



Student and Parent Handbook

218 West Boardman Street
P. O. Box 1684
Youngstown, OH 44501

(330) 744-1934

www.balletwesternreserve.org
info@balletwesternreserve.org

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1:1 Introduction to Ballet Western Reserve

For 56 years, Ballet Western Reserve has been teaching dance and an appreciation for the arts to the youth of our community. The programs offered at Ballet Western Reserve accommodate both pre-professional and recreational dance Students. Ballet Western Reserve strives to help every Student achieve her or his potential and to become an active supporter of the arts in our community.

1:2 Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide excellence in dance education which enlightens, entertains, and inspires passion and joy.

1:3 History of Ballet Western Reserve

Ballet Western Reserve is a non-profit organization providing quality dance education for Students of all ages since 1962. Many of our alumni have gone on to advanced study in some of the nation's most prestigious schools and universities and have launched successful professional careers with major companies and as respected teachers.

1:4 Ballet Western Reserve Faculty and Staff

Please visit our website for complete biographies and photographs of our faculty and staff.

1:5 Handbook Purpose

This Handbook will familiarize Students and Parents with the policies, procedures, and expectations related to Ballet Western Reserve. The Handbook serves to highlight our Organization's policies and is not inclusive of all of our practices.

Every Student and Parent joining Ballet Western Reserve will be provided a copy of this Handbook and will be asked to read and understand our policies prior to starting their dance education with us.

As circumstances change, we reserve the right to change and update these policies. All updated policies will be made available to you as soon as they are published.

We welcome any questions you may have regarding this Handbook and related policies.

The version of this Handbook is effective August 12, 2018. It serves as the latest version of Ballet Western Reserve's practices, and replaces any previous policies, either verbal or written.

CHAPTER 2: BALLET WESTERN RESERVE DANCE PROGRAM

2:1 Overview of Dance Program

At Ballet Western Reserve, we offer a graduated level of study in a variety of dance styles to promote the development of a versatile dancer. Each class level is designed to meet both technical and conceptual benchmarks for Students. Material presented is developmentally appropriate and supported by anatomically sound teaching practices. Our faculty aim to inspire and challenge Students over the course of their dance education.

Please note:

Due to the physical nature of dance, hands-on adjustments are sometimes given in class. Teachers may gently move the Student into the proper placement to assist with correct positioning. Areas of contact may include the head, arms, torso, hips, legs, and feet.

Methods of both tactile and verbal feedback are important tools in helping each Student reach their individual potential.

2:2 Class Descriptions

Mommy & Me (Ages 24-36 months)

A 30-minute class offering an introduction to dance in a nurturing atmosphere. Your little one will learn developmental skills, social skills, creative movement, music interpretation, all with you by their side.

Pre-Ballet (Age 3)

A 30-minute class offering a fun exploration of basic ballet and dance technique. Creative dance, musicality, posture and problem solving, social skills and self-expression are encouraged. Props are incorporated into the class.

Ballet/Tap Combo (Age 4-5)

A 1-hour class offering an introduction to both ballet and tap. The ballet portion focuses on body placement and limb alignment, working away from the ballet barre. The tap portion covers elements of rhythm, musicality, and creative tap. Both dance styles address spatial and body awareness and incorporate props. Class is divided into 30 minutes of ballet, and 25 minutes of tap.

Ballet A, B, C (Ages 4-6)

Ballet A, B, and C are structured ballet classes focusing on body alignment and limb placement. Class is primarily away from the ballet barre to build spatial and self-awareness. Props are incorporated into these classes. Ballet A is a 30-minute class, and Ballet B and C are 45-minute classes.

Ballet 1-6 (Ages 7 and up)

Ballet levels 1 through 6 are structured ballet classes that include a warm-up at the barre, followed by center work and movement across the floor. Exercises focus on developing strength, alignment, flexibility, achieving and maintaining turn-out, application of correct body positions, classical ballet vocabulary, and concentration.

- **Ballet 1:** Dancers increase their retention skills and are introduced to a structured barre warm-up. It is recommended that Students take 1-2 classes per week. Classes are 1 hour.

- **Ballet 2:** Dancers develop proper muscle memory and retention skills. It is recommended that Students take two classes per week. Classes are 1 hour to 1.25 hours.
- **Ballet 3, 4:** Students are required to take 2-3 classes per week. Classes are 1.25 to 1.5 hours.
- **Ballet 5, 6:** Dancers enter a more advanced level of training with the goal of reaching a pre-professional level. Dancers are required to take 4-6 classes per week. Classes are 1.25 -1.5 hours each.

Beginning Pointe (By invitation only, Ballet 3+)

Students are required to take at least 3 ballet classes per week and be invited by their teacher to enroll and participate in Beginning Pointe, a 30-minute class.

Intermediate/Advanced Pointe (Ballet 4+)

Intermediate Students demonstrate strength and control during barre and center work. Students are required to take 4-6 ballet classes per week to participate in Intermediate and/or Advanced Pointe, a 45-minute class.

Beginning Modern, Jazz, Tap, and Hip Hop (Ages 6 and 7)

A 45-minute class offering an introduction to the dance styles listed.

Modern 1-4 (Ages 7 and up)

Classes integrate various traditional disciplines of modern dance foundations with current contemporary styles. These classes are for dancers who like physical, complicated floor work, level changes, patterns of movement and self-expression. Elements of improvisation and partnering are also introduced. Each level of Modern is a continuation of the previous level and increases in difficulty. Classes are 1 hour.

Jazz 1-4 (Ages 7 and up)

Jazz dance combines techniques of classical ballet and modern dance with a stylized approach. Jazz covers elements of body isolation, energy, rhythmical accuracy and style. Jazz can take form as traditional Jazz, Street Jazz, Musical Theatre, Contemporary, and Lyrical. Each level of jazz is a continuation of the previous level and increases in difficulty. Classes are 1 hour.

Tap 1-4 (Ages 7 and up)

Tap dance combines techniques from African and Irish dance roots. Articulation of feet, musicality, rhythm, and coordination are all elements of this style. Each level of Tap is a continuation of the previous level and increases in difficulty. Classes are 1 hour.

Hip Hop 1-3 (Ages 7 and up)

Hip Hop will introduce the Student to basic vocabulary and style of hip hop movement. Hip Hop is about personal style and expression. This high-energy class can be taught to anyone with a passion to move, so no dance experience is required. Classes are 1 hour.

Improvisation (Modern 3 or 4 Co-Requisite)

A 45-minute class that explores the dancer's surroundings and creates new ways to move. Improvisation will teach the dancers to keep an open mind and find different ways to express themselves while focusing on problem solving and partner work.

Ballet Variations (BWR Company Members only)

A 45-minute ballet class that teaches dance excerpts from classical and contemporary ballets.

Stretch & Conditioning (Ballet 4+)

A 1-hour class focusing on building strength and flexibility through dynamic stretching, core work, and conditioning.

Adult Ballet, Tap, Modern/Jazz

One-hour classes geared toward beginning and intermediate adult dancers in a variety of dance styles.

2:3 Performance Opportunities

Ballet Western Reserve offers a variety of performance opportunities in a non-competitive environment. Opportunities include two fully-staged productions, two in-house performances, as well as outreach and promotional events. Our two fully-staged productions are described below.

Fall Production

Students age six and up have the opportunity to participate in our Fall Production. Interested Students must audition, and there is a \$25 Audition Fee at the time of the audition. Audition dates and times will be announced via email, *Facebook* and on our website. Please be sure your dancer arrives at least ten minutes early to auditions.

The casting of roles is the decision of the faculty and Artistic/School Director. All casting decisions are final.

Rehearsal Schedules will be available on our website, sent out via email, and posted on bulletin boards located in the Front Lobby and main hallway. Schedule conflicts should be put in writing and turned into the Office.

Building Art A fundraiser to maintain our building with performances by our Company dancers.

Young Dancers Performance A themed performance opportunity for dancers from pre-ballet through Ballet 2 held in March.

Spring Gala

All Ballet Western Reserve Students have the opportunity to showcase what they have learned throughout the year at our annual *Spring Gala* performance. Dances are rehearsed in class during the spring semester, along with a mandatory rehearsal at the theater the week of the performance.

2:4 Student Performing Company (BWR Company)

Dancers who progress to the advanced levels of the ballet program have the opportunity to audition for Ballet Western Reserve's Student performing company (BWR Company). The audition process is typical of what an advanced dancer would experience if pursuing placement in summer dance intensives, college dance programs, or a contract with a professional dance company. Introducing our Students to the process and demands involved with being part of a dance company aid in each dancer achieving his or her individual potential.

BWR Company members learn about commitment, responsibility, and collaboration. Being a member of BWR Company allows Students to be active community volunteers through the art of dance. BWR Company dancers have performed in collaboration with local arts organizations such as The Youngstown Symphony Orchestra, *Opera Western Reserve*, Liz Rubino Studios, *The Youngstown Playhouse*, YSU

Performing Arts, and other local organizations. BWR Company dancers also perform in Ballet Western Reserve's Fall Production, *Building Art* event, and *Spring Gala*.

2:5 BWR Company Requirements

BWR Company members must meet the following requirements:

- Placement in Ballet 4 or above.
- Attend the required number of classes as specified in the BWR Company Handbook.
- Perform in Ballet Western Reserve's Fall Production, *Building Art* event, and *Spring Gala*.
- Participate in a minimum of 2 additional community outreach, fundraising, or promotional events.
- Participation in a minimum of 1 Workshop or Master Class during the year.
- Demonstrate respect and support for Ballet Western Reserve and its affiliates through positive and professional behavior.

For more detailed information on BWR Company auditions, requirements, rehearsals, and performances, please see the BWR Company Handbook.

2:6 Prep Classes and Pre-Season Classes

Ballet Western Reserve offers supplemental classes for students interested in reviewing and/or refining aspects of their dance technique. Prep Classes are scheduled throughout the year for Students interested in auditioning for BWR Company in the following season. Pre-Season classes are offered in late August for Students wanting a head start on their conditioning for the regular season.

2:7 Private Lessons

Students seeking one-on-one instruction with our faculty may do so through contacting the Ballet Western Reserve Office.

2:8 Workshops and Master Classes

Ballet Western Reserve offers in-house Workshops and Master Classes throughout the season. Information related to these events is available on our website and *Facebook* page.

CHAPTER 3: SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

3:1 Attendance and Lateness

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes except in the case of illness or emergency. Class attendance is monitored on a daily basis.

Students are expected to be dressed and ready to dance at class time. Please arrange transportation to ensure your dancer will have adequate time to change clothes and prepare for class. Late arrivals place stress on the Student and are disruptive to our classes.

For purposes of safety, Students arriving more than 10 minutes late may be asked to observe class and take notes. Students needing to leave early must receive permission from their teacher prior to the beginning of class.

3:2 Make-up Classes

If a Student misses a regular class he or she may discuss a make-up class with the teacher. No refund or credit is offered for missed classes. Credits for missed classes due to injury or a lengthy illness will be given if proper medical documentation is provided.

3:3 Parking

Free parking is available after 4:00pm on weekdays and all day Saturday in the lot directly across from the Ballet Western Reserve entrance. Parking in the alley is prohibited, and parking in the alley at the side of the building is reserved for Ballet Western Reserve faculty and staff.

3:4 Security

A Security Guard is on site during all Ballet Western Reserve classes.

3:5 Inclement Weather and Emergency School Closings

In the event Ballet Western Reserve must close due to inclement weather or emergency, notification will be issued via telephone or text message and our social media pages. Make-up classes will be scheduled for cancelled classes.

3:6 Student Arrival and Pick Up

Students should wear proper attire over their leotards when traveling to and from the School. Dressing rooms are available for Students who wish to change from street clothes into dance attire. Students are not permitted to change in the restrooms. Dance shoes should not be worn outside of the building. Students should arrive no less than ten minutes prior to their scheduled class time in order to prepare for class.

Please pick up your dancer on time. In the case of an emergency, please notify the Office. In the event a faculty or staff member need to stay more than 15 minutes past the School closing time, you will be billed.

3:7 Front Lobby and Student Lobby

While waiting for your dancer, please feel free to make yourself comfortable in the Front Lobby. A Sprout Healthy Vending machine is available for snacks and drinks, and Keurig cups are for sale in the Office. Siblings and other children who are with you are your responsibility. Running and other disruptive behavior are not permitted. Please help to keep the Front Lobby neat and clean.

Dancers in Level 1 and below may wait in the Front Lobby with their Parent/Guardian prior to their class time. Teachers will meet Students in the Front Lobby and take them into the dance studio at their designated class time.

The Student Lobby is for dancers enrolled in Levels 2 and above. Only Students and faculty are permitted in this area. Lockers are for the use of BWR Company dancers only. While in the Student Lobby area, dancers must conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. Cell phones and all electronic devices are to be silenced when in this area. Noise is to be kept to a minimum as some Students use the area for academic studies. The microwave and refrigerator are available for the Students to use in a clean and safe manner.

3:8 Communication Methods

Office Hours

The Ballet Western Reserve Office is generally open Monday – Thursday 1:00pm – 5:00pm, and select Saturdays from 9:00am-12:30pm. Please check our website and *Facebook* page for updated hours.

Website

Ballet Western Reserve maintains a website at www.balletwesternreserve.org where parents and students can access information about the School, register for classes, and pay tuition.

Email

Please be sure to log into the Parent Portal located on the homepage of our website to update your email address and account information.

Phone

Personal contact information for faculty and staff will not be provided to Students or Parents/Guardians. All phone communications between Ballet Western Reserve faculty, staff, and Students, must go through our main phone number: (330) 744-1934.

Social Media

Ballet Western Reserve maintains *Facebook*, *Pinterest*, and *Twitter* accounts. Please respect the privacy of others if they are included in photographs you post on social media outlets.

Please note: In order to maintain a professional relationship, Ballet Western Reserve prohibits interaction between faculty/staff and Students/Parents/Guardians on social media.

3:9 No Bullying Policy

Ballet Western Reserve has a **zero-tolerance** policy regarding bullying of any kind. If you witness or experience any form of bullying on School property, please notify the Office immediately. All reports will be taken seriously and handled quickly.

3:10 Cell Phones

Cell phones are not permitted in the dance studios. Cell phones must be kept on silent in the Student Lobby.

3:11 Lost & Found

A Lost & Found is located in the Front Lobby by the Security desk.

3:12 Fundraising

Questions regarding fundraising events can be directed to the Ballet Western Reserve Office. To suggest a fundraising idea, please contact the Office.

CHAPTER 4: EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

4:1 Fire or other Emergency

In the event of a fire or other emergency, all Parents and Students should immediately evacuate the building using the nearest marked exit. After an emergency evacuation, all people should gather in the parking lot across from Ballet Western Reserve's alleyway entrance, if possible or in a safe area away from the building. No one is to re-enter the building until the signal is given that it is safe to return.

Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with the posted Building Maps and Evacuation Routes.

4:2 Tornado

In the event of a tornado, employees will lead all Students and Parents into the basement using the closest available stairwell. If this is not possible, seek shelter near an inner wall away from glass. Crouch down and cover head and neck with hands.

CHAPTER 5: REGISTRATION AND CLASSROOM POLICIES

5:1 Registration

Each Student must be registered prior to the first class of the Fall semester to secure class placement. Registration fees are non-refundable and must be paid in full in order for the Student to attend classes. Students enrolled in the Fall semester will be automatically registered for the Spring semester. The registration fee is waived for Students who are continuing from Fall semester. Students must be enrolled and attending classes by the posted deadline to participate in *Spring Gala*.

5:2 Dress Code

Students enrolled in classes at Ballet Western Reserve must adhere to the dress code. Uniform leotards for ballet classes may be ordered at any time through the *Curtain Call for Class* link on our website.

General Dress Code Policies

- Ladies: Long hair must be secured off the face into a bun for ballet, off the face in a pony or braids for all other dance styles
- Gentlemen: Long hair must be secured off face as necessary
- All Dancers: No warm ups, street clothes, dangling jewelry, or excessive fragrance

Mommy & Daddy & Me, Combo Ballet/Tap, Pre-Ballet – Ballet 6, Pointe, Partnering, and Ballet Variations

- Ladies: Uniform leotard available through our website via the *Curtain Call for Class* link; pink tights, pink ballet slippers (split-soled allowed for Levels 4-6)
- Gentlemen: Fitted white t-shirt, black shorts or tights, white socks, white ballet shoes (split-soled allowed for Levels 4-6)

- Combo Ballet/Tap dancers will need pink ballet slippers and black tap shoes, available on *Curtain Call for Class*
- Mommy & Daddy & Me dancers will need clothes allowing for comfort and movement, bare feet

Beginning Modern, Modern 1-4, Improvisation

- Fitted dance or athletic wear, bare feet

Beginning Jazz, Jazz 1-4, Musical Theater, Jumps & Turn Technique

- Fitted dance or athletic wear, black jazz shoes

Beginning Tap, Tap 1-4

- Fitted dance or athletic wear, black tap shoes

Beginning Hip Hop, Hip Hop 1-3

- Clothes that allow for comfort and movement, clean tennis shoes – preferably that have not been worn as street shoes

Adult Ballet

- Fitted dance or athletic wear
- Ballet slippers

5:3 Class Assignments, Level Placement, and Promotions

Class assignments for the Fall semester are given to each Student at the end of June. New Students will be initially placed by age and/or experience with adjustments made by the teacher if necessary after the first class.

Ballet Western Reserve is dedicated to Student safety, growth, and development. We aim to place each Student in classes and levels appropriate to his or her emotional and physical development. Dancers progress at different rates, and it is not unusual for a Student to spend several years at one level. Many different factors affect level placement, including maturity, puberty, growth, and strength. Students are promoted to a higher level as determined by, and at the sole discretion of the faculty and Artistic/School Director.

Safety is our fundamental concern. We ask that Parents trust our qualified faculty's judgment regarding their dancer's level placement to ensure a safe, positive, and productive dance experience for everyone.

Promotions are recommended based on a combination of criteria:

Attendance

Students are expected to attend every class for which they are scheduled. Students or a Parent/Guardian must report all absences to the School office prior to class time. See aforementioned attendance policy (section 3:1). Students who let attendance drop may jeopardize their placement and/or jeopardize their scholarship for the year.

Technical Skill:

Included as part of the Student's technical accomplishments are: proper alignment and placement, use of turn-out, physical strength, coordination, classical line, musicality, clarity of movements and positions, movement quality and performing skills (in class, during rehearsals and on stage).

Attitude

Students must bring to class a positive attitude in order to develop a good working relationship with teachers and other Students, showing a willingness to receive and apply feedback from the teachers.

5:4 Conferences

Student/Parent/Teacher conferences may take place at any time during the year in order to update Parents on their child's progress. Call the Office to set up a meeting with the teacher and the Artistic/School Director.

5:5 Class Observation

Near the end of each semester, family and friends are welcome to observe the Students in class. No food or drink is permitted in the dance studios. You are welcome to take photos and video. Anyone interested in enrolling their child in classes at Ballet Western Reserve can call the Office and schedule a time to observe classes.

Visitors must check in with the Office before going into the studios or Student lobby area. Out-of-town family wishing to observe a Student in class may do so with prior permission from the teacher.

5:6 Health Issues

Any Student who is experiencing health problems or injuries is asked to notify the Office and their teachers. All health issues will be kept confidential.

Ballet Western Reserve promotes a healthy mind, body, and spirit for all Students. Students having questions or concerns in the areas of health and wellness may consult with faculty and the Artistic/School Director. Students who display signs of physical and/or emotional distress will be referred to health specialists who can provide expert care in helping Students reach and maintain optimum physical and emotional health.

Students with injuries preventing them from full participation are encouraged to participate through class observation, class discussion, and written reflection. Ballet Western Reserve must receive written notification of the Student's medical diagnosis, and a medical release must be obtained from the attending physician in order for the Student to resume full participation in class.

CHAPTER 6: FINANCIAL MATTERS

6:1 Tuition

Tuition installments are due by the fifth day of every month. Credit cards, checks, or cash are accepted in the Office. You may also utilize the payment box located in the hall outside the Office. Please be sure to place the payment in a sealed envelope with the Student's name listed on the front. Credit card payments can be taken through the Parent Portal located on the homepage of our website. Please notify the Office if

an installment is going to be late. If two installment payments are missed, the Student may not attend class.

Tuition must be paid in full by May 1st to participate in the *Spring Gala*.

6:2 Registration Fees

There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$35 for all new Students, \$20 for current Students and \$45 for current Ballet Western Reserve families with three or more children.

6:3 Discounts

A 5% discount will be applied to tuition of the second child registered from the same family. A 10% discount will be applied to the third and every subsequent child registered from the same family.

6:4 Refunds and Tuition Credits

Registration fees are non-refundable. If a Student misses a regular class, a refund or tuition credit will not be issued. Tuition credits will be given to Students who miss due to lengthy illnesses or injury if a medical excuse from the doctor is provided.

6:5 Returned Checks

A \$25 fee will be applied to all returned checks.

6:6 Scholarship Opportunities

Financial Hardship Tuition Scholarships

Because of the generosity of charitable foundations and local arts supporters, Ballet Western Reserve is able to offer a limited number of financial scholarships to those in need. Scholarship forms are available from the Office. Financial Hardship Tuition Scholarships cover a maximum of two classes per semester.

CHAPTER 7: CODE OF CONDUCT

7:1 Student Rights

At Ballet Western Reserve, we believe each Student has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place.
- Be treated with respect.
- Receive the support and guidance of caring adults.

We ask that both Students and Parents/Guardians help us maintain these beliefs by reading and acknowledging the Codes of Conduct and receipt of this Handbook.

7:2 Code of Conduct for Parents

Ballet Western Reserve Parents are expected to:

- Respect the expertise and decisions of the Ballet Western Reserve faculty and staff.

- Uphold our No Bullying policy.
- Support and encourage your dancer at all times.
- Be considerate of, and courteous to, those around you.
- Promote positive solutions and avoid gossip and negativity.
- Set up appointments with the appropriate faculty and/or staff to voice any major concerns.
- Be a role model for your child, as well as other dancers.
- Celebrate the benefits of your child's dance experience!

Through dance education, Students will:

- ✓ Develop self and spatial-awareness
- ✓ Set and achieve goals
- ✓ Be creative and expressive
- ✓ Learn to work as a team
- ✓ Build physical strength, flexibility, and endurance
- ✓ Make life-long friends!

7:3 Code of Conduct for Students

Ballet Western Reserve Students are expected to:

- Respect themselves and others.
- Uphold our No Bullying policy.
- Support and encourage fellow dancers.
- Refrain unsafe and disruptive behavior.
- Respect our building by keeping it neat and cleaning up after yourself.
- Follow the rules of our School.
- Follow directions from Ballet Western Reserve faculty and staff.
- Have fun, make friends, and enjoy dancing!