITH STUDENT'S NAME
  - Ballet slippers\* (**\*2 pairs: 1 pair Black, 1 pair matching the color of pink or flesh-toned tights for Auditions/Mock Auditions**) \*LABELED WITH STUDENT'S NAME
- GENTLEMEN:
  - [Form-fitting black and form-fitting white t-shirts](#) (for Auditions/Mock Auditions) or [short-sleeved black or white leotards](#)
  - Black footless tights or nylon/lycra unitards [short-sleeved](#) or [tank](#)
  - Dance belt
  - Ballet slippers\* (**\*2 pairs: 1 pair Black, 1 pair White, to be worn with white socks for Auditions/Mock Auditions**) \*LABELED WITH STUDENT'S NAME
- Sweatpants/warm pants \*LABELED WITH STUDENT'S NAME
- Sweat top(s)/warm top(s) \*LABELED WITH STUDENT'S NAME
- Legwarmers
- Solid colored (**white, black, and/or flesh toned**) Socks
- Jazz shoes (1 black pair) \*LABELED WITH STUDENT'S NAME
- Dance Journey Journal (~2-4 per year), pen(s), pencil(s): for corrections, rehearsal notes, general notes, thoughts, insights, points of motivation/inspiration, frustration, etc. because the school must prepare its graduates to be critical thinkers, effective communicators, self-disciplined students and artists, and productive citizens—this is still a classroom situation and should be treated as such. The mental preparation in the School of Dance is just as important as the physical: there is no such thing as a dumb dancer. And, we repeat, this is NOT an enrichment program, it is a TRAINING PROGRAM.
- [Gail Grant's Technical Manual of Ballet](#) or any ballet vocabulary book/dictionary
- Theraband(s)
- Tennis/lacrosse ball(s) (for rolling, self-massage, self myo-facial release exercises)
- Knee pads
- Foot tape (some recommended brands include: Elastikon, Kinesio tape), bandaids, scissors
- **At least 32oz. Water bottle (FILLED)**; this is so students do not waste precious/valuable class time filling their empty water bottles as the water fountains are not located close to the studio

**\*REMEMBER Parents:** This is your money and the students' equipment. **We strongly recommend that all your child's materials be labeled with nametags** (whenever possible) to help your child learn responsibility for their materials. It is **VERY, VERY important that Students and Parents understand: Your child is expected to gather up their clothes and clean up after themselves:** if they lose it, you must replace it and it will all be reflected in their grades.

## PROFESSIONALISM

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Students' self-discipline and responsibility to themselves and their art is very important to OSA's School of Dance.

Professional decorum means consistently coming to class prepared physically, mentally and emotionally to do the work.

Being properly attired and groomed demonstrates respect for self as well as colleagues, peers, and instructors: Sloppy clothing and hair, ballet slippers without elastics or in disrepair, cannot be tolerated in a pre-professional program where students are preparing to meet the future demands of College/University programs, Professional/Trainee Programs and Conservatory-based schools, Dance Companies, Commercial work, Broadway work, Choreographers, Music Videos, and other employers.

**SUBJECTING ONESELF TO RULES THAT MAY CAUSE ONE PERSONAL DISCOMFORT, BUT WHICH ARE NOT DEMEANING OR HARMFUL, IS PART OF LEARNING HOW TO LIVE, AS WELL AS TO SUCCESSFULLY BE PART OF A PRE-PROFESSIONAL/PROFESSIONAL DANCE PROGRAM, COMPANY, or situation.**

**Full cooperation with the dress, hair and conduct codes** clearly stated in this handbook, course syllabi or communicated in class **is expected by The School of Dance Faculty in order to create an atmosphere conducive to learning professionalism.**

**Students demonstrating questionable behavior inside the dance studio**, coming to class not dressed-out, not prepared, not focused, **will be issued up to 2 very clear and understood warnings that if their behavior continues, the 3<sup>rd</sup> incident will necessitate School of Dance Faculty to call the Parent/Guardian(s) to be apprised of the situation** and to see what is going on and what may need to occur moving forward to solve the situation. **Students' repeated behavior will affect their dance grades.**

All this is based upon your child going through the audition process, going through the acceptance process, that this is something that the student and the Parent/Guardian agreed to be a part of.

**It is very important that the student is involved in the standards and the expectations of the School of Dance and for the Parent/Guardian to make sure that the student is supported in accepting the standards and expectations of the School of Dance—in actions and approach.**

**If the student is consistently showing us that this is not important to them, you the parent/guardian should support the notion of perhaps the School of Dance not being a good fit**, for the bottom line in all of this is that the student and the parent/guardian are engaged and happy with the decision they made to be part of OSA School of Dance, and, if not, we must open a dialogue where we can find what would make both the student and parent/guardian happy.

**The bottom line to this, Students and Parents/Guardians: The School of Dance is a dance TRAINING program, not a dance enrichment program and students will be judged, assessed, and graded by their ACTIONS, their response to corrections, and by their strength, work ethic, manners, etiquette, courage, and integrity to persevere to make themselves the best dance student they can be.**

**If it takes a village to raise a child,  
then it takes absolutely everyone involved in dance classes at every level,  
to make OSA's School of Dance a great and excellent dance department and program.**

## **School of Dance Technical Objectives**

**All Students, Parents/Guardians Please Note:** This is a Training Program. You, as Parents/Guardians and Students, may find, through this process, that the student does not have the willingness and the desire to extend oneself to the expectations of the program. This does not mean that the student is a bad person or even a bad dancer. But, in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century world that we live in, the students have access to and feel the pull of having, what seems to be, a plethora of choices. They benefit a lot from this open-endedness of having these myriad choices, but these limitless choices can come with a hidden cost: notably in the form of aimlessness and lack of making a true commitment to a thing.

We, as teachers, will strive and assist to satisfy students' desires to become dancers, but, in this process, the student may recognize that they have other desires. They have the world at their feet and they can do as they please, but they may find it difficult to figure out what truly pleases them or what they truly ought to do. The problem with having limitless choices is that it dissipates the possibility of fully realizing the choices they make: as in Dance; as in Academics; as in their life. In their minds, there is *always a chance* that there could be something better, easier, or simpler. This can lead to distractions and a kind of lack of focus and commitment, that is not necessarily a bad thing, but is ill-suited for the School of Dance.

Our young students usually, in the beginning, have the desires to be dancers, but, as they grow older and become more aware of the difficulties, commitment, and consistent discipline and dedication required to become a dancer, they may have trouble recognizing or coming to terms with the fact that they may not have the drive or the secure commitment becoming a dancer relentlessly requires. If/when this happens, it is up to the student to make clear to the School of Dance Faculty and Parent/Guardians that perhaps this is no longer something they wish to pursue on this level. There is no shame and there is no wrong in this. For this awareness will allow both School of Dance Faculty and Parent/Guardians to support the student in making transitions and decisions that reflect the student's best interest and allow the student to gracefully make the transitions they need or desire for a different kind of future.

For this is the bottom line: The Student's Future.

School of Dance students must demonstrate the hunger and the drive, the commitment, the strength, the development of character and integrity, to be honest with oneself, and to embrace the art form as it is, and not to wish it was something else, for this will turn into an investment of time and money. And if all is not lined up for the Student, it will put the student in this aimless, fearful, unfocused state, from which no one benefits: not the Faculty, not the School of Dance Program, not the Parent/Guardian, and most importantly, not the Student. This is not about hoping, this is about what it takes to be prepared. Because that is the best we can promise a Student, preparation, for there are no guarantees and we want every student in the School of Dance to feel as best prepared, if not for Dance, at least for Life, as possible.

**The discipline of dance technique at OSA begins by covering the basic fundamentals upon which ballet technique is built, and then builds on these fundamentals of ballet technique to expand to more wide-ranging movement styles (i.e. contemporary, modern, jazz, Dunham, Graham, Horton, etc.).**

**The focus of study includes analysis of these concepts: alignment (posture), weight placement, transfer of weight, anatomically correct turn-out/rotation, coordination, flexibility and the proper use of muscles for correct development of muscular shape using the resistance and opposition philosophy.**

**Emphasis is placed on the movement value of the steps, developing muscular strength and stamina (breath control) and musicality involving different rhythms, accents and phrasing.**

**In view of the inherent logic of dance technique, no information is ever obsolete.**

**Instructional objectives are "on-going" because once an objective is covered it is used continually throughout all levels to greater degrees of proficiency.**

**One keeps building, placing concept upon concept, until the full spectrum of the technique is apprehended.**

**All the good habits acquired through the years keep strengthening the foundation of the craft.**

**PROGRESS IS MEASURED BY THE IMPROVEMENT ACHIEVED IN THE EXECUTION OF THE STEPS, NOT MERELY BY HOW MANY STEPS HAVE BEEN ADDED TO THE VOCABULARY.**

Expectations are based on Senior Division and Junior Division levels (ages 16-25 and 11-15, respectively) of pre-professional training programs.

We want all our students to embrace the “3 C’s”:

- **Critical: students should be self-critical**
- **Comparative: students should compare themselves to the dance world standards (not just what is in the room)**
- **Competitive: students should be creating an atmosphere of (healthy) competition not only within the classroom with each other, but with the higher standards of the bigger dance world beyond OSA’s studios; this healthy competition helps to elevate all students in the room and keep all students pushing themselves to a higher standard, never content to stagnate and stop learning and growing**
- **BONUS “4<sup>th</sup> C”: Students are encouraged to work on and execute the “3 C’s” in a Chic manner, implying sophistication, thoughtfulness, musicality, awareness of how they carry their bodies, and generally holding themselves to a higher standard**

# ADDENDUM 1

## GOALS/PLANS/PREPARATION (GPS) HIGH SCHOOL ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

This assignment should cover your future goals for yourself, both within High School as well as post-High School, and what you need to do to prepare yourself for your goals. There should be a healthy dose of honest self-assessment here, as you cannot improve your current practices to work toward your goals, without taking an objectively honest look at where you are now and what exactly you currently are and aren't doing.

This assignment is a representation and exemplification of the **3 C's**: Being self-**Critical**, **Comparing** yourself to the standards of your goal programs, and putting yourself in a position to be on a level to **Compete** with the other students that are applying to or already part of the programs you are trying to get into.

Also, please remember: your academic education is only as important as **YOU** make it. The Department has made the academic requirements fit in with the overall vision of OSA, but it is still truly up to you to uphold your own standard, in relation to how high you are willing to reach and strive academically here at OSA. It is up to you to take advantage of help, and to know when to and to be willing to ask for help.

Worry more about content, than format, but, with that being said, the assignment will probably lend itself to a mixture of both paragraph/essay format and bullet points (and possibly tables/charts for workout/stretch routines/schedules).

- **STATE YOUR FUTURE GOALS FOR YOURSELF** (these can include):
  - **Summer Intensives** (ex. Ailey Summer Intensive, Martha Graham, Juilliard...)
  - **Post-HS:**
    - **Colleges** (ex. Juilliard, UNCSA, Ailey/Fordham...)
    - **Programs** (Ailey Certificate; Trainee Programs: Joffrey, SFB, Boston Ballet...)
    - **Dance Career/Companies** (Ailey, Martha Graham, Hubbard Street, Broadway...)
- **FOR EACH OF YOUR FUTURE GOALS, INCLUDE:**
  - **Program Information/Requirements:**
    - **Academic** (Colleges): GPAs, SAT scores
    - **Tuition cost** (Intensives/Colleges/Programs): In-state, Out of State, Scholarships available? If so, what are the criteria?
    - **Audition Info:** Dates/Locations (use old audition dates if dates have passed and none are upcoming), Format (type/length of class), Length/type of solo needed (if any)
    - **Ideal student/dancer criteria (All):** Years of training, type of training, pointe work, body type, etc...  
What type of student/dancer are they looking for? What is their ideal student/dancer?  
Ex: Juilliard states that “**All applicants** must have prior dance training. A minimum of three years experience with ballet and modern dance vocabulary is required, and dancers should currently be training for a minimum of 10 hours per week.” And that they “are concerned with the dancer’s dedication, openness to corrections, technique, performing skills, and citizenship both in and out of the classroom.” This is their list of Criteria for Acceptance: “A serious commitment to dance training and a career in dance performance; A high level and quality of training. We do not accept students who are untrained. Applicants should have a minimum of three years experience with ballet and modern dance vocabulary; A potential for meeting the technical standards of Juilliard’s professional training program; Talent and potential as a performer, including a vivid imagination, courage, and emotional accessibility; An articulate body promising significant development in dance; A willingness to re-evaluate technique and explore new approaches to training; Demonstrated musicality; The ability to work as a part of an ensemble including: the strength and sensitivity necessary to partner/be partnered, the ability to

work openly and honestly with other dancers, the ability to be flexible in the artistic process with choreographers, directors, or rehearsal assistants.”

- **FOR EACH OF YOUR FUTURE GOALS, INCLUDE SELF-ASSESSMENT in each of the following categories that apply to your goal:** What do you need to do in order to prepare for said Intensives/Colleges/Programs/Companies?
  - **Academics:** Compare your current GPA/Academic work to what is required and make solid/measurable plans to achieve goal GPAs/Grades if you are falling short of requirements
  - **Tuition costs:** What do you need to do in order to qualify for scholarship aid? Become a better academic student? Become a better dance student? What do you need to do to present yourself in the most attractive way possible to the organization in question in order to be a recipient of scholarship money?
  - **Dance Training Self-Assessment:** Examine your weaknesses in all of the following areas:
    - **TECHNIQUE:** What are your biggest weaknesses (turnout, feet, extensions, jumps, turns, speed, off-center work, transitions...)?  
**What are you willing to do to work on your weaknesses?**  
**BE SPECIFIC:** put it on a schedule (i.e. do x amount of turnout/feet/extension/jump strengthening exercises on these specific days and/or commit to work for 15 minutes at the end of class on specific issues from the class and/or commit to take x number of additional classes outside of the normal school day per week...).  
[Refer to Mind/Body Dance Conditioning Schedule Guidelines]
    - **MOVEMENT QUALITY:** What are your biggest weaknesses?  
Overall movement quality? (You are stiff, jerky, unpleasant to watch dance)  
Mostly upper body? (Upper body is tight, stiff, with tension in the neck/head/shoulders—back is inarticulate/stiff; arms/hands/port de bras are not aesthetically pleasing)  
Mostly lower body? (Lack of lushness/use of plié in legs, you dance very “up” on top of the floor instead of using the floor and your plié’ to accentuate the times you are up and off the floor; lack of use of rotation in initiation of movement, in the movement, and/or in transitions, making you look poorly trained, stiff, stingy in your movement quality; feet are inarticulate making you look poorly trained and accentuating less-than-ideal/”biscuit” feet)  
Immature Movement Quality? (do I still dance like a child in their pre-teens or do I bring a sense of maturity to my movement more on par with an older teen and able to compete with other older teens and young adults?)  
**What are you willing to do to work on your Movement Quality weaknesses?**  
**BE SPECIFIC:** put it on a schedule (i.e. spending x amount of minutes per day working on transitions/movement quality from specific class combos that day and/or focusing all classwork on quality of exercises/combinations, how am I doing this plié’/tendu/degagé’?  
How am I doing this center combo? ...).  
[Refer to Mind/Body Dance Conditioning Schedule Guidelines]
    - **PRESENCE/PERFORMANCE QUALITY:** Do I make exercises/combinations interesting to look at or do I just go through the motions?  
Do I focus on my posture/carriage/presence/poise both in and out of the dance studio so that I make it a habit/a part of **WHO I AM**, not just what I do, something I do, or, worse, something I have to do?  
Do I really DANCE exercises/combinations and work on making even the most mundane things look special?  
Do I put energy and life into exercises and combinations or do I tend to stay in my comfort zone and not want to step out to be seen?  
**What are you willing to do to work on your Presence/Performance Quality weaknesses?**

**BE SPECIFIC:** ex. I will work on my posture/carriage daily and enlist the help of an accountability partner whom I trust to tell me when my posture/carriage is not present; I will focus on being more vulnerable in class and make myself get in the habit of performing exercises as if I am center stage at Lincoln Center and people have paid money to watch me take class, from barre to center to rehearsal...)

- **BODY TYPE/DIET/NUTRITION:** What do I need to do in order to present my best body type to an audition panel?

**BE SPECIFIC:**

What is my current height and weight?

What weight do I think would put me in the best position to be seen in the best light at an audition (meaning it looks to the audition panel like I care about my body)?

What is my current diet like (be honest as you cannot make effective changes to something that you do not look at honestly)?

How do I think I should, could, and am willing to eat in order to get at my best body type to present to an audition panel? Be specific in terms of the types of foods (protein types, fruits, vegetables, nuts, fats, etc.) and quantities/servings you would like to use as a guideline to your eating habits.

- **STRENGTH:** What are my biggest weaknesses when it comes to strength? (calves, feet, legs, core, arms/chest/upper body, etc...) What do I need to do in order to tackle my weaknesses?

**BE SPECIFIC:** Detail a home workout schedule/routine that should include strengthening of all body parts (feet, ankles, calves, quads, inner thighs, backs of legs, hip flexors, glutes, abdominals/obliques, lower/upper back, arms, chest). List specific exercises for each body part, with specific reps and sets for each exercise, and when you will be doing them (specific days of the week). [Refer to Mind/Body Dance Conditioning Schedule Guidelines]

- **FLEXIBILITY:** What are my tightest areas? (hamstrings, back, rotators, etc...) What do I need to and what will I do in order to tackle my tightest body parts?

**BE SPECIFIC:** Detail a home stretching schedule/routine that addresses all body parts and includes extra attention to tightest areas.

[Refer to Mind/Body Dance Conditioning Schedule Guidelines]

- **PHYSICAL ENDURANCE/STAMINA:** Do I lack sufficient endurance? Do I get out of breath easily and feel unable to finish combinations with strength and power, flailing instead of using my technique and strength just to finish the combo? What do I need to and what will I do in order to tackle my endurance/stamina?

**BE SPECIFIC:** Detail a home cardio schedule/routine that addresses your endurance/stamina weaknesses. [Refer to Mind/Body Dance Conditioning Schedule Guidelines]

- **APPROACH/FOCUS/INTEGRITY/WORK ETHIC:**

How do I approach my time in the studio? Do I have a specific pre-class routine that gets my body and mind primed and focused for class? Or do I come in with no sense of responsibility to my instrument? With no pre-class routine? Instead of getting into my body and mind before class, I am distracted, looking for, initiating, or getting involved in side conversations? During class, am I intensely focused on all my faults and all the corrections I need to be working on or do I tend to drift off, or worse, get carried off into side conversations?

Do I approach my training with integrity and work ethic, working as hard and as smart as I can 100% of the time, working up a sweat by the third barre exercise, regardless of who is or isn't watching me, or do I constantly cut corners, look for ways to cheat, look for ways to put as little energy and effort into exercises as possible?

**What do I need to do in order to change my habits and approach my training as a pre-professional would instead of an immature student just taking class?**

**BE SPECIFIC:** Detail a personal pre-class routine that you have the time to do after lunch and before class begins. Your pre-class routine is about **YOU!** It should help you get focused

for class and get your mind in tune with your body. By the end of your routine, you should feel warmed-up, stretched out, and mentally aware of what may be tight or sore that day and mentally focused and ready for training. Generally, pre-class routines should include some type of abdominal/core/back warm-up/wake-up (i.e. Planks+backups, push-ups [gentlemen especially]...), foot/ankle warm up (i.e. ankle rolls, foot articulations, tendus...), hip socket/rotator warm up (i.e. leg swings, exercises that wake up your rotator muscles such as side-lying clams, passe' rotations, floor-barre type exercises) and stretching out of all major body parts used in dance. Warm-ups should be specific to the type of activity that you are getting ready for, so your warm-up/pre-class routine should be getting you and your body ready to dance! If you are a generally more flexible person, then your routine can be more focused on warming up, strengthening and technical exercises, with less time spent in easy and already accessible stretches. If you are tighter, your focus may be more on spending more time in stretches, after you've sufficiently warmed up your body.

[Refer to Mind/Body Dance Conditioning Schedule Guidelines]

■ **PERSONAL CHOICES/LIFE DECISIONS/PERSEVERANCE:**

This may be last, but it is not least. All your personal choices and life decisions have consequences (be they good or bad). And you must accept the responsibility of and be accountable for the choices you make in your life—by the way, this includes not making any decisions, as deciding and choosing not to act is much of a decision as choosing to take action toward a goal. Your journey started when you made a personal choice to audition for the OSA School of Dance and were fortunate enough to be offered a spot in the School of Dance. And it is only the first of many personal decisions that you will have to and must continue to make.

As you are making the sacrifices to do what you say you came here to do, you must become comfortable with the notion that these are not sacrifices, but simply what is expected and required out of you to accomplish what you came here for. For if this is not forefront in your mind and in your actions, this is a conversation to have with your parent/guardians or whatever OSA counselor so that appropriate action can occur.

You need to be willing to make decisions that reflect to all parties involved that you have both eyes toward your future. You need to understand that the immediate gratification of performing, at this point in your life, is not as essential as it is to prepare for the rest of your life. You must learn the difference between what you WANT to do and what you NEED to do.

You need to evaluate and understand how your personal choices and life decisions affect you: whether through injuries, burnout, distractions, or any of the myriad reasons/excuses that allow you to get off-track and take your focus away from the main thing. For the main thing always remains the main thing.

Make an honest self-assessment of your current schedule of activities and assess whether you honestly feel they are helping you to work on the goals and weaknesses you have stated above or whether they fall under the category of instant gratification (they feel good, are fun, keep you socially involved with a group of friends, etc...), preventing you from truly giving the time, energy, and focus that you need toward working on addressing the weaknesses you have assessed above.

We are aware of all the things that can and will go wrong, off-track, off-plan in life, but we would like for you to write about how you foresee yourself handling this, how you see this being addressed to your parents, to your teachers, and your ability as a person and as a dance student to deal with it, to get over it, to persevere to get through it, and to move on.

We are trying to teach you to embrace the three simple words that can change your life:

**“I AM RESPONSIBLE”.**

## ADDENDUM 2

### Mind/Body Dance Conditioning Schedule Guidelines

As a dance student, your body is your instrument! If you don't maintain your instrument, it will get "out of tune", meaning out of dance shape. When your body is out of dance shape, you are not only unable to work, train, and dance at your best, and unable to get to the correct lines and shapes, but you are also setting yourself up to get injured. If you are out of dance shape, you cannot dance well and if you are injured, you cannot dance at all. As a dance student, it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MAINTAIN YOUR INSTRUMENT! You own your instrument (your body). Your instrument, your body, is yours and you only get one. Unlike a musical instrument, if you don't take care of YOUR instrument, your body, you cannot replace it with a new one. It is irresponsible and careless not to maintain the health of the one and only instrument you have, your body.

As a dance student, you need to treat yourself and your body like an athlete: always working to fine tune it, make it better, stronger, more flexible, more responsive. In order to get these things out of your body and keep it running in its best state, you need to keep your mind and body on an upkeep/maintenance/conditioning schedule that addresses all of the points below, and puts them on a specific schedule.

- **FLEXIBILITY\*: 7 days/week** (\*Always warm up before stretching.)
  - Should cover all body parts:
    - Feet/toes/arches/ankles
    - Calves and achilles
    - Thighs: quadriceps, inner thighs, hamstrings/back of legs
    - Pelvis: glutes/rotators and hip flexors
    - Core: Abs, obliques, upper and lower back
    - Upper Body: arms, shoulders, chest
  - Should include all splits (right, left, center) and Heel in Hand stretches in all directions:
    - Front
    - À la Seconde and Tilt
    - Arabesque/Penché

Indicate what stretches you will do and for how long you will hold each stretch.

Your stretch routine may look different on different days of the week, depending on how much time you have in your schedule on different days of the week. Indicate this on your assignment/schedule.

- **STRENGTH: 6 days/week**
  - Should cover all body parts:
    - Feet/toes/arches/ankles
    - Calves
    - Thighs: quadriceps, inner thighs, hamstrings/back of legs
    - Pelvis: glutes/rotators and hip flexors
    - Core: Abs, obliques, upper and lower back
    - Upper Body: arms, shoulders, chest

Indicate what exercises you will do on what days of the week and how many repetitions (reps) and sets (if applicable) of each exercise.

- **CARDIO/ENDURANCE/STAMINA\*: 3-6 days/week**

\* Always warm up properly before getting into any intense exercises to avoid injury.

Cardio workouts should have you breathing heavy. Cardio workouts could be:

- shorter, more intense interval style workouts using bodyweight and/or plyometric (i.e. explosive) type exercises
- or workouts using cardio gym equipment (such as elliptical machines, treadmills, stationary bikes, etc.) or running/sprints outside, swimming, etc.

Exercises that make you use your body with bodyweight exercises (like the interval workouts you have done at OSA) tend to be more effective, but both types of cardio workouts can be used. Remember, the less time you have, the more intense your workout should be.

Indicate what type of workouts you will be doing on what days and how much time you will be spending on them.

- **CORRECTIONS/TECHNICAL WORK: 7 days/week**

Dance students must do their own work, on their technical, movement quality, and rehearsal corrections/notes, on their own time outside of dedicated class time in the studio, in order to progress in their dance training. The teachers give you the tools, corrections, and notes in dance class/rehearsal, but there is not enough time in class or rehearsal to have individual workshops and “private lessons and coaching” within the context of a group class everyday. Therefore, it is imperative that students take the tools, corrections, and notes given and learned in class, home and work to figure them out on their own bodies.

Indicate how much time each day you will spend working on technical concepts/class-work/corrections.

The amount of time you spend working on technique/class-work/corrections may be different on different days of the week, depending on your schedule on different days of the week.

Corrections/Technical work should include your dance notebook (writing notes, reviewing notes, reflections, etc).

- **PRE-CLASS ROUTINE:**

**MS: 5-10 min. routine for typical OSA Dance days**

**HS: 10-30 min. routine** (depending on how much time your are willing to commit) **for typical OSA Dance days**

- Ideal professional Pre-Class Routines are typically 30-60 min and typically follow the progression below:

- Self-myofascial release (aka. Rolling the muscles out)
- Warm-up (5-10m; should get the whole body warm):
  - Should ALWAYS include Core/abs/back (i.e. planks, back-ups, back articulation roll-downs, etc.)
  - Should ideally also include:
    - Feet/ankles/toes/calves (i.e. foot articulations, theraband exercises, relevés, dancer jogs, spring points, small jumps, etc.)
    - Rotators and hips (i.e. leg swings, rotation exercises, etc.)
    - Thighs (i.e. pliés, lunges, etc.)
    - Arms (i.e. push-ups, pull-ups [you can use the center barres for these], port-de-bras, etc.)
- Stretch (whole body stretching that includes all body parts and includes all splits, right, left, and center)
- Heel in hand stretches (all: Front, À la Seconde and Tilt, Arabesque/Penché)
- Technical work that gets you ready to dance! (This typically includes pliés, tendus/dégagés, balances/getting on your leg; if time allows, you can progress through more barre work)

Indicate your intended pre-class routine.

Make sure to indicate how long each part of your pre-class routine will take, and do some practice/trial runs at home so you know you can fit your routine in the time frame you intend to commit to it before class begins and you can feel how effective it is (or isn't) at getting your body ready for class (and make adjustments, if needed). Please note: Even though you should have a very clear idea of what you want to do with your body before class begins, you want to make sure that you are flexible with yourself (no pun intended ;), so that you can spend more time in one area and/or less time in another area, depending on how your body feels that day.

Ultimately, there should be no time in the dance studio where you feel like you don't know what to do with yourself.

**The Dance Studio = WORK.** And you should always equate the Dance studio as a place where you come to work. There is always too much to do and not enough time to do it in the dance training process, so all students should come into the studio with a sense of urgency and intense focus, unable and unwilling to be distracted from their pre-class routine and process, and with no need to be told what to do.

***“I have no time to relax. I have only a lifetime, a lifetime to force the most exquisite use of the body.” –George Balanchine***

# ADDENDUM 3

## Pointe Work, Training & Readiness

Many dancers want to dance en pointe. But not every dancer should.

There is something about these pink satin slippers that entices many dancers, young (and older).

Pointe shoes have a certain mystique and there is a well-earned sense of accomplishment that goes along with getting that first pair. It's a symbol for the student that she has graduated into something "bigger and better."

Young dancers don't usually care that pointe work is sometimes painful and frustrating with slow and hard-won rewards. The pull of pointe shoes is a powerful one.

### What Determines Pointe Readiness?

As teachers, it is not always easy to tell an eager student that they are not yet ready for pointe shoes.

There are many factors involved when considering each individual's preparedness.

#### **NUMBER ONE, IS SAFETY.**

Is the student ready to safely work at this level?

"The bones of the foot are not fully developed, strengthened and hardened until sometime in the teenage years.

Naturally there is a great deal of individual variation. If a young dancer attempts pointe work without proper strength and technique, there is a chance that she will permanently damage those not fully developed bones. Body weight times momentum creates a great deal of force." — *When To Start Pointework?* via Gaynor Minden FAQ

**"Students attempting pointe work before being ready risk, at the very least, building bad habits which may take years to correct. More serious is the potential for injury or permanent damage to the bone or muscle structure of the foot, which far outweighs the risk of disappointment."** — *To The Pointe* by Janet Parke



### General Requirements:

Though teachers may have their own set of criteria, these requirements are widely accepted within the dance community:

- At least 11 years of age.
- At least 2 years of ballet training.
- Taking at least 3 full hours of ballet per week.
- Responsible enough to bring all ballet equipment needed.
- Dresses appropriately for class.
- Attentive in class and applies corrections well.

### Physical Criteria:

A general (not necessarily complete) list of what you need to be able to DO:

- Uses **and Maintains** rotation and turnout while dancing
- Demonstrates correct posture and alignment in positions and while moving
- Shows awareness of proper ankle and foot alignment, avoiding sickling or rolling-in
- Effectively uses plié while dancing
- Points and articulates the foot while dancing
- Can piqué passé with a straight leg
- Can perform repeated relevé in the center without tiring & while maintaining alignment

- Can balance on one foot with the body correctly positioned over the supporting leg
- Coordinates movement well, particularly in regard to varying approach to relevé (from plié, from straight leg, stepping or springing into, etc.)

Attitude and work ethic play a large role in dancing at an advanced level. Students must display dedication during class and a strong commitment to the art form at all times.



### What a Beginning Pointe Student Can Expect

Most teachers will take time from class to show students how to properly break-in and care for their shoes. Some preparatory work involving the increased articulation (mobility) and strength of the feet is often added to the end of a full ballet class. If students wear pointe shoes at all during this time, it is usually under 10 to 15 minutes. Pointe work begins at a slow, steady pace with exercises performed only with the aid of a barre. Even standing in the pointe shoes requires ankle strength and can take some getting used to because of the uneven feel of the sole. Eventually dancers will exhibit enough strength to complete some steps in the center, however expect progress to be gradual.

### What Pointe Is... And Is Not

**Advancing to pointe work is a serious step and should be treated as such by students, teachers, and parents.**

There are studios and other dance situations in which the requirement for pointe work is much less than 3 hours per week and students are advanced simply because it is “their turn” to move up. The result of this method is often frustration for everyone involved.

At best, students end up “spinning their wheels” in regard to progressing and eventually leaving the barre for center. At worst, they form bad habits and develop injuries.

**Pointe work builds upon ballet technique and every struggle, problem, weakness, and deficiency is amplified with this new layer of difficulty.** With this in mind, I must state the following:

- **Pointe work is an evolution and extension of effective ballet training--It is NOT the end result of a particular number of years in ballet class, being a certain age, or even of an intense desire to dance en pointe.**
- **Pointe work is not a right.**
- **Pointe is not for everyone.**
- **Dancing en pointe is only a requirement for dancers who are pre-professionals or professionals.**
- Choosing not to dance en pointe (because you are not planning to be a professional ballet dancer) does not make you less of a dancer. It’s actually a very mature decision!
- Pointe work is a positive experience for those ready to devote themselves to quality ballet training.

### Responding to a “No”

As a student, you should expect no less of a teacher than to instruct logically, carefully, and thoughtfully. If you feel unclear or have a question about what is required or how you might improve, arrange a meeting with your teachers to discuss this. However, make a commitment to respecting your instructor’s judgment and knowledge if they feel you are not yet ready for pointe work.

**A teacher willing to say “no” to you has likely put a lot of thought behind the decision.  
A teacher who tells everyone yes is not someone we would trust to train us.**

# ADDENDUM 4



## Doctor/Physical Therapist Note

### **Parent/Student Instructions**

When your student goes to see a Doctor or Physical Therapist (PT) for any injury or pain that may affect their participation in class, please fill out the top portion of this form and provide to your doctor at your appointment. *This form must be returned to the OSA School of Dance Faculty prior to returning to class.*

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Doctor's visit: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Physician Instructions**

Dance training requires each student to be able to completely participate in a full range of sustained, repetitive, vigorous physical activities including but not limited to quick movements, bending, twisting, running, leaping and lifting, which place extreme demands on the human body, including stress of joints and ligaments, repetitive impact, and occasional falls, slips and collisions with other participants and objects. Please complete the following:

Diagnosis: \_\_\_\_\_

Please select:

Student may return to FULL PARTICIPATION in ballet and all other dance classes, body conditioning classes, and rehearsals with NO RESTRICTIONS.

Student may return to LIMITED PARTICIPATION in ballet and other dance classes, body conditioning classes, and rehearsals with the following RESTRICTIONS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Student MAY NOT PARTICIPATE in classes at this time and will be will be reevaluated on \_\_\_\_\_ (specific date). In the meantime, the student will participate in the following course of treatment:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Physician Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN this form to the OSA School of Dance Faculty prior to your next class.**

*This syllabus and handbook is a guide for OSA's School of Dance and is subject to change with or without advanced notice*

# OSA SCHOOL OF DANCE CONTRACT & AGREEMENT

I have thoroughly read the entirety of all three parts of the OSA School of Dance Syllabus and Handbook with said student and both said student and I fully understand and agree to adhere to all course policies, standards, and expectations.

I also understand that, if undersigned student demonstrates **through their behavior** (not their words) that they are not buying into the program and its policies by mid-year, the School of Dance will meet with said student and parents to discuss what the best possible option might be for the student.

Our desire is to have a happy parent/guardian and student.

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Parent / Guardian Signature

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Date

---

Student Name (PRINT CLEARLY) & Signature

---

Date

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTACT INFO:**

**\*PLEASE PRINT ALL INFO CLEARLY\***

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CELL # (include area code)

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HOME # (include area code)

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WORK # (include area code)

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EMAIL (please print CLEARLY)