

BALLET THEATRE OF SCRANTON

POLICY AND PROCEDURE HANDBOOK

A Guide for Students and Parents

WELCOME TO BALLET THEATRE OF SCRANTON

As a condition of Ballet Theatre of Scranton membership, students and their parents/guardians agree to abide by all the policies set forth by Ballet Theatre of Scranton, its Artistic Director, Board of Directors, faculty, and staff. This handbook will serve as your guide to Ballet Theatre of Scranton's philosophy, policy, and procedures.

MISSION

The mission of Ballet Theatre of Scranton:

1. To provide area residents with an opportunity to experience the finest in quality dance education and performances, including opportunities to work with internationally known guest artists and choreographers;
2. To stimulate and encourage public education, interest, and support of classical ballet and the performance of ballet choreography;
3. To play an active role in promoting the arts, especially dance, in the regional community;
4. To offer a variety of programs and residencies to area school districts and institutions of higher learning.

Ballet Theatre of Scranton faculty members takes our roles as mentors and teachers in your child's life very seriously. Our objective is to inspire a passion for the art of dance in every child who passes through our doors. In the process, we strive to set the right example and help your child (and you) create memories that will last a lifetime.

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

Since 1958, Ballet Theatre of Scranton has been a leader in dance education. We believe that our success comes as a result of providing solid training and from the strength of our organization. We have created this handbook to offer students and parent's a clear understanding of their commitments and responsibility to Ballet Theatre of Scranton.

ABOUT BALLET THEATRE OF SCRANTON

Ballet Theatre of Scranton, a not-for-profit 501(c) 3 organization, is the resident Ballet Company of The Dance Studio. Ballet Theatre of Scranton and The Dance Studio: The Official School of Ballet Theatre of Scranton are completely separate. They operate independently both financially and organizationally. The Dance Studio is the official school of Ballet Theatre of Scranton. Joanne Arduino, owner of The Dance Studio, has served as Artistic Director of Ballet Theatre of Scranton since 1991. All positions of Ballet Theatre of Scranton are volunteer with the exception of the Technical, Artistic and Production Staff. All monies raised are used for production of the performances.

Ballet Theatre of Scranton currently produces a total of 10 performances a season: Two (2) *Nutcracker* educational performances before the Christmas Holiday and six (6) *Nutcracker* performances on December 26, 27 and 28 at The Theatre at North; a Children's/Apprentice Company production in the Spring; and a Senior Company full length Ballet in the Spring.

Children are eligible to be a member of Ballet Theatre of Scranton when they reach the age of 8 years and are students of classical ballet at The Dance Studio: The Official School of Ballet Theatre of Scranton. Student's progress through the companies from Children's to Apprentice to Senior as they develop their abilities and at the discretion of the Artistic Director. The artistic staff is responsible for casting all roles for *The Nutcracker* and the Children's/Apprentice companies. The Senior Company is cast by the choreographer.

FOR STUDENTS

The first step to becoming a successful dancer is making a solid commitment to your classes. Strong technique is a key ingredient and class is where you develop that technique. Come to each class prepared to learn and without personal distractions. Class time is your chance to focus on yourself, so try to leave your concerns or worries at the studio door. True progress is made when you look at each class as an opportunity to become better at what you love to do. Dance full-out, stretch a little farther, become more aware of your technique, and make the most of every class.

Respect for the teachers is essential. Listen to each correction given, whether it's directed at you or another dancer. A correction is an honor; it shows you how much a teacher cares about your progress as a dancer. Always say thank you when a teacher offers you constructive criticism. Nothing can stop those students who apply themselves in every class and appreciate their teachers' knowledge and experience.

FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

We believe that children's success depends on the support of their parents or guardians. Because your commitment to the process makes an enormous difference, we encourage you to be a part of your child's dance education. BTOS relies on a positive atmosphere and educational experience for our faculty, students, and parents. Cooperation between all parents is expected. Showing respect—for other parents, the students, and the faculty—makes an important impression on the children. You are a role model for your child in how to interact with others in a professional setting.

Your child's presence at all classes is imperative. The experience of teamwork and the lesson of dedication are a big part of our school's educational process. Parents and teachers may look at a child's learning from different perspectives. However, we believe they share a common goal: to ensure that every child receives the best possible training, both physically and mentally. Mutual respect among our faculty, students, and parents provides the children with the ultimate care and education.

FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS/STUDENTS: UNDERSTANDING DANCE EDUCATION

As a parent, you play an important role in supporting your student financially, but your emotional support is of equal—and perhaps even greater—value. Encourage your child to be the best that he or she can be regardless of what others may achieve. Dance is an individual art form and children need to be allowed to achieve at a pace that's comfortable. No two students will progress at the same rate, even if they experience the exact same training. It is important to encourage children to focus on themselves, give it their all, and be satisfied with their own accomplishments.

Not all children will develop into professional dancers. One of the primary goals of our faculty is to teach life lessons and skills that offer children the best chance for success. Dance education encompasses far more than technique and the steps your children learn. We believe the discipline of dance training gives young people a better understanding of commitment through learning, experiencing the spirit of teamwork, and discovering what they can accomplish through hard work. Our goal is to educate the minds and bodies of our students, teaching them the skills needed for a successful life whether or not they stay involved in dance.

DO'S AND DON'TS

Some parents may compare their child's progress or class placement to another child's. Watch for this behavior in your children and encourage them to focus instead on their own accomplishments. Looking to other students for inspiration is good; however, making negative comparisons distracts children from focusing on becoming stronger dancers. In addition, speaking negatively about your child's teachers, fellow students, or other parents in front of your child—or other students—could result in problems far beyond your original concerns. Often children will imitate a parent's behavior with other adults or authority figures. Children learn important lessons from their teachers and parents, acquiring behavior patterns through their example. Our faculty takes that responsibility seriously. It's our philosophy to encourage our students to feel, think, and act respectfully toward their peers, the adults in their lives, and themselves.

If you have questions or concerns about your child's dance education (such as progress or class placement), please discuss them with your child's teacher or the Director. Talking only to other parents can lead to misinformation and confusion. Please contact Ballet Theatre of Scranton for an appointment. If you request a conference, please listen carefully to what your child's teachers have to say. They spend a significant amount of time with your child and offer expertise in the field of dance education.

CLASS PLACEMENT

Placement decisions are derived from many years of teaching experience. A child is placed in the particular group or class where we feel he or she will feel confident enough to develop self-esteem. Placement is highly individual and the factors that go into the decision are complex.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Parents must notify the director/and or teachers regarding children who use an inhaler or who may require medications during their time at Ballet Theatre of Scranton. It is also important to inform the director and/or teachers about your child's existing conditions. The more we know about your child, the better the dance experience will be for all involved. All information about our students is confidential.

STAYING INFORMED

We work hard to make the dance experience organized and fun. Keeping you informed is one of our primary goals. Please read all newsletters and other school information. Notes and important updates are handed out to our students in class and are also sent by email and/or text to those who sign up for the messaging service "Remind". You are encouraged to utilize Remind as it is a free app, a safe messaging service utilized in many schools, and it enables you to consistently receive all updated information on all devices you choose. **BTOS DOES NOT SHARE OR SELL YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION.** To sign up for Remind, download the app on your phone, tablet, or computer. To receive messages via text: text @btos to 81010. You can opt-out of messages at any time by replying, 'unsubscribe@btos'. If you have trouble using 81010, try texting @btos to (484) 334-8069 instead. To receive messages via email: send an email to btos@mail.remind.com. To unsubscribe, reply with 'unsubscribe' in the subject line. If you have any questions regarding the information distributed, we encourage you to contact Ballet Theatre of Scranton at 570-347-2867.

Website: balletscranton.org

Facebook: [facebook.com/BalletTheatreOfScranton](https://www.facebook.com/BalletTheatreOfScranton)

Twitter: @BALLETHEATRESCR

Instagram: btos310

For Class announcements, rehearsal schedules, and weather cancellations: Remind

WEATHER CANCELLATIONS

Studio closures due to severe weather conditions will be announced on BTOS voicemail, The Dance Studio: The Official School of Ballet Theatre of Scranton voicemail, by text/email via Remind, and via Social Media.

DRESS CODE REQUIREMENTS

Ballet Theatre of Scranton maintains a dress code to encourage concentration and a sense of inclusiveness. Uniformity in dancewear allows the teachers to assess how well the students are implementing the technique being taught, problems with alignment, and other important aspects of dance training.

- Students should carry their dancewear, shoes, and other belongings in a dance bag. Please print your child's name on the bag as well as on all of its contents.
- Dancewear is to be kept in good repair and laundered on a regular basis.
- Female students should wear their hair tightly secured and styled away from the face, pink tights, black leotard, and pink ballet slippers or pointe shoes.
- Male students should wear a white T-shirt, black tights, white socks and white ballet shoes.

TARDINESS

Dance is a physical activity that requires the body to be warmed up in order to execute movement safely. Late students miss the proper warm-up and therefore may sustain injury. Students who arrive more than 10 minutes late may be asked to observe class for reasons of personal safety.

LOST AND FOUND

Please mark all dancewear, shoes, and personal items with your child's name. We will make every effort to locate and return lost items; however, we cannot be responsible for any items that your child brings to class.

CLASS ATTENDENCE

All students are expected to attend their regularly scheduled classes. Each class offers a step forward in the educational process. A missed class could leave a child one step behind the other students. Missing class could result in frustration for the students, teachers, and classmates. All absences should be reported by calling The Dance Studio: The Official School of Ballet Theatre of Scranton at 570-347-0208.

ILLNESS

To help protect your own child's health and to minimize the possibility of contagion, please keep your child at home if they are ill. If symptoms or other conditions deemed contagious are observed during a class, you will be called to pick up your child. Call The Dance Studio: The Official School of Ballet Theatre of Scranton at 570-347-0208 to report your child absent for illness or any other reason.

BTOS MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

BTOS MEMBERSHIP DUES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING: Annual non-refundable membership dues, one (1) Nutcracker costume rental & cleaning, rehearsal separate from regular class time, choreographic instruction, one spring costume rental & cleaning for Senior Company members and one (1) costume purchase for Children/Apprentice Company members, and pizza party run through for the Children/Apprentice Company Ballet.

BTOS MEMBERSHIP DUES DO NOT INCLUDE: The second or third costume rental for the spring Senior Company Ballet or the purchase of a second costume in the Children/Apprentice Company ballets (if required), The Dance Studio: The Official School of Ballet Theatre of Scranton's tuition, Jazz/Tap/Hip Hop/Modern costumes, Ballet Theatre ticket purchases for the spring ballet performances, tickets for the Senior Company ballet or the Children/Apprentice Company ballet, or any soloist costumes. (A soloist costume is a costume for a role designated by the Artistic Director, specifically made for a principal role, example: Sugarplum Fairy).

Ballet Theatre of Scranton accepts checks and credit cards (Visa and MC) for membership payment. When making any kind of payment to Ballet Theatre of Scranton, please enclose your check made payable to Ballet Theatre of Scranton in an envelope marked with your child's name and the purpose of payment in the memo portion of the check. **NO CASH PLEASE!** Place your envelope in the BTOS mailbox on the Board Room door, or mail it to Ballet Theatre of Scranton. Please do not pay any Ballet Theatre of Scranton fees at The

Dance Studio: The Official School of BTOS's front desk – that is for lesson payment only.

If you/your child **DOES NOT** wish to become a member of Ballet Theatre of Scranton, your child is still welcome to take ballet classes at The Dance Studio: The Official School of Ballet Theatre of Scranton and you do not have to submit membership dues. If you choose to waive membership, please be aware that your child will not be included in either Nutcracker or Spring Ballets or the rehearsals that accompany each production.

FINANCIAL AID

Those in need of financial assistance may apply to be considered for the limited scholarship aid available by contacting the BTOS president or treasurers. Applicants will be given instructions on the documentation necessary to be considered for a scholarship award. Once the required financial documents are submitted, the BTOS Executive Council and/or the Board of Directors will determine if the need criteria has been met for an award and if so, the scholarship amount to be awarded on a case by case basis. Scholarships are awarded on a yearly basis, thus past scholarship recipients must re-apply for assistance each year. The BTOS Board of Directors no longer permits a goods or services trade for scholarship aid.

BTOS FAMILY/ALUMNI MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNT

We offer a \$100 discount to each additional student in families with more than one BTOS member. We also offer a discounted Membership of \$150 per year to BTOS alumni who return after high school graduation.

BTOS MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT SCHEDULE

FOR RETURNING MEMBERS: The membership fee can be paid in full or paid in 3 equal monthly installments due on October 1, November 1 and December 1. The first installment must be paid by October 1st to be eligible to audition for *The Nutcracker*. All payments must be received by December 1st to be eligible to perform in *The Nutcracker*. There are no refunds for Membership dues after auditions.

FOR FIRST YEAR MEMBERS: The membership fee can be paid in full or paid in 3 equal monthly installments due on November 1, December 1, and January 1.

VOLUNTEERISM

Ballet Theatre of Scranton is strictly a volunteer organization and greatly appreciates your help. Volunteering is a great way to learn what goes on behind the scenes of a ballet company.

Parents/Guardians of new members of Ballet Theatre of Scranton and of first year pointe students are required to volunteer for a *minimum* of one duty listed on the Volunteer form during *The Nutcracker*. This enables you to understand the production and be prepared for your child's participation in the performance the following year. Your child will be cast as a collection soldier at Nutcracker performances, if they are

unable to perform on their assigned dates, it is the student or parent's responsibility to reschedule with another student. Students who do not serve as collection soldiers will not be eligible to participate in the Breakfast with Santa at Glenmaura National Golf Club as a Jingle Girl.

PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

Senior Company: Senior Company members consist of 3rd year pointe students and older. Senior Company members perform in *The Nutcracker*, the Senior Company Spring Ballet, as well as community performances by invitation only. Participation in a Senior Company production is dependent upon the number of performers needed in the chosen ballet. If an Apprentice Company member is chosen for the Senior ballet, they will also perform in the Children/Apprentice Company performance.

Children's Company: Children's Company members consist of 8 to 12 yr. old students not yet on pointe. Children's Company members perform in *The Nutcracker* and the Spring Children/Apprentice Company Ballet with the exception of 8 year old first year members (SEE NEW MEMBER AND FIRST YEAR POINTE NUTCRACKER POLICY).

Apprentice Company: Apprentice Company members consist of 1st and 2nd year pointe students. Apprentice Company members perform in *The Nutcracker* and the Spring Children/Apprentice Company Ballet with the exception of first year pointe students (SEE NEW MEMBER AND FIRST YEAR POINTE NUTCRACKER POLICY). In instances when no additional dancers are needed in the Senior Company Ballet, Apprentice dancers will participate in the Children/Apprentice Company performance only.

NEW MEMBER AND FIRST YEAR POINTE NUTCRACKER POLICY

8 year old and 1st year pointe students are not prepared sufficiently in just 1 month of training to audition for or perform in *The Nutcracker* since auditions are held in October. When their training has progressed, they can perform in the Spring Children/Apprentice Company performance and in subsequent Nutcrackers. Exceptions can be made regarding transfer students with sufficient training, and special circumstances such as military deployment as determined by the Artistic Director.

REHEARSAL POLICIES

There are no absences allowed for rehearsals for any Ballet Theatre of Scranton performances. One excused absence for illness will be allowed with a doctor's excuse.

CASTING POLICIES

It shall be understood that performers who audition for The Nutcracker, Spring Ballet, or any other performance, audition as a performer, and not as a class. That is to say a class does not constitute a performing ensemble (i.e., if a student is in a class where most students may be cast as mice in The Nutcracker, the performer may be cast as a soldier with students from another class.) Casting is based on talent, ability and type, and is at the sole discretion of the Artistic Director and/or Guest Choreographer. This applies to all Children, Apprentice, and Senior Company members. Performers agree, upon auditioning, to accept any role or any ensemble role the Artistic Director casts them in. Ballet Theatre Membership dues MUST be paid or the first installment must be paid prior

to Nutcracker auditions. Dancers cannot perform in other productions of The Nutcracker.

STUDENT AND PARENT USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Use of Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, and other online social-media vehicles is commonplace. Each student must sign and return a Photo/Video Release form included in the membership packet. This policy is intended to provide BTOS students and parents with guidelines to eliminate any confusion concerning the use of social media.

- You DO NOT have permission to reveal any information that compromises Ballet Theatre of Scranton. By that, we mean you are forbidden to share personal information about the director, other students or their families, or anything that is proprietary and/or confidential to Ballet Theatre of Scranton.
- Students and parents should neither claim nor imply that they are speaking on behalf of Ballet Theatre of Scranton.
- Never post anything that could compromise the self-esteem of Ballet Theatre of Scranton members or Dance Studio students.
- If you post videos of class or rehearsals, don't post any choreography in its entirety; Ballet Theatre of Scranton owns the copyright to all choreography taught at the school.
- Respect the law, including those laws governing defamation, discrimination, harassment, and copyright and fair use. As stated in this handbook, parents and students should never post negative comments about other schools or teachers.
- Ensure that your social networking conduct is consistent with all of the policies contained in this handbook.
- Never post pictures or video of any person in any changing rooms or bathrooms.

GENERAL POLICIES

- Parents and students should never interrupt a class in session unless there is an emergency.
- Only water is allowed in the studios. Food and drinks are allowed in the cafeteria area only.
- We love babies and young children; however, our priority is the safety of every child on the premises. Children must be supervised at all times.
- No cell phones or computers may be used during class time. In the waiting area you are welcome to use your electronic devices.
- Students and parents are restricted from contacting teachers by phone, email, text messages, etc. All communication with teachers or the director must go through the Ballet Theatre of Scranton 570-347-2867 or The Dance Studio: The Official School of Ballet Theatre of Scranton 570-347-0208.
- Never speak negatively about teachers, students, or parents from other schools.
- All students must show respect for their teachers at all times.
- It is understood that all dance training and performances shall be with BTOS exclusively unless permission is granted by the Artistic Director to train or perform elsewhere.

TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Ballet Theatre of Scranton reserves the right to terminate any student's enrollment at any time for misconduct or inappropriate actions by either the student or his or her parent(s). Every effort will be made to correct a problematic situation before terminating membership. Termination as determined by the Artistic Director and/or the BTOS Executive Board is final. Reasons for termination of membership include but are not limited to the following:

- Disruptive or dangerous behavior by students or their parents
- Abuse of other children, staff, or property
- Inability of Ballet Theatre of Scranton to meet the child's needs
- Violation of any terms of the policy and procedures in this handbook

BALLET THEATRE OF SCRANTON
EXECUTIVE BOARD AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS
2019-2020

Artistic Director	Joanne D. Arduino
Administrator	Paul Arduino
Executive Director/	Nancy Salerno
Immediate Past President	
President	Dr. Kimberly D'Andrea
Managing Director	Tony Nicosia
Co-Treasurer	Erin Culkin
Co-Treasurer	Kim McHale
VP Fundraising	Ann Kearny
VP Production	Karoline Mehalchick
VP Social	Janet Durkin
Secretary	Christine Gutekunst

Membership Chair	Annie Bednash
Educational Chair	Ann Conway
Educational Outreach	Johninne Bickaskus
Usher Chair/House Manager	Julie Avvisato
Nutcracker Ticket Chair	Kelli Vachino
Spring Ticket Chair	Annie Bednash
Nutcracker Benefactor Chair	Mary Kate Culkin
Historian/Archivist	Jo-Ann Osiadacz