



DANCE!

**YOUTH DANCE COMPANY
HANDBOOK 2021-2022**

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 hope to continue our annual Spread Kindness dance concert that benefits a charity, 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, and the company calendar will be released at the end of August.

Attendance - Classes & Rehearsals

Regular attendance at technique classes as well as rehearsals is required. Make-ups are encouraged for missed classes, and make-ups are REQUIRED for ballet. 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 or jazz/contemporary class per week
- at least 1 tap class per week
- the assigned weekly rehearsal

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! We will have a new design for our company jackets this year, as well as some fun new spirit wear. You will be able to order online, beginning in September!

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 are generally \$50-75 per dance. You will pay a costume deposit for each dance, and a final payment later. 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 \$175-\$225.

Dance Competition Entry Fees

The dance competition charges a certain amount per dancer, per dance. Each competition charges a different amount, but in general, the fees are between \$55-65 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, and we will also collect costume & entry fee deposits at this time.



Dancer & Parent Contract - Company 2021-2022

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:
