



Oakland School *for the Arts*

SCHOOL OF DANCE

# 2018-2019 HANDBOOK & SYLLABUS

High School and Middle School



Rooms 357/359: 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Dance Studios

Teachers and Co-Chairs: Mr. Savage ( [rrsavage@oakarts.org](mailto:rrsavage@oakarts.org) ; 510-593-0560); Ms. Hurley ( [ahurley@oakarts.org](mailto:ahurley@oakarts.org) )  
<http://www.oakarts.org/school-dance>

## **\*THIS DOCUMENT IS REQUIRED READING FOR ALL SCHOOL OF DANCE PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS.\***

**By reading and signing this document, you are acknowledging that you understand and agree to adhere to all Course Policies.**

**If you do not understand or agree to adhere to all Course Policies, it is expected that you communicate to Mr. Savage directly (Cell: 510-593-0560).**

**The Agreement on the final page of this document must be signed and turned in directly to Mr. Savage or Ms. Hurley, by Monday, August 27, 2018.**

**Agreements not turned in will result in said student not being able to participate in class, resulting in Dance Absence(s) (see below), which will affect their grades, until document is signed and returned.**

**Signing and turning in the final page of this document says to School of Dance Faculty that both Parents/Guardians and Students are in understanding of and agreement with all Course Policies outlined below.**

**The OSA School of Dance is serious. We want you, Parents/Guardians and Students, to be serious.**

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

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## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **\*\*THE SCHOOL OF DANCE IS A DANCE TRAINING PROGRAM, NOT A DANCE ENRICHMENT PROGRAM.\*\***

All of the School of Dance policies and expectations are established to help and guide the student to do and be their best artistically and academically and are there to assist the parent/guardian in making a connection between OSA and home.

**Remember:** In order for there to be a “we”, there must be a “you”, the parent/guardian.

- All OSA policies as outlined in the Student Handbook will be respected.
- **PARENTs/GUARDIANs/FAMILY REPRESENTATIVEs INVOLVEMENT & PARTICIPATION:**  
**Parents/Guardians are expected to:**
  - Be very involved and aware of the academic and artistic progress of their child
  - **Attend APT Meetings:** With the new Audition Expectations, it would serve both the Parents/Guardians/Family Reps and Students well to attend most, if not all, APT Meetings in order to stay on top of the child’s progress, in addition to staying abreast of any updates and developments in the School of Dance.
  - Stay on top of their child’s academic progress by checking PowerSchool frequently (we **STRONGLY recommend AT LEAST once a week**, no matter what your student says) and staying in touch with all academic teachers teaching their child.

- **TEACHERS AS MANDATED REPORTERS:**

If you, as a student, need help with a personal issue, please reach out to Mr. Savage, Ms. Hurley, the dean, a counselor, or another trusted adult on campus. We’ll see what we can do to assist you. You should know that, in California, as listed in the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA), school personnel are mandated by law to report known or suspected child abuse. That means, if we suspect that you are experiencing harm or abuse from someone, we will reach out to Child Protective Services to make sure you are safe and cared for. Your wellbeing is our most urgent priority.

- **ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS/PHYSICAL PARTICIPATION/DANCE ABSENCES:**  
**\*STUDENT PROGRESS IN DANCE DEPENDS HEAVILY UPON CONSISTENT, which means EVERY DAY, AND FULL PARTICIPATION IN DANCE CLASSES, EVERY DAY.\***

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH TOP-TIER DANCE PROGRAMS:**

**-PERFECT OR NEAR PERFECT ATTENDANCE IS EXPECTED AND REQUIRED FOR ALL SCHOOL OF DANCE STUDENTS.**

**-IF/WHEN PHYSICALLY PARTICIPATING ATTENDANCE IN ANY/ALL DANCE CLASSES FALLS BELOW 90%, DANCE GRADES WILL BE AFFECTED**, no matter how well the student does in the classes that they do fully participate in.

**-SATISFACTORY ARTISTIC AND TECHNICAL ABILITY DO NOT OUTWEIGH A DEDUCTION IN GRADE DUE TO POOR ATTENDANCE.**

- **TARDY:** Punctuality and reliability are valued traits for professional dancers and are crucial to professional and academic success. **Students who do not begin class when the teacher has started class are considered to be TARDY, EVEN IF THE STUDENT WAS IN THE STUDIO BEFORE THE BELL.**  
**Students who are so Tardy that they miss an entire period, will be marked Absent for that period, which will be noted in the Teacher’s records and factored into Student Assessment.**  
**Students who are Tardy due to having met with Academic Teachers or Administrators, need to present Dance Faculty with a note from said Teacher/Administrator in order to be allowed to take class. Students who do not have a note from the Teacher/Administrator with whom they were meeting, will not be allowed to take class and will be marked Dance Absent.**

**\*HAVING MORE THAN 4 TARDIES IN DANCE PER QUARTER WILL RESULT IN A LOWERING OF THE STUDENT'S DANCE GRADES.\***

Once a student has accumulated 3 Tardies, School of Dance Faculty will initiate a conversation with Student and Parent/Guardian, in order to make Student and Parent/Guardian aware that Student's grade may begin to be affected by Student's Tardies, if the Student continues to amass more Tardies, as well as to address any academic issues/concerns the Student/Parent might have and to see what type of support the Student might need in order to succeed academically without affecting student's artistic progress.

**PERFECT or NEAR PERFECT, PUNCTUAL ATTENDANCE, IN ALL CLASSES, IS EXPECTED OUT OF SCHOOL OF DANCE STUDENTS.**

**\*All students who do not begin class when the teacher begins class, whether Tardy or Partially Absent NEED TO ASK THE TEACHER IF AND WHEN THEY CAN JOIN CLASS. Students who are allowed to join class after class has begun are expected to take NO MORE THAN 10 MINUTES (from the time they walk into the studio) to warm themselves up as quickly and thoroughly as possible, under the conditions provided, in order to try to catch up to wherever the rest of the class might be in the class process.** This is an essential skill for pre-professional and professional dancers to have (as it will come up throughout their dance careers when needing to get ready for class, rehearsal, auditions, etc. especially when conditions are not ideal, which happens a lot!) and students should have a less-than-10 minute routine that they have worked out specifically for such situations that they can use as a go-to when these situations arise. This is also to help the student teach themselves how to use the movement, technical, and alignment principles of class to warm up. With that being said, **all HS students are strongly encouraged to come to school with their hair ready for Dance** (MS students are required to come to school with hair ready for Dance) **and to either come to school already dressed for dance (leotard, tights, sweats) or, at the very least, have dance clothes on under their easy-to-change-out-of "street" clothes, especially if they know or anticipate that they may need to meet with Academic Teachers or Administrators during lunch, before dance, or during Dance.** We are trying to encourage students to be responsible, think ahead, plan ahead, and have **NO EXCUSES**. This is the expectation for professionals and pre-professionals. Students who are serious about dance will likely already be doing this, without needing to be reminded.

**\*PLEASE NOTE:** Due to variables in meeting times, dealing with school issues, and other extenuating circumstances that come with being on Faculty at school, **School of Dance students should expect and be ready for classes to begin on time/as scheduled regardless of which School of Dance Faculty member begins class.** For example, if Mr. Savage is pulled away on some school business, and Ms. Hurley begins class, all students are expected to begin class with Ms. Hurley (even if the teacher on their school schedule is Mr. Savage), and vice versa

- **DANCE ABSENT:** Students who do not physically participate in dance class (whether due to working on academics, illness, injury, not feeling up to task, etc...) **are considered "Dance Absent" as they are not physically participating in part or all of the Dance class.** Dance is a physical art form and therefore, at risk of stating the obvious, student assessment in Dance must rely predominantly on the physical participation of the student. It is neither respectful to the Art form of Dance nor fair to physically participating dance students, to allow the grades of students who don't physically participate in Dance class to be "held". **We cannot grade students who are not physically participating in class.**

- **Missing Dance for Academics:**

If a student feels that they must use any part or all of the Dance periods for academic matters, this is considered a "Dance Absence". **Dance Absences from part or all of the Dance periods count toward student grading and assessment.**

**Only in the case of Academic Teachers and/or Administrators requesting to**

**see/meet with a student, will student's absence from dance be excused.**

**Students will only be permitted to meet with academic teachers/Administrators during Dance periods with a note from the academic teacher/Administrator they would like to meet with.**

**Students will not be allowed to meet with academic teachers during Dance periods without a note from the academic teacher and will not be allowed to leave Dance periods in order to try to get a note from their academic teacher to bring back to us—they must plan and manage their time in advance.**

**That means: YOU MUST HAVE A NOTE FROM YOUR ACADEMIC TEACHER/ADMINISTRATOR BEFORE asking Dance Faculty to use Dance Periods for Academic matters.**

**STUDENTS/PARENTS/TEACHERS/ADMINISTRATORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

If students or Academic Teachers/Administrators feel they must miss part of the Arts Block in order to address Academic concerns, **The School of Dance STRONGLY ENCOURAGES students/Teachers/Administrators to use the LAST PART OF THE ARTS BLOCK (5<sup>th</sup> Period for Middle School and 9<sup>th</sup> Period for High School) to meet.**

This allows the student to be able to participate in the warm up and technical training portion of the Arts Block before meeting with Academic Teachers/Administrators, which allows the School of Dance Faculty to still be able to make assessments on the student's progress.

Students who miss the first part of the Arts Block and then try to join into class after class has begun, not only miss the crucial warm up element of the class, which puts them at greater risk of injury but also miss the technical training which not only increases their injury risk but also erodes and degrades their technical progress.

**PLEASE NOTE: Students who are Partially Absent/Dance Absent due to meeting with Academic Teachers or Administrators, need to present Dance Faculty with a note from said Teacher/Administrator in order to be allowed to take class.**

**Students who do not have a note from the Teacher/Administrator with whom they were meeting, will not be allowed to take class and will be marked Dance Absent.**

Please note that it is at the Teacher's Discretion whether students will be allowed to participate in class (there are a variety of factors than can affect this decision, including but not limited to: how late the student is/how much class is left; how far along the class is; etc.).

**\*PLEASE NOTE: PARENT/GUARDIANS CANNOT EXCUSE STUDENTS FROM DANCE CLASS FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES—ONLY ACADEMIC TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS CAN REQUEST TO PULL STUDENTS FROM DANCE CLASS.**

With that being said, Parents/Guardians can and should be encouraged to engage in developing a support system with teachers and administrators, but Parents/Guardians cannot excuse students from missing Dance Class for academic purposes. This is about all of us being on the same page.

**If full or partial absences from Dance due to academic reasons seem to become excessive, occurring with enough regularity to affect student's punctuality to and preparedness for Dance periods, then a discussion will be initiated with said student and parent/guardian in order to address what may be going on and if there are any viable solutions so that student can feel like they are coming fully prepared to Dance while still being able to manage, stay on top of, and excel in their academic classes.**

This is to encourage Dance students to work out their schedules, priorities, and manage their time in order to meet their academic and artistic demands. **If students need to meet with their academic teachers it is strongly suggested that they get to school early enough, before 1<sup>st</sup> period, during lunch periods (in most cases, they will be able to eat their lunch with the teacher of record), or stay after school to meet with their**

**teachers.** Please be aware that if the student needs help from an academic teacher during a time that the student is not actively in said academic teacher's class, the student needs to be proactive about scheduling time with the academic teacher to meet with that teacher—**students should not assume that academic teachers will be available for them at their disposal whenever the student needs to meet. BE PROACTIVE: PLAN AHEAD AND SCHEDULE MEETINGS WITH ACADEMIC TEACHERS IN ADVANCE.** This is to make sure that student and parent/guardian are fully engaged in the student's achievements here at OSA.

- **Missing Dance for After-School Activities:**

**If your child has after school activities, they cannot cut and miss the Dance classes here at OSA to catch up on their academics, in order to be available for their after school activities. If this scenario occurs, it will be reflected in their Dance grades, as per the absence policies stated below.**

**Recurring patterns of partial absence from the Arts Block will be cause for faculty to initiate a meeting with student's parent/guardian(s) to discuss the situation to see what may need to be addressed.**

**\*All students who do not begin class when the teacher begins class, whether Tardy or Partially Absent/Dance Absent WILL NEED TO ASK THE TEACHER IF AND WHEN THEY CAN JOIN CLASS.**

Students who are allowed to join class after class has begun are expected to warm themselves up as quickly and thoroughly as possible, under the conditions provided, in order to try to catch up to wherever the rest of the class might be in the class process.

**\*Students who are Tardy or Partially Absent/Dance Absent due to meeting with Academic Teachers or Administrators, need to present Dance Faculty with a note from said Teacher/Administrator in order to be allowed to take class.**

**Students who do not have a note from the Teacher/Administrator with whom they were meeting, will not be allowed to take class and will be marked Dance Absent.**

**\*HAVING MORE THAN 4 ABSENCES/DANCE ABSENCES FROM DANCE (this includes students who are present on campus or in the dance studio but otherwise not physically participating in Dance class) PER QUARTER WILL RESULT IN A LOWERING OF THE STUDENT'S DANCE GRADES.\***

**Once a student has accumulated 3 Absences/Dance Absences, School of Dance Faculty will initiate a conversation with Student and Parent/Guardian, in order to make Student and Parent/Guardian aware that Student's grade may begin to be affected by Student's Absences/Dance Absences, if the Student continues to amass more Absences/Dance Absences, as well as to address any issues/concerns the Student/Parent might have and to see what type of support the Student might need in order to succeed academically without affecting student's artistic progress.**

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH TOP-TIER DANCE PROGRAMS:**

**-PERFECT OR NEAR PERFECT ATTENDANCE IS EXPECTED AND REQUIRED FOR ALL SCHOOL OF DANCE STUDENTS.**

**-IF/WHEN PHYSICALLY PARTICIPATING ATTENDANCE IN ANY/ALL DANCE CLASSES FALLS BELOW 90%, DANCE GRADES WILL BE AFFECTED, no matter how well the student does in the classes that they do fully participate in.**

**-Satisfactory artistic and technical ability in class do not outweigh a deduction in grade due to poor attendance.**

- **ILLNESS/INJURY:**

Absences/Dance Absences due to Illnesses or Injury will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

**Students who are Partially or Fully Absent/Dance Absent due to physical injury are required to obtain a completed OSA School of Dance Doctor/Physical Therapist note**

[see Addendum 5], before returning to class.

With that being said, **student progress in dance depends heavily upon consistent and full participation in dance classes.**

- **Students missing more than 10 days (in a quarter) of dance, as per their doctor's note, will receive an Incomplete (INC) for that quarter.**  
**Students receiving an Incomplete in Dance are considered ineligible and are expected to make up their missed presence and work in the class by receiving a B grade or above during the next quarter.**

**Once a student has accumulated 5 Absences/Dance Absences, School of Dance Faculty will initiate a conversation with Student and Parent/Guardian, in order to make Student and Parent/Guardian aware that Student's grade/Course Completion Credit is in danger of being affected by Student's Absences/Dance Absences, if the Student continues to amass more Absences/Dance Absences, as well as to address any issues/concerns the Student/Parent might have and to see what type of support the Student might need in order to succeed Academically and Artistically at OSA.**

**\*INCOMPLETES (INC):** Students receiving an Incomplete (INC) in any Dance courses due to **physical non-participation totaling more than 10 days/Arts Blocks in the quarter**, (whether due to injury, illness, or other reasons, such as using part or all of the Arts Block to meet/consult with other teachers [thus, not being able to physically participate in dance during that time], not dressing out for Dance class [i.e. not having ballet shoes, leotards, tights, etc.], absenteeism, etc.), **are considered ineligible.**

**Once a student has accumulated 5 Absences/Dance Absences, School of Dance Faculty will initiate a conversation with Student and Parent/Guardian, in order to make Student and Parent/Guardian aware that Student's grade/Course Completion Credit is in danger of being affected by Student's Absences/Dance Absences, if the Student continues to amass more Absences/Dance Absences, as well as to address any issues/concerns the Student/Parent might have and to see what type of support the Student might need in order to succeed Academically and Artistically at OSA.**

How Does an INC Affect GPA/Course Credits?

Students receiving an INC receive no credit for the quarter in which the INC is received. This has a neutral effect on the overall GPA: it does not act as a "0/F" which would pull down the GPA, but acts as though the student did not take the class.

If a student receives an INC in one quarter of the semester, but is able to participate fully enough in the next quarter to earn a grade, the student will receive half credit for the course for the semester (ex. If a semester course normally counts as 24 credits, a student with an INC in one quarter of the semester and a letter grade in the other quarter of the semester, will receive 12 credits for the course).

**Students receiving an Incomplete in a Dance course are expected to make up their missed presence and work in the class by receiving a B grade or above during the next quarter.**

○ **MISSING ACADEMICS AND SHOWING UP FOR ARTS BLOCK:**

- **The School of Dance does not condone or support missing Academic Classes but still showing up for the Arts Block**, as we feel that, while students/Parents do not have to "pay" for Dance Students' Dance Training at OSA's School of Dance, the students are essentially "paying" for their dance training and classes with their academic attendance, involvement, and participation.

The School of Dance will monitor Dance students' Academic Attendance to see if there is a recurring pattern of students continually missing academic class(es) but being present for Dance. A recurring pattern on the part of the student of missing academics and showing up for the Arts Block can result in a lowering of the Dance Student's CCRG Grade in Dance, student being asked to sit out of Dance (resulting in a Dance Absence, which will affect student's grade), and/or contacting the parent/guardian to determine what the issue might be and make sure the parent is aware of said attendance issue. We feel that this policy is important as recurrences of academic attendance issues mean that the student is not seeing the "Big Picture".

**If an Academic Teacher or Administrator calls into question a Dance Student's academic attendance record and feels that the student should not be eligible to perform or to participate**

**in Dance class, based on their poor Academic Attendance, The School of Dance will side with the Academic Teacher or Administrator**, and the consequence can/will be reflected in student's College/Career Readiness/Goals portion of their Dance grades, as per the Attendance/Absence policies stated above.

**PLEASE NOTE: STUDENTS WHO DO NOT ATTEND ONE, MORE, OR ANY OF THEIR SCHEDULED ACADEMIC CLASSES ON PERFORMANCE DAYS, WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PERFORM IN THE SHOW THAT DAY/NIGHT, EVEN IF THE ABSENCE IS EXCUSED BY A PARENT/GUARDIAN. (The only exception to this would be in the case of a medical excuse). (See Eligibility Section for more information).**

**STUDENT PROGRESS IN DANCE DEPENDS HEAVILY UPON CONSISTENT, which means EVERY DAY, AND FULL PARTICIPATION IN DANCE CLASSES, EVERY DAY.**

Dance grades must reflect a true representation of the School of Dance. The reputation of OSA's School of Dance as a well-respected training program in the dance community (and beyond) must be upheld and not compromised. Grades must be a reflection of the work students are doing in the Department—**we cannot grade students who are not present and not physically participating in class**; Dance grades reflect the teaching standards of the Faculty, Department, and OSA. **Dance periods must be used for dance. Students are here at OSA to take care of and handle academic and artistic business, for that is the main thing. And the main thing always remains the main thing.**

**If our students are not in class, how can we grade them and how can they improve?**

**Remember:**

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

- **PERSONAL DAYS (HIGH SCHOOL ONLY):**

**HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ONLY:** In complete fairness to the High School students and to the parents/guardians, the School of Dance would like to extend 4 Personal Days (1 per Quarter) to each School of Dance High School student.

- Personal Days do not count toward the "Absences from Dance" policies listed above
- Unused Personal Days will not accumulate and cannot be "rolled over" from quarter to quarter: Only 1 Personal Day can be used per quarter. Personal Days are "use it or lose it".

These Personal Days are to be used if a High School student really feels like their attitude and approach toward dance class will not be conducive to them being their best and doing their best in dance class that day.

**PLEASE NOTE: Personal Days MUST and can ONLY be ok'd by Parents/Legal Guardians and can ONLY be applied toward Arts Block periods (NOT academic classes—there is NO WAY that the School of Dance WOULD EVER OK PERSONAL DAYS TAKEN TO MISS ACADEMIC CLASS TIME).** The student would be required to get in touch with their parent/legal guardian, who would have to personally talk to Mr. Savage, and the student would then be allowed, with parental/guardian's permission, to go home, to another family member's house, to tutoring, or wherever the parents/guardians see fit to allow them to go. **Notes or emails will not be accepted as parental/guardian endorsements for Personal Days.** It is important that the parent/guardian and student both understand that there is NO place on campus for students to hang out without getting in trouble or being perceived as getting in trouble. Students using personal days must leave campus--unsupervised classrooms are not an option; and most academic teachers usually leave by 3pm—they cannot stay on campus. It is important that the parent/guardian understand that this is a Personal Day to go home, rest up, catch up with homework, and to be ready to come back the next class refreshed, energized, and ready to dance and work. **This is exclusive to High School School of Dance students only.**

- **STUDIO UPKEEP:**

In order to maintain a safe and organized environment, students must handle all supplies and materials with respect. **All students, including Upperclassmen and Seniors, are responsible for keeping the dance studios and dressing rooms clean, neat, and free from food particles, and properly**



**storing all materials at the end of each class.** This includes: making sure all personal items (including other students') and materials are picked up off the floor, sweeping the studio, putting all materials back neatly in their proper places (therabands, balls, rollers, barres, costumes, lost & found items, etc...). Students may be called upon to wipe windows, clean mirrors, sweep, dust, organize, etc. and/or anything that is required to maintain the cleanliness and hygiene of this shared, communal, and sacred space. Yes, the dance studio is a sacred place and should be seen and treated as such. The studio is not your house, or living room and should not be treated carelessly or taken for granted.

**Remember:**

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

- **ADDITIONAL DANCE CLASSES:**

Students should have an increased awareness and desire for additional dance classes, outside of the normal school day, especially if the desire to become a better dancer is there from the student and the parent/guardian. Students will be encouraged to participate in additional classes offered by OSA School of Dance Faculty and/or Savage Jazz Dance Company (SJDC: Resident contemporary dance company at OSA and official OSA School of Dance partnership) at OSA. Experience has shown us that inconsistencies in students' dance training, including inconsistencies in discipline, structure, expectations, and training standards, often leads to lack of progress, confusion on the student's part, and higher incidence of injury. Students and parent/guardians need to stay aware that any injuries and/or incorrect working habits resulting from outside studies and/or performances could end up affecting dance grades. In an effort to make the **training** process more accessible, we (OSA School of Dance Faculty and SJDC) strive to offer steeply discounted class rates—We are truly in the business of TRAINING our students, not “giving them class” or offering them an enrichment program. This is a fundamental difference that must be understood by parent/guardian and student alike. Understand that we have a real and vested interest in our students getting better, improving consistently, staying injury-free, being well trained, and upholding and, in an ideal world, raising the standard and reputation of OSA's School of Dance. We are driven by wanting to see our students be the best they can be. We are not into seeing students stay stagnant or strive to be mediocre.

- **HEALTH & BODY AWARENESS:**

The School of Dance expects its students to have an increased awareness of taking care of their bodies from the inside out, including making an effort to eat healthily and be aware of proper nutrition, hydrate properly, and treat themselves like elite athletes in training.

The School of Dance does not have strict weight requirements for Dance students; the Modern/Contemporary/Jazz Dance fields utilize a variety of body types. However, excess body weight can affect students' opportunities in the field of dance. Students are accepted into the School of Dance program based on their potential and physical facility at the time of audition.

Part of the discipline of dance is maintaining an acceptable body weight/composition for your body type.

All students are expected to be aware of and maintain appropriate body composition/weight (in a healthy/realistic way that does not compromise student's health), core strength, flexibility, and overall body conditioning and nutrition.

School of Dance Faculty will be happy to advise students who seek out additional information/advice, understanding, of course, that each student is an individual and different strategies work differently on different bodies/body types.

In particular, Gentlemen should be aware of obtaining the necessary musculature and core and upper body strength for jumping, turning, and partnering.

Ladies should be aware that, at some point, they are going to have to be partnered, and at times, jump and turn as well as any man.

The School of Dance is not an enrichment program—it is a serious, intensive training program and School of Dance students are expected to treat it as such, and treat themselves as serious students in an intensive training program.

▪ **TACTILE CUEING:**

Due to the physical nature of dance training, it may be necessary for School of Dance Faculty, Guest Teachers, Guest Choreographers, and Physical Therapists and other types of physical educators to use “hands on” techniques in their instruction.

In order for students to fully understand and correctly, and thus safely, execute movements and exercises with proper technique, teachers and educators may use physical demonstrations and corrections as an aid in teaching, most commonly to:

- Correct faulty or dangerous body alignment/posture/etc.
- Assist students in achieving correct lines
- Give students tactile cues as to which muscles to engage when doing specific exercises or movements
- Assist in stretching/strengthening exercises

Should students feel uncomfortable with tactile cueing and corrections, the student should make School of Dance Faculty aware of their concern as soon as possible.

As a result, modifications in teaching style may be made.



## **ACADEMIC AWARENESS**

- **QUIET ZONE:**

At home, we encourage students to give themselves (and parent/guardians to enforce) a 3-hour “Quiet Zone”, where all technology is to be turned off. This includes, but is not limited to: cell phones, TV, computers (unless being specifically used for research or writing), etc...

- **NO LATE HOMEWORK:**

Embrace a “No Late Homework” policy that School of Dance is self-imposing (it has come to the School of Dance’s attention that the lack of turning in homework, 90% of the time, is a wake up call that the student will not succeed academically here at OSA). “No Late Homework” should be imperative to the Parent/Guardian and student—all homework assignments should be turned in directly to the teacher and on time! (Make sure students have back ups of any/all assignments on computers!). It would be a bad and poor decision on students’ and parent/guardians’ part to assume that students will be given breaks, extensions, etc...

**Do not assume that teachers will allow students to make up late or missing work!**

**Students: Stay on top of your work!**

**Parents/Guardians: Stay on top of your student’s work!**

- **GPA AWARENESS & POWERSCHOOL:**

**\*We STRONGLY recommend that parent/guardian(s) check their student’s grades in PowerSchool, AT LEAST once a week** (no matter what your student says).\*

**If you have limited access to the internet and/or are unable to check PowerSchool for whatever reason, we, the School of Dance Faculty, will be happy to check PowerSchool for your student, UPON REQUEST. But you should not rely on School of Dance Faculty to stay on top of your child’s grades for you. We will only check PowerSchool FOR parent/guardian(s) and students UPON REQUEST.**

- Increase awareness of:

- **MIDDLE SCHOOL** students: **Striving for minimum 3.0 GPA** (this is a reasonable expectation for the Middle School since the School of Dance is of the mind set that since we cannot guarantee the success of the student as a dancer/artist, the School of Dance’s intention is to, at least, have a very good college-eligible student)
- **HIGH SCHOOL** students: **Striving for minimum 3.5 GPA** (this is a very reasonable expectation for the High School in order to help put students in a better position to compete, not only for college acceptances but also, and more importantly, to receive scholarships, grants, and financial aid, and, if we must err, we will err on the academic side of things)
- Constantly promoting a behavior and attitude towards school academically and artistically about being and doing our best

**\*It is up to the Parent/Guardian to form and maintain professional and effective relationships and open communications with student’s academic teachers.**

Keeping a patient approach and not panicking will help lay the foundation for a caring and effective relationship between the Parent/Guardian, Student, and academic teachers and school administrators.\*

- **WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:**

**\*The expectations of the English and History departments shall serve as the standard of expectations for all writing assignments in Dance.**

- 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders: MLA standards shall serve as guidelines for all writing assignments
  - Papers typed, double spaced
  - Black ink
  - 12 point font
  - Times New Roman / Times font
  - 1” margins
- 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders: All writing assignments should be neat, show focus, clarity of thought, and be legible: margins should be clear and paper should be “loose” and not ripped from notebooks (i.e. no frayed edges!)

# PERFORMANCES

## ELIGIBILITY

- **GPA:**

**The School of Dance strongly suggests a minimum 3.5 GPA, especially for High School dance students**, in order to help put students in a better position to compete for both college acceptances and to receive scholarships, grants, and financial aid.

This is for the student's sake. We know these times are hard. The four years in High School, are the equivalent of putting money in the bank. The currency is your child's GPA in this bank called Life. A higher GPA enhances the student's chances of not only getting into colleges/universities, but also of receiving grant and scholarship money to be able to go to the colleges students might be accepted to. You must embrace the concept: these four years at OSA should be considered an investment, not just a place from which to graduate, but the portal through which the student must step, in order to go forward to pursue the life that both the student and the parent/guardian dream and hope for.

With that being said, the following are the Eligibility requirements to perform/choreograph/etc. in the School of Dance:

- **“On-Site” Performances:**

**The absolute minimum GPA to be eligible to perform for on-site OSA events/performances, for all students, is a 2.50 GPA with no Ds, NCs, or Fs in ANY classes (all grades in all classes must be at a minimum of C- and up).** This is out of respect toward the child and parent/guardian(s) of having some expectations for the child. We want to respect you, the child, and their education enough to not accept Ds, NCs, or Fs for your child.

**HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ONLY:**

**High School Students earning a 2.50-2.99 GPA will be in a position to participate in a minimal and limited capacity of only one (1) dance piece.**

**High School Students who earn and maintain a 3.00 or above GPA will be eligible for the full range of dances and performances of the OSA school year.**

- **“Off-Site” Performances:**

**The absolute minimum GPA to be eligible to perform for off-site events/performances, for all students, is a 3.00 GPA, with no Ds, NCs, or Fs in ANY classes (all grades in all classes must be at a minimum of C- and up).**

**Students who receive an Incomplete (INC) in any Dance courses** (through physical non-participation, absenteeism, or various other reasons—see Attendance Section; The School of Dance understands that there may be extenuating circumstances that may lead to students receiving an INC in a Dance Course and The School of Dance will treat each individual's situation on a case by case basis) **are considered ineligible to perform.**

- **ATTENDANCE:**

**STUDENTS WHO DO NOT ATTEND ONE, MORE, OR ANY OF THEIR SCHEDULED ACADEMIC CLASSES ON PERFORMANCE DAYS, WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PERFORM IN THE SHOW THAT DAY/NIGHT, EVEN IF THE ABSENCE IS EXCUSED BY A PARENT/GUARDIAN. (The only exception to this would be in the case of a medical excuse).**

- **ELIGIBILITY CUT-OFF:**

Grades/GPA earned in a quarter determine the student's eligibility to perform in the following quarter (ex. Q1 grades/GPA determine student's eligibility to perform in Q2).

Eligibility cut-off dates may be determined independently for certain shows if/when performance opportunities come up during the school year that make it illogical to use the Quarter Cut-off for eligibility. In the event that this occurs, students and parent/guardians will be notified of the eligibility cut-off dates for each show as each performance comes up. Therefore, **students should stay aware of staying on top of all their grades at all times throughout the school year**, and not allow themselves to fall behind, so that everyone is in the

best position to participate in as many opportunities as possible.

Students who do not meet the eligibility requirements by the Eligibility Cut-Off date will be considered ineligible to perform/choreograph/etc. in said performance.

Students who are deemed eligible by the Eligibility Cut-Off date are expected to maintain their eligibility/grades from the Eligibility Cut-Off date through the run of performances.

- **BEHAVIOR/FIGHTING/SOCIAL MEDIA:**

**Even students meeting the minimum GPA requirements by the Eligibility Cut-Off date risk becoming ineligible to perform if their behavior and etiquette on school time (this includes before school, during lunch, and after school), in the classroom and/or in and around the school, is called into question, at any time leading up to and through performances, by arts teachers, academic teachers, administrators, and/or OSA staff as not being in accordance with the OSA standards.** The suggested consequences from academic teachers, staff, and administrators will be seriously taken into consideration. **The standard for behavior inside the dance studio is the standard upon which the dance student will be judged.** (All incidents will be evaluated on a case by case basis). **Students who find themselves in a position where their actions are such to where the consequences from academic teachers and administrators include detentions and suspensions, put themselves at risk of becoming ineligible to perform,** because of the School of Dance behavior expectations.

**FIGHTING: 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.**

**SOCIAL MEDIA: 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.\***

### **A NOTE TO ALL SCHOOL OF DANCE STUDENTS AND PARENT/GUADIAN/FAMILIES**

**It is very important for students and parent/guardians to understand that the School of Dance is trying to be a focused, disciplined group of teachers and students, that are striving for and actively pursuing excellence.** With that being said, pulling students out of academic classes for rehearsals and shows can be very arduous and counter-productive to the student, that can put them in the position of not being the best student that they can be. We do not wish to punish any students: for performances such as the annual OSA School of Dance concert, students receiving a minimum GPA of 2.50 with no Ds, NCs, or Fs in any classes, will be considered eligible to perform. Having minimum grades of C-s in all classes is intended to put students in a better position, to not be too far behind, if/when they may miss certain academic classes due to rehearsals during tech/performance week in the theater, and to allow them to catch up while still allowing/giving students a chance to get to perform on stage.

**HIGH SCHOOL:** The minimum 2.50 GPA is to encourage and to inspire the student to participate, but with saying that: **a 2.50-2.99 GPA will put a high school student in a position to participate in a minimal and limited capacity of only one (1) dance piece.**

**\*PLEASE NOTE:** As per the School of Dance Syllabus, behavior in and around the school, both in and out of the dance studio, can affect Students' eligibility to perform/choreograph/etc. and **students may be considered ineligible for the privilege to perform/choreograph/etc., even if they have met their GPA requirement, if their behavior and etiquette do not meet School of Dance standards and expectations.** (All incidents will be evaluated on a case by case basis).

High School Students who maintain a 3.00 or above GPA (with no NCs, Ds, or Fs in any classes) will be eligible for the full range of dances and performances of the OSA school year.

These policies and expectations are not to punish a student but to help incentivize students to put their best effort forth in all they do (academically and artistically) and to let them know that in this world, the more prepared you are as a student and the harder you work in the dance studio, the more you allow yourself to be seen at your best and the more doors open and opportunities present themselves to you, for collegiate aspirations, professional aspirations, and life aspirations.

**We must continue to uphold the highest standards for taking students for off-campus/off-site performances** (such as Oakland Museum of California, Black Choreographers Festival, Clorox performance, etc...). **It is imperative for these types of performances/events are treated and seen as privileges not a birthright. And, as such, it is essential that we represent and show off OSA's best dancers and best students in these situations.**

#### **PLEASE NOTE:**

- **IEPs/504s:** Due to the fact that students' individual needs manifest in a variety of ways, students with IEPs/504s may require alternate eligibility criteria. When this is the case, the IEP/504 Resource Team will discuss and document the alternate eligibility criteria, in conjunction with the Arts Teachers whenever possible, and notify the Arts Chair of the modified requirements.
- **No student who is deemed ineligible within their own department may participate within another department's show for the ineligible period.**
- **Departments using students from another department must first clear that student with their department chair(s) prior to casting them in outside department show/program.**

#### **Remember:**

**The School of Dance is a dance TRAINING program, not a dance enrichment program.**

#### **CASTING\***

**The School of Dance is a dance TRAINING program, not a dance enrichment program.**

**\*Students being eligible to perform and how much they perform are two different things.**

**Performing on stage in front of people, for a paying audience, is a privilege, not a birthright.**

**Representing OSA School of Dance is also a privilege, and, we would like to think, one day, an honor.\***

#### • **REHEARSAL PERIODS LEADING UP TO SHOWS:**

During rehearsal periods leading up to shows, students are expected to participate fully in classes and rehearsals. Students who miss classes and/or rehearsals during rehearsal periods leading up to shows, may be removed from pieces in accordance with their unreliability during the rehearsal period. Student absences during rehearsals greatly affect the ability for choreographers/rehearsal directors to move forward with rehearsals and affect every participating student in the rehearsal. This is a very basic and common sense expectation in the dance world (and frankly, in life). **PLEASE NOTE:** The closer a student's absence(s) are to a performance date, the higher the likelihood that said student will be removed from sections, parts, full pieces, and possibly even the performance itself. Students are expected to continue to participate in and take class, with a positive energy and approach, prior to rehearsals, during rehearsal periods leading up to shows. Students will not be allowed to skip

or miss class and participate in rehearsals. Class is an important and essential part of all dancers' careers. There is no high level professional situation where dancers are not expected to remain in class during rehearsal periods. Class is the great equalizer, where students and professionals alike, come back to check in and get into their bodies, center their minds and bodies to see and feel where they are that day, and continue to humbly put in the focused work on continuously improving and fine-tuning their craft and their instruments: their minds and bodies. This is a necessary and integral part of the professional dancer's life. Period.

**Students are expected to be in class if they expect to participate in rehearsals. Period.**

During rehearsal periods leading up to shows, absences, tardies, (whether valid or not), a lack of focus and unprofessional approach in the dance studio, inappropriate behavior, poor etiquette, and skipping or missing class prior to rehearsals can and will likely affect casting, up to said student being removed from select sections, whole dance pieces, or the entire show.

There is no professional situation where missing class, missing rehearsals, showing up late to classes and rehearsals, or acting unprofessional and unfocused in classes and rehearsals leading up to shows would be tolerated. It is not personal, it is just a teaching moment that is best learned now as opposed to later. Students who are absent from classes and rehearsals, showing up late to classes and rehearsals, or behaving inappropriately, unprofessionally, or with a lack of focus, will likely be removed from the show. It is not fair to other students who are consistently present, on time, acting professional and focused, to slow the rehearsal process down to accommodate students who are not showing up for the job. Period.

**Remember:**

**The School of Dance is a dance TRAINING program, not a dance enrichment program.**

- **CALL TIMES:**

Showing up late, after call, to a performance or rehearsal or company class, without getting in contact with Mr. Savage (510-593-0560) or Ms. Hurley (510-387-9403), to warn or inform of possible tardiness, will result in consequences, from being pulled from certain pieces up to being removed from the show.

**Remember:**

**The School of Dance is a dance TRAINING program, not a dance enrichment program.**

**Good rule of thumb: if you arrive later than Mr. Savage without having notified him, you are late for call.**

Parents/guardians: This is the teaching part of the pre-professional program, modeled off of the rigorous and immersive dance training that we speak of at OSA. So this is a very important lesson about the importance of being on time and being ready and prepared to be on stage. This is not a punishment, this is a teaching moment. And some students have to learn the hard way. We truly hope this is not the case this year, or any year. For the School of Dance truly wants every dance student to feel that the program has taught them to show up, to auditions, classes, interviews, and in life, alert, attentive, and prepared.

**For we, the teachers in the School of Dance, do not, by any stretch of the imagination, want any of our students to proclaim, "the best time of my life was here at OSA." For OSA is a four to seven-year speed bump to where the student is using this as a process to learn and appreciate process and to develop the mental toughness and the physical strength to persevere. For we would like for them to say: "Thank you, OSA, for helping give us a light to showing us the way."**

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**\*ADDRESSING PROBLEMS/ISSUES WITHIN THE SCHOOL OF DANCE:**

**With all due respect, we would like for parent/guardians to feel that their first course of action should always be to approach and address any School of Dance problems/issues directly with the chairs of the department, Mr. Savage and Ms. Hurley. After parent/guardians first look, watch, and see what is going on in class, the discussion with the parent/guardian about the student will take place and continue until satisfaction is met. If satisfaction cannot be met between the two parties, the head of the department will see that the parent/guardian has an immediate meeting with Administration so that satisfaction can be achieved, for it is very important that both the student and the parent are happy and positive about being here at OSA.**

## **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.

**Remember:**

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

- **STUDENT ACTIONS/BEHAVIOR:**

**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 mindful 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, OSA Principal, 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.

**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.**

**Remember:**

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

- **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 and should be made a way of life for all dance students.**

**Remember:**

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

- **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, not only to improve your technique, but also to keep you injury-free**

**We cannot help students who are not willing to assist us in the preparation of becoming a dancer.**

- **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.**

**Remember:**

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

## **IN THE STUDIO**

In the study of dance, students are not merely learning a technique. They are learning a discipline, an art form, and a way of life, 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:

- 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.**
- 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**.
- 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.
- 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.
- No “hanging out”/loitering/congregating in the hallways during bathroom breaks: students are expected to go to the bathroom and come back in a timely and efficient manner and not “wait” for friends to finish their business (this can also point to a lack of seriousness and purposefulness on the part of the student—the student should be here for dance, not for socializing, and should want to get back to the studio in order to not miss anything and/or to have time to work on things in the studio)
- Cell phones should be on silent in the dance studio and there is no cell phone use in class (no texting, talking, facebooking, emailing, web surfing, tweeting, etc.)
- No chewing gum in the studio
- 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.
- 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.
- No leaving class without asking the instructor's permission.
- 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. **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PERSONAL ITEMS BEHIND. YOUR CHILD IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR DANCE GEAR.**

- Manners are extremely important on or around campus, in the studio and in the theater:
  - Always address adults with Sir/Ma'am/Mr./Ms. at the beginning/end of your sentences
  - Students should use "please" and "thank you"
  - Students should ask instructors with "may I" (not "can I")
- Students are expected to begin class without junk/warm ups (i.e. sweats, legwarmers, layers on top of leotards and tights), unless otherwise indicated by the teacher. Students' bodies are their instruments; We, as teachers, need to be able to see students' bodies in order to be able to fine-tune and correct incorrect form—wearing warm ups (especially baggy ones) is a safety issue, where students can practice bad form and get injured without the watchful eye of an instructor. When warm ups are allowed to be worn at the beginning of class, students are expected to remove warm ups as soon as possible (a general good rule of thumb is that students should be ready and warm enough to remove warm ups by the third class exercise) and are expected to remove warm ups promptly and without hesitation, when teacher requests it.
- 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 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 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
- Students must end all activity/talking and be ready to dance when they hear the words "Music up" or "Places"
- Students must come down to the front of the studio and go around after they finish combinations
- Students must be dressed in street clothes, sweat pants, or other cover-ups and shoes when out in the hallways on breaks, going to the bathroom, or even rehearsing in the hallways.
- 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 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.
- The student is in class to learn and embrace discipline, structure, and focus, as well as technique.

**Remember:**

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

**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**
- 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
- Students are not allowed to wear any jewelry (no necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings [small studs are ok], facial rings, 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.

**Remember:**

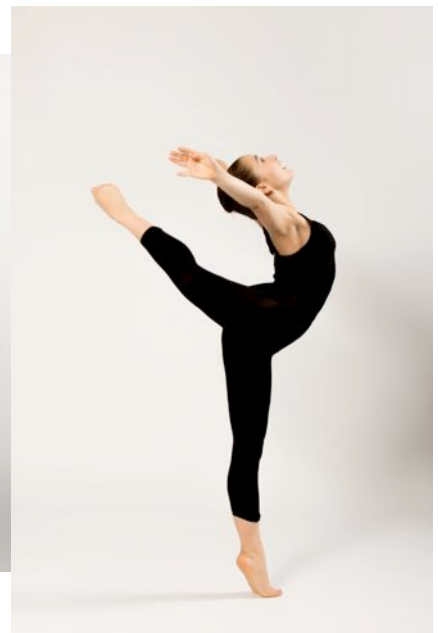
**The School of Dance is a dance TRAINING program, not a dance enrichment program and your student will be graded on this.**



**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!
- Leotard(s) (~5-7 per year) \*Labeled with Student's Name
- Black Tights (~5-7 pairs per year) \*Labeled with Student's Name
- Ladies: Pink Tights (convertible) (~1-4 pairs/year 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 (that don't fall off the body)
- Solid colored (**white, black, and/or flesh toned**) Socks
- Ballet slippers\* (**\*2 pairs: 1 pair Black, 1 pair skin toned**) \*Labeled with Student's Name
- 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), band-aids, 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.**



## **STUDENT ASSESSMENT / GRADING**

All academic courses are aligned with California State Standards.  
For a comprehensive listing of state standards, visit: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

The purpose of grading is to provide each student with as accurate an assessment as possible of their work during the grading period. A high grade is not given as a reward and a low grade is not given as a punishment. The grade is meant to be an accurate reflection of the work the student is or isn't doing. Grades should be used by students to help them understand where they have succeeded and in what aspects their work needs improvement. The student's physical performance is considered as well as categories which refer to the student's behavior, attitude, approach, and work habits.

**PLEASE NOTE:** In an effort to allow Middle School students time to adjust and transition into the Middle School, Dance students who are placed into the MS I/II level classes, will be assessed on a Pass/Fail system (not letter grade system). The standards and expectations for Pass/Fail classes will remain high, as established, but this will allow students to hopefully feel and know that their effort and energy is respected and to give them a more fair chance to catch up to a much bigger expectation, and also for them to see if this is what they really want to do. For this is **HARD**. Physically and mentally **HARD**. And we want them to feel that we are giving them every chance to be as successful as they can.

Please note that all 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Dance Students will be assessed using the Letter Grade system, whether they are new or returning students. This is to make sure that they understand the rigorous expectations of the School of Dance before entering the High School, where all HS classes are assessed using the Letter Grade system.

The following are all taken into account when determining a student's grade each grading period.

**ATTENDANCE: Student progress in dance depends heavily upon consistent and full participation in dance classes on a daily basis.** Perfect, or near perfect, regular and punctual attendance is the basis of and essential to artistic and technical growth; consistency is extremely important for the student, teacher, and class, and, in alignment with top-tier dance programs, having at least 90% physically participating attendance is expected out of School of Dance students.

**Having more than 4 absences/dance absences per quarter, will lower student's Dance grades** (refer to "Absences from Dance" section above). **Students whose progress has been impaired by excessive absences risk failing a course. The School of Dance no longer "holds" grades for students who are not physically participating in class on a daily basis. If the student is not taking dance class, it WILL affect their grades.**

**Satisfactory artistic and technical ability in class do not outweigh a deduction in grade due to poor attendance.**

**DANCE ETIQUETTE:** Students are expected to exhibit the highest level of work ethic. Students must demonstrate proper classroom etiquette and observe the dress code and other rules and regulations of the School, including proper dance etiquette and citizenship, representative of the School of Dance, in and around the school.

**TECHNICAL and ARTISTIC PROGRESS:** Students are expected to demonstrate notable technical and artistic progress. Students are expected to have the highest level of focus and commitment, as well as the ability to retain and take ownership of corrections and material. Students are expected to embrace, pursue, and demonstrate progress in the areas of dynamics, musicality, projection, phrasing, and emotional and performance maturity and movement quality.

**Technical and Artistic progress for Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors** will be based upon the constant preparation to compete on a Senior Division level (Senior Division students are competing with students and adults aged 16-25)—that means the highest level in preparation for the top schools and the top pre-professional programs. And this preparation, approach, and progress should be based upon their "Goals/Plans/Preparation" assignment (aka. GPS, see Addendum 1).

**Technical and Artistic progress for 6<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> grades** will be based upon the ability to compete on a Junior Division level (ages 11-15) and making sure that they are preparing toward being able to compete on a Senior Division level by the time they enter the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades.

**Technical and artistic progress for new entering Middle and High School students** should reflect a constant striving toward those goals we have set forth in the Middle and High School, respectively.



All School of Dance students, both Middle and High School, should be striving to:

- **DEVELOP CRAFT:** Development of craft is rooted in a truth and a trust that comes with time and patience. To open up perceptions and assumptions about dance that will allow them to have the confidence to pursue dance. In developing their craft, it should come with an appreciation of dance and the process of training in general. In developing a craft, they should know that there are only two types of dance: Good and Bad. Their ability and desire to develop their craft will go a long way to keeping them inspired to not only be a great artist and a great dancer, but a great person.
- **OBSERVE:** To observe the qualities that make up a more deep artistic expression. To have the confidence to be willing to observe not only the teachers, but their fellow dance students, and guest choreographers and guest teachers that will allow them to have the confidence to observe themselves. And also, in going to see other dancers and dance performances, can they have enough confidence to ask themselves the questions: Do I see myself up there? Have I been able to observe enough to know that one day I too can be up there? Am I honestly headed in that direction?
- **ENVISION:** To envision themselves being it, doing it, and living it. A willingness to dig deeper, to get over the fear of what they may find, and to have the confidence and appreciation of what they do find. And to understand: Different does not mean “wrong” or “bad”—Different just means different.
- **EXPRESS:** To start learning to express through their bodies and have the courage to want to express through their bodies. Also to develop the confidence and willfulness to be clear and articulate about movement choices. That they are clear that they mean what they say. And in time, learn to say what they mean.
- **ENGAGE & PERSIST:** The School of Dance will at times INSIST AND DEMAND to show them that they must ENGAGE and PERSIST. To make sense of movement and problems, and to have the strength and courage to persevere and solve them. In other words: Make it work, people.
- **STRETCH & EXPLORE:** In the dance world, the word *tendu* means to stretch. The word stretch itself, in the dance world, implies flexibility and mobility. But in this instance, stretch is about opening one’s mind and heart to be willing to explore and to be comfortable with the uncomfortable and to work from a “what if” situation. And to have the confidence to deal with a “what is” situation. To let prior skills help lead you to the connection of learning new skills. And, in this exploration, to be able to accept and understand the problems at hand. It’s about connecting the dots.
- **REFLECT:** Already in the School of Dance we encourage a “Quiet Zone” time at home (see “ACADEMIC AWARENESS” section above) and we strongly suggest a “quiet time” in their preparation for class, rehearsal, and performance, so that they can respond to tasks at hand with self-awareness of contexts. To be able to reflect upon the “3 C’s” (see “School of Dance Technical Objectives” section, below) of being Critical, Comparative, and Competitive; to be able to compare and reason with definitions and a constructive argument to analyze and critique not only others, but, and most importantly, themselves. These things lead to the competitive fire that allows you to go for what you want.
- **UNDERSTAND COMMUNITY:** We want the dance student to understand not just the history and theories of dance, but also what part they play in staying inspired to be part of the community, to have a positive effect on the community, and be willing to inspire in the community. And, if we do it just right, they will let the community keep inspiring them.

## COMMITMENT TO THE **WORK** OF DANCE TRAINING

**The School of Dance Faculty cannot over emphasize the importance of dedicated dance practice and application (aka “dance homework”) outside of structured instructional class time (i.e. before class, during unstructured or break times in class, after class, at home, etc...).**

Only through dedicated, conscientious, and deliberate daily practice, determination, and discipline can students truly begin to understand how the principles, techniques, and artistic elements of dance apply to each student’s individual instrument (their body); and only then can students truly begin to **OWN** their technique (and eventually, artistry) in their own bodies and minds--This has a positive “snowball” technique-building effect: the more the student understands their own bodies and how to master their mind/body control, the more easily the student assimilates new concepts, corrections, and movements in the dance studio when more complex or challenging material is introduced. This in turn helps to build true self-confidence, based on a true sense of accomplishment, growth, and progress.

Students are given tools, corrections, and concepts in class by the School of Dance Faculty, but what the students do to help develop their own abilities and potential is each student’s individual responsibility and is directly proportional to what each student does with the given tools/corrections/information and how much and what type of work students do, not only during structured instructional class time, but also, and most importantly, on their own, outside of structured dedicated class time.

Serious dance students are expected to work on their craft outside of the normal school day and to seek out additional intensive training outside of normal school hours whenever possible (evening classes, weekend classes, Summer Intensives, etc.).

A word about **motivation**: Each student supplies his or her own. Look to the Faculty for advice, honest assessment, corrections, and notes, guidance, and training, but not for motivation to be an artist in the field of dance.

Developing attention to individual progress, a strong daily work ethic, and maintaining one’s concentration in all department courses is imperative for success.

The School of Dance Faculty work to both guide the individual in the right direction and meet the needs of the collective in class and during productions.

The following points of assessment will help the student know what is expected to form the disciplined habits of professional dancers.

### **Assessment Category 1: Technique & Movement Quality:**

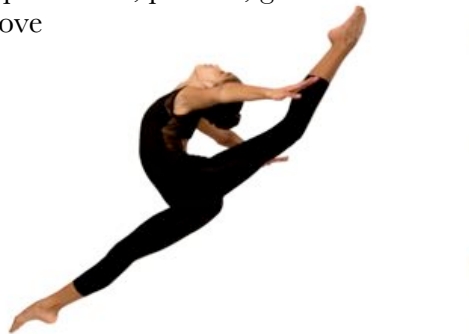
- **High School = 35%**
- **Middle School = 35%**

- demonstrates a knowledge, understanding, and application of technique and terminology at a pre-/professional level
- has, shows, and uses a level of flexibility and strength that is on par with a pre-/professional level
- hits clean and correct lines with his/her legs/arms/body
- demonstrates a conscientious use of feet and rotation that is on par with the pre-/professional dance world
- executes **quality** (not necessarily *high*) extensions and turns (not necessarily *how many*)
- demonstrates a pre-/professional movement quality
- remembers dance pieces; consistently picks up combinations quickly
- demonstrates combinations with pre-/professional performance quality and presence
- carries him/herself as a pre-/professional dancer
- shows an energy and enthusiasm for performing combinations, choreography, and movement, especially transitions, at a pre-/professional level and takes initiative in not just executing the combinations, choreography, movement, and transitions well and correctly but making more out of them
- shows that they care about transition steps as much as they do the “steps”

## Assessment Category 2: Dance Etiquette

- **High School = 30%**
- **Middle School = 35%**

-very focused and present mentally and physically  
-shows awareness of posture/being pulled up and how they present themselves in/around the dance studio  
-comes to class with energy and enthusiasm  
-takes and retains corrections  
-takes responsibility for their own talent and progress by working on technique, stretching, combinations on their own without being asked  
-shows a willingness to help others and does so in a pre-/professional manner  
-staggers him/herself intelligently, keeps intelligent spacing consistently throughout combinations, and keeps good spacing in rehearsal  
-has a very focused, studious, and professional approach to class and rehearsal  
-well-mannered and respectful of fellow students, teachers, and OSA Faculty and Staff both in and out of the studio  
-looks at and pays attention to who is speaking when teacher speaks or fellow student asks a question  
-comes down and around after combinations  
-ready to go in places for class combinations and in rehearsals (does not miss cues)  
-does not leave items in the studio or dressing room  
-demonstrates sense of leadership in all criteria of all categories (helps, reminds, encourages others)  
-strictly adheres to dress code  
-shows a conscientiousness in how they dress for class  
-does not need to be told to remove junk/warm ups (sweats, leg warmers, any attire besides leotard/tights)  
-hair consistently pulled back cleanly and neatly away from face and neck (Ladies: in a secured bun **with hairnet and bobby pins**) in a way that is reflective and representative of the beauty of the young dancer in training (does not present themselves in a haggard way that reflects a lack of care and conscientiousness toward their art and craft)  
-Consistently exemplifies and embodies expectations, policies, guidelines as outlined in the “OSA School of Dance Expectations” section above



### **Assessment Category 3: College & Career Readiness/Goals (CCRG)**

- **High School = 35%**
- **Middle School = 30%**

**\*Student's Attendance habits (DANCE TARDIES, TARDIES, TARDY ABSENCES, PARTIAL ABSENCES, DANCE ABSENCES, and ABSENCES) affect the CCRG portion of Student's Grade\***

-Student has excellent attendance, comes to class punctually, consistently and reliably

**-8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Graders:** Student has completed Audition Requirements for their grade level which includes:

-Student is CONSCIENTIOUSLY AND CONSISTENTLY PREPPING FOR SAID AUDITIONS (this is reflected in the consistency of their attitude, work ethic, and approach in class)

-Student has completed a thorough and honest **Post-Audition Self-Assessment**, including notes on how the audition went and what student feels they need to work on and improve for future auditions

-Student has created and is following a thorough, detailed, and specific **Plan of Action** to address said areas of improvement for future auditions

-How student comes into and approaches class reflects a desire to be there to work on themselves and their craft:

energized for class, ready to dance, with a zest for life and learning, and a hunger to be challenged, for this art they have chosen to do—Remember: your child has chosen to be here and this should be reflected in their attitude, energy, and approach

-Student comes to class prepared with all required class materials

-Student comes into class focused and to work, with the idea that this is not the commercial studio. This is reflected not only in their approach during class, but also in their approach in how they **prepare for class before class begins (student is rarely, if ever, Dance Tardy): student is expected to focus on properly stretching and warming up their bodies for class which requires an intense internal focus, minimizing external focus, stimulus, and distractions**

-STRETCHING, Body Conditioning exercises, reading assignments, writing assignments

-outside classes and outside performances

-turns in work on time

-turns in high quality work that demonstrates effort and conscientiousness (attention has been paid to spelling and grammar that is aimed toward the college level, paper is typed according to the guidelines laid out in the syllabus [for 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades])

-Dance Journey Journal reflects consistent, good, conscientious, extensive, class and rehearsal notes, daily corrections, reminders, thoughts, inspirations, frustrations, combinations, choreography, stretching/strengthening exercises, Plans of Action, etc.

**Students whose approach to class does not seem to align with School of Dance expectations and/or student's goals and aspirations (as stated in their GPS assignments [Addendum 1], for High School) and/or reflects a carelessness, neglect, or disregard for the safety and longevity of their instrument (i.e. their bodies) will be pulled aside by a School of Dance Faculty member to make them aware that their work habits and approach are of concern and not conducive to their success and expectations of the Dance Department.**

**If after two (2) conversations, student's behavior and approach have not seemed to change or grow in any consistent manner and a 3<sup>rd</sup> conversation is needed, student's parent/guardian(s) will be notified.**

**If there is no change/improvement of behavior after 3<sup>rd</sup> conversation and parent/guardian notification, student's grades will be affected by their approach to the class.**

## **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

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

- **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/Cool manner, implying sophistication, thoughtfulness, musicality, awareness of how they carry their bodies, and generally holding themselves to a higher standard

Students are expected to embrace the concepts of self-discipline, self-motivation, work ethic, integrity, and consistency and self-reflect on their progress in these areas throughout their journey within the School of Dance.

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## **\*ALL STUDENTS PLEASE NOTE:**

As stated in the "LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION" section above, 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".**

**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 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.

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### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

During this year of study, the focus will be on building a strong, basic technical foundation, built on proper muscular engagement, sound alignment principles, and intense mental focus and intention.

Students gain the awareness and learn the responsibilities they have of having and executing flexibility, strengthening, and body conditioning practices: building sound and consistent mind/body habits and practices (including the importance of consistent and thoughtful use of note-taking dance journals).

Students are expected to begin to develop the skills of self-awareness and self-assessment/critique, beginning with awareness of proper aesthetic of lines and dance shapes, and eventually developing into awareness of quality of lines, movement and performance/projection.

Students who embrace this building of a solid foundation will put themselves in a better position to be able to approach more advanced material, in later years, with proper execution and least amount of risk of injury.

Corrections will be more probing and awareness of correct line are part of the measure of progress.

Emphasis will focus on the following:

- **Proper and consistent dancer posture: stomach in, chest lifted, shoulders down, shoulder blades flat**
- Proper alignment and squareness in all exercises
- Coordination between arms and legs, both at the barre and in center combinations
- Proper upper body placement and muscular engagement:
  - The positioning of the arms in 2<sup>nd</sup> position, central to the correct development of muscles of the torso

- The shoulders should remain down, with shoulder blades flat against the back, not contracted together, allowing:
    - The chest to be open and slightly uplifted
    - The back to be engaged and support the arms
  - Isolation of muscular actions, selecting the correct muscles to be used to perform specific motions safely and effectively. This process of isolation and selection is the core of learning neuromuscular response.
  - The action of placing the heel firmly back on the floor each time the working leg returns to any position (1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup>) conditions the body for quick weight changes in the execution of *petit allegro* (small, fast jump work), provides the necessary traction during preparations for pirouettes, ensures a safe landing in *grand allegro* (large jumps), and not only promotes “clean” execution but also provides a release of the muscles at the back of the leg (calf and hamstring) essential to maintaining a healthy musculature. If this basic habit is fostered early in training, the ailments of Achilles’ tendon problems and tendonitis can be totally avoided.
  - The enforcement of turning out correctly from the hip joint (not feet or knees), making sure:
    - the knees are properly aligned over the toes
    - the arches are lifted and the ankles not pronating (rolling in)
    - pelvis remains “neutral” (i.e. not “tucked-under” or “swayed”)
    - proper thigh, rotator, gluteal, and abdominal muscles are strongly engaged to support the body
- 

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

During this year of study, students begin to appreciate the interrelatedness of the exercises at the barre and the steps in the center. Therefore, many of the corrections at barre can be made in terms of what is needed in the center.

For example:

- standing squarely and securely on the supporting leg can be related to adagio and pirouettes
- the execution of *degagé*, *frappé*, and *grand battement* is applied to the execution of jumps
- *port de bras* gains a new importance when related to its effect on the performance of pirouettes and jumps

**\*Anything that does not directly help execution is going to affect movement negatively\***

Because the vocabulary is becoming more extensive it is necessary to continue to:

- maintain proper and consistent dancer posture: stomach in, chest lifted, shoulders down, shoulder blades flat
- stress basic alignment
- make sure that transitions between positions, especially of the feet/legs and arms, are correct and clean

The complexity of the technique is founded on the clarity of the basic positions and transitions and it is all too easy to be drawn away from these concepts, unconsciously devising shortcuts and cheating once the combinations become more challenging. A solid basic lesson from time to time will serve as a means of keeping these concepts in mind.

Additional emphasis will be made in the following areas:

- Correct and safe execution of *cambré* back using the strength and support of the body’s musculature (stomach, upper back, gluteal and thigh muscles), NOT bending backwards by collapsing into the vulnerable lower back/waist area
  - Increased usage of demi-pointe/*relevé*, emphasizing maintaining a strong, balanced verticality/placement on the supporting side with a straight back, strong and engaged abdominals, back muscles, gluteal/rotator muscles, inner thighs, calves, and arches, with proper placement between the first and second toes (no pronating/rolling in or everting/rolling out)
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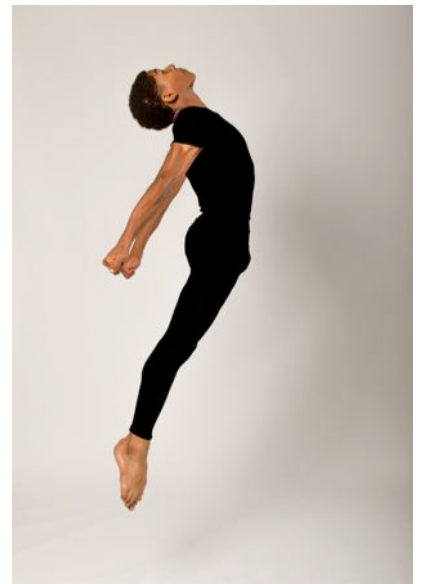
## 8<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Audition Requirements

One of the main objects of the program is to help, assist, and support Dance students to get into desired programs. The auditioning process is a needed measuring stick that will help students connect the artistic, academic, and personal presentation and preparation that is needed to help them and allow them to stay on a focused track, and for them to keep an eye on the big picture of what they came to the program for. For when we accepted the students into the School of Dance program, the expectations were that they had the willingness to go through the process of becoming the dancer that they wanted to be, or at the very least, of finding out that dance was not the way they wanted to go. Either way is fine for us. The thing that we are trying to emphasize is their willingness to **commit to a process**, for the student to put themselves in a position to respond to the challenges of the audition process, to find out where their commitment level is and to accept the pressure of this process and how it works: for some, it can be a joy, and for others, it might be too much. But the only way to find that out is through a FULL COMMITMENT and part of that commitment is through the process of prepping and going through the audition process. For this, the Audition Process, will be the most constant and consistent norm of their dance career. And students must learn to ACCEPT this, for all roads should be leading toward their Senior Year of being ready to extend themselves to an even higher level of expectations, self-motivation, and to have their work ethic be a true reflection of who they want to be, where they want to go, and at this part of their life, what they want to do.

These Auditioning Requirements and processes should be looked upon as the equivalent of prepping for Final Exams or SATs, and perhaps even more important or urgent, as the window of opportunity for dancers and dance students is small, and this is as young as the students are going to be. By not accepting these standards and the importance of what it is to prep for these auditions, the student puts themselves in a position of not taking full advantage of being in the School of Dance and the training opportunities that come along with that. For many students, being in the School of Dance will be the last chance they get to receive this type of intensive (and low to no cost) training opportunity. And for many, that can be a harsh reality, when realized post high school graduation. For students who don't take advantage of their time in the School of Dance, this usually reflects a lack of desire to see the program through.

The Audition Process is the Dance Student's way for them to see how they are working, what they need to work on, and in some cases, allows us as Teachers to find out how we can best support and prepare them in a way that reflects the standards of the program.

This is very, very important, for this is a way for the student to find out how important this is to them as a dancer, as a person, and as a student. The Audition Processes serve as the measuring sticks, guideposts, and proverbial carrots that all the dance students should urgently desire and want to be about. This will keep them in a constant state of readiness which is really what the Program is about. If this is no longer what the student is willing to do it is up to the student to make this clear to the School of Dance Faculty and Parent/Guardians, alike. 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.





## **8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> Grades:**

**AUDITION REQUIREMENTS\*: In order to be eligible to qualify for Letters of Recommendation from School of Dance Faculty, students are required to go on at least 2-3 or more auditions this year.**

**\*Please Note: Students are not necessarily expected to attend the programs for which they audition:** the Audition Requirements are meant as a self-assessment tool and to help remind students of why they are here in the School of Dance at OSA, and to help them continue to push toward their goals and to help open up their minds to see what else is out there in terms of competition, program styles, and possible career/life-path options to work towards.

**For each Audition that the student goes on, students are expected to:**

- **DO all their own audition research** (as per the GPS assignment, see ADDENDUM 1), including but not limited to: knowing all **audition deadlines**, audition **fees**, audition **requirements (technical, styles, etc.)**, audition **dress codes and required materials (shoe types, etc.)**
- **BE RESPONSIBLE for preparing for and meeting all audition deadlines, requirements, etc.**
- **ASK for help/assistance/guidance, if needed, in completing audition requirements, BUT SCHOOL OF DANCE FACULTY IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR DOING THE RESEARCH AND GATHERING OF INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS NEEDED FOR STUDENTS—THIS IS SOLELY THE STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITY and it is IMPERATIVE that the research and work involved be driven by the student, NOT School of Dance Faculty.**
- **NOTIFY School of Dance Faculty, in person**, regarding which auditions they intend to attend in a timely manner: **NO LESS THAN 3-4 WEEKS PRIOR TO AUDITION**
- **PROPERLY PREPARE for the auditions** (this will be reflected by their work in class and extra-curricular work)
- **COMPLETE AND TURN IN an Post- AUDITION SELF-ASSESSMENT paper** to School of Dance Faculty that includes, but is not limited to:
  1. **AUDITION EXPERIENCE:** Information on how the student felt their audition experience went
  2. **AREAS FOR GROWTH/IMPROVEMENT:** What student feels they need to work on (weaknesses, areas for growth/improvement)
  3. **PLANS OF ACTION** to address what they feel they need to work on in order to improve for the next audition and/or in relation to their current dance goals.

**PLEASE NOTE: Students who do not complete audition requirements (or students who attend auditions without properly preparing for the auditions or completing follow-up written Audition Self-Assessment assignment) will be considered ineligible to receive Letters of Recommendation from School of Dance Faculty.**

**By the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, serious dance students should be getting ready to audition for Summer programs.** As stated in the “Artistic Advisement” section above, **students are expected to communicate their intentions to and seek counsel from the School of Dance Faculty regarding their intentions and goals.**

By these years of study and training, proper placement should be established.

The arms and head should respond to the position of the legs in a “natural” way; correct configurations should be performed automatically.

Correct alignment should now be supported by a stronger musculature.

**Alignment is not something that a dancer acquires once and for all times.**

**The demands of the training are always slightly ahead of the capability of the student; there is always challenge and alignment is always tested in increasingly complex situations.**

At this level, students are both old enough and versed enough in the technique to begin to control and direct their movements consciously. They will be expected to make increasingly subtle corrections in their execution. This is necessary because extensions are now higher and the technical demands continue to increase, but also heightened awareness of the shape one is making, as well as the effort inherent in motion, benefits every aspect of performance. Most problems in center exercises arise from incorrect execution at the barre.

Because of this, additional emphasis will be made in the following areas:

- Continued awareness of maintaining proper and consistent dancer posture: stomach in, chest lifted, shoulders down, shoulder blades flat
  - Stability and mobility in the hip joint (meaning continued strengthening, usage, engagement, and stretching of the rotator muscles)
  - Proper and usable weight placement of the body, up and forward, with weight on the balls of the feet, not resting in the heels. If the weight of the body pulls back or sits on the hip joint, the body will adjust and compensate, not only forcing the body to activate incorrect usage of muscles, which itself puts the body at risk of injury, but also forcing the body out of proper alignment, eroding the very foundation of technical training that is trying to be built, which will seriously hamper, if not grind to a complete halt, the progress the student will be able to make
  - Continued awareness of putting the heels down in exercises at the barre, transitions, and jumps. Failure to put the working heel down will affect the execution of jumps in the center.
  - Increased awareness of *fondus* to work on a variety of concepts:
    - Proper alignment on the supporting side
    - Awareness of mobility and placement in the working hip joint
    - Use of rotation in both the working and standing thighs
    - Coordination between the two legs, preparing the body for jumps
  - Longer and more complex center combinations with more balances and *grande pirouettes* (pirouettes in positions other than *passé*)
  - Increased work with beats
- 

## **10<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

**AUDITION REQUIREMENTS\*: In order to be eligible to qualify for Letters of Recommendation from School of Dance Faculty, students are required to go on at least 3-4 or more auditions this year.**

**\*Please Note: Students are not necessarily expected to attend the programs for which they audition:** the Audition Requirements are meant as a self-assessment tool and to help remind students of why they are here in the School of Dance at OSA, and to help them continue to push toward their goals and to help open up their minds to see what else is out there in terms of competition, program styles, and possible career/life-path options to work towards.

**For each Audition that the student goes on, students are expected to:**

- **DO all their own audition research** (as per the GPS assignment, see ADDENDUM 1), including but not limited to: knowing all **audition deadlines**, audition **fees**, audition **requirements (technical, styles, etc.)**, audition **dress codes and required materials (shoe types, etc.)**
- **BE RESPONSIBLE for preparing for and meeting all audition deadlines, requirements, etc.**
- **ASK for help/assistance/guidance, if needed, in completing audition requirements, BUT SCHOOL OF DANCE FACULTY IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR DOING THE RESEARCH AND GATHERING OF INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS NEEDED FOR STUDENTS—THIS IS SOLELY THE STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITY and it is IMPERATIVE that the research and work involved be driven by the student, NOT School of Dance Faculty.**
- **NOTIFY School of Dance Faculty, in person**, regarding which auditions they intend to attend in a timely manner: **NO LESS THAN 3-4 WEEKS PRIOR TO AUDITION**
- **PROPERLY PREPARE for the auditions** (this will be reflected by their work in class and extra-curricular work)
- **COMPLETE AND TURN IN an AUDITION SELF-ASSESSMENT paper** to School of Dance Faculty that includes, but is not limited to:
  4. **AUDITION EXPERIENCE:** Information on how the student felt their audition experience went

5. **AREAS FOR GROWTH/IMPROVEMENT:** What student feels they need to work on (weaknesses, areas for growth/improvement)
6. **PLANS OF ACTION** to address what they feel they need to work on in order to improve for the next audition and/or in relation to their current dance goals.

**PLEASE NOTE: Students who do not complete audition requirements (or students who attend auditions without properly preparing for the auditions or completing follow-up written Audition Self-Assessment assignment) will be considered ineligible to receive Letters of Recommendation from School of Dance Faculty.**

**By the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, students should be prepping to be ready to compete for scholarships to Senior Division level (ages 16-25) Summer Intensives and Programs.**

As stated in the “Artistic Advisement” section above, **students are expected to communicate their intentions to and seek counsel from the School of Dance Faculty regarding their intentions and goals.**

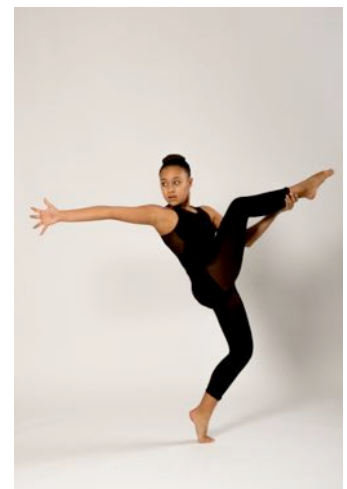
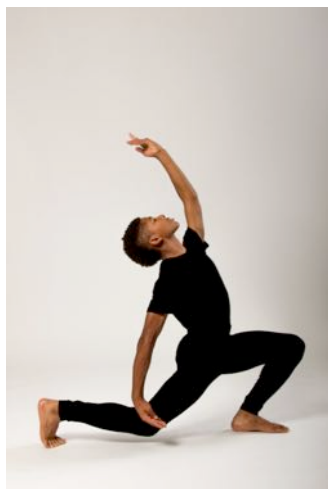
In this year of study, clarity is maintained by remaining within the tenets of the technique and honoring its rules. All too often the rules of the technique are regarded as obstacles to movement, rather than facilitators and enhancers. For example, a clean 5<sup>th</sup> position—weight divided equally between both feet—provides a secure base from which to jump or turn and ensures a safe and balanced landing.

Similarly, the action of the arms can either enhance or detract from a motion. A *port de bras en dehors*—arms rising from *bras bas*, passing through 1<sup>st</sup> position, and either rising to 5<sup>th</sup> position or opening to 2<sup>nd</sup> position—facilitates the execution of all jumps as it garners impetus. As the landing occurs, with the arms still lifted in 5<sup>th</sup> position, the opening of the arms into 2<sup>nd</sup> position is slightly delayed. This preserves the illusion that the body is still airborne and ensures that the tension of the body is not released prematurely, which would endanger a balanced, and properly placed and supported landing.

Dance technique is founded on basic locomotive precepts, but the positions of the arms and head also, although less obviously, are designed to maintain equilibrium by allowing the body’s weight to be carried on the supporting side. Modern dance masters have based their techniques on the natural flow of motion: Martha Graham on the rhythm of breathing, Doris Humphrey on the principle of fall and recovery, and José Limón on the circularity of motion in which movement generates an impetus that carries the dancer like a surfer riding a wave. While ballet, a highly stylized form of expression that requires a tremendous amount of initial subordination of the “natural” physical response, hence the minimum 10 years of **training** the mind and body it takes to “make a dancer”, does not seem to explicitly embrace these notions, it inevitably uses them because they are basic to human movement.

During this year, we begin to explicitly address the concepts that lead the dancer toward a transcendence of the technique, that is through acknowledgement of the basic precepts the dancer uses the acquired expertise and transforms it into a usable, transferable, breathable, artistic expression.

Nevertheless, basic lessons from time to time, will help serve as check-points for students to check-in and maintain a grasp on the fundamentals of their technique, providing an opportunity for students to address questions of alignment and placement, questions no dancer ever outgrows.



## **11<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

**AUDITION REQUIREMENTS\*: In order to be eligible to qualify for Letters of Recommendation from School of Dance Faculty, students are required to go on at least 3-4 or more auditions this year.**

**\*Please Note: Students are not necessarily expected to attend the programs for which they audition:** the Audition Requirements are meant as a self-assessment tool and to help remind students of why they are here in the School of Dance at OSA, and to help them continue to push toward their goals and to help open up their minds to see what else is out there in terms of competition, program styles, and possible career/life-path options to work towards.

**For each Audition that the student goes on, students are expected to:**

- **DO all their own audition research** (as per the GPS assignment, see ADDENDUM 1), including but not limited to: knowing all **audition deadlines**, audition **fees**, audition **requirements (technical, styles, etc.)**, audition **dress codes and required materials (shoe types, etc.)**
- **BE RESPONSIBLE for preparing for and meeting all audition deadlines, requirements, etc.**
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- **NOTIFY School of Dance Faculty, in person**, regarding which auditions they intend to attend in a timely manner: **NO LESS THAN 3-4 WEEKS PRIOR TO AUDITION**
- **PROPERLY PREPARE for the auditions** (this will be reflected by their work in class and extra-curricular work)
- **COMPLETE AND TURN IN an AUDITION SELF-ASSESSMENT paper** to School of Dance Faculty that includes, but is not limited to:
  7. **AUDITION EXPERIENCE:** Information on how the student felt their audition experience went
  8. **AREAS FOR GROWTH/IMPROVEMENT:** What student feels they need to work on (weaknesses, areas for growth/improvement)
  9. **PLANS OF ACTION** to address what they feel they need to work on in order to improve for the next audition and/or in relation to their current dance goals.

**PLEASE NOTE: Students who do not complete audition requirements (or students who attend auditions without properly preparing for the auditions or completing follow-up written Audition Self-Assessment assignment) will be considered ineligible to receive Letters of Recommendation from School of Dance Faculty.**

**By the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, students should be ready to compete at the Pre-Professional and Senior Division levels (ages 16-25) and prepping for and working toward their Post-High School plans and goals (i.e. College/University Programs, Companies, Professional Training Programs, etc.).**

As stated in the “Artistic Advisement” section above, **students are expected to communicate their intentions to and seek counsel from the School of Dance Faculty regarding their intentions and goals.**

During the previous years of training, the focus of instruction was on the acquisition of a pure, correct line and a clean execution of the classical vocabulary. With this foundation the individual quality of the dancer is free to emerge, but a distinction must still be made between the application of the technique to training and to choreography. The teacher, unlike the choreographer, is entrusted to impart the precepts of the art form. Although there is an element of choreography in all lessons, it is subordinate to the needs of the students. The lesson cannot be used as a choreographic platform.

In the final two years of training, kinetic awareness and intellectual understanding are sharpened, creating a foundation for students to make increasingly subtle adjustments in execution of the vocabulary and to hone their instrument to a truly expressive and responsive entity, freeing them to explore and find expression in drastically different modes of movement. A major component in the process of reaching control of the craft is stylistic awareness—the ability to see

both the difference and the interconnectedness between a classical *balancé* and a modern triplet. The role of the teacher in these final, intensive years of study is to foster that awareness, to prevent mannerisms from creeping into the execution, and to guide students toward a full flowering of their talent.

As always, basic lessons, focusing on the fundamental concepts of alignment, use of rotation, and balance, will be incorporated as a useful means of reinforcing the foundation and precepts of technique.

Increased emphasis in the following areas:

- Using previously learned material in more challenging ways and contexts
  - Combinations with quick changes of weight and direction condition the body to respond quickly and efficiently
  - Increasing emphasis in building more strength and endurance (especially for the gentlemen)
  - Smooth, clear, clean, and correct transitions regardless of difficulty of combination
  - Students being able to self-correct, an essential skill to both advanced and professional working dancers
- 

## **12<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

**AUDITION REQUIREMENTS\*: In order to be eligible to qualify for Letters of Recommendation from School of Dance Faculty, students are required to go on at least 3-4 or more auditions this year.**

**\*Please Note: Students are not necessarily expected to attend the programs for which they audition:** the Audition Requirements are meant as a self-assessment tool and to help remind students of why they are here in the School of Dance at OSA, and to help them continue to push toward their goals and to help open up their minds to see what else is out there in terms of competition, program styles, and possible career/life-path options to work towards.

**For each Audition that the student goes on, students are expected to:**

- **DO all their own audition research** (as per the GPS assignment, see ADDENDUM 1), including but not limited to: knowing all **audition deadlines**, **audition fees**, **audition requirements (technical, styles, etc.)**, **audition dress codes and required materials (shoe types, etc.)**
- **BE RESPONSIBLE for preparing for and meeting all audition deadlines, requirements, etc.**
- **ASK for help/assistance/guidance, if needed, in completing audition requirements, BUT SCHOOL OF DANCE FACULTY IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR DOING THE RESEARCH AND GATHERING OF INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS NEEDED FOR STUDENTS—THIS IS SOLELY THE STUDENT’S RESPONSIBILITY and it is IMPERATIVE that the research and work involved be driven by the student, NOT School of Dance Faculty.**
- **NOTIFY School of Dance Faculty, in person**, regarding which auditions they intend to attend in a timely manner: **NO LESS THAN 3-4 WEEKS PRIOR TO AUDITION**
- **PROPERLY PREPARE for the auditions** (this will be reflected by their work in class and extra-curricular work)
- **COMPLETE AND TURN IN an AUDITION SELF-ASSESSMENT paper** to School of Dance Faculty that includes, but is not limited to:
  10. **AUDITION EXPERIENCE:** Information on how the student felt their audition experience went
  11. **AREAS FOR GROWTH/IMPROVEMENT:** What student feels they need to work on (weaknesses, areas for growth/improvement)
  12. **PLANS OF ACTION** to address what they feel they need to work on in order to improve for the next audition and/or in relation to their current dance goals.

**PLEASE NOTE: Students who do not complete audition requirements (or students who attend auditions without properly preparing for the auditions or completing follow-up written Audition Self-Assessment assignment) will be considered ineligible to receive Letters of Recommendation from School of Dance Faculty.**

**By the 12<sup>th</sup> grade, final and Senior year, the students should be in an all out relentless pursuit of College/University and Professional Training Programs and Companies. The ultimate goal to prep**

**is for scholarships and financial support to go to their desired programs.** And, at the very least, the **Bottom Line Goal: Is to GET IN.**

As stated in the “Artistic Advisement” section above, **students are expected to communicate their intentions to and seek counsel from the School of Dance Faculty regarding their intentions and goals.**

In this final year of intensive study, students will be challenged to use movement in increasingly difficult and virtuosic ways. Virtuosity is demonstrated not only in the mastery of certain steps, but is also manifest in the speed and accuracy of execution. Because the ability to move quickly, safely, and correctly from one movement to another is intimately linked to the student’s understanding of proper alignment in weight transference, students will be challenged to embrace corrections that are increasingly subtle, exacting, and, for lack of a better term, “nit-picky”, reinforcing that the more advanced student must care about the finer details of the art form and holding themselves to a higher standard.

Virtuosity also relies on timing and creative phrasing—both concepts usually being described collectively as “musicality”. In technical terms, musicality involves retarding or accelerating certain motions. It is instilled by teaching the student to hear the beat of the music, then the phrase, and to stay within the measure. It is rather like encouraging a first-grader to color with the lines of a drawing. Some people will argue that this process of limiting expressiveness kills creativity, but all art forms rely on a technique for execution and communication—when we learn to speak, we also learn the rules of the language.

As proficiency increases, the concept of musicality changes. The musical dance student develops an ability to use music to enhance movement, not merely to delineate it. It is no longer sufficient simply to stay within the rhythmic structure; one must interpret the music by cultivating a creative relationship between it and the movement, just as the painter fills a canvas with abstract shapes or the poet uses language in ways that move us and expand our perceptions.

Increased emphasis on the following:

- Challenging students to be able to “switch gears” with increasing proficiency, alternating seamlessly between differing and opposing qualities, speeds, and directions
- Increased awareness and usage of musicality, not only by contrasting slow with fast movement or percussive with flowing qualities, but also by holding some positions beyond the musical phrase and moving on the upbeat of the following phrase, or, conversely, anticipating a new phrase by beginning the transition before the downbeat
- Challenging students to increase their virtuosity
- Challenging students to accept, embrace, and care about being increasingly self-critical, working on subtleties and finer details of the art form, holding themselves to a higher standard
- Students being able to self-correct, an essential skill to both advanced and professional working dancers

Virtuosity is founded in all of the precepts honored through the years of training: the process of building a technique is relevant to its maintenance. **A high level of proficiency is maintained when the minutest details of the technique are always part of the dancer’s consciousness.** The advanced student should already be like the professional dancer, a fine-tuned instrument that needs expert and daily care and maintenance to keep it operating efficiently and beautifully. Health and efficiency are achieved only when misalignment and mannered execution are corrected before they cause any damage.

**No matter what the circumstance, students need to be impressed with the fact that they must not skip class because they are tired.** If they aspire to a college/university or professional career, the daily lesson must be part of the routine of their day.

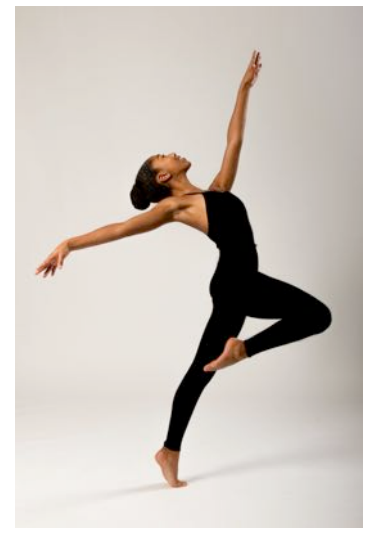
In this final year, students also produce choreography, and are presented with increasing opportunities for leadership which vary but can include teaching and mentoring. Students need to maintain eligibility requirements (including GPA and behavioral expectations) and exemplify School of Dance standards and expectations in order to be considered eligible to privileges of choreographing, teaching, and mentoring.

## **LETTER GRADE CHART**

PLEASE NOTE: This Letter Grade Chart is meant to be used as a guideline for assessing each student's work, rather than as an absolute: No one student will perfectly match the descriptions below.

<b>LETTER GRADE</b>	<b>LEVEL OF COURSEWORK AND PERFORMANCE</b>
<p style="text-align: center;">A = 93-100 to A- = 90-92</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Student demonstrates consistently excellent, AP/Honors-level work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student is a talented and hard worker, who works with a high level of energy (aka. sweating!), integrity, intelligence (goal-oriented) and intention.</li> <li>▪ Student is strong, flexible, holds center of body at all times, and consistently carries and presents themselves well, in accordance with dress code, and with consistently excellent posture and carriage.</li> <li>▪ Student demonstrates outstanding improvement and makes excellent progress in multiple areas, including but not limited to: energy, strength, core strength, flexibility, endurance, coordination, development of line, phrasing, technique, artistry, movement and performance quality.</li> <li>▪ Student is at the top of the class, always demonstrating strong technical execution of movement and expressive artistry and musicality.</li> <li>▪ Student picks up movement and combinations quickly and has an excellent movement memory and retention.</li> <li>▪ Student has excellent attendance, is always on time, and always in proper dress code.</li> <li>▪ Student has excellent attitude, is always focused and attentive throughout the class, and demonstrates excellent dance etiquette (to both peers and teachers, alike).</li> <li>▪ Student gives consistent effort to grasp class material, demonstrates an eagerness to try new approaches to improving in work, and demonstrates a willingness to let go of old habits.</li> <li>▪ Student always takes responsibility for taking and retaining corrections, even when given generally to the class or specifically to another student.</li> <li>▪ Student completes and turns in assigned reading, writing, and research assignments that are thorough, thoughtful, high quality, and at his/her possible highest level.</li> <li>▪ Student is a leader in the class, demonstrating leadership qualities through their maturity, work ethic, and positive approach and attitude.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;">B+ = 87-89 to B = 83-86</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Student demonstrates very good, solid, high level work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student is a hard worker and does the material well, but does not yet have or consistently demonstrate movement with strength, flexibility, or artistry.</li> <li>▪ Student consistently holds center of body and has a sense of musicality.</li> <li>▪ Student accomplishes consistently good work and demonstrates good to very good improvement.</li> <li>▪ Student is not at the top of the class, but is consistently trying to reach that level.</li> <li>▪ Student may struggle to learn new movement, but can achieve a capable and expressive execution of the material after working on it.</li> <li>▪ Student accepts and utilizes both general and personal feedback and demonstrates a willingness to be open to new ways of thinking and moving.</li> <li>▪ Student has very good attendance and very good attitude.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;">B- = 80-82 to C+ = 77-79</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Student demonstrates above average to good level work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student is a decent worker.</li> <li>▪ Student can approach material with varied accuracy and consistency.</li> <li>▪ Student holds center of body with varied consistency.</li> <li>▪ Student demonstrates above average to good improvement throughout the semester.</li> <li>▪ Student keeps up with the class and his/her technique is "coming along".</li> <li>▪ Student can pick up movement, but not with enough ease, speed, and depth to embody technical proficiency, expressivity, and musicality at the same time.</li> <li>▪ Student has good attendance and good attitude.</li> <li>▪ Student must be given the same correction multiple times and does not consistently take general corrections given to the class or specifically to other students.</li> </ul>

<p>C = 73-76 to C- = 70-72</p>	<p>Student demonstrates consistently average to below average level work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student is a sporadic worker and does not put extra effort into coursework.</li> <li>▪ Student demonstrates minimal improvement.</li> <li>▪ Student does not hold center of body consistently.</li> <li>▪ Student has inconsistent to below average motivation and attitude.</li> <li>▪ Student has mediocre attendance.</li> <li>▪ Student struggles to pick up and retain movement quickly and accurately, demonstrating average to below average technique, musicality, and movement and performance quality and artistry.</li> <li>▪ Student must be given the same corrections multiple times and does not demonstrate the drive, desire, attentiveness, focus, or dance etiquette to take general corrections given to the class or specifically to other students (i.e. student “waits” for the teacher to give <i>them</i> a correction specifically and otherwise does not work to assimilate all notes/corrections given in class).</li> <li>▪ Student struggles to keep up with the class and fails to demonstrate the kind of personal commitment that will allow him/her to move forward, progress, and grow in any significant way in technical execution and artistry.</li> </ul>
<p>NC/D = 60-69</p>	<p>Student demonstrates far below average, unacceptable level work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Poor Worker.</li> <li>▪ Poor Attitude.</li> <li>▪ Resistant to change.</li> <li>▪ Little to no progress.</li> </ul>
<p>F = 0-59</p>	<p>Failing to meet School of Dance expectations.</p>





# **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**

### **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.***



# ADDENDUM 4

## 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 5



### 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 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.**



# **OSA SCHOOL OF DANCE AGREEMENT**

I have thoroughly read the entirety of this 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

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Student Signature

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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)