

# **BALLET TECH**



**PARENT / STUDENT**

**DANCE HANDBOOK**

**2021-2022**

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# WELCOME

September 2021

Dear Ballet Tech Families,

Welcome to the 2021-22 school year.

This handbook is designed to provide you with important information about Ballet Tech's dance program, curriculum, and policies. We hope that it can provide a useful resource to you throughout the school year.

Ballet Tech is a collaboration between the Ballet Tech Foundation and the Department of Education. The BT Foundation provides students with dance instruction and the NYC DOE provides academic instruction. **The contents of this handbook reflect the policies of Ballet Tech Foundation's dance program, not the NYC Department of Education.**

Should the need arise, we may amend the Dance Handbook during the school year. You will be notified in the event of an amendment and an updated version of the Dance Handbook will be uploaded onto our website. Any policy statements published during the course of the school year are considered to be an addendum to the Dance Handbook.

We look forward to a productive and fulfilling school year!

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## BALLET TECH FOUNDATION PARENT / STUDENT AGREEMENT

In order to participate in Ballet Tech Foundation's dance program, we ask that all parents/legal guardians and students read and review this Parent / Student Dance Handbook and sign the **Parent / Student Dance Agreement**, both of which are distributed as part of Ballet Tech Foundation's *Fall Registration Packet*.

The Parent / Student Dance Agreement is an affirmation that families and students have reviewed and understand the contents of this handbook; in addition, the agreement includes a physical activity release form and a media release form.

# I. ABOUT BALLET TECH FOUNDATION

## MISSION

Ballet Tech is committed to introducing tens of thousands of New York City public school children to the beauty and rigor of classical dance and providing those most talented with the dance training necessary to fulfill their natural gifts, tuition-free. Ballet Tech pledges itself to the development of succeeding generations of classical dancers, whose diversity reflects the full spectrum of the American community.

## HISTORY

### Eliot Feld

Ballet Tech was founded by choreographer Eliot Feld. Born in Brooklyn, Mr. Feld began dancing at the School of American Ballet in 1954 where he made his stage debut as the Prince in New York City Ballet's first production of *The Nutcracker*. A few years later, while attending the High School of Performing Arts, he joined the original Broadway production of *West Side Story* and later appeared as Baby John in the movie version.

In 1963 Mr. Feld joined American Ballet Theatre (ABT), rising to the rank of principal dancer. Mr. Feld choreographed his first ballet in 1967 for ABT and has since choreographed 149 ballets, including those in Ballet Tech's repertory and some that have been in the repertory of leading dance companies, including American Ballet Theatre, The Joffrey Ballet, The National Ballet of Canada, New York City Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and The Royal Swedish Ballet.

Mr. Feld has received numerous honors and awards, including: The John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship (1969), Dance Magazine Award (1990), and an Honorary Doctorate degree from Juilliard (1991). Additionally, Mr. Feld was featured in two special tribute performances hosted by New York City Ballet in 2006.

### The Company

In 1974, Mr. Feld founded Ballet Tech as a professional ballet company, then known as **The Eliot Feld Ballet**, serving principally as an instrument for his choreography. For 30 years, the company presented biannual performance seasons in New York and toured extensively domestically and abroad. Although the full-time company disbanded in 2003, Mr. Feld continued to create new ballets both for professional dancers and for Ballet Tech's students.

## **The School**

In the late 1970s, while sharing a subway car with a class of exuberant elementary school children, Mr. Feld was struck with an idea: all children in New York City's public schools should have an introduction to dance, and those with aptitude and enthusiasm for it should have access to rigorous – and free – pre-professional dance training.

Pursuing this inspiration, Mr. Feld received permission from New York City's Board of Education to visit elementary schools throughout the city and audition children in grades 3-5.

Ballet Tech – originally called **The New Ballet School** – opened its doors in 1978. In its first year, 138 students from 8 elementary schools were bused from their schools to Ballet Tech's studios at 890 Broadway for beginner ballet classes. In subsequent years, Ballet Tech added classes for intermediate and advanced students.

In the Fall of 1995, Ballet Tech entered an unprecedented partnership with the Department of Education and opened the **New York City Public School for Dance**. By adding academic classrooms to its space at 890 Broadway, Ballet Tech's students could now pursue both their academic and dance studies under one roof.

In the 43 years since its founding, over 900,000 elementary school children in all five boroughs have participated in Ballet Tech's citywide audition program and over 25,000 children have enrolled in classes. In addition to performing with Ballet Tech, alumni have danced with distinguished companies such as *A.I.M.*, *Charlotte Ballet*, *Dance Theatre of Harlem*, *Martha Graham Dance Company*, *New York City Ballet*, *Pacific Northwest Ballet* and on Broadway. Students rank in the top percentiles on standardized exams and alumni have enrolled at leading colleges and universities including *Brandeis*, *Brown*, *Cornell*, *Juilliard*, *Purchase College*, and *Skidmore*.

Ballet Tech was designated one of four national projects by the United States Department of Education's Office of the Gifted and Talented. In 1986 the school received a Schools and Culture Award, co-sponsored by the Alliance for the Arts and the New York City Commission for Cultural Affairs. In October 1992 the Arts and Business Council honored Ballet Tech for "its unique service to New York City's youth." The New York State Alliance for Arts Education awarded Ballet Tech the Creative Ticket Award for Schools and Excellence in 2002. Ballet Tech has been consulted by ballet companies nationwide on replicating components of its unique and innovative program.

## **890 Broadway**

Ballet Tech is located inside one of the most well-known buildings in the New York performing arts community: 890 Broadway, the *Lawrence A. Wien Center for Dance and Theater*. Ballet Tech occupies the 6th, 7th, and 8th floors.

In 1976, in need of a permanent home for his company, Mr. Feld discovered an ideal space for dance and theater at 890 Broadway. Fifteen-foot ceilings and column-free interiors make the space especially suitable for dance studios. Ballet Tech rented and renovated the 8th floor, becoming the building's first performing arts tenant.

In 1986, Ballet Tech Foundation, together with American Ballet Theatre, purchased 890 Broadway, saving it from commercial development. In addition to Ballet Tech and ABT, 890 Broadway is also home to Gibney Dance, which provides affordable rental space to independent choreographers and small dance companies. Broadway, off-Broadway, and national tour companies rent additional studio space when it is available.

## **The Joyce Theater**

In 1982 Mr. Feld and Cora Cahan founded The Joyce Theater, a former movie house redesigned to meet the performance needs of small to medium sized dance companies. The Joyce has become one of the foremost presenters of dance companies, providing performance opportunities to many forms of dance, including Ballet Tech's annual presentation of **Kids Dance**. The Joyce Theater is in Chelsea, at the corner of Eighth Avenue and 19th Street.

## II. WHO'S WHO AT BALLET TECH

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Philip E. Aarons	Bill Heinzen
Patricia Crown	Carol Zerbe Hurford, <i>Vice President</i>
Laurel Durst	Karen Levinson, <i>Secretary</i>
Jenny Gersten, <i>Treasurer</i>	Mimi Lien
Jilian Cahan Gersten, <i>Interim Chairperson &amp; President</i>	Rachel Moreno
	Patricia Tuthill Pazner

### TRUSTEES EMERETI

Cora Cahan
Gregory Hines ( <i>in memoriam</i> )
Howard Klein ( <i>in memoriam</i> )
LuEsther T. Mertz ( <i>in memoriam</i> )

### ARTISTIC STAFF

Dionne Figgins	<i>Artistic Director</i>
Ashley Tuttle	<i>Director of Faculty</i>
Cathy Rhodes	<i>Director of Body Conditioning</i>
Tammi Shamblin	<i>Director of Dance Academics</i>
Michael Snipe	<i>Rehearsal Director</i>

### ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Maggie Christ	<i>Chief Operating Officer</i>
Elizabeth LaCause	<i>Director of Development</i>
Joe Gregori	<i>Administrative Director</i>
Janel Rayome	<i>Administrative Director</i>
Drake Andersen	<i>Program Coordinator</i>
Zoe Padden	<i>Program Coordinator</i>
Darren Thomas	<i>Program Coordinator</i>
Russell Murphy	<i>Finance Associate</i>
Andrew Ennis	<i>Development Assistant</i>
Jason Walters	<i>Building Manager</i>
Israel Geronimo	<i>Maintenance</i>
Alicia Rivas	<i>Maintenance</i>

## FACULTY

Men Ca	<i>Horton</i>
Dionne Figgins	<i>Ballet, Improv Composition</i>
Brian Reeder	<i>Allegro, Ballet, Contemporary</i>
Cathy Rhodes	<i>Ballet, Pointe, Strength &amp; Stretch</i>
Sierra Sanders	<i>Graham, Jazz</i>
Jacquelyn Scafidi	<i>Ballet, Repertory</i>
Tammi Shamblin	<i>Ballet, Pilates</i>
Jeremy Smith	<i>Music/Percussion</i>
Michael Snipe	<i>Allegro, Audition Prep, Ballet, Composition</i>
Ashley Tuttle	<i>Ballet, Contemporary, Pointe</i>

## ACCOMPANISTS

Stephanie Chun	<i>Piano</i>
Joe Cross	<i>Piano</i>
Brett Deptula	<i>Percussion</i>
Sorin Frisan	<i>Piano</i>
Allan Greene	<i>Piano</i>
George Lykogiannis	<i>Percussion</i>
Dmitry Polischuk	<i>Piano</i>
Tim Prepscius	<i>Piano</i>
Jeremy Smith	<i>Percussion</i>
Mihoko Suzuki	<i>Piano</i>

## PROFILES: ARTISTIC STAFF

## **Dionne Figgins**

### *Artistic Director*

Dionne D. Figgins began her career as a member of the Dance Theatre of Harlem, under the direction of Arthur Mitchell, dancing lead roles in *Serenade*, *Four Temperaments*, *Agon*, and *Concerto Barocco*, all by George Balanchine. She has also appeared as a guest artist with *Complexions Contemporary Ballet*.

Her Broadway credits include *Hot Feet*, *Memphis*, *Leap of Faith* (Assistant Choreographer) and *Motown: The Musical*. Her regional theatre credits include *Sophisticated Ladies*, *The Wiz*, *Ray Charles Live*, *Smokey Joe's Cafe* (Ovation Nominee, Chita Rivera Award nominee), *Trip of Love*, *Chicago*, and *A Wonderful World*. Film/TV credits include: *Across the Universe*, *Walk Hard*, *The Princess and the Frog*, *Bolden*, *She's Gotta Have It* (Netflix), Starz dramas *Flesh and Bone* (Yasmine) and *Power*, *Glee*, *House*, and The Academy Awards, to name a few.

Ms. Figgins is the co-founder and Creative Director of *Broadway Serves*, a non-profit organization whose mission is to engage theater professionals in community service opportunities locally, nationally, and abroad. During the pandemic, she turned her focus to teaching full time for her home studio of Jones-Haywood Dance School in Washington, DC. She also galvanized the theatre community in a series of conversations on Instagram called *Pass the Mic Broadway*, an initiative that sparked dialogue about social justice issues between Black and White female theatre makers. She is a proud member of AEA and SAG-AFTRA.

## **Ashley Tuttle**

### *Director of Faculty*

Ms. Tuttle was invited by Mikhail Baryshnikov to join American Ballet Theatre at the age of 16. Her career spanned 17 years with ABT reaching the rank of Principal dancer. Ms. Tuttle is known for her pure classicism and vivid characterizations. While maintaining her career with ABT, Ms. Tuttle joined the acclaimed Twyla Tharp Dance Company in 2000. During her time with TTD, Ms. Tharp created the hit Broadway show *Movin' Out* and the role of Judy on Ms. Tuttle. Her interpretation of this role earned her both TONY Award and Fred Astaire Dance Award nominations. As well as continuing her performing career, Ms. Tuttle teaches ballet at the Mark Morris Dance Group, Steps on Broadway, The School at Steps, Gibney Dance, and Barnard College. Ms. Tuttle was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Humanities from Wofford College in the spring of 2011. She joined Ballet Tech's faculty in 2016.

## **Cathy Rhodes**

### *Director of Body Conditioning*

Ms. Rhodes began her professional career with American Ballet Theatre at the age of 15. The company toured the United States and Europe under the direction of Lucia Chase and later Mikhail Baryshnikov. Later she was offered a contract under John Neumeier with The Hamburg Staats Opera in Germany. She holds her teaching certification from American Ballet Theatre and also holds certifications in fitness and yoga. Ms. Rhodes joined Ballet Tech's faculty in 1995.

## **Tammi Shamblin**

### *Director of Dance Academics*

Originally from California, Tammi Shamblin began her dancing career after she found a local ballet studio in a phone book at the age of eight. She pursued her love of ballet while on scholarship at the University of Utah, where she received her BFA in Ballet with an emphasis in pedagogy and performing. After college she returned to Sacramento and danced with Sacramento Ballet and directed a youth ballet company. She moved to NYC in October of 2003 and began working with Deborah Lohse of ad Hoc Ballet and started her career teaching at Ballet Tech. She received her 500-hour certification in Pilates from Body Tonic in Brooklyn, NY. She also has her RYT 200 Certification from Abhaya Yoga and continues to train with Abhaya founder, and former Ballet Tech Director, Tara Glazier. She has studied extensively in therapeutics and teaches a wide range of somatic-based activities for all levels. She is currently pursuing her passion for pedagogy as Ballet Tech's Director of Dance Academics.

## **Michael Snipe**

### *Rehearsal Director*

Mr. Snipe received his BFA from The Juilliard School under the direction of Benjamin Harkavy, and upon graduation he was awarded the Héctor Zaraspe Prize for choreography. He performed with Ailey II, Parsons Dance, and The Irish Modern Dance Theatre. He made his Broadway debut in *Movin' Out*, before touring nationally and internationally with the show. He also toured with *Swing! The Musical*. Mr. Snipe has taught at the Kirov in DC, Columbia College in Chicago, Joffrey Ballet Academy, and for the Ailey Extension. He is currently working on his Master's in Behavioral Sciences at Mercy College. He joined Ballet Tech's faculty in 2015.

## III. DANCE CURRICULUM

### BALLET TECHNIQUE AT BT

Ballet Tech's faculty embraces and teaches a blended style of ballet, utilizing influences from Italian, Russian, French, English & American schools of training, which presents students with a full breadth of techniques rooted in Classical Ballet.

In Ballet Technique class, students learn proper body alignment, coordination, artistry, flexibility, and ballet vocabulary, with an emphasis on strength, speed and agility, control, stamina, and memory retention. Each technique class consists of barre work, center exercises, and travelling movements across the floor.

As students progress to higher levels, the work becomes more challenging: they learn more elaborate sequences of movement, more advanced ballet vocabulary, and more complicated rhythms and music.

### DANCE TRAINING POLICY

Families are expected to make Ballet Tech their child's **primary school for dance study**.

In the experienced estimation of Ballet Tech's faculty, the BT dance curriculum offers students the proper amount of training for their age and developmental stage. However, families may enroll their children in supplemental dance classes outside of Ballet Tech provided that those classes do not conflict with any element of Ballet Tech's dance schedule – including dance classes, rehearsals and performances.

#### Elementary School Students

Families of Elementary School students should be particularly cautious about enrolling their children in **ballet** classes at other schools/institutions. There are different schools of ballet technique, including Cecchetti, Vaganova, Royal Academy of Dance, and various neo-classical American styles, and because every ballet school teaches different ballet techniques, training at multiple schools at this stage in their training can be confusing for young students.

#### Middle School Students

Ballet Tech's Middle School dance schedule extends late into the afternoon and families should be especially mindful of scheduling conflicts. However, it can be beneficial for older students to begin exploring other dance schools in preparation for planning for

their high school years. Middle School families who are looking to enroll their children in supplemental dance classes outside of Ballet Tech should feel free in reaching out to school administration for advice on outside classes.

## LEVEL BREAKDOWN

Ballet Tech utilizes a level system to identify its dance cohorts. For example, 4th grade students are in the *first year* of their dance training at Ballet Tech and therefore are in *Level 1*, and so on:

### The Elementary School

4th Grade → **Level 1**

5th Grade → **Level 2**

### The Middle School

6th Grade → **Level 3**

7th Grade → **Level 4**

8th Grade → **Level 5**

## DANCE DICTIONARIES

Effective September 2021 all BT students will be given a copy of a dance dictionary: *Technical Manual and Dictionary of Classical Ballet* by Gail Grant. This book will be a useful resource to students throughout their years at Ballet Tech.

Students are expected to carry their dance dictionary with them in their mesh dance bags and/or dance lockers. Teachers will instruct students on which days they would like them to bring the dictionaries to class.

Students who lose their dance dictionaries will be charged **\$8** for a replacement copy. (The charge for replacement copies can also be deducted from Middle School students' **Dancewear Deposits**. For more information about the Dancewear Deposit please see Section V of this Handbook.)



## THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Students in Ballet Tech's Middle School dance 5 days a week, Monday through Friday. Dance classes are incorporated into the regular school day, but often extend past the end of the academic school day.

In their **ballet** classes, Middle School students:

- Retain form, proper placement, and alignment while doing more challenging combinations
- Continue to experience the flow of a ballet class, with more challenging barre and center work, and traveling combinations across the floor
- Learn and retain intermediate ballet vocabulary
- Continue to incorporate the use of *épaulement* (the relationship of the head and shoulders to the feet)
- Learn how to reverse all combinations
- Strengthen feet and legs for more advanced jumps and pointe work
- Deepen their connections to the relationship between music and movement

In addition to classes in Ballet Technique, Middle School students take classes in a variety of other dance disciplines:

### **Allegro**

Allegro focuses on the athleticism and strength required for the big jumps, turns, and acrobatic movements typically performed by the male dancer in ballet. Emphasis is also placed on upper body strength, preparing students for partnering. In the schedule, students take *either* Allegro or Pointe. Effective September 2021, consideration for entry into Allegro is based on aptitude as opposed to gender.\*

*\* Dance is an ever-evolving artistic form, and historically gendered techniques are now being studied and performed by people of any gender identity. As such, all students can be considered for placement in Allegro, regardless of gender.*

### **Audition Prep**

In Audition Prep, 8th grade (Level 5) students begin learning techniques for auditioning. The class prepares students for the audition process by teaching them how to learn combinations quickly and how to dress and present themselves for an audition. Students also choreograph their own solo, which many schools require for consideration.

## **Composition**

In Composition, students learn the art of making dance, known as choreography. Choreography is comprised of many components, including theme and variation, repetition, retrograde, narrative, and the use of music and rhythm in relationship to movement. Students learn to develop the skills to access their voice through dance, and the lens from which they view themselves, the world, and their unique place in it.

## **Contemporary**

Contemporary dance is a style of expressive movement that combines elements of several dance genres including ballet, modern, and jazz. In Contemporary class, students will strive to connect the mind and the body through fluid dance movements. Contemporary dance emphasizes versatility and improvisation, and incorporates floorwork. Contemporary dance can be performed to many different styles of music and is often done in bare feet or socks.

## **Graham**

In Graham, students learn the modern dance technique created by American dancer and choreographer Martha Graham. Graham technique is based on the opposition between contraction and release, a concept based on the breathing cycle which has become a trademark of many modern dance forms. Another dominant principle of Graham technique is the spiraling of the torso around the axis of the spine. Graham is known for its unique dramatic and expressive qualities and distinctive floorwork.

## **Horton**

Horton Technique is a modern dance movement style named after its creator Lester Horton. This technique emphasizes a whole-body, anatomical approach to dance that includes flexibility, strength, coordination, and body and spatial awareness to enable unrestricted, dramatic freedom of expression.

## **Jazz**

Jazz dance is a social dance style that emerged at the turn of the 20th century when African American dancers began blending traditional African steps with European styles of movement. Jazz dance shares many of the same techniques as ballet, though that shared vocabulary is presented in a parallel position. Jazz dance is known for its energetic and dynamic stylings and is frequently the go-to dance style for choreography in Broadway musicals, commercials, and Film/TV.

## **Pilates**

Pilates is a body conditioning technique that builds strength and flexibility, and helps dancers learn body maintenance techniques. The fluid, controlled motions in Pilates emulate movements found in ballet, helping to increase control, precision and core strength, and improving balance and stability for the dancer. By creating an equilibrium of muscle awareness and control that is vital to ballet, Pilates helps to assess injuries and extend the longevity of a dancer's career.

## **Pointe**

Pointe technique is a form of ballet in which a dancer supports all their body weight on the tips of their toes in a specialized shoe called a pointe shoe. BT students begin pointe training in Level 3 (6th grade). Historically, pointe is a ballet technique performed by the female dancer. In our Pre-Pointe class (which takes place during the Summer Session before 6th grade), training focuses on developing the muscles of the ankle and feet, so that students gain the necessary strength to support themselves on their toes. Once in 6th grade, more emphasis is placed on students finding their center of balance as they move en pointe and discover the ethereal quality of pointe dancing. In the schedule, students take *either* Pointe or Allegro. Effective September 2021, consideration for entry into Pointe class will be based on aptitude as opposed to gender.\*

*\* Dance is an ever-evolving artistic form, and historically gendered techniques are now being studied and performed by people of any gender identity. As such, all students can be considered for placement in Pointe, regardless of gender.*

## **Repertory**

In Repertory class, students learn the choreography of notable choreographers throughout history, including BT founder Eliot Feld. This class gives students the opportunity to put their dance technique to use and prepare them for stage performances. In addition to learning Feld repertory, students are introduced to new choreographers and their dances. This class is also used to prepare students for BT performances, including Kids Dance at The Joyce Theater.

## **Strength and Stretch**

Strength and Stretch is a class designed to increase physical strength through weight bearing and resistance training. This class focuses on teaching students the value of properly stretching to prevent injury, and a regime of exercises to help develop physical endurance, strength, and flexibility. The exercises in this class help support the added rigor of more complicated ballet exercises and help develop the strength necessary for partnering.

## Middle School Classes by Level, Fall 2021

### Level 3

#### *Weekly Classes, Fall 2021*

Ballet	5 classes per week
Allegro or Pointe	2 classes per week
Horton	1 class per week

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### Level 4

#### *Weekly Classes, Fall 2021*

Ballet	5 classes per week
Allegro or Pointe	2 classes per week
Horton	1 class per week
Jazz	1 class per week
Music / Percussion	1 class per week
Repertory	1 class per week
Strength & Stretch	1 class per week

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### Level 5

#### *Weekly Classes, Fall 2021*

Ballet	5 classes per week
Allegro or Pointe	2 classes per week
Audition Prep	1 class per week
Contemporary	1 class per week
Graham	1 class per week
Improv / Composition	1 class per week
Repertory	1 class per week
Strength & Stretch	1 class per week

## ASSESSMENTS AND GRADING

**Dance Report Cards** are distributed three times a year in alignment with the Academic School's Marking Period calendar. In addition, students receive a **written assessment** prior to the Fall Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences.

**Marking Period 1:** September 13, 2021 – December 3, 2021  
*Report Cards distributed December 10, 2021*

**Marking Period 2:** December 4, 2021 – March 25, 2022  
*Report Cards distributed March 31, 2022*

**Marking Period 3:** March 26, 2022 – June 27, 2022  
*Report Cards distributed June 27, 2022*

Elementary School students receive “level” grades; Middle School students receive “percentage” grades:

PERFORMANCE	LEVEL	PERCENT
Exceeds Standard	4	100% - 90%
Meets Standard	3	89% - 76%
Approaching Standard	2	75% - 65%
Below Standard	1	64% - Below

Students are graded in the following categories on their Dance Report Cards: Work Habits and Technical Progress.

The **Work Habits** category comprises **60%** of the Overall Grade; the **Technical Progress** category comprises **40%** of the Overall Grade. The **Overall Grade** also appears on the Academic Report Card.

## **WORK HABITS**

**60%**

- Acceptance of Corrections
- Application and Retention of Corrections
- Concentration and Focus
- Conduct and Decorum
- Energy and Physicality
- Preparedness and Organization
- Punctuality
- Work Ethic

## **TECHNICAL PROGRESS**

**40%**

- Placement/Alignment
- Coordination
- General Flexibility
- Extension
- Use of Hip Rotation
- Use of *Port de Bras*
- Strength of Footwork
- Ability to Pick Up Combinations
- Attention to Musicality

## **Grading Category Descriptions**

### **Work Habits**

#### **Acceptance of Corrections**

How consistently the dancer pays attention to both **general corrections** that are given to the entire class and **individual corrections** given to that particular dancer.

*Please note: the term “correction” specifically refers to feedback about physical technique; not, for example, a correction regarding conduct.*

#### **Application and Retention of Corrections**

How effectively the dancer absorbs and retains the specific feedback the teacher is giving them about their physical movements.

#### **Concentration and Focus**

How well the dancer maintains their attention and mental energy while in class.

### **Conduct and Decorum**

How consistently the dancer conducts themselves in a positive way in the dance learning environment, both in the studio and the dressing room.

- *Does the dancer conduct themselves with respect and treat others with respect?*
- *Does the dancer follow the rules of etiquette and behavior?*
- *Does the dancer turn their attention to the teacher when the teacher is speaking?*
- *Does the dancer keep their body off the ballet barre between exercises?*
- *Does the dancer ask appropriate questions at the appropriate times and follow established rules?*

### **Energy and Physicality**

How consistently the dancer studies with their best physical effort and gives 100% of their capacity in a physical sense.

### **Preparedness and Organization**

How consistent the dancer is in being prepared and organized for their dance classes. The number of days “**unprepared**” for class automatically affects this category -- dancers are marked unprepared when they do not have the necessary materials for class (including dancewear, dance dictionaries and journals) or are not physically prepared (being underdressed, having hair correctly secured, etc.).

*(See Section V. page 27.)*

### **Punctuality**

How consistent the dancer is in arriving to class in a timely manner. The number of unexcused days late to class automatically affects this category.

*(See Section IV. page 23.)*

### **Work Ethic**

Does the dancer train with discipline, integrity, hard work, and diligence?

### **Technical Progress**

#### **Placement/Alignment**

How well the dancer finds proper, balanced alignment in any given exercise.

#### **Coordination**

How well the dancer understands opposition, uses *port de bras* (carriage of the arms) with their legs and torso, and puts two or more movements together smoothly and effectively.

### **General Flexibility**

How effectively the dancer can stretch and elongate their body.

### **Extension**

How well and how high the dancer can lift and hold a properly placed leg.

### **Use of Hip Rotation**

How well the dancer maintains their ability to rotate the legs and feet from the hips within their own personal range of motion.

### **Use of Port de Bras**

How gracefully and harmoniously the dancer's arms are carried in relation to their body.

### **Strength of Footwork**

How well the dancer can maintain their floor position, use their entire foot in action, and stretch their foot to its fullest point. How well the dancer can utilize their muscles to leave the floor and find elevation in the air with both power and grace.

### **Ability to Pick Up Combinations**

How well the dancer can produce a combination, as instructed by the teacher either visually or verbally.

### **Attention to Musicality**

How well the dancer hears nuances in music and can apply it to their movement.

## **KIDS DANCE**

Kids Dance is Ballet Tech's annual performance season at The Joyce Theater, located at Eighth Avenue and 19th St.

Kids Dance typically features students in the Middle School, as Elementary School students are still in the primary stages of their dance training. Participation in Kids Dance is at the discretion of the rehearsal directors and is based on a student's work ethic and ability to execute the choreography. Students participating in Kids Dance must attend **all scheduled rehearsals and performances.**

## **2022 Kids Dance Season**

Thursday, June 9, 2022 7pm  
Friday, June 10, 2022 7pm  
Saturday, June 11, 2022 2pm and 7pm  
Sunday, June 12, 2022 2pm and 7pm

*(Performance times are still to be determined; schedule above is subject to change.)*

## **OPEN CLASS WEEKS**

Ballet Tech traditionally holds 3 Open Class Weeks each year. Family and friends are invited, and strongly encouraged, to attend and observe classes.

Historically, Open Class Weeks happen in December, May and the last week of the Summer Session. Due to ongoing COVID safety protocols it has not yet been determined when and how BT will conduct Open Class Weeks during the 2021-22 school year. Once released, Open Class schedules are available on Ballet Tech's website: [ballettech.org/schedules/open-class-week](http://ballettech.org/schedules/open-class-week).

## **STUDENT-PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Student-Parent-Teacher conferences are held twice a year—in the fall and in the spring. Conferences are for both academics and dance. Both students and parents/guardians attend the conferences.

November 3, 2021: 4pm - 7pm

November 4, 2021: 1pm - 4pm

March 2, 2022: 4pm - 7pm

March 3, 2022: 1pm - 4pm

*Please note: due to ongoing COVID safety protocols it has not yet been determined if 2021-22 conferences will be held in-person or virtually.*

## **THE SUMMER SESSION**

Each summer, Ballet Tech Foundation offers its incoming and continuing students a 4-week summer dance program. Participation in the Summer Session is recommended, but not required.

In addition to their regular dance classes, students take classes that are not offered during the academic school year. For new students and their families, the Summer Session is a great time to get to know new classmates and fellow parents prior to the start of the school year.

The **2022 Summer Session** is tentatively scheduled for **July 11- August 5**. The summer class schedule and registration forms will be distributed to families in late Winter / early Spring 2022.

## IV. NORMS OF STUDENT CONDUCT

Ballet Tech requires strong levels of physical, intellectual, and emotional commitment from each student to meet the rigorous standards and expectations required for the study of classical dance. Students are expected to fully dedicate themselves to their dance studies and take full advantage of the unique training that is offered to them.

### ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to regularly attend all scheduled dance classes and rehearsals. Illnesses, injuries, or other serious circumstances are the sole allowable reasons for absences. Appointments – including medical and dental – should be made on days/times that do not conflict with classes and rehearsals.

#### Middle School Schedule

The end of the Middle School academic school day is 2:50pm. However, Middle School dance classes regularly extend past 2:50pm. **Students are obligated to attend these classes.** When students are engaged in dance activities past 2:50pm, they are instructed and supervised by Ballet Tech Foundation faculty and staff, not the NYC Department of Education.

### PUNCTUALITY

Students are expected to arrive on time and be fully prepared to begin each of their dance classes. **Punctuality is a component of the “Work Habits” section in the Dance Assessment.**

### CONDUCT

#### General Conduct

All members of the BT community – faculty, staff, musicians, and students – are expected to contribute to a positive and productive learning environment and are expected to conduct themselves with respect and treat others with respect.

Students are expected to show a consistent focus and commitment to their dance studies. Matters of student conduct must be in accordance with the NYC Department of

Education's *Discipline Code*. **Conduct is a component of the "Work Habits" section in the Dance Assessment.**

### **Dismissal from Class**

A teacher may need to dismiss a student from dance class due to disorderly or disruptive conduct, including, but not limited to, failing to abide by the rules of the ballet studio, invading the space of others, or a violent outburst.

A student who is dismissed from class meets with school directors and an "Incident Report" is filled out and saved in the student's file. A phone call home or a conference with the student's family occurs when deemed necessary by school administration, or when requested by a parent/guardian.

### **School Property**

Students are expected to respect all school property including, but not limited to, dance studios, pianos, dressing rooms, lockers, hallways, and walls. Students are not permitted to use any equipment kept in the studios, nor are students permitted to be in the studios unsupervised. Eating and drinking in the studios and dressing rooms is prohibited.

### **Cell Phones and Electronic Devices**

Cell phones, portable music and entertainment systems may not be turned on or visible at any time during the school day. If a student's phone is turned on or visible it will be confiscated by BT staff. Students may ask permission to use their cell phone in the front office for the purposes of communicating with a family member.

## V. DANCEWEAR AND APPEARANCE

Ballet Tech provides necessary dancewear for all students. As part of their pre-professional training, all Ballet Tech students are expected to come fully prepared for class every day, wearing the correct uniform. Students are to be conscientious and organized about the upkeep of their dancewear.

*Please note: as part of Ballet Tech's ongoing COVID safety protocols, to quickly prepare for dance class and reduce the amount of time in the dressing rooms, **students should come to school wearing their dance uniform underneath their regular clothes.** For more information about BT's COVID protocols please see Section VI of the Handbook -- Addendum: COVID Safety.*

### DISTRIBUTION OF UNIFORMS

Elementary School students receive two sets of their dance uniform. Each set contains a leotard, a pair of shorts, and a pair of socks. Middle School students receive three sets of their dance uniform. Each set contains a leotard, a pair of tights, and a pair of socks. Slight variations in the dance uniforms are outlined in the "Dancewear by Level" section of the Handbook.

#### **Purchased Dancewear – Middle School Levels**

As stated above, students are provided with dancewear free of charge. Ballet Tech distributes the dancewear to students and then collects and re-uses it.

However, certain items worn by Middle School students cannot be re-used, and therefore are sold to families **at a discounted cost:** pointe shoes, toe pads, dance belts (dance underwear for boys), and split-sole ballet slippers.

When any one of these items is provided to a student, the cost is deducted from the student's **dancewear deposit**, unless the family chooses to directly pay for the item. (More information about the dancewear deposit is provided later in the Handbook.)

Ballet Tech shares in the cost of the items listed below and charges families the following discounted rates:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost to Ballet Tech Families</u>	<u>Retail Value</u>
Pointe Shoes	\$40	\$75 - \$120
Toe Pads <i>(For Pointe Shoes)</i>	\$15	\$28
Split-sole Ballet Slippers	\$20	\$24-33
Dance Belts	\$15	\$22

## MAINTENANCE AND UPKEEP

Students are responsible for maintaining the upkeep of their dancewear. They must wash their clothes regularly, mend holes, and sew elastics and/or ribbons on their shoes, as needed.

Dear BT Student:

You are responsible for keeping your dancewear clean and bringing it with you to school daily. You will be marked unprepared each day you forget any item or all of your dancewear at home.

- When you get home, wash clothes right away so that they will have time to dry.
- In a regular **washing machine**, use the gentle cycle.
- In a **dryer**, use a **low heat setting** (high heat will shrink the clothes). For best results, hang dry your clothing on a drying rack or a hanger.
- **To hand wash in a sink or plastic washtub** – use warm water and a very small amount of detergent. Allow clothing to soak in the soap and water for several minutes and rub the clothing on any dirty parts. After washing, rinse all the detergent out of the clothing. After rinsing, squeeze all excess water out of the clothing. Hang clothes to dry on a drying rack or on a hanger over the bathtub.
- If you notice a rip in your clothing, **it is your responsibility to repair it** as soon as possible.
- If you notice that your clothing is becoming too small, it is your responsibility to wash it and exchange it for a larger size.

## CLOTHING REQUESTS

Students may request a replacement item of dancewear if they have an item that they have outgrown or that is worn beyond repair.

## HAIR AND JEWELRY

Loose hair can be a distraction to a student's training. As such, for dance class all students must properly secure their hair up and away from the face and off their neck, using discreet hair supplies, if needed. Students who are unable to quickly and neatly secure their hair prior to the start of dance class should come to school with their hair already prepared for dance.

Students may not wear any kind of jewelry to class, including long earrings (stud earrings are allowed).

## UNPREPARED POLICY

As stated above, students must be prepared for class. **Preparedness for class is a component of the "Work Habits" section in the Dance Assessment.** Students are allowed 3 days per school year in which staff will provide replacement clothes before their grade is affected. Families will be notified if their child is consistently unprepared for class.

## DANCEWEAR DEPOSIT

A \$200 refundable deposit is required from families of all **Middle School** students. Payments are due by October 1st. Your child will not be able to receive new split-sole ballet slippers, pointe shoes, and/or dance belts until there is a dancewear deposit on file.

The deposit serves two purposes:

1. Security: Damage to or loss of any piece of dancewear provided by Ballet Tech will be deducted from the deposit, excluding normal wear and tear. Below are the amounts for each clothing item that will be deducted, based on average retail prices:

**Leotards:** \$15

**Women's Tights:** \$15

**Men's Tights:** \$25

**Shorts:** \$15 (*Levels 1 & 2*)

**Pointe Skirts:** \$15

**Full sole ballet slippers:** \$20

2. Payments: Pointe shoes, toe pads, split-sole ballet slippers, and dance belts (dance underwear for boys) are purchases. When any one of these items is given to a student, the cost is deducted from the student's deposit, unless the parent chooses to directly pay for the item.

Middle School families are expected to start each school year with \$200 on file – any unused portion of the deposit from the previous school year is rolled-over into the new year and families refill the remaining balance. The unused portions of the deposits are refunded to families when students complete their time at Ballet Tech.

At the end of the school year, students return their dancewear to Ballet Tech. It is expected that they turn in all sets of laundered dancewear. The cost of any missing and/or damaged items is deducted from the dancewear deposit on file for the middle school students.

**NOTE:** Families of Elementary school students are not expected to have a Dancewear Deposit on file. However, at the end of the school year, families will be billed for any missing and/or damaged items. *(See page 23 for prices of items.)*

# DANCEWEAR BY LEVEL

## *THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL*

### LEVEL 1

<b>Leotards</b>	<b>Shorts</b>	<b>Socks</b>	<b>Ballet Slippers</b>
2 White	2 Black	2 Pairs White	1 White

### LEVEL 2

<b>Leotards</b>	<b>Shorts</b>	<b>Socks</b>	<b>Ballet Slippers</b>
2 Royal Blue	2 Black	2 Pairs White	1 White

## *THE MIDDLE SCHOOL*

### LEVEL 3

<b>Leotards</b>	<b>Tights</b>	<b>Socks</b>	<b>Ballet Slippers</b>	<b>Misc. Extras</b>
3 Forest Green	3 Black	3 Pairs White	1 White	Boys: 3 Dance Belts and 1 Waist Belt  Pointe: 1 Black Skirt

### LEVEL 4

<b>Leotards</b>	<b>Tights</b>	<b>Socks</b>	<b>Ballet Slippers</b>	<b>Misc. Extras</b>
3 Burgundy	3 Black	3 Pairs White	1 White	Boys: 3 Dance Belts and 1 Waist Belt  Pointe: 1 Black Skirt

### LEVEL 5

<b>Leotards</b>	<b>Tights</b>	<b>Socks</b>	<b>Ballet Slippers</b>	<b>Misc. Extras</b>
3 Black	3 Black	3 Pairs White	1 White	Boys: 3 Dance Belts and 1 Waist Belt  Pointe: 1 Black Skirt

## VI. ADDENDUM: COVID-19 SAFETY

### HEALTH & SAFETY AT SCHOOL

All members of the BT community are expected to follow Ballet Tech's COVID-19 safety procedures. As in all areas of the school building, appropriate social distancing must be maintained in the dance studios, dressing rooms, and hallways. **Face masks must always be worn.**

#### Dance Studios

Dance studios will only be occupied by the appropriate number of persons – including teachers, staff, musicians, and students – as determined by the NYC Department of Education's social distancing guidelines.

Each student will have an assigned spot in the dance studio, both at the ballet barre and in the center of the studio. The studio floors have taped markings designating these assigned spots for students. These taped markings have been carefully measured to ensure proper social distancing. Students must remain within their designated taped areas, except for when they are transitioning from the barre to the center, or across the floor exercises, or in and out of the studio.

High-touch surfaces in the studios will be sanitized in between each use. A deep clean of each studio will also take place every evening.

As in the academic classrooms, windows and doors in the dance studios will remain open to maximize air flow. The NYC School Construction Authority visited Ballet Tech to ensure that there was proper ventilation in all of our spaces. In addition, Ballet Tech Foundation hired an industrial hygienist who reviewed our spaces and concurred that there was proper ventilation.

All air conditioning units have been cleaned and have been set to take in maximum outside air. Many of our rooms also have exhaust fans, which have also been function tested for correct operation.

#### Dancewear and Dressing Rooms

Dressing rooms also meet capacity and ventilation standards. As in the dance studio, each student will have an assigned spot in the dressing room. To quickly prepare for dance class and reduce the amount of time in the dressing rooms, **students should come to school wearing their dance uniform underneath their regular clothes.**

When students enter the dressing room, they will go to their assigned spot, quickly remove their street clothes, put on their ballet slippers, use the bathroom if they need to, wash their hands, and then head to their assigned spot in the studio so that the next group of students can enter the dressing room and prepare for class. Students must wash their hands before and after ballet class.

Students with loose hair should come to school with their hair tied up and prepared for class. Staff will not assist students with tying up their hair, nor will students be allowed to assist each other with their hair. We also recommend that students avoid wearing jewelry to school. Jewelry, apart from stud earrings, is not permitted in ballet class. Taking jewelry on and off can be time-consuming and, like hair, sometimes requires the assistance of staff or fellow students.

## **REMOTE CLASSES ON ZOOM**

The following is based on the NYC Department of Education's safety plans for the 2021-22 school year at the time of the printing of this handbook.

- If an Elementary School cohort goes into quarantine due to a confirmed positive case, live (synchronous) remote classes on Zoom will be provided to that cohort.
- Full Middle School cohorts will not go into quarantine -- only unvaccinated Middle School students quarantine -- and Zoom classes will not be provided.

These are guidelines for Elementary School remote dance classes:

### **Space**

As much as possible, students should use a space at home where they will not have any distractions, so that they will stay focused on class. Students need to be able to hold onto something, such as a chair or a table, and they need enough space around them to be able to kick their legs. In addition, if possible, they should find space in their home where the internet signal is as strong as possible.

### **Dancewear and Footwear**

Students are expected to wear their dance uniform for all classes, including remote classes. Students can be barefoot, in socks, or in ballet slippers – footwear will vary depending on the type of floor that your child is on. The floor should be as least slippery as possible, and what the student is wearing on their feet will affect that. Sneakers should not be worn in ballet class.

**Remote Class Etiquette**

Once the class has started, students must put their sound on MUTE. The only time there is talking during the dance class is if students are speaking directly to the teacher. Students' video should be ON. When possible, the camera should be positioned so that the teacher can see as much of the student as possible. Students should "pin" their teacher's window so that it is the only window that the student sees.

The "chat" function is enabled only for teacher-student communication. Chatting between students is not available.

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# CALENDAR: 2021-22

## 2021

### SEPTEMBER 2021

- 13 First Day of School, 2021-22
- 15 Yom Kippur – No Classes

### OCTOBER 2021

- 11 Indigenous Peoples' Day – No Classes

### NOVEMBER 2021

- 2 Election Day – Remote Instructional Day
- 3 Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences, 4pm – 7pm
- 4 Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences, 1pm – 4pm
- 11 Veterans Day – No Classes
- 25-26 Thanksgiving Recess – No Classes

### DECEMBER 2021

- 23-31 Winter Recess – No Classes

## 2022

### JANUARY 2022

- 17 MLK Jr. Day – No Classes

### FEBRUARY 2022

- 1 Lunar New Year – No Classes
- 21-25 Mid-Winter Recess – No Classes

### MARCH 2022

- 2 Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences, 4pm – 7pm
- 3 Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences, 1pm – 4pm

### APRIL 2022

- 15-22 Spring Recess – No Classes

### MAY 2022

- 2 Eid al-Fitr – No Classes
- 30 Memorial Day – No Classes

### JUNE 2022

- 7 Clerical Day – No Classes
- 9 Anniversary Day – No Classes
- 9 Kids Dance, 7pm
- 10 Kids Dance, 7pm
- 11 Kids Dance, 2pm and 7pm
- 12 Kids Dance, 2pm and 7pm
- 20 Juneteenth (Observed) – No Classes
- 27 Last Day of School, 2021-22

### JULY 2022

- 11 First Day of 2022 Summer Session

### AUGUST 2022

- 5 Last Day of 2022 Summer Session

Please visit [ballettech.org/schedule](http://ballettech.org/schedule) for the most up-to-date version of the school calendar, including academic and PTA events.