



*move-
& ment
sound
DANCE*

DANCE!

YOUTH DANCE COMPANY
HANDBOOK 2023-2024



Competition and Teaching Philosophy

Company rehearsals, performances, and competitions are catalysts in the technical and artistic progress of our dancers. It allows them to feel connected to the art and to the other dancers in their group, making the company experience so special!

At Movement & Sound Dance, our view about the “why” behind doing competitions is unique. Our company philosophy includes the following ideas!

It is fun to be recognized for our hard work by the judges at competitions, but our ultimate goal is never about winning top awards; our goal is to “top” our last best performance, to feel proud and confident about what we put on the stage, and to present work that highlights the students’ ever-growing technique and individual personalities.

Our teaching and choreography is “dancer-centric” (focusing on the big picture and on the long-term development of our dancers), as opposed to “award-centric” (focusing only on the elements that earn high scores but are not necessarily appropriate or creating good technique). Dance competitions are objective, based on the opinions of judges, and we view them as a vehicle for building our technique, confidence, team-building and artistry.

We make sure our dancers are mastering core technical skills before skipping ahead (which is why we sometimes tell them “no” when they ask to learn an advanced skill too early). In this way, we ensure that they build correct muscle memory habits and learn to protect their bodies from injury, avoiding muscle imbalance (from only practicing skills with a dominant leg) and torn or pulled muscles (from overstretching). We want to set our dancers up for long-term success, learning advanced skills at their own right pace and growing into strong, mature movers.

At Movement & Sound, we prefer to present work that lets kids still be kids and that teaches them about the artistic side of dance, while keeping their bodies safe and increasing their knowledge of ALL dance vocabulary, especially those steps that are the “movement glue” that go in between all the beautiful show-stopping turns, leaps, & kicks. The judges provide us with comments and critiques, which are very helpful in our progression as dancers. At the competition, we ask the dancers to think about it this way – Did you dance better today than you have before? A YES is our goal, regardless of the award they receive.

Team Attitude - For Dancers & Parents

We strongly believe that dance is all about creating positivity, community, and joy! We attend two competitions per year, to give our dancers performance opportunities and chances to gain feedback from other dance professionals. Because we believe that any awards or recognition we receive at the competitions are an added bonus, we expect all company members and families **to always be positive and supportive of each other, to be kind, and to cheer on their teammates, as well as the dancers from other studios that we see at competitions and performances.**

Performances, Competitions, & Conventions

Each dancer will compete at the two required competitions. Because we believe in using dance to give back to the community, we will continue our annual Spread Kindness dance concert that benefits the Vernon Township Food Pantry, as well as a few other low-key community performances.

We feel that learning and growing as dancers and artists is the most important part of the company experience. It is for this reason that we require our company members to attend one dance convention each year, where they have the opportunity to learn from master teachers, who are professionals from across the country.

All show dates are listed on the **company calendar**. The events labeled "Required" on our calendar are mandatory events for our company members. The company calendar will be updated frequently & new versions will be emailed out.

Attendance - Classes & Rehearsals

Regular attendance at technique classes as well as rehearsals is required. Make-ups are required for missed classes. We understand that sometimes illnesses, school activities, and family events cause dancers to miss class and/or rehearsal. Please make sure to communicate, **in advance**, any days you know you will miss. Any excessive amount of absences will require a check-in with the studio directors. **Any absence the week of a show or competition, that was not pre-approved, may result in not being able to perform.** Please plan family vacations during our scheduled breaks. We want our dancers to feel confident and proud on stage. This is only possible through building their skills and technique in class as well as learning to work together as a group in rehearsal.

Class Etiquette

We expect our company dancers to be role models throughout our studio and the community. All members are expected to show the utmost respect for the studio, teachers, and their fellow dancers. Company members are expected to always be in dress code and to be an example of good classroom behavior.

Required Weekly Classes & Rehearsals

- at least 1 ballet class per week
- at least 1 jazz class per week
- at least 1 tap class per week the assigned weekly rehearsal (all dancers in our Foundations, Explorations, & Accelerations levels must participate in BOTH their assigned jazz and assigned tap companies)

Our schedule is designed so that all dancers can fulfill their required classes in 2 days of dance per week. For our Elements & Foundations level company dancers, their weekly required time commitment is approximately 2-3 hours per week. Our Explorations level company dancers can expect to spend 3-4 hours per week, and our Accelerations level company dancers can fulfill their requirements in about 4 hours per week.

Company Dancewear & Team Jackets

Every one of our dancers will receive a complimentary studio t-shirt from us, that can be worn to the community events we do and during the award ceremonies at our competitions. We need to re-stock, but as soon as we do, we'll make sure that every new dancer receives one. If your dancer already has one, but needs a new size, please let us know and we will give you a bigger size.

A company jacket is not required, but we've found that many dancers like to get one to show team spirit and pride. It is completely up to you! Jacket order forms & spirit wear order forms will be sent out at a later date.

Fees, Payments, & Approximate Costs

Rehearsal tuition is billed with your regular class tuition, and all volume discounts will apply. There are other fees and payments that will be due, outside of the regular class and rehearsal tuition. We will spread these payments out to help with budgeting. In some cases, we will ask for a deposit and then a final payment later.

COMPANY COSTUME FEES

Company costumes cost slightly more than typical recital costumes, as they are specialized to each dance. Company costumes will be \$75 per dance. Costume fees are non-refundable.

DANCE CONVENTION COST

The dance convention charges its own non-refundable fees for the convention. In the case of an in-studio convention, the fee you pay will cover the costs of the dance professionals we bring in to teach. Dance convention tuition is usually between \$135-\$195 for ages 5-8 and \$195-\$295 for ages 8+. Attending for one day is required, but all dancers are encouraged to attend both days, if it works with their schedules.

DANCE COMPETITION ENTRY FEES

The dance competition charges a certain amount per dancer, per dance. Entry fees this year will be \$65 per dancer, per dance, per competition. We will collect the fees from you and we will take care of the registrations for our entire company in advance, so that we can reserve our spots at the competition. All dance competition entry fees are non-refundable.

CHOREOGRAPHY KICK-OFF REHEARSAL TUITION

Our Choreography Kick-Off rehearsals in August happen prior to the regular dance season. Each group will have a flat fee for these workshops.

SOLOS & DUETS COMPANY

Dancers have the option to participate in a solo or duet for Competition. These do incur additional fees. All dancers in a solo and/or duet will be allotted 16 rehearsals which will be \$320 per dancer for all rehearsals. There will be an additional \$75 costume fee per dancer. There will also be additional entry fees. Competition entry fees for Solos are \$140 per competition and Duets are \$76 per dancer/per competition.

Disney Performance & Workshop Opportunity

FEBRUARY 16 & 17, 2024

Joining our Disney performance group is open to all Dance Company Members ages 7+.

Just like Solos and Duets, joining the Disney Performance group is optional and will incur additional fees.

Rehearsals will be held mostly on Friday evenings, Saturday afternoons/early evenings, and/or Sunday mornings/afternoons. Rehearsals times for Disney will be based upon dancer availability for those days. You will register for Disney rehearsals through your portal and they will count towards your volume discounts with an additional one time \$30 Disney Performance Group fee. These rehearsals will be on our Fall and Winter Session only. Please refer to the tuition discount page in the 2023-2024 Brochure.

Costumes: We are hoping to keep costume costs down by purchasing sale/clearance costumes and/or by re-using costumes from this past season. It is hard to predict the exact price since they vary greatly. The hope would be to keep these costs to \$50 or under per dance, but a lot depends on what is available in terms of costumes and sizes that we need.

Disney Parks Ticket Package: All performers are required to purchase a Disney Ticket Package. All price information has been emailed out. Anyone traveling with us can also purchase ticket packages through us. These rates are special for our performing group!

Disney Workshop: All dancers are required to attend the Dance Disney Workshop on February 16. There is a \$38 per dancer fee to attend the workshop.

Bus: Dancers will need to be bused into the workshop and the performance. More information regarding the cost of this TBA as soon as we have more information.

Fundraising: We are currently working on different fundraising opportunities to help offset the additional costs of participating in our Disney trip! We plan to organize some opportunities that will help us fund the Bus for the dancers and we will also plan some opportunities that can help individual dancers/families cover the additional rehearsal costs, costume fees, and/or ticket package costs.

Hotel & Airfare: Everyone can plan the best way for themselves to get down to Orlando and for where to stay. We are working now to put together some recommendations for housing down in Orlando. More information will be sent out as we have it available.

Dancer & Parent Contract Company 2023-2024

We agree to all policies of the Movement & Sound Dance LLC Youth Dance Company, as laid out in this handbook and in any email correspondence.

We agree to the classroom behavior and kind attitude expectations. We acknowledge that we must attend all required events, performance, classes, and rehearsals. We acknowledge that we are responsible for completing all payments, and that all dance company fees are non-refundable.

Dancer's Name:

Dancer's Signature:

Parent's Signature:

Date: