



STUDENT HANDBOOK

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Welcome

We would like to welcome you to The Dance Connection. We are so happy that you are here. We are proud to offer our students the opportunity to grow through the art of dance. We give our students the opportunity to further their dance education in a fun and caring environment.

About Us

In 2005, the citizens of St. Bernard were driven away from their homes and families due to Hurricane Katrina. Seemingly lost in the wreckage was a place for those who have a passion for dance. Sharing in that passion, we (Christie Cantrell Sercovich and Theresa Mowers Dysart) decided to return, determined to offer the opportunity for those students wishing to pursue their dance dreams. With the encouragement of family and many friends, The Dance Connection was formed eliminating the fear that dance in St. Bernard Parish would be just a mere memory. We hope that in some small way, our dance school has helped with the recovery of our Parish. As fellow residents, we are proud to have the opportunity to teach, work, and live in such a unique community. It is a privilege to serve the families of St. Bernard Parish. We hope that our Dance Connection Family will continue to grow for many more years to come.

What We Offer

Here at TDC we strive to provide St. Bernard Parish with premium quality dance education at affordable prices...producing true value.

Our curriculum focuses on terminology and technique of all dance styles, in a FUN & caring environment, to ensure a well-rounded versatile dancer.

Our Faculty is comprised of qualified, skilled and caring instructors. We continue to further our dance education in order to bring you the latest styles and trends in the dance world.

At TDC we pride ourselves on a personal experience for all students. With the largest faculty in St. Bernard Parish, we are able to provide 2 skilled instructors in EVERY class. In addition, class assistants are provided in most classes to guarantee individual attention to every student!

Competition opportunities available, TDC is home to the National Award winning TDC Competition team!

We provide each student the opportunity of performance in our annual professional quality recital!

Our facility, the largest in St. Bernard Parish, encompasses over 6000 square feet divided into 3 large dance studios.

Each studio is equipped for structured dance education complete with suspended hard wood flooring to provide shock absorption which decreases the risk of injury.

Classes Offered

Tap - a step dance performed by somebody wearing shoes with metal tips to make a rhythmic sound

Ballet - a form of dance characterized by conventional steps, poses, and graceful movements including leaps and spins

Jazz - contemporary dance utilizing ballet and modern techniques, quick movement to express attitude

Lyrical/Contemporary - combines ballet, jazz, and modern techniques in flowing movements

Pointe/Ballet - focuses on technique and body movements. It is a classical dance form demanding strength and grace.

Hip Hop - street dance style requiring rhythmic movements.

Modern - rejects the limits of classical ballet deriving expression from within.

Mommy & Me - a way for mother and child to bond, while introducing the child to the art of dance.

Technique - focuses on correct body placement, leaps, turns, balance and progressions across the floor

Private Lessons - one on one instruction to help strengthen the dancer in any area needed. A time to work on perfecting technique. Private lessons may also be required for students who missed class and need to learn their dance for the recital.

Session Information

Session

The school session begins the week after Labor Day in September and concludes with the recital on the second weekend in June.

Class Ages and Levels

Classes are divided into appropriate age groups. The Dance Connection LLC reserves the right to place a student in the appropriate LEVEL of classes for his or her ability level regardless of age. Level placement is in the best interest of the student. Previous dance experience may be a factor in class placement. Faculty will evaluate student's class placement in the first couple months of class. The directors' decision is final.

Class Size

Although we provide two faculty members in every class, we take pride in the fact that classes will not become bigger than what a teacher can comfortably handle. Attention is paid to each child and they are pushed to his or her level.

Assistants

Assistants may or may not be present in a class. Assistants are selected to ensure personal attention for every child. If you are interested in assisting classes please speak with a staff member.

Attendance

Regular attendance is very important in order to better your dance education. Please make sure that your child is on time and is dressed and ready for class. If a student misses the warm up exercises there is a risk of injury; therefore if a student is more than 10 minutes late they could be asked to observe rather than take the class. Please make sure that the student understands this rule and that this policy is only because we care about their well-being. No one other than the students will be allowed in the studio.

The school reserves the right to have student who come late to class, sit out the class. Tardiness is very distracting to the teacher and other students, so please be on time! ***Remember to use the restroom before class begins as this is also a distraction to the class.***

No refunds or reductions will be given due to missed class. If you miss more than one month of classes, you may not perform in the annual recital unless you have private lessons to learn what you have missed. Your attendance is very important to the instructor and the other students.

Please note that while all classes are important, we understand the occasional absences. However, it is crucial to your child and her classmates to be present the two months prior to the recital. Excessive absences during this time may result in your child being removed from portions/entirety of the dance(s) affected. It can be hazardous for your child, as well as her classmates, to be on stage if they are unsure of the dance or their placement in a dance. Private Lessons may also be required for your child to participate in the recital. Reminder all fees are non-refundable.

Holidays

Holidays are posted on our calendar. *We typically follow the holiday schedule of the St. Bernard Parish Public School system.*

Fees

ALL FEES (registration, tuition, revue fees, costume fees, photos, etc.) are non-refundable and non-transferable.

Registration Fee

\$40.00 per student. Late registration fee of \$5.00 will be added to anyone who does not register at the specified registration dates. This fee is once a year and **non-refundable**. The first month's tuition must also be paid with the registration fee. Registration is not complete until registration fee, first month's tuition, registration form and registration contract are submitted to the office.

Tuition

October through June tuition due by 1st lesson of each month. All cash payments must be in a sealed envelope with exact change, marked with student's name and class. *Our tuition is based on an annual fee, divided into equal monthly payments. Tuition is **not** based on the number of lessons received per month. Therefore, you are not paying for the holidays observed by the studio.*

Late Fees

Tuition not turned in by the 10th of the month is considered late and will be charged a \$10.00 late fee. NSF check charges are \$25.00 per check.

Tuition Rates:

One Student:

45.00 – For first class

25.00 – for each additional class

Two Students:

80.00 – For first class

25.00 – for each additional class for each student

Three Students:

120.00 – For first class

25.00 – for each additional class for each student

Private Lessons

35.00 per hour paid to faculty member providing lesson at the start of each lesson.

If you pay your tuition in full for the year, you will receive a 10% discount off tuition only.

If you sign up for automatic payments, you will receive a 5% discount off tuition only for each month that you are enrolled.

*When completing online registration, discounts will not be displayed. Please select option if you would like to enroll in the discounted programs. Discounts will be issued monthly. **By enrolling in an automatic payment plan, you are also agreeing to have any additional charges (ie. revue fees, etc) billed to the account on file on the 1st of the month the charges are due.***

Any Credit Card payments processed using the online payment system will incur a 2.9% processing fee. This fee will be applied to all types of cards. It does not apply to ACH/Electronic Check transactions. (Additional fees may be avoided by paying using Bank Account information, or submitting payment in cash or checks before the due date)

Dropped Classes

Withdrawal is not permitted without written notice. If it is decided to drop a class, it is imperative to notify us in writing. There will be a drop form located in the waiting room and on our website at all times. You will be responsible for all charges incurred until the drop form is received. The written notice must be received prior to the 1st of the month, or you will still be charged that month's tuition. (ie. if you are withdrawing for November, the drop form must be received prior to Oct 31st.) If you stop coming to class and do not give written notice you will still be responsible for tuition for that class.

Past Due Accounts

Students will be automatically dropped from the class roll if account is 90 days past due. In order to continue, you will have to re-register in classes and pay the registration fee again. All fees due at the time the student was dropped will also be due.

Payments

PAYMENT: All payments should be placed in a sealed envelope labeled with student's name, class day and time, and what the payment applies to. All payments should be placed in the locked box located by the reception desk. Please do not hand payments to faculty! We accept cash, checks, bank draft and all major credit cards. Checks should be made payable to: The Dance Connection.

Payments can also be placed in the black mailbox located on the fence at the entry gate. This mailbox is locked at all times, and can only be opened by TDC owners.

Your child will not be allowed to participate in the annual production if your fees are not paid in full.

Online Accounts

Each family will have their own personal customer online account which can be accessed through our website. Families can access their accounts to update personal information, make payments, register for classes, etc. When registering, discounts will not appear until after registration is complete and your account has been tagged by The Dance Connection. Online registration instructions are available on our website.

Costumes

Costumes must be ordered in November to ensure arrival for pictures and the recital. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to place their child's costume order. Costumes will not be ordered until they are **PAID IN FULL**.

Costume Fees

Costume costs average \$70.00 - \$85.00 per costume. This is an approximate cost which is subject to change based on costume company price increases.

Costumes will not be ordered until they are PAID IN FULL. The deadline for ordering costumes is November 30th.

Students are measured for costumes in October, and we know that children grow during the year. Please note that costumes are not tailor made to fit each child. Costumes may need alterations and is the SOLE RESPONSIBILITY of the student, the student's guardian or parent. Costumes are non-returnable. *The Dance Connection is not responsible for damaged, misplaced, misassembled, lost, unaltered, wrongly altered or unfinished costumes.*

Parents will order the size costume necessary for your child (you know your child's growing pattern better than TDC faculty). We will give you your child's class worksheet with their measurements and it is your responsibility to choose the correct size for your child. Remember costumes are not returnable due to improper fit. (When in doubt, you should always order the larger size, costumes can be taken in, but can't always be let out.) Detailed instructions/guidelines will be distributed at a later time once costumes have been selected.

No refunds will be issued once costumes have been ordered.

Revue T-shirts

All students are required to purchase the revue t-shirt. Parents may also order revue t-shirts. The cost is \$20.00 per shirt.

Accessory Fee

Accessory Fees are billed in February/March. Accessories include, but are not limited to, required stockings, optional jewelry, props etc. Additional props that may be required for a routine (ie. gloves, hats, flowers, lights, chairs, etc.) are included in the accessory fee. These items are at the TDC faculty discretion, and costs are always kept to a minimum. The class will be notified in advance if additional props are required.

Required Revue Stockings

All students are required to purchase the required stockings. Stockings should be ordered when you place your costume order. If stockings are not ordered with costumes, they will automatically be included with your accessory fee and will be given out with the costumes. The cost is \$15.00. We will have extra stockings on hand if you would like to purchase additional stockings.

Revue Fees

We hold our annual production the second Saturday of June at the St. Bernard Civic Center. We have two shows on this day - a 1:30pm and 6:30pm show. Please plan family vacations around this date. We will also have mandatory rehearsals that week. The revue fee is **non-refundable** and covers the cost to produce the show: auditorium rental, backdrops, props, lighting, music, etc.

Revue Fees

\$175.00 for first child, \$125.00 for each additional child. This amount will be split into two payments due in March and April.

Revue Information

Invitations

You will receive 10 tickets for the first student, and an additional 5 tickets for each sibling who has paid their revue fee. For example, a family consisting of 3 students will receive a total of 20 tickets. Students performing in both shows will *ONLY* receive the number of tickets included in revue fee.

Should you require more tickets, they may be purchased during dress rehearsal week at the studio.

All Rehearsal Week Practices are MANDATORY. Both dress rehearsal and auditorium rehearsal attendance is mandatory. Anyone missing a rehearsal practice will not be allowed to participate in the recital.

Rehearsal Week

Students will have a dress rehearsal at the studio the week of the revue. Please be advised that the rehearsal schedule may differ from the students' normal class times. A detailed schedule will be sent out prior to rehearsal week. We ask that you please plan accordingly.

Auditorium Rehearsal

Rehearsal at the auditorium is MANDATORY and will take place at The St. Bernard Civic Center Auditorium. We have separate rehearsals for the two shows. You will be notified which day your rehearsal will occur.

Video DVD

Everyone will have the opportunity to purchase a copy of the recital DVD. Order information will be distributed in May.

Opening Number

Some students may be asked to participate in our Opening Number. To be eligible for participation, students must be registered in our tap/jazz combination class. Selection of students for the Opening Number is at the discretion of The Dance Connection Faculty. Participation in the Opening Number is optional and will require additional costume expense as well as a choreography fee. Practices for the Opening Number usually begin in May and are held on weekend mornings.

Dancewear

Dancewear

All students must wear (any color) leotard or cropped top, tights. Cover-ups such as jazz pants or booty shorts may be worn over the leotard. **No** oversized T-shirts or pajama pants allowed. All students must have proper dancewear and shoes. **Please label all shoes and dance bags with student's name.** Optional TDC dancewear will be available for purchase at registration, and at the beginning of each dance year.

Required Shoes

All Dance Connection required shoes can be purchased through The Dancers Closet on our website at any time. The required shoes are listed under the Shoes tab. Dancewear is optional and will also be listed on The Dancers Closet tab.

All required shoes must be purchased through The Dance Connection. Please see the required shoe list in your registration packet. You can purchase shoes at registration or any time throughout the year.

All students participating in the recital will be required to wear a specific dance shoe. Usually the shoes worn are the same as those used for class, however, there are situations where a costume may require a different shoe be used. You will be notified in advance.

Revue Book and Pictures

Revue Book

We will have a revue book available for purchase at our recital. The book is a great keepsake for all students. It will contain pictures of our students and faculty, recognition of ad winners, performance order and much more.

Pictures

There are two ways to put your child's picture in the revue books. You can either sell ads or pay a cash fee. More information will be sent out in January.

Pictures for the revue book will be taken at The Dance Connection in mid-April. Pictures must be taken with our photographer to be placed in the revue book. If you would like to purchase pictures, there will be additional fees due to the photographer at the time the pictures are taken. Parents are allowed to choose the picture(s) placed in the revue book.

Only students who have sold ads or paid the cash fee to have their picture in the revue book will be allowed to take pictures with our photographer during picture week. Selling ads or paying the cash fee covers the cost of a sitting fee.

There will be a detailed picture schedule given out prior to picture week. We ask that you arrive on time for your picture time. Students should arrive with makeup and hair already done.

On group picture day, we pride ourselves on a quick, smooth picture day. Anyone late for a group picture will not be in the group picture. You should arrive dressed with makeup and hair already done, 15 minutes prior to your scheduled picture time. Groups will be on the backdrop prior to the picture time and we will take the picture at the exact time stated on your schedule for group pictures. Students may only take group pictures if they have paid/sold ads to have their individual picture in the book.

Awards

Year Awards

Our students will receive awards for the following years of completed dance education:

1st, 4th, 6th, 8th, 10th, 12th, etc.

Credit from other schools are accepted.

Graduates

If you will be graduating from The Dance Connection please see the requirements listed below.

The graduate program is designed for the dancer who has completed 12 years of dancing education and is at least a high school senior. This program was developed to recognize the student's hard work, dedication and love for dance. It gives the student a sense of completion, but it is not a requirement.

Graduates will be required to assist at least one class per week in their graduation year. The day and time of the class will be decided upon based on the student's availability. Please notify us if you are graduating this year.

As a graduate of The Dance Connection, you will receive the following:

- The Dance Connection graduate exam.
- An 8x10 graduate group color photo in the revue book (Graduates may only take group pictures if they have paid/sold ads to have their individual picture in the book).
- A graduate plaque and certificate.
- Five (5) reserved floor seats at the revue.
- A feature in the opening number, if the student chooses to participate. All graduates will be invited to participate in the Opening number. (Costume fee is the responsibility of the student.)
- All graduates will be presented on stage immediately following the Opening number in both shows.

Other Rules & Regulations

Hair must be fixed and out of eyes. No gum chewing allowed in studio. No long chains or other heavy jewelry should be worn to class.

Dancers must be on time, dressed in proper attire and remain in the waiting area until class begins.

No smoking, eating drinking or gum chewing is allowed in the studio.

Dancers are not allowed to run, to hang on the barres or otherwise misuse our equipment. No cell phones are allowed during class.

Do not open class doors while class is in progress.

Disrespect / slander of any kind from both parents and students directed towards anyone affiliated with The Dance Connection will not be tolerated, and can result in dismissal from the school.

The Dance Connection reserves the right to reschedule or cancel a class or classes at a moment's notice.

No food or open drink containers will be allowed in the studio. Water bottles are allowed.

Please be aware the studio doors will not be opened until approximately 15 minutes prior to the start of class. This is to give faculty a chance to get prepared for the day.

Please be sure to supervise your children until the start of their class. Please note faculty may be in other studios, teaching other classes and will not be able to supervise your children until the start of their class.

Please explain to all children, not to leave the studio until you arrive to pick them up. We do not want students wandering outside after class for their own safety.

Please make every effort to arrive on time to pick up your child after their class (especially the last class of the evening).

Please remember studio is open to registered students only during class – no mothers, siblings, friends, boyfriends will be allowed in.

The Dance Connection is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items. Any items left in the studio will be placed in the lost and found.

If problems arise, public places such as the lobby waiting room, parking lot, competition dressing rooms, backstage, during class, etc. are not the place to discuss issues. You may speak with Christie and/or Theresa in the office or another private place to discuss issues. Please respect others around you. This will ensure a pleasurable experience for all involved and will eliminate the "he said, she said" scenario. **Please understand that "drama" will not be tolerated.** Those who do not respect this policy will be asked to leave. NO EXCEPTIONS!

Communication

The best way to communicate with The Dance Connection is via email. We ask all parents and students to not address faculty members between classes. This delays the start of the next class. You would not want your child's class delayed because of someone else's questions. If you have any questions or concerns, we will be happy to address them. For the quickest / most efficient response, we ask that you email us at thedanceconnection@hotmail.com. A receptionist will also be available to assist you during most class hours. Again, the quickest response will be via email. Reminder, no one is at the studio during the day to answer phone calls.

Our website www.danceconnectionllc.com, is always updated with the latest information.

In the event that class may have to be cancelled due to bad weather or any other instances, please check our website. This will be the first place updated with class cancellation. We also will send emails to classes affected. Please be sure The Dance Connection always has your current contact information. Those enrolled in text message alerts will also be notified via text messages.

Monthly newsletters, Billing Statements and all other important information will be sent via email to your address on file with The Dance Connection at the beginning of each month. Please make sure to list thedanceconnection@hotmail.com as a safe sender through your email provider.

Important documents will also be available on our website for your convenience.

Competition Team

We are very proud of our award winning competition team. Auditions for The Dance Connection Competition Team take place prior to the start of the dance year. Tryouts are usually held in May for the upcoming year. Students on the team are required to take additional classes and attend extra practices called throughout the year. We compete at several competitions each year. Being a part of our team requires a commitment both from students and parents.

Important Dates

Please see the attached schedule of important dates for the upcoming dance year. We typically follow the holiday schedule of the St. Bernard Parish Public School system.

We want everyone to have a great experience here at The Dance Connection. If you have any questions, concerns or comments we ask that you please communicate with us. We look forward to working with you and your child. And again, thank you for joining The Dance Connection Family!