



# **Handbook for New Students**

2023-2024

***CELEBRATING THE ART OF DANCE***

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# MISSION STATEMENT

The **PACIFIC BALLET CONSERVATORY** is celebrating its 42<sup>nd</sup> season as a thriving ballet school in South Orange County. The recent merger of the reputable Pacific School of Ballet (est. 1996), and the Ballet Conservatory (est. 1982) has created a school at the top of its field and ever-committed to serving its students in their dance-related goals and aspirations.

Our Mission is to provide our students with the personal care, guidance and training to help them become consummate dancers and young adults of exceptional caliber.

The school is located in beautiful Aliso Viejo, 2 minutes from the 73 freeway. It continues to enjoy a remarkable reputation due to the amazing achievements of its dancers (many dancing in professional venues), its international staff, its comprehensive dance training, and its regionally acclaimed performances.

## **PACIFIC BALLET CONSERVATORY HAS BEEN NAMED**

***“Best Ballet School for Children” – Orange Coast Magazine, September 2011***

# SCHOOL RULES

- **We at PBC strive to maintain proper safeguards for your student at all times.** However, PBC cannot be responsible for injuries sustained while traveling to or from PBC facilities, nor can we be responsible for injuries sustained while engaged in supervised or unsupervised activities within the PBC facility, or during rehearsals, performances, or competitions in other facilities.
- **If your child has an injury which will keep them from dancing, please call the office and provide a Doctor's note. If your child has a minor injury, but can still attend class, the student should tell their instructors at the beginning of each class each week until the injury is gone.**
- **Punctuality is a must. We cannot stress enough the importance of the opening class exercises, which are warm-ups to condition the body against injuries. Dancers arriving after the first ten minutes of class will not be allowed admittance. Arriving early and taking time to stretch before class is encouraged.**
- **We kindly ask parents to make arrangements with their child's instructor before the class starts if a student must be excused from class early.** This will allow the class to continue without interruption and show respect to the instructor. **Please remember to pick up your child promptly after their class.**
- **The Staff at PBC is continually monitoring your student's progress.** If you wish to discuss your student, please make an appointment with the Artistic Director as there is no time between classes for this type of discussion.
- **PBC cannot be held responsible for lost or stolen property.** Please put your name in all of your belongings. The lost and found bin is located in the girl's dressing room. **Parents who want to video their dancer in class must first ask the instructor for permission.** If given permission, please try to videotape only your child, and make sure that all parents in the class are in agreement.
- **Please respect the instructors and children in the classroom. Do not communicate through the lobby windows as it is a distraction to the students and instructors.**
- **Please be certain your child is attired correctly for class with the appropriate dancewear and with hair secured properly (refer to PBC dress code.)**
- **NO unsupervised children (without a parent) outside the building or in the parking lot. There is no running or yelling in the lobby or in the business park common areas. NO CLIMBING ON THE TREES. No bike riding or skateboarding.**

# SCHOOL RULES (cont.)

**MAKE-UP CLASSES:** If you are a regularly enrolled student paying monthly tuition, you are entitled to make-up classes. Students are allowed to do make-ups for a period of 30 days after a missed class. In order to preserve the integrity of our class levels, students are allowed to do make-ups in a class of equal level only. If there is no other class of equal level offered, they may do a make-up in a lower level or alternate style. With class size restrictions this year, make-ups will only be allowed in classes with space available.

## **HOW TO DO A MAKE-UP CLASS**

1. Make sure it is within 30 days of your missed class
2. Look at the schedule to find a class at your dancer's level or below, available on the website.
3. E-Mail – [director@pacificballetconservatory.com](mailto:director@pacificballetconservatory.com) with the class, date and time that the student missed/will miss and the class title, date, and time they want to do a make-up class in. Requests should be made at least 24 hours in advance. The office will let you know if space is available and confirm the make-up prior to your arrival.

MAKE-UPS ARE NON-TRANSFERABLE AND MAY NOT BE USED IN PLACE OF MONTHLY TUITION.

- **PBC reserves the right to refuse service to any student or parent, at any time, at the discretion of the Staff, and to enforce the School Rules**

# TUITION POLICIES

- **Tuition is due on the first of each month and late on the 11th.** If you remit your payment after the 10th of the month, your account is automatically charged a \$15.00 late fee; after the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month, your account is charged an extra \$25.00 late fee.
- We understand it may be a hardship for some families to submit their tuition early in the month. We are happy to make arrangements when needed, if you **communicate with us in advance** that this is your situation.
- Tuition at PBC is based on a monthly schedule, not per class. This means your monthly tuition fee will not change if there are more or less classes in the month based on how the calendar falls. Tuition will not be prorated for months with holidays in them. Full tuition is due in June if you are performing.
- **Past Due Accounts:** Warnings are issued at 60 days past due; accounts are suspended at 75 days past due and students are no longer permitted to attend class until accounts are made current. Accounts must be current for students to perform at our Gala Spring Performances.
- **IN ORDER TO RECEIVE A REFUND, a request must be made within 3 business days of the original payment.** Monies cannot be transferred to other family members or friends. Registration Fees are non-refundable. If you enroll in May or June for the following fall classes, requests for refunds must be made before July 1<sup>st</sup> of that same year.
- We regretfully reserve the right to refuse service or admittance to anyone at our discretion.
- Regularly enrolled students may take **make-up classes for any missed classes** within 30 days from the date missed as long as tuition is current. **Make-ups are non-transferable, must be pre-scheduled and may not be used in place of monthly tuition.**
- We are sensitive about preventing a child from continuing classes because of unpaid tuition. **Therefore, we request that tuition be current at all times. This allows your child's classes to continue uninterrupted.**
- In the event of a medical disability, we will prorate tuition in accordance with the date the credit is requested with a Doctor's note.
- There will be a \$25.00 charge for all returned checks.

# TUITION POLICIES (cont.)

## Adding A Class

There must be an opening in a class in order to add it. Please check with the office for availability. You can sign-up online, over the phone or at the front desk. If the class is full, you may choose to be placed on a waiting list. All class additions are subject to student evaluation and class availability.

## Changing A Class

There must be an opening in a class in order to switch into it. Please check with the office for availability. Please call, email or come into the office to see availability and make the class switch. If the switch represents a change in class level, it must be pre-approved by the Artistic Director or Instructor. All class changes are subject to student evaluation and class availability.

## Dropping A Class

If you are interested in dropping a class, please inform the office as soon as possible. We have waiting lists for most classes with dancers eager to have those spots. A prorated credit will be applied to your account for the unused classes, which will be used toward the following month's tuition if dropped mid month.

## Withdrawal

If you need to withdraw from PBC and drop all classes, please inform the office as soon as possible, **BEFORE THE MONTH ENDS**. Under these circumstances you can elect to remain enrolled through the end of the month; or receive a credit on your PBC account for the prorated, unused portion of your tuition. This credit can be used for single classes at the single-class rate for up to **6 months**. (Both students AND parents may use this balance for classes.) After 6 months, any balance remaining is forfeited.

# DRESS CODE

The Pacific Ballet Conservatory endorses a professional dress code. We are concerned with clean, simple attire which will not detract from our purpose in training dancers. We do not want dance attire to be a financial burden to families. **PLEASE DO NOT WEAR YOUR DANCE SHOES IN THE PARKING LOT, ONLY ON THE DANCE FLOOR.**

ALL STUDENTS: All classes (except Hip Hop) require a leotard and tights. No bare knees or midriffs. No jewelry or watches or dangling earrings. No gum. Hair must be secured out of face in a bun or ponytail.

ALL LEVELS OF BALLET: Hair should be secured in a professional bun if at all possible. Hair should be off the face with no loose ponytails. If you are not sure how to secure a bun, please ask your instructor to show you. Theatrical, light pink tights must be worn at all times in all classes. Girls must wear light pink ballet shoes.

GIRLS - COMBO & PRE-BALLET THROUGH BALLET 4 & POINTE: All students must wear a plain black leotard (**NO ATTACHED SKIRTS**) and pink tights. No shorts, skirts, or shirts. Attire for Pointe classes is based on ballet level.

GIRLS – BALLET 5, 6, 7 & POINTE: Any style and color leotard and pink tights. No shorts or shirts. Skirts are acceptable by instructor approval ONLY. (If you are a level 4/5 dancer taking a level 5 class, you must follow the Ballet 4 dress code.) Attire for Pointe classes is based on ballet level.

ADULT WOMEN: Any color and style leotard/unitard and skirt. Pink, black or tan tights. Pink, white or black slippers.

ALL LEVELS OF JAZZ/CONTEMPORARY/MUSICAL THEATRE/MODERN/LEAPS & TURNS: Any color and style leotard and tights **MUST** be worn; hair must be in a neat ponytail or professional bun. Any additional jazz pants, shorts, t-shirts are allowed if they are **FORM FITTING AND NOT BAGGY**. Jazz shoes. (bare feet for Modern.) No bare knees or midriffs.

ALL LEVELS OF TAP: Any color and style leotard and tights **MUST** be worn; hair must be in a neat ponytail or professional bun. Any additional jazz pants, shorts, t-shirts are allowed if they are **FORM FITTING AND NOT BAGGY**. Black tap shoes. No bare knees or midriffs. No jeans.



## **DRESS CODE (cont.)**

ALL LEVELS OF HIP HOP: Leotard and tights are NOT required; however, knees and midriffs MUST be covered. NO BAGGY PANTS. No jeans. **DANCE SHOES: TENNIS SHOES FOR CLASS ONLY, NOT TO BE WORN OUTSIDE THE DANCE ROOM.**

MEN – BALLET: White t-shirt tucked in, black footless tights, white socks, and black slippers

MEN – NON-BALLET: Jazz pants or sweats and t-shirts. No bare knees. No jeans.

# PERFORMANCES

PBC offers a variety of opportunities throughout the year for dancers to perform and families to enjoy:

- Nutcracker Suite (through Pacific Theatre Ballet)
- Soloiste – (Solo's En Pointe)
- To the Pointe
- Gala Performances

## **NUTCRACKER SUITE (Pacific Theatre Ballet):**

- Open to intermediate and advanced level dancers only
- Auditions are held in early September
- Rehearsals begin in September and are held every weekend until the performances
- Performances are held in December
- For more information, please visit [www.pacifictheatreballet.com](http://www.pacifictheatreballet.com)

## **SOLOISTE:**

Soloiste is an opportunity for our advanced dancers to learn and perform variations from classical ballets before a audience. Soloiste is performed only some years.

- Open to advanced level dancers only
- Rehearsal begin in January
- Performances are held in February

## **GALA PERFORMANCES:**

Our Gala Spring Performances are a wonderful culmination of our year of dance. They are an opportunity for your dancer to demonstrate and celebrate all that he/she has learned throughout the year; and for family and friends to join in that celebration.

- Open to all dancers
- Every class has a separate performance piece (with the exception of "Tech" classes; "Tech" classes do not perform.) "Tech" means only Technique is taught in the class.
- Rehearsals begin in January or February; rehearsals are held in class for lower level classes; some rehearsals for advanced dancers are held on Saturday afternoons starting in February or March.
- Performances are held in June
- Timeline and specifics:
  - There will be an e-mail going out in January in the classrooms. Your returned email lets us know if your child will be performing in our Gala Spring Performances and if we have your permission to order your child a costume. Please make sure you respond promptly by e-mail to the office by the due date.

## PERFORMANCES (cont.)

- Your child will be asked for measurements in December/January for a costume. This helps ensure that we meet costume ordering deadlines.
- The **Costume Payment Deadline** is very important. All payments must be received in a timely manner in order for us to ensure your child has a costume in time.
- A **Performance Order** will be posted in the studio in January. This lets you know in which performances your child will be performing.
- A **Performance Information Letter** containing general information regarding Dress Rehearsals, Performances and Ticket Sales will be published in February.
- **Ticket Sales** begin in March and April
- **Dress Rehearsal Schedules** are published in May. They will be distributed in classrooms and posted in the lobbies.
- We offer **professional photographs** in June if you would like to have photos of your child in costume.
- We also have an in house professional Videographer to record all performances and digital downloads will be available to order. Personal videos and photos may only be taken during Dress Rehearsals as they represent a danger to dancers and a distraction to audience members if taken during a live performance. This is strictly enforced.

# EVALUATIONS & PROMOTIONS

Students are evaluated on a continual basis by their instructors. While promotions can happen any time of year, typically they happen twice per year:

- In December in preparation for the June Gala; and
- In May for the following summer and fall schedules.

December promotions are a way for us to ensure that students will be performing at the proper level for our June Gala. Parents are only notified if their dancers are being promoted.

For May evaluations, every parent/student will receive a letter in the mail containing a list of the classes for which the student is eligible to enroll. This mailing will also contain the summer and fall schedules, as well as instructions for when and how to enroll.

The decision to promote a student is a collaborative one. In other words, it is not made by a single instructor but collectively by all instructors for a particular student, with the Artistic Director's Approval.

A student's progress and subsequent evaluations are based on his/her ability to demonstrate proficient technique and performance quality of the full curriculum at their level. Whether a student progresses to the next level is dependent on several key factors:

- Whether the student is taking the recommended number of classes by level, as follows:
  - Ballet 1: 1 Ballet classes/week
  - Ballet 2: 2 Ballet classes/week
  - Ballet 3: 2 Ballet classes/week (and Pre/Beg Pointe when invited)
  - Ballet 4: 3 Ballet classes/week and Pointe
  - Ballet 5: 3 Ballet classes/week and Pointe
  - Ballet 6/7: 4 Ballet classes/week and Pointe
  - Pointe 1: 1 Pointe class/week
  - Pointe 2: 2 Pointe classes/week
  - Pointe 3/4: 3 Pointe classes/week
  - **Must take a minimum of two Ballet classes to enrolled in Pointe**
- Regular attendance in registered classes
- The student's proficiency and confidence in demonstrating the skills taught

# EVALUATIONS & PROMOTIONS (cont.)

- The student's physical condition and subsequent ability to demonstrate proper technique (i.e. turn-out, flexibility, strength and conditioning, etc.)
- The student's quality of performance (i.e. facial expression, understanding and expression of the music, etc.)
- The student's passion for dance and drive to improve.

Students DO NOT necessarily advance a level every year; many levels require multiple years before the student is able to demonstrate proficiency. Also, every student is unique and, as a result, may advance at different rates. In other words, students may not advance at the same rate as their fellow dancers.

It is not appropriate for parents or students to request promotion. Our instructors have hundreds of years of combined experience developing dancers. We ask that you please trust in that experience as we guide your child through the process of becoming an exceptional dancer.

If you have concerns regarding your child's progress, the appropriate action would be to schedule a conference with the Artistic Director to discuss these concerns. Please contact the office for this and the Artistic Director will contact you at her earliest convenience to set something up. Of course, students are always welcome to discuss their progress with their instructors directly.

When a student reaches the Ballet 3 level they should make an appointment with the Artistic Director to discuss summer programs and their progress at the school.

**Summer Programs/Auditions** - Levels that qualify for summer programs are approximately Ballet 3 and above.

If you are interested in auditioning for a Summer dance program, please join us at our annual 'To the Pointe' seminar in January/February for more information. Also, you can make an appointment with the Artistic Director to discuss whether your student is eligible for a summer program

Audition Photos take place in November at PBC with Steve Wylie Photography, because the ballet companies auditioning your student want a photo of them. Auditions begin in January and go through March each year. (audition information such as type of photographs, dates, and locations can be found online at each school's website, i.e. [Joffreyballetschool.com](http://Joffreyballetschool.com)) there is a published list of acceptable programs eligible for scholarship by the Friends of The Conservatory available at the office.

# FALL REGISTRATION

Fall Registration begins in May. Please refer to your child's evaluation packet that will be emailed to you prior to the start of registration. Contained in the packet (along with the evaluation) will be our Summer and Fall Schedule of Classes as well as detailed instructions on how to register online (preferably) or in person.

Registration will begin in the morning for online registration only and later in the day for in person registration. It is recommended that you register online in order to get your first choices for classes.

Classes fill up very quickly, so please ensure that you register your child promptly in order to ensure your child's placement in your preferred classes.

# SUMMER SESSION

It is important to note that, unlike many sports, dance is not a seasonal activity. In order for your dancer to consistently grow and improve, she or he must dance year-round. By continuing to dance during the summer, dancers will continue to improve the skills, technique, flexibility and strength they have worked so hard to achieve all year long.

To accommodate that desire, PBC has special Summer Session offerings:

## **SUMMER SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**

Regular daily classes are offered through our Summer Schedule, which is published in May and you can sign up for at registration.

## **SUMMER DANCE CAMPS**

Our Summer Dance Camps are extremely popular. We offer multiple week-long camps for students interested in exploring a wide variety of dance styles, including Ballet, Musical Theatre and Hip Hop. On the last day of each camp, there is a wonderful performance for family and friends.

## **SUMMER INTENSIVE**

For our intermediate and advanced level students, we offer an in-house week-long summer intensive taught by professional instructors.

This in-house, world-class intensive brought to you represents a huge savings compared to the cost of sending your dancer away to similar intensives around the country when you factor in the cost of airfare, room and board.

Each Summer Intensive culminates in a wonderful performance for family and friends.

Enrollment information for all of our summer programs is published in May.

# MANAGING YOUR ACCOUNT

Once your student is in our system, you may go online and access your account.

- Go to [www.pacificballetconservatory.com](http://www.pacificballetconservatory.com);
- Click on the Enrollment tab;
- Select Student Log-In from the drop-down menu;
- On the right side of the new screen, enter the following login information:
  - 1) The email address you provided us; and
  - 2) Password1 (make sure to capitalize the 'P')

You can now manage your account. If you would like to change your password, click on Edit Family Info. You can also add classes for your student and pay tuition. However, dropping or switching classes still needs to be done through the office.

Feel free to call us if you have any questions! 949-837-0095.



# **FRIENDS OF THE CONSERVATORY**

Friends of the Conservatory is a non-profit service organization, whose goal is to support the students, families and faculty of Pacific Ballet Conservatory. Under the guidance of Maryann Bayless, Artistic Director, they strive to enhance the students dance experience and education.

Through generous donations and support of our fund-raisers, Friends of the Conservatory has been able to provide the following:

- Student enrichment events;
- Student scholarships for summer programs;
- Special events and community outreach;
- Studio support; and
- Performance contributions.

Additional information including membership levels and benefits is available in the lobby.

# **CHARACTERISTICS OF A HEALTHY DANCE SCHOOL**

- **Positive, helpful attention to each and every student and family**
- **Age-appropriate instruction with a solid, proven curriculum**
- **Instructors who are excellent models for their students**
- **A reasonable, but traditional dress code for students**
- **A well-organized office and administrative policies**
- **Large, airy studios with sprung Marley floors that promote safe, but maximum movement for the dancers**
- **Full classes with progressive, patient instruction**
- **Students who take pride in their personal appearance and the cleanliness of their studio**
- **Students and parents who are polite and patient**
- **Creative performances that showcase the best attributes of all students with theatrical flair**
- **Exciting extracurricular programs (i.e. Nutcracker, master classes and intensives)**
- **Cultural opportunities offered in addition to regular classes (i.e. tickets to professional performances)**

# **DANCER'S PRINCIPLES**

**I will commit to always do my own personal best.**

**I will support, help and encourage my fellow dancers.**

**I will be respectful and thankful to my parents, teachers, studio staff and volunteers.**

**I will be friendly and gracious to all participants at dance auditions, rehearsals and performances, and I will try to make new friends there.**

**I will be careful to take time with myself to be well groomed and prepared before classes, rehearsals, auditions and performances.**

**I will follow the dance school dress code at all times.**

**I will only put positive input on social media about my fellow students & instructors.**

**I will be an outstanding representative of my dance school.**

**I will perform at my own true level of ability and always have a good attitude about my dance studies.**

**I will be modest and humble in victory.**

**I will be gracious in defeat.**

**I will focus on participation, cooperation, kindness and harmony in all that I do with my fellow dance students and teachers.**

# DANCE SUPPLY STORES

## **DANCERS CHOICE**

27131. Aliso Creek Rd Suite 160  
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656  
949.305.7230  
dancerchoice@gmail.com  
dancers-choice.com



66 Argonaut, Suite 100  
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656  
Ph: (949) 837-0095  
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