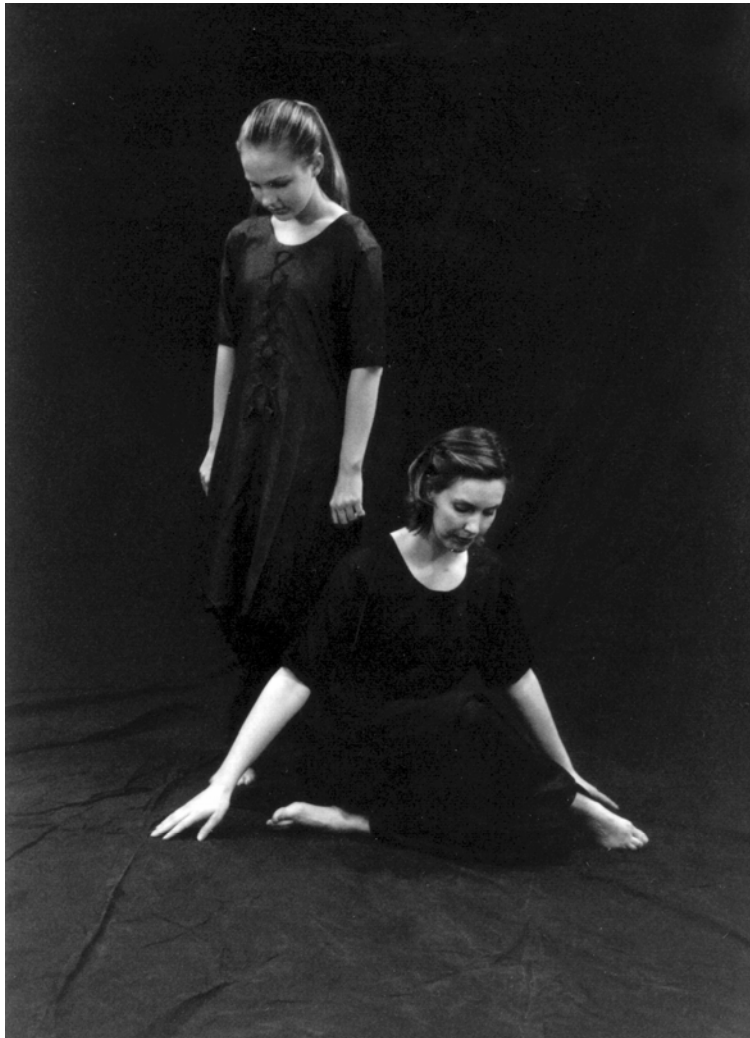


Grace Center for the Arts School Of Dance Student Handbook

*Please keep for your records as long as student is taking dance with Grace
Center for the Arts School of Dance*



"Let them praise His name with *dancing*; Let them
sing praises to Him with timbrel and lyre."

Psalm 149:3

WELCOME TO GRACE CENTER FOR THE ARTS SCHOOL OF DANCE

On behalf of Miki Merritt and our faculty and staff we want to welcome you to our school! We believe that God has brought you to us and we appreciate the privilege of teaching you!

We believe that God has given us our commission in Colossians 3:23 "Whatsoever you do, do it heartily unto the Lord and not unto men," It is our prayer that through our teaching and training and our classes we will enable you to develop your gifts and use them to "...Glorify God and enjoy Him forever."^{*}

You are special to us and we will be praying for you as you pursue your studies. May God bless you richly as we "praise His Name with dancing" (Psalm 149).

In His Grace,



Miki Merritt

MISSION STATEMENT

Grace Center for the Arts School of Dance is committed to training Christians to glorify God and share the gospel through dance in order to restore our culture through the arts.

Our school serves students of all ages with varying goals and aspirations who desire to study dance. Faculty members are dedicated to providing a Christian world-view of dance as art and to instilling in students the desire to use their talents to glorify God. They wish to impart the love of dance and encourage each individual to reach his or her maximum potential physically and spiritually.

Excellent training combined with personalized interaction teaches discipline of body and mind, grace and poise, creativity, rhythm, and appreciation for the beauty of art - as well as the sheer joy of dancing! And while performing experiences provide a creative outlet and produce a sense of confidence and responsibility, most importantly, they allow students to use their gifts in a ministry context.

^{*} *from the Westminster Catechism*

STUDENT PLACEMENT

Class Levels: Grace Center for the Arts reserves the right to determine the class level for every student through its evaluation procedures, regardless of prior, recent or current training.

New Students: Students who have never trained with Grace Center for the Arts will be required to take a placement class. Faculty recommendation will determine a student's placement in a class appropriate to his/her ability, regardless of age. The school Administrator will handle all placement procedures and notify students and parents of placement.

Current Students: Our teachers determine the readiness of each student to advance. Advancement will occur on an individual basis when the progress of the individual student has warranted moving to the next level technically, physically, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually.

Mercy's Breath R.D.T. is open only to those students whose placement has been recommended by the Faculty. Students are invited only after faculty observation or by audition in the case of new students. Students can enter at any time during the year.

FEES AND SCHEDULES

Please refer to the current year brochure for pricing.

Yearly Tuition Fees

Tuition is based on a full school year. WE DO NOT SEND STATEMENTS.

Tuition Payment Schedule

- All 50 minute classes-- \$30 per month, due on the first day of the month
- All 60 minute classes-- \$35 per month, due on the first day of the month

Costume Fees are due on or before October 15.

1. Payments may be made by check. Your canceled check is your receipt.
2. Please make checks payable to Grace Center for the Arts.
3. Indicate name of student on the check in lower left corner.

Late Payment: Please be aware that we do not send statements. Past Due Invoices are sent out if your account is **two weeks overdue**. A **\$5 late fee** will be charged all accounts with a past due balance.

Returned Checks: Grace Center for the Arts is charged a penalty by our bank for any checks returned to us for insufficient funds. We will ask you to cover this penalty. If checks are habitually returned we will request that you pay future payments with cash only.

Withdrawal: If it becomes necessary to withdraw your child from dance, you **MUST** fill out a Student Change Form. This cannot be done by phone or through a third party. Notification of withdrawal before the beginning of a new month will release your future tuition commitment. Full monthly tuition will be required if withdrawal notification occurs after a new month has begun.

Costume Fees: Full costume payment is due on or before October 15. We must receive payment before a child receives their costume in the spring.

If you withdraw your child after we have ordered costumes (by mid-December) for our Spring Performance, you will still be responsible for the costume and a refund will not be issued. You will receive the costume when it comes in.

Some students may be required to buy/rent as many as four costumes for the spring performance. If a student is assigned a Mercy's Breath R.D.T. costume, or one rented from an outside source, during this production there will be a costume rental fee in lieu of the full costume fee.

Class Cancellation: A minimum of 5 students is required for a class to commence. A minimum of 3 students is required for a class to continue. Should class enrollment drop below 3 students anytime during the academic year, the school administrator will work with the parents to find suitable placement in another class within the same level.

Refunds: For registration - if a student registers for classes and we are unable to place them in a class by December 1, the full registration fee will be refunded.

For tuition - in the event a student is unable to continue classes due to medical reasons or if a student's family moves, please contact us to discuss the account. If the school administrator must cancel a class due to low enrollment and we cannot place the student in another class, any credit balance will be refunded.

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

A newsletter is published each quarter. Each issue will contain important notices and helpful information. Please let us know if you do not receive this information. Also, please be certain you update your records with us if you move!

PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITES

These productions are considered a priority for all of our students and other conflicting events should be secondary to preparations for these programs.

Please see schedule for individual class opportunities.

The annual Spring Performance for students will be held in the sanctuary at Grace Church of Fredericksburg.

ATTENDANCE

1. Students should arrive and depart promptly. We suggest that students arrive at least 10-15 minutes before class to prepare physically, mentally and spiritually for class. Students may be prohibited from taking class if they arrive after the first 15 minutes of class. This is not a punishment; it is a precaution for the physical safety of the dancer. The student should remain and watch the remaining portion of class and will be counted as present. If the student does not observe class, she/he will be marked absent.
2. We encourage you to stress the importance of NOT MISSING CLASSES unless there is a real emergency or sickness. Regular and consistent attendance is important. The progress of the entire class is hindered when class must be stopped to re-teach what was missed at an earlier session. We have also found that when a student feels a lack of confidence in their class work because of inadequate preparation, they become discouraged with their dancing in general.
3. If a student will knowingly miss class due to illness, an activity or appointment, she/he should notify the office prior to class. Leaving a voice mail will be sufficient. Notification of the absence will be given to the teacher.
4. Advanced students and Company members MUST call the office if you are going to be absent. A message left on voice mail will be sufficient.
5. Enrollment in a dance class commits a student to all rehearsals for spring performances as a priority over all other activities the student may be involved in during the spring

- months. Absent dancers are ill prepared and undermine the confidence of the entire group. Also, it is very confusing to work around empty spaces.
6. Spring Performance - Students may have to be excused from the spring production if they incur more than three unexcused absences in the last three months of classes. Excused absences include sickness, injury, and death in the family, family emergency or a grade-related activity for academic school. Please call the office if you have any questions regarding your absence.

Early Dismissal/Sitting Out Class

Teaching a child the meaning of commitment is another basic building block of character - and commitment is always costly! If your dancer seems discouraged, please let us know. Many times there may be some simple solution to the problem or an extra dose of encouragement may do the trick! Please pray for our discernment.

Sometimes the strenuous nature of combinations, the challenge of learning new material and the difficulty of completing a task presents an overwhelming reaction in a student. We want to stress the importance of finishing a class and learning to respond rather than to react to frustrations that might seem insurmountable but can realistically be conquered and mastered.

Make-up Classes

All students can make up a missed class in any class of the same level or a level below. See the current schedule of classes for days and times.

A parent must accompany student to the makeup class, get a Makeup Slip from that teacher, fill it out and return it to that teacher. The makeup class teacher will pass the information on to the student's regular teacher.

Inclement Weather and Snow Policy:

We have built extra days into the end of the year to ensure that the weather doesn't affect our schedule. In case of inclement weather, please call the office at 540.785.2293. You may also check our web-site at www.gracearts.org.

PARENT/TEACHER CONSULTATIONS

Please schedule any conference or meeting in advance. The teachers have very limited time before, during, or after classes. Please give them enough notice so they will have adequate time to talk and be prayerfully prepared.

If you need to speak with a faculty member, please request an appointment. Please refrain from "meeting" with the faculty in-between classes. Due to our population and studio availability the teachers have very little time, if any between classes. They need to stay focused and warm for their next class. We love your greetings and brief exchanges.

PARENT OBSERVATION

Each teacher will set his or her own observation day schedule. These will be distributed through the classes at some point during the school year or printed in the newsletter if available.

When observing, please DO NOT bring young children who CANNOT sit quietly and watch class. ALSO, please be in place before the class begins and remain until the class ends. It is very disruptive for the dancers' concentration when observers enter or leave a class in progress.

We will not leave the door open for daily observation. Please do not hang out around the door because this proves to be very disturbing and sometimes causes misbehavior. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

DRESS CODE

1. A dancer's attire greatly determines the attitude toward her/his class work, therefore we require that the standard of appropriate neatness be observed at all times. The teacher may not allow class participation by a student who regularly neglects this requirement.

2. **Cover-ups are required.** With respect for the fact that Grace Center for the Arts is run out of a church, we will require that ALL DANCERS WEAR COVER-UPS when coming and going from the building beyond the classroom areas. If T-shirts are worn as a cover-up, they must be worn with pants, shorts or a skirt.
3. All female students should wear pink-footed tights and pink ballet shoes in all ballet classes. Please do not wear tights with holes or bad runs and BE CERTAIN all shoes have the elastic properly sewn onto the shoe. (Refer to the shoe instructions to follow.)
4. **No underwear** should be worn under tights. Both the tights and leotards have cotton lined panels. It can be compared to a bathing suit.
5. No Camisole Leotards. Leotard styles must reflect modesty. Tank, cap sleeve, short sleeve and long sleeve leotards are appropriate.
6. Leotards should be plain and solid in color - without imprints or designs - and without an attached skirt.
7. Skirts for 3-year olds- 5th Grade: Skirts are NOT desirable because they are a distraction and are easily lost. They may be worn to and from class and they should be a solid color that matches the leotard, hemmed evenly, mid thigh length chiffon or Lycra.
8. Stud and small earrings are the ONLY permissible jewelry to be worn in class. Watches, necklaces, large rings and bracelets are potentially hazardous.
9. Rehearsal dress for any dancer involved in any school rehearsal is standard class uniform.

Leotards/Tights

Level	Leotard - <i>with no attached skirt</i>	Tights	Shoes - <i>no split-sole shoes</i>
3 year olds - 2 nd Grade	Pink	Pink	Pink ballet
3 rd & 4 th Grade	Black	Pink	Pink ballet
5 th Grade & up	Black, Navy or Eggplant	Pink	Pink ballet, split sole allowed
Young Men	White T-shirt, black gym shorts	White socks	Black ballet
Modern	Black, Navy or Eggplant	Pink, Black or Nude convertible or footless OR Black jazz pants	N/A
Jazz/Tap	Black, Navy or Eggplant	Pink, Black or Nude convertible OR Black jazz pants	Jazz sneakers or Tap shoes

No T-shirts, boxers, or baggy outerwear is to be worn in class.

We will gladly receive any out-grown dancewear or shoes for our borrower's box.

HAIR

3-year olds - 2nd Grade Girls: Ballet buns are preferable BUT ponytails are acceptable.
 3rd Grade and Up Girls: Wear hair neatly in a ballet bun for ballet class. For jazz, tap, and modern classes hair must be pulled back **securely** out of face but not necessarily in a bun.

Dance Bag Supplies (*for all ages*): brush & comb, nylon hair net, braided elastic band, barrettes/clips, hair & bobby pins, hair spray.

Instructions for Styling Hair

1. Brush hair smooth. Remove all tangles.

2. Spray hair lightly with hair spray. Smooth hair with hands and secure wisps, layers or short ends into a ponytail and secure with a braided elastic band. (Do not use rubber bands. They tear hair.)
3. Secure sides and back hair with clips or barrettes
4. Divide ponytail into two sections and twist, or three sections and braid.



5. Wrap each section of twisted or braided hair clockwise around the braided elastic band secure with hair and bobby pins as you wrap.



6. Place the hair net over the bun; twist the net over the bun at least two times. Tuck ends of hair net into the bottom of the bun and secure with hair or bobby pins.
7. Spray hair and bun with hair spray to set. Smooth with hand or comb.

Shorter Hair:

1. Chin length hair - This length is difficult to place hair in a bun. Pull hair into a ponytail, securing the sides back away from face with clips or barrettes. Spray heavily with hair spray to set.
2. Very short hairstyles should pull sides away from face. Long bangs secured back with clips to keep from eyes.

Why do dancers wear their hair this way?

Credible professional dance schools require their students to wear their hair up for class. The correct use and placement of the head and neck are very important in dance for concentration and balance. Hair must be removed from these areas to allow instructors to see the development, technique and growth of the head, neck and shoulders so they can give proper corrections to achieve the desired results.

Unsecured hair is distracting, can hurt the eyes and can throw a dancer off balance, especially when turning. Bangs and wisps can cause shadowing on the face and create a short look to the forehead. A uniformed look is desired in class and is essential for neat grooming and for confidence and conscientiousness. This demonstrates the value of being prepared, encourages individual artistic expression, and provides a visual ease for the teacher's corrections.

SHOES: THE DANCER'S TOOLS

1. **Do not wear dance shoes outside!** Oils and dirt are hazardous when tracked into the studios and are damaging to the shoe.
2. Shoes must fit properly.
3. Dance shoes fit snugly and are not fitted with room to grow.
4. Toenails should be cut short and straight to avoid sore nails.
5. Do not sew elastic or ribbons on the shoes if you are unsure of the fit or do not know where or how to sew them on. Have your teacher check and approve the shoes first.
6. Leather shoes will stretch. Canvas shoes do not.
7. Gaps and bagging are signs of an improper fit.
8. Cross the drawstring to pull taut around foot, then tie and tuck into the shoe.
9. Never use the drawstring to fit the shoe. This could injure the skin or tendon.
10. Laces, ribbons and ties must be neatly secured or tucked in.
11. A small crochet hook is helpful in retrieving a drawstring that has withdrawn into the casing.

Pointe Students

1. **Do not purchase Pointe shoes before consulting with your teacher.**
2. Do not sew elastic or ribbons on the shoes if you are unsure of the fit or do not know where or how to sew them on.
3. Dancers should learn to sew their own shoes. This is their responsibility - not their parent's. If they are ready for Pointe - they're ready to sew! Look for the sewing workshop for all Pointe students!
4. Follow precisely the recommendations of the faculty as to protective measures for the toes. Do not purchase toe pads or adapt "professional" techniques for wrapping, taping or padding the toes. These measure are sometimes more hazardous to the foot than helpful. This is a learning process as the dancer develops and should only be advised and overseen by faculty.
5. Experienced dancers should pre-tape their toes prior to technique class to limit the amount of time taken to put on Pointe shoes for Pointe class.
6. Split soled tights must cover the entire foot for Pointe. Mid-calf tights are not appropriate for Pointe technique class
7. Each dancer must dispose of his/her own Band-Aids, Band-Aid wrappers, and discarded tape to ensure cleanliness and a healthy workspace.
8. Follow the instructions of the faculty as to the care, longevity techniques and storage of the Pointe shoe.

STUDENT GUIDELINE

General Information

1. Please **label** all removable items your child wears or brings to class. This includes shoes, books, and even underwear.
2. **Valuables:** Do not bring valuables to dance. We cannot "police" the dressing area and we are very sorry to say that we sometimes find things missing. If money is brought to dance, the dancer may bring a purse to the classroom.
3. Please leave books, coats, bags, etc. outside the classroom and do not bring them to class as this takes up valuable classroom space.
4. **Lost and Found** will be placed with the church lost and found. Jewelry and other valuable items are kept in the cabinet in the dance room.
5. **Telephone:** There is a telephone in the Café that students and parents may use.

Preparation for Class

1. Students should wait quietly for their class to begin.
2. Students should go to the bathroom before class. Students will not be given permission to leave class.
3. Students 15 or more minutes late may be asked to observe class to physically protect them and avoid injury.
4. Students late for class should wait at the door until the teacher acknowledges and invites them to join the class.
5. Students may use the senior high room or the hallway adjacent to the dance room for stretching before class.

Class Etiquette

1. Students are not allowed in the studios unless a faculty or staff member is present.
2. No food or drink in the studios.
3. There are water fountains in the hall.
4. No chewing gum in studios.
5. No hanging on the Barres in the studio.

Conduct while on Church Premises

1. Students are NOT permitted to run or play in the hallways or in the Sanctuary.
2. Students are not permitted to make excessive noise in the hallways.
3. Students are expected to keep the facilities clean by picking up after themselves and throwing away all trash.
4. Dancers in Pointe shoes are required to dispose of all Band-Aids, Band-Aid papers, and tape.
5. Facilities of the church are being utilized by other people and groups; therefore we ask that students remain only in the areas designated for dance use.

SNACKS

Please eat all snacks in the café. Please leave NO TRASH OR FOOD in the hallways. A failure to observe this policy may result in the loss of the privilege of bringing snacks to the room. Be sure to PICK UP ALL TRASH leaving no candy and chip wrappers and drink cans ANYWHERE around the building.

PARENT GUIDELINES

Please encourage your children to pray for their teachers and the faculty and staff of Grace Center for the Arts School of Dance. Please review the Student Guidelines with your child. Please support and endorse their importance.

Class Preparation

1. We expect our students to be prompt for class. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.
2. Parents of young children: Please arrive in time to assist your child dress for class and have their hair appropriately fixed.
3. Parents of older children: Please arrive in enough time for your child to dress, fix hair, warm up and stretch before class.
4. Students should wait quietly for their class to begin. Parents, please encourage this.
5. In the event you are late, please do not interrupt the class to give the teacher an explanation. The teacher will request an excuse if one is deemed necessary.
6. Please call the office if you know ahead of time that your child will be absent from class so we might notify the teacher. 540.785.2293
7. Please encourage students to go to the bathroom before class.
8. Good nutrition is essential for a dancer's physical and mental health. Please keep this in mind when planning snacks and meals.

Studios/Church Facilities

1. Please do not park in the drive-through lanes in front of the sanctuary, even for “just a minute.”
2. For safety, students are not allowed in the studios unless a faculty member or representative is present.
3. Students may not take food or drink in the studios. (Water fountains are located in the hallway)
4. Students may not chew gum in studios.
5. Students may not hang on the Barres in the studios.
6. Everyone on the premises of Grace Church of Fredericksburg is expected to keep the facilities clean by picking up and throwing away all trash.

Waiting Areas

1. Please instruct your children not to leave valuables or personal items in the dressing area. Encourage them to take their belongings into the studio.
2. Students are not allowed to change in the restroom by the Bookstore.
3. **No Boys** - even little brothers - are allowed in the dressing area. Please remember that 4-year-old boys look old to 5 year-old girls.
4. If you must wait while your child is in class, there are chairs in the Café and in the Senior High room. Also, the church library and bookstore welcome you to visit there.
5. Small children and siblings are not permitted to run or to play in the hallways. Please support this rule by keeping all small children under control. Never leave small children unattended at any time. All dance families may use the school playground ONLY when Grace4Kids is not using it.
6. Please pick up students promptly after class.
7. After dusk, students are encouraged to wait indoors for their ride.

IN CLOSING

We want to once again tell you how much we appreciate your being with us for the new year. We are praying that the ministry of Grace Center for the Arts School of Dance will bless your entire family and be a joy in your life - “He has turned my mourning into dancing!” (Psalm 30:11)

Please pray for us as we endeavor to pursue excellence in the training that we offer your children.

In Christ,
The Faculty and Staff of Grace Center for the Arts School of Dance

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