METRO PARKS DANCE DIVISION

Handbook 2026-2027

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Metro Parks Dance Division
Centennial Performing Arts Studios
211 27th Ave North
Nashville, TN 37203

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Welcome to the Metro Parks Dance Division program. To ensure a vibrant and healthy dance environment for all students, parents, and teachers, please read the following information carefully for some important information regarding your child's dance class(es).

The **primary goal of the dance division is education.** Our instructors want to offer your children the highest quality training in a supportive environment. Some students take our classes simply to enrich their lives and discover the joy of movement, but for the students who would like to go on to dance professionally or seek a college degree in dance, we want to ensure that they have the prerequisite skills to be successful. Additionally, we help students develop as educated audience members and unearth the positive effects that physical activity and creative expression can have on their overall well-being.

We are proud to offer high-quality dance education in the public sector to a wide variety of students and families from diverse backgrounds. It is expected that all students and families will treat each other, faculty members, and Metro Parks employees with respect and will show support to each of our dancers, faculty members, and companies-in-residence regardless of race, gender identity, body type, socio-economic status, disability, political or religious beliefs.

Please read through the Parks and Recreation Participants Code of Conduct

Dance Division Staff Contacts:

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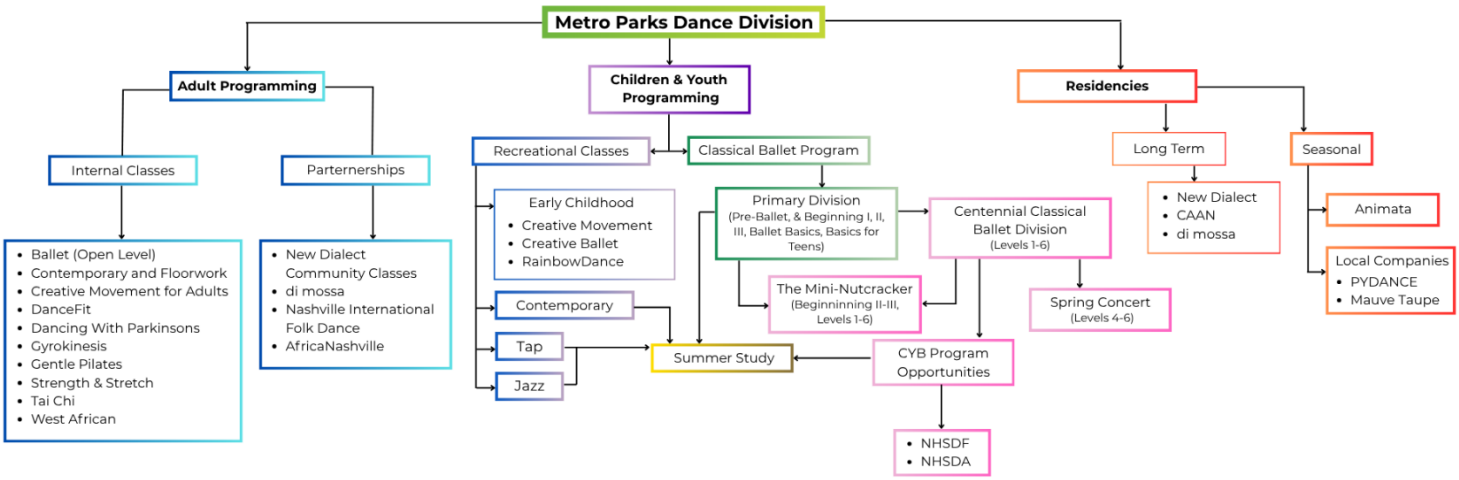
Dance Division Locations & Community Centers

Centennial Performing Arts Studios
211 27th Ave North
Nashville, TN 37203
Front Desk: 615.880.2787

Other Community Center Locations Can be Found HERE

Programs & Classes

Metro Parks Dance Division offers programs designed to encourage technical development, education, and a joy for movement for a variety of ages. Our program is split into three categories, classes for adults, programming for youth and children, and professional residencies, with many options for classes in each program:



Adult Classes | Ages 15+
Our dance classes for adults provide community-oriented, high-quality, affordable dance and movement experiences led by a diverse group of faculty and dance community members. The Dance Division of the Metropolitan Board of Parks and Recreation currently offers classes for adults of all ages and in beginning, continuing, and gentle levels in ballet, contemporary, contact improvisation, creative movement, West African, Tai Chi, Pilates, DanceFit, Gyrokinesis, and Dancing with Parkinson's.

Early Childhood | Ages 18 months to 5 years
Our early childhood classes introduce young children to the joy of dance with a blend of movement, music, rhythm, and creative imagery to help them develop a musical ear, locomotor skills and physical coordination in a developmentally appropriate way, all while having fun.

Rainbowdance
Creative Movement
Creative Ballet

Jazz | Ages 8-13
Jazz is a fun, high-energy dance form that develops technique, rhythm and style while building strength, flexibility and body awareness. Classes include warm up, isolations, stretches, across the floor progressions, and choreography combinations. These classes are great for dancers who like precision and rhythm, physical challenges, and personal style and expression.

Tap | Ages 5+
Learn the foundational steps and rhythms of both Broadway and rhythm tap styles. Students develop physical coordination, agility, and a musical ear, all while having fun!

Contemporary Program | Ages 12+
Contemporary dance training building strong, creative dancers through technique, improvisation, and composition. Students learn technique, create original movements, and move with confidence through creative and imaginative movement exercises.

Classical Ballet Program | Ages 6+
Students experience the beauty and discipline of classical ballet in a cohesive program of study that focuses on the progressional development of a strong technical foundation and artistic mastery, coupled with a rigorous culture of excellence. Students will be challenged, encouraged, and prepared for the demands of a professional career on or off the performance stage, while building a supportive community along the way. Includes Pre-Ballet through Level 6.

Summer Study | Ages 3+
Metro Parks Dance Division provides numerous options for students aged 3+ during the summer months. To view our options of the most recent summer offerings for young children, youth and teens you can view it here. Our adult classes also continue throughout the summer with additional offerings from our fabulous companies in residence.

Performance Opportunities
Performance is introduced in a developmentally appropriate way. For all classes, an observation class at the end of the fall and spring sessions serves as a time when the students can share what they have learned with their family members and friends and is a great way to introduce them to dancing in front of an audience.

For the Classical Ballet Program:
Students are eligible to perform in The Mini-Nutcracker when they are 8 years old and in Ballet: Beginning II or higher and have completed the previous spring semester in ballet with Metro Dance. Eligible students are invited to a casting audition in August in which all students who commit to the production schedule receive a role. The Mini-Nutcracker, a narrated, abbreviated version of the popular holiday ballet, is designed to introduce young children to ballet as a performance art.

Students who reach Levels 4, 5, & 6 are eligible to participate in the Centennial Youth Ballet, if they wish to commit the necessary time in class and rehearsal. Centennial Youth Ballet students who complete the fall session of classes are invited to perform in a spring concert in addition to The Mini-Nutcracker. The Spring Concert gives members of Centennial Youth Ballet the opportunity to learn and perform a range of ballet, including corps de ballet work, classical variations, as well as contemporary choreography to reflect the type of work being done in a professional dance world. With the support of Friends of Metro Dance, each spring semester guest artists are brought in to either stage or create new work for dancers to perform. Occasionally, we are invited to participate in a local festival and will invite students to participate in a short group dance as time and staff resources allow.

Admissions & Enrollment

Metro Parks Dance Division classes have an open enrollment policy. These classes are quickly filled, and entry level classes are on a first-come, first-served basis. Classes and levels are cumulative and build on developmentally appropriate skills learned and mastered from year to year. **Students are strongly encouraged to study for the full academic year**. Students learn foundational skills during the fall session and continue to build on those skills during the spring session. Students must complete the full fall and spring semester of the same class (including day/time) before registering for the next level. Please consider your child's full year schedule when committing to a dance class. Students must be the minimum age for both fall and spring sessions on August 15, which aligns with MNPS age requirements for the school year.

Attendance Policy

Consistent attendance and punctuality are key ingredients for a dancer's success. It is expected that students will participate in all scheduled classes. **Attendance in all scheduled classes is critical to consistent progress and advancement in the program.** Students with excessive absences may be asked to continue in the same level the following year to master skills needed to progress. *If your child is going to miss a class, please notify the appropriate dance staff member or*

Dance Division Supervisor ahead of time with the date of the class that will be missed. For last-minute emergencies (a student is sick, stuck in traffic, etc.) ***please call the Program Assistant at 615.880.2787 x72737*** as they will be able to deliver the message to the teacher most efficiently. *Please note that the Classical Ballet Program has a more detailed attendance policy that is specified in the* ***Classical Ballet Program Handbook.***

New & Transfer Students

New students for fall classes may register for entry-level classes without supervisor approval. All new students wishing to join mid-year must have the Dance Division Supervisor's approval before registering for a Winter/Spring class to ensure appropriate placement, and that there is room in the class. For the Classical Ballet Program, placement classes for students aged 8-18, or for Beginning II and up are required for enrollment. To schedule a placement class please fill out the online form. For more information, please visit the Classical Ballet Program portion of the handbook.

Registration & Tuition

The Fall semester begins mid-August and runs until late November, with extended classes for dancers performing in The Mini-Nutcracker. The Winter/Spring semester begins in early January and ends in mid-April. All program dates and holiday closures, including Spring break dates, are listed in the School Calendar which is posted on our website.

Tuition includes all scheduled classes. Students in the Classical Ballet Program must take the full schedule of classes for their level to participate in Centennial Youth Ballet productions.

Refund Policy

If a registered student needs to withdraw, please inform the Dance Division Supervisor in writing no later than one week prior to the first class of the semester. Because some classes have minimum enrollment requirements or are full and have waitlists, it is important that students who are registered are committed to the class for the full session. Metro Parks has a no refund policy once a class is in session unless the class is cancelled by the department.

Scholarship Information

Friends of Metro Dance offers needs-based tuition scholarships to help defray the cost of a student's cultural arts education. Scholarships offered are at the 75%, 50% or 25% levels based on income documentation provided and are based on the federal guidelines for free and reduced lunch. Scholarship funds are limited and will be available while they last for the fiscal year (July 1-June 30 of the following year). Applications are due at least one week before your child's class begins. Recipients will be notified via e-mail about any scholarship funds you receive. Once awarded, scholarship benefits are applied to classes for the current fiscal year. Each year, recipients will need to reapply for scholarship benefits with updated financial information. This information will be used for the purpose of determining need-based financial aid and shall not be used for any other purpose. The Dance Supervisor will review the applications and will maintain the

confidentiality of all information submitted by applicants. Financial documents will be secured and appropriately disposed of at the end of each fiscal year.

Friends of Metro Dance also provides financial scholarships to assist families with dancewear, including a Performance Pointe Shoe Fund. In addition, they subsidize the cost for students attending the National High School Dance Festival.

School Policies and Procedures

Announcements and Communicating with Staff

Metro Parks Dance Division announcements and schedule updates are currently communicated to students and their families through email and/or our social media pages. To ensure that you receive these messages, please make sure that all staff contact emails are added to your contact list, so no important information gets sent to a junk folder.

The limited time between classes does not make it possible for your child's instructor to address individual problems during their teaching hours. If you need to reach a staff member, please utilize their office e-mail or phone number provided on the first page of this letter. Our full-time faculty are available by email when they are at their desk during business hours. Since all faculty teach multiple classes throughout the day, **please note that it may take up to 24 hours or more for a response.**

For communication with an instructor who does not work full-time, please contact a full-time staff member so that they can direct you to the most effective method of contact.

If an instructor gives out their personal cell phone number to use in offsite performances or events, please do not text or call *outside of the event*.

The following table details how each type of notification will be communicated. All general program information such as the Metro Parks Dance Division Handbook, academic year calendar and registration information are ***listed on the website*.**

Email	Instagram | Social-Media
• Weekly rehearsal schedules for CYB Performers • Faculty and staff correspondence (during office hours M-F) • Casting • Important program updates • Evaluations and conference scheduling • Pre-Sale ticketing information for performing families • Dance class cancelations • Last-minute class updates	• Dance class cancelations • Last-minute class updates • Performance reminders • Public ticket sale announcements • Metro Parks Dance Division Events and performances • Sneak peaks into classes and events • Post performance photos

Please make sure you follow us on social media:

Instagram: @metroparksdance #centennialyouthballet

Facebook: Metro Parks Dance Division

Websites: http://www.friendsofmetrodance.org • www.dance.nashville.gov

Inclement Weather

Metro Parks Dance generally cancels classes if Metro Schools close for weather but may elect to hold afternoon classes if students can travel safely. If we cancel classes, we will notify families via e-mail, and post on social media: @metrodancenashville and generally schedule make-up classes at the end of the semester.

Lost and Found

For students attending classes in *Centennial Performing Arts Studios*, any items left behind will be placed in the blue cabinet in the main lobby.

For students attending classes in any of our *community centers,* please check in with the class instructor or community center staff.

Observation Days

Parents and family members are not allowed to watch classes inside the studio unless invited by the instructor or given permission by the supervisor. We happily welcome you to watch classes during Observation Week, the last week of classes each term. We encourage attendance at Observation Day and know this is a special and unique educational opportunity. You will see your student's progression and experience class from start to finish. We recommend staying to observe the entire class.

Visitors must follow the **observation day etiquette** below:

- Please plan to stay for the entire class period; leaving during class is distracting. If you do need to leave the studio during class, please wait for an appropriate break before leaving and re-entering.
- Photos and videos are permitted when following our social media policy below.
- Cell phones are only permitted for videographic and photographic use. Texting, phone calls, laptop or any other use of electronic equipment are not allowed during observation classes because it is highly distracting for the dancers and staff.
- No food or drink in the studios except for bottled water.
- Please refrain from talking during class.
- Visitors are asked to restrict observation of classes to assigned Observation Days. Please remain in designated waiting areas at all other times.

Photo/Video/Social Media Policy

- Parents may take photos of their child(ren) during the invited Observation Week. Please do not post or tag photos on social media of children other than your own without permission from the student/parent.
- Parents are asked to initial a digital photo/video release upon registration giving permission for the Metro Parks Dance Division and Friends of Metro Dance to post photos/videos taken by staff or a professional photographer/videographer (hired for performances) on Facebook and Instagram. We do not name the students without getting further explicit permission from the families. If you prefer that your child's likeness is not used on social media at all, please let us know and we will be more than happy to respect your wishes.

What to do on The First Day of Class

1. Sign-in at the front desk to ensure your child is registered and shows up on the roster.
2. Check that your contact information is accurate. Our most effective mode of communication is e-mail. Please make sure that the e-mail address on file is one you check regularly. Feel free to add an e-mail address of any other adult, and/or student who needs to receive information about your child's class(es).
3. For CPAS: Pick up a parking pass at the front desk to park in the side lot.

Drop Off and Parking

Centennial Performing Arts Studios:

- Please display the CPAS parking pass, (available at the front desk), on your dashboard when you are parked in the side lot.
- For both pick-up and drop-off, if the front-desk attendant has stepped away from the desk, please ring the doorbell to the right of the door and wait to be buzzed in.
- Please pick up students promptly after class. Many instructors teach back-to-back classes and may not be able to supervise your child after class.
- *For students under the age of 12,* we ask that a parent/guardian please come to the lobby or wait at the front door to pick up the child so that the staff can ensure children are leaving with a trusted adult. If there is no front-desk attendant and a student has been waiting beyond 5 minutes for pick-up, they will be invited to wait in the Dance Division Supervisor's office or sit quietly in an in-progress class.
- Students should enter and exit the building in street shoes and with cover-ups over their dance clothes to prevent holes and tears in clothing, tracking dirt into the studios and onto the dance floor, and to protect their warm muscles after class.
- *No* student should arrive at or leave any Metro Parks and Recreation building without shoes on.
- *No* dance shoes (ballet, booties, tap, jazz, etc.), may be worn outside. This policy reflects our concern for the safety of our students and maintaining our studio floors.

Building Policies | Main Lobby & Waiting Areas

- Noise should be kept to a minimum
- Please always supervise children in the waiting area, including on the walking track at Sevier Park Community Center and by the herb garden and fountain at the Centennial Art Center or the playground next to the Centennial Performing Arts Studios.
- Do not block active hallways and doors in case an emergency exit is necessary. In the event of an emergency, please follow directions given by a Metro Parks employee, all of whom have been briefed on the Emergency and Safety Plan.
- Please properly dispose of trash after eating snacks in the waiting area.
- Please do not enter the studios or offices without an invitation from a staff member.
- Please do not touch anything on the front desk or adjust the thermostat in the lobby.
- **For early childhood classes** that do not include parent/caregiver participation, please note that one important goal of the class is to help build a child's independence. To that effect, we ask that family members wait outside the studio while class is in session. We do understand this may be your child's first time in a class on their own and the instructor will work with you if your child has trouble making the initial adjustment. We also ask that you or a proxy parent remain close by in case your child needs to go to the bathroom during class time.

Student Code of Conduct | Metro Parks and Recreation

- Dancers should **arrive at least 10 minutes before class begins**, dressed in the proper attire, and ready to work.
- Dancers should neatly store their belongings in the cubbies provided in each studio. Younger students are advised to leave belongings with their grown-up in the lobby.
- Dancers should show respect to the teacher through active listening when the teacher is giving instructions, asking questions only related to the task at hand, making relevant comments when addressed by the teacher, and demonstrating an openness to new information.
- Phones must be silenced and put away during class. Texting and phone calls should be made from the lobby before or after class or during a break.
- Dancers are expected to respect the space of others.
- Dancers are not allowed to chew gum or bring food into the studio. Only bottled water is allowed.
- Dancers are not allowed to hang on the ballet barres.
- Dancers should conduct themselves appropriately in the lobby and dressing room before and after class as well. Please, no running, gymnastics or screaming.
- Dancers may never give their fellow classmates or other students technical corrections unless specifically asked to do so by another faculty member for an education exercise OR during a student-led choreography rehearsal *with* dance staff supervision.
- Please respect the personal space of other dancers both in and outside of the studio as dancers have varying levels of comfort with physical touch. In other words, keep your hands to

yourself without consent or unless specifically required to do so in a choreographic context during class or performance rehearsals.

- The faculty and staff are committed to maintaining a healthy, productive, and warm environment for the **entire** community. It is required that all students conduct respectful and courteous behavior to other dancers, instructors, Metro Parks staff & parents before, during, and after classes or rehearsals both inside & out of the facilities at all times, (including social media, external group gatherings or group messaging). This includes not using coarse language and avoiding negative or inefficient discourse with fellow classmates. Negative energy is contagious and can become habitual. Younger dancers, or even peers, copy the behavior being exhibited both in and out of the studio. Exemplary etiquette is expected, and bullying will not be tolerated. If a student or parent witnesses any of the above, please contact the dance staff. Faculty and staff are available for conferences to address issues that may affect training/experiences in the program.

Friends of Metro Dance

Get involved in your child's dance education by joining Friends of Metro Dance, a non-profit organization established in 1995 that supports the Metro Parks Dance Division beyond the scope of government funding. Their mission is to enhance the art of dance in the Metro community; enrich the programming of the Metro Parks Dance Division; and encourage the growth of dancers of all ages and abilities through funding and volunteerism.

There is no correlation between parents' participation in the Friends of Metro Dance Board or personal gifts to the School/Teacher and a child's progress in Metro Parks Dance classes or in the casting choices for Centennial Youth Ballet productions.

- Metro employees cannot accept gifts with a value of higher than $25 from a single source in a calendar year.

The organization:

- Provides financial and volunteer support for two annual performances by Centennial Youth Ballet: the ever-popular Mini-Nutcracker and a spring performance that showcases a range of ballet works from classical to contemporary.
- Sponsors programs such as Dancing with Parkinson's and partners with artists and organizations such as AfricaNashville to provide free community-based classes, workshops, and performances to dancers of all ages, levels, and abilities.
- Provides financial scholarships to assist families with class tuition and dancewear including a Performance Pointe Shoe Fund. Friends also subsidizes the cost for students to attend the National High School Dance Festival.
- Enhances the studios at Centennial Performing Arts Studios and other community centers by providing state-of-the-art sprung floors, marley dance surfaces, mounted mirrors, sound equipment, and more!

How can you participate?

- **BECOME A MEMBER** and receive a quarterly newsletter, invitations to special community events, and the warm and fuzzy feeling that comes from supporting the program in what it needs to thrive.
- **BECOME A SPONSOR.** Our winter and spring performances are our primary fundraisers and are solely funded by FOMD and your generous contributions. Please help continue these Nashville traditions and ensure their success by becoming a sponsor or being a community liaison to secure sponsorships from local businesses.
- **DONATE**. Make a financial contribution or donate in-kind goods or services.
- **VOLUNTEER** at performances, events, or on a board committee.
- Choose Friends of Metro Dance as your favorite charitable organization when you shop at Kroger. Learn More:
    - The Kroger Community Rewards program makes fundraising easy by donating to local organizations based on the shopping you do every day. Once you link your card to our organization (**Friends of Metro Dance Nashville**), all you have to do is shop at Kroger and swipe your Shopper's Card. Learn More
    - Already have a Kroger Shopper's Card? Follow these instructions to link your card to our organization.
    - Learn more at FriendsofMetroDance.org or email friendsofmetrodance@gmail.com with questions or interest.

Tickets/Attending Performances

We encourage all students across Metro Parks Dance Division classes to attend any Centennial Youth Ballet performances. The live theater experience provides an essential and enriching component to the education of our students. Both The Mini-Nutcracker and the Annual Spring Concerts dates are decided well in advance and listed on the academic year calendar online.

When attending these performances, it is important to remind young dancers of performance etiquette. They are expected to be responsible, respectful, and mindful of their behavior in the theater. Conversation/critiquing of performances should be saved for after the performance. The theater experience should be enjoyable for all. Parents are expected to model this behavior for their child(ren).

During tech week or performances, only students who are performing, faculty, guest artists, and volunteers who have signed up to work backstage for that specific day or show are permitted backstage. This includes before, during, or after the performance. Family, friends, and guests of the performers may greet the dancers when they come to the lobby after the performance has ended.

Dress Code

As with many sports, dance class has a special uniform. Dress code requirements are in place so that instructors can make sure students are working in proper alignment and to cut down on distractions in class. We do keep a stash of extra shoes and leotards in case a student leaves an

item at home. Please check with your instructor or the front desk attendant at least 10 minutes before class if you need to borrow a uniform item.

General Guidelines

- Tutus and patterned leotards are not permitted in class. Skirts are not permitted in Creative Ballet, Creative Movement, Pre-Ballet or Beginning I, II, III.
- For all ballet classes, hair should be in a bun as length & texture allow (if not in a bun, hair should be pulled back away from face and secured to head). For all other classes, hair can be in a ponytail or secured away from face.
- No jewelry is allowed except for small stud earrings.
- Please write your child's name in all dance shoes.
- Dance shoes should be purchased from a dancewear store such as or Bellissimo or Spell's or website such as dancesupplies.com. Street or house shoes made to resemble dance shoes are not acceptable.
- Street shoes (shoes that are worn outside) are not permitted on the dance floor. No dance shoes should not be worn as outdoor shoes.
- Students should enter and exit the building in street shoes and with cover-ups over their dance clothes to prevent holes and tears in clothing, tracking dirt into the studios and onto the dance floor, and to protect their warm muscles after class.
- For the purposes of this document: "Girls" & "Boys" refer to anyone who identifies as such. Non-binary dancers may choose ANY of the approved dress code options for their level.

Rainbowdance

*Children & Grown-Ups***:** Clothing you feel comfortable sitting on the floor and moving in comfortable shoes for outdoor classes, barefoot for indoor classes
Suggested for Outdoor Classes: Yoga mat or towel for wet grass; sun and bug protection if needed

Creative Movement

Girls: Solid cap-sleeved or long-sleeve leotard (any color); pink or skin tone footed tights; no-tie pink or skin tone ballet slippers*; Skirts and tutus not permitted. Tights and shoes should be the same color.

Boys: Solid t-shirt (any color); shorts or sweatpants; black ballet slippers

Creative Ballet

Girls: PINK solid cap-sleeved or long-sleeve leotard; pink or skin tone footed tights; no-tie pink or skin tone ballet slippers; Skirts and tutus not permitted. Tights and shoes should be the same color.

Boys: White T-shirt; black tights or shorts; black ballet slippers

Tap (All)

Girls: Black cap-sleeve or long-sleeve leotard; pink footed tights; black tap shoes.

Boys: Solid white T-shirt; black shorts, leggings, or sweatpants; black socks; black tap shoes.

Jazz (All)

Girls**:** Solid leotard (any color); black jazz pants, leggings or tights; black split-sole jazz shoes

Boys**:** White fitted T-shirt; black shorts, leggings, sweatpants, or jazz pants; black split-sole jazz shoes

Contemporary (All):

Girls: Black leotard (camisole, cap-sleeve, or long-sleeve); black footless or convertible tights or leggings; black socks (ideally 50/50 cotton poly blend); Optional long-sleeve layer for floor work

Boys: Solid black t-shirt; black leggings, shorts, or sweatpants; black socks (ideally 50/50 cotton poly blend)

Ballet Basics for Teens and Ballet Basics | 9-11 yrs
Girls: Black cap-sleeved or long-sleeved leotard (camisole leotard acceptable for teens); pink or skin tone footed tights; no-tie pink or skin tone ballet slippers; Skirts and tutus not permitted. Tights & shoes should be the same color.
Boys: White fitted T-shirt; black tights; black ballet slippers

Classical Ballet Program
For the Classical Ballet Program**,** which includes the **Pre-Ballet, Beginning, Intermediate, and Levels 1-6** please view the dress code section in the *Metro Parks Dance Division, Centennial Classical Ballet Division Handbook.*

Centennial Classical Ballet Division | Handbook

The classical ballet program is divided into three divisions: Primary Division, Levels 1-3 and Levels 4-6, designed to encourage each student's technical development. The divisions represent important curricular milestones, like elementary school, middle school, and high school. It is the goal of the faculty to support **all** students in attaining the highest level of mastery and achievement. Every effort is made to place students in the level which will provide them with the most benefit. The school curriculum and syllabus, developed by the faculty, establishes a classroom curriculum and teaching method and defines how the class is to be taught, thus ensuring consistency within the school. The syllabus is periodically reviewed by the Dance Division Supervisor and faculty and enhanced with the objective of offering the strongest ballet training possible for the program.

Primary Division

The Pre-ballet, Beginning I, II, and III syllabus focuses on preparing the body and mind for their future classical ballet training. Students will learn the importance of foundational vocabulary and movement patterns, coordination, alignment, and classroom etiquette. The fundamentals of musicality and body coordination are introduced with age-appropriate enrichment games and directional drills. In Pre-Ballet and Beginning I, basic conditioning exercises are introduced to develop the feeling of properly activating the muscles used in classical ballet technique. As the levels progress, conditioning exercises intensify to increase muscle strength, endurance, flexibility, and coordination.

During these levels, it is important for the students to familiarize themselves with the basic concepts of a classical ballet classroom structure: developing the ability to concentrate and lengthen the attention span, learning the basic behavioral expectations of the class, and practicing taking direction and receiving corrections from the teacher.

Beginning II and III students who participated in the previous spring semester with Metro Parks Dance are eligible to audition and perform in The Mini-Nutcracker in the fall.

- Pre-Ballet | (Age 6+)
- Beginning I | (Ages 7+)
- Beginning II | (Ages 8+) By placement class or accumulation from the previous year.
- Beginning III | (Ages 9+) By placement class or accumulation from the previous year.
- Ballet Basics (Ages 9-11)
- Ballet Basics for Teens (Ages 12+)

Levels 1-3 | By placement class or accumulation from the previous year.

The first three levels of the Centennial Classical Ballet Division, build on the skills learned in the Primary Division and are three of the most important years in the syllabus. The growing vocabulary and additional time demanded in these levels represent a signification progression in the development of a dance student especially for the preparation of pointe work. These levels deepen the development and understanding of proper body placement, muscular engagement, and muscular endurance.

Students are encouraged and nurtured to practice confidence and self-expression through nuances in épaulement and age-appropriate dancing steps. It is expected that students work to apply corrections without consistent cueing from teachers by the end of Level 3.

Pointe readiness evaluations are conducted when a third day of technique class is added to a student's schedule (at least Level 2) and when the faculty deems the group is ready for the evaluations. The evaluation is conducted by a physical therapist specializing in ballet and dance training with input from the instructor(s) and supervisor. Students dancing en pointe must attend a minimum of three ballet classes a week to practice pointe safely. Students who do not attend class consistently may not be allowed to participate in pointe work. Once on pointe, it is expected that students dance consistently during the summer months to maintain the physicality required for pointe-work. For more information on pointe-work please view this section of the handbook.

Level 2 students are now eligible and strongly encouraged to add Strength and Conditioning into their schedule to supplement their classwork. These additional classes will help students build strength, gain coordination, and accomplish a greater sense of musicality Strength & Conditioning is added as an option for Level 2 students.

Levels 4-6 | By placement class or accumulation from the previous year.

These levels are designed to refine and further develop the skills learned in Pre-Ballet-Beginning 3 and Levels 1-3, while adding a more complex layer into the class structure for a students' specialization in classical ballet. To provide students with a comprehensive program necessary to support each dancer to reach their fullest potential both technically and artistically, lessons will increase in length and frequency.

Students in Levels 4-6 attend classes 4-5 days per week, supplemental classes such as Strength and Conditioning and Contemporary are a requirement and no longer optional. For students dancing on pointe, pointe work is practiced at a minimum of twice a week in their technique class. The syllabus vocabulary becomes increasingly complex with a demand of virtuosity and performance artistry. Faculty safely and properly train students for their future endeavors, whether that be external summer programs, college dance programs, or professional careers on and off the stage. Variations and classical partnering workshops are added to the schedule of dancers in Level 6 throughout the year.

Promotions & Conferences

Yearly Advancement from one level to the next is not automatic. We want to celebrate each student's unique journey through the program and understand that each student will grow and develop at their own rate and in their own time. It is normal for students, especially in Levels 1-6, to spend more than one year in one or more levels. It is our goal to support all students in attaining the highest levels of achievement. Faculty take great care in placing students in the level which will provide them with the most benefit and in constructing the class schedule and the assignment of teachers. Students are placed according to their current stage of ability, physical and psychological

development, and age. Students' progress faster by spending the time necessary to master the fundamentals, rather than rushing ahead to a more advanced level.

New students beyond the Ballet Basics or Beginning I level should fill out the online form to schedule a placement class to determine the appropriate level for the student before registering.

All students enrolled in the Centennial Classical Ballet Division and in **Beginning II and up** will receive a written evaluation with class placement and registration materials in the Spring/Summer, if continuing in the program for the following school year. Students in Pre-Ballet and Beginning I do not receive a formal written evaluation but will receive placement info by email for the following year. Students will be evaluated by their current instructors in consultation with the dance supervisor. Students learn progressive levels of ballet technique following the school syllabus for each appropriate level of age. Yearly advancement is based on faculty evaluations of the individual student's technical ability, physical aptitude, strength, classroom effort, attendance, the understanding of ballet concepts, technical development, and how a student responds to the physical demands of the syllabus. Level placement does not determine professional potential. The dance faculty is committed to teaching the whole student as well as the entire class.

Student Conferences are held in person at the end of the spring semester for students in Levels 1-6 to discuss progress and goals. Conferences last approximately 20 minutes and involve the student(s), parent(s)/guardian(s), and the student's ballet instructors. Students are encouraged to take notes in their class journal during the conference to use as a reference during the school year. It is important for parents to discuss these reports and evaluations with their child to ensure there is a shared understanding of the student's progress.

The Dance Division Supervisor and/or faculty are available to answer questions or concerns throughout the year. Appointments can be made through their contact email. Please note that the faculty teach numerous classes during the week and may delay in response time.

Additional Program Opportunities

Technique Tune-Ups: As a public program, we do not have a private lesson option available and do not rent the studios for private lessons with outside instructors as we prioritize studio and staff availability for group classes and performance rehearsals. However, during interim weeks between semesters, Metro Parks Dance Division staff offer 30-minute Technique Tune-Ups free of charge to students in levels 1-6 for a chance to have a one-on-one conversation with a teacher about goals or get a little more individual attention on a ballet concept. A sign-up schedule is sent out to families prior to each session.

Physical Therapy Consultations: To support dancer health, Friends of Metro Dance sponsors free, 30-minute onsite consultations with physical therapists who work with ballet dancers. Physical therapists work with intermediate and advanced students to answer questions and provide resources for injury prevention, provide strengthening movement exercises for any challenges a dancer is facing, and advise on whether students should seek further medical attention for aches and pains. They also provide onsite support at performances to help keep dancers healthy through

long tech and performance weeks. Consultation time blocks are scheduled once or twice per season and a sign-up is sent out to families to reserve a timeslot.

Summer Study

Metro Parks Dance Division students in Levels 1-6 are highly encouraged to continue their training through the summer via the CYB Summer intensive (Ages 12-18) and the Junior Ballet Intensive (*Appropriate for students enrolled in Ballet: Beg III, Level 1 (or equivalent) during the prior school year or as a first intensive for Level 2)*. These summer offerings include an expanded curriculum designed to challenge students in an intensive setting. In the past, these intensives have offered classes in ballet technique, pointe work (for students already on pointe), West African, Hip-Hop, tap, International folk dance, character, modern, contemporary, and stage acting for dancers. Current Metro Parks Dance Division Students enrolled in Levels 1 and up are not required to audition for the Summer Courses and may take it as a continuation of their school year.

Metro Parks Dance Division also offers **Winter Interim**, **Maymester** and **Summer Maintenance Classes** for Levels 1-6 to maintain a student's dance technique when the full academic year schedule is not in session. **Once dancers are en pointe, both Maymester and Summer classes are utilized as maintenance of the program's syllabus and attendance is strongly recommended. It is expected for students en pointe to dance over the summer to maintain consistency in their training.**

Attendance Policy | Classical Ballet Program

(For Levels 1-6)
This policy was developed to provide a framework to help students develop a healthy practice, stamina, strength, and rest they need to perform classical ballet at a high level in a healthy way. Students are expected to attend **all** required classes for the level in which they are registered, including their extended curriculum classes (Strength & Conditioning and Contemporary). Students and their families must report all absences to the dance staff via email prior to class time. Attendance in all classes is critical to consistent progress and advancement in the program. Poor attendance (whether excused or unexcused) may jeopardize a student's promotion or casting. ***For Levels 4-6 only:*** please note that to be cast in any Spring Concert contemporary works students must be actively participating in their Contemporary class for safety and fairness to other students.

Please note that while we do offer make-up classes for dancers in Levels 2 and up, there is no true, "make-up," for any class that is missed in a student's weekly schedule. Information is not always repeated from class to class, and taking class in a level that is not one's own will affect a student's progression. This policy was also created as a courtesy, particularly to students en pointe, to maintain consistency and meet their weekly participation requirements.

Warming Up
It is expected that **all students dancing en pointe** in the Classical Ballet Program will arrive with enough time to properly warm up. Warming up is an essential practice and helps the longevity of a student's training and has been proven to "boost" a dancer's technique and prevents injuries.

Students in Levels 4-6 may use the corner space in Studio A to warm up prior to class. Please refrain from talking while a class is in session. Students in all divisions may utilize the warm-up space in the dressing room. If a student is borrowing Strength & Conditioning equipment to warm up, please put it back in the appropriate location when finished.

Transitions Between Classes (CPAS)

Students are expected to be dressed and ready to go (i.e. with technique shoes on and hair done) for their first exercise when they *enter* the studio. Because our classes run back-to-back, the transitions between are included in a class's scheduled time. Please be prompt when entering the space and respectful to the teacher's and other students by not delaying. For students whose class has just finished in Studio A, please be quiet and efficient when packing up to leave as to not disrupt the next class.

Tardiness

It is essential that students come to class on time. Late arrival does not allow a student sufficient time to warm up, may cause injuries, and disrupts class concentration. Students who are more than 10 minutes late to class and miss the first exercise will be asked to observe class and will be provided with an observation form. Observing a class can be a useful tool to provide students with a different perspective on their technique.

Make-Up Class Policy and Protocol (Level 2 & Up)

Up to 3 **excused absences** will be tolerated per semester. Only excused absences are eligible for make-ups.

- An excused absence is one that is communicated prior to the missed class, and one of the following reasons: Medical/Illness/Sickness, Religious Holidays/Events; Family Obligations such as weddings, births, funerals, family emergencies; Academic Obligations such as school trips, standardized tests, and mandatory school events. Special Events such as prom and other school dances must be communicated with **three weeks'** advance notice for classes/rehearsals. All other absences are considered *unexcused* and are not eligible for make-ups. Vacations, although wonderful and important to families, are *not* considered excused absences and cannot be made up.
- We understand that many families will take a vacation during the annual fall break, however, we do still hold classes that week for the students who are in town. Although there are no make-ups available for any absences for Fall Break, students will not be penalized in their final attendance score at the end of the year. For students who are in town and attend, those classes will be included in their final attendance at the end of the year. Students in town for fall break are expected to attend class.

Protocol:

- Students should attend a class in an equal or lower level on a different day from their regular class and must inquire via email with the level's instructor with a minimum of 48 hours prior to ensure that there is availability in the class.

- A make-up class for all but Medical/Illness/Sickness reasons should take place within two weeks (before or after) the missed class. A make-up for a Medical/Illness/Sickness reason may be made up at any point in the semester once the student is sufficiently recovered.
- Students must notify their current instructor with the date of the class that will be or was missed, the reason, and the make-up date.
- Students are reminded that they are guests in make-up classes and might not receive individual corrections. Guests are expected to stay in the back or to the sides and allow enrolled students in that level to take precedence in the space.

Pointe Work

Pointe Evaluations:

Students are invited for a pointe evaluation when they have met the requirements in the school: a third day of technique class is added to a student's schedule (at least Level 2) and when the faculty deems the group is ready for the evaluations. The evaluation is conducted by a physical therapist specializing in ballet and dance training with input from the instructor(s) and supervisor. The dance staff will send more information to families about pointe evaluations at the appropriate time.

Students dancing en pointe must attend a minimum of three ballet classes a week to practice pointe safely. Students who do not attend class consistently may not be allowed to participate in pointe work. Once en pointe, it is expected that students dance consistently during the summer months to maintain the physicality required for pointe-work.

Injuries, Doctor's Notes, & Medical Leave

The following protocol is important for communication between the faculty, parent and student, to effectively prioritize the health and recovery of a student who becomes injured or has non-communicable illnesses. While injuries (or illnesses) are not expected, they can be a normal occurrence with any physically demanding activity. This protocol has not been created to penalize students but to make sure that the dancer is following an appropriate medically approved method to return to dance. The student's recovery and long-term health, both mentally and physically, is the priority of all staff at The Metro Parks Dance Division.

Students who are injured or have a non-communicable illness may choose to observe class. Class observations are not considered an absence. **Students who have a fever or symptoms of illness should stay home** to ensure they get the rest they need and to prevent exposing other students to something contagious.

All student injuries and accidents **in and out of ballet class** must be reported promptly to their instructor and the school office. School staff will notate the students' condition and any medical guidelines for activity.

If an injury occurs (either in or outside of class), please do the following:

1. Notify the instructor promptly *and before the student's next class* so that proper documentation and/or modification of any physical work can be made.

2. If necessary, students may be asked to stop class participation until they can be seen by a physician.
3. Have the student's doctor email their report (or bring in a copy) of their injury and recovery plan to the Dance Division Supervisor so that teachers can follow or make appropriate class and rehearsal accommodation.
4. Send the Dance Division Supervisor written permission from the doctor when they approve the student's return to classes.

Students with an injury requiring limited participation in class or a significant leave of absence must meet with their teachers and the Dance-Division Supervisor to set up a recovery plan before returning to classes.

Attendance in all classes is expected. However, medical leave may be initiated by the Dance Staff for the management of physical, mental, and/or emotional conditions that hinder a student's ability to participate in class. Medical leave may also be requested by a student or parent.

When the student is ready to return to class, their parents, physician, and/or counselor must provide written recommendations. These recommendations should explain the student's condition and any ongoing treatment as well as any limitations or accommodations that should be considered for their return. Students may return from Medical Leave only with the approval of Ballet Staff.

Centennial Youth Ballet

Centennial Youth Ballet is the performing arm of the Classical Ballet Program. CYB puts on performances such as The Mini-Nutcracker and the annual Spring Concert. Rehearsals for these performances are scheduled outside of the Classical Ballet Program class schedule. Dancers in Levels 1-6 and who commit to the full schedule of classes are eligible to participate.

Centennial Youth Ballet Program Opportunities

***National Honor Society for the Dance Arts* (NHSDA)**

Metro Parks Dance is one of only two NHSDA chapters in Nashville and we'd be delighted to have your dancer join us! The National Honor Society for Dance Arts' purpose at CPAS is to: Celebrate the artistic merit, leadership, and academic achievements of dance students; Build community within the organization; Create opportunities for growth and leadership among the student body. Students gain points toward honor society induction with every single class they take during their high school years in with the Metro Parks Dance Division, Summer Intensive, and by helping backstage! This year we hope to build a mentorship program to help students in Levels 1-6 grow in knowledge and community. Members of NHSDA are eligible to publish in the national newsletter, apply for special scholarships, and network with other driven young dancers throughout the country.

Contact Chapter Sponsor: daniella.parisot@nashville.gov for more information.

***National High School Dance Festival* (NHSDF)**

Centennial Youth Ballet dancers currently in Levels 3-6 and enrolled in 9th-12th grade are eligible to attend the National High School Dance Festival in March. Fundraising efforts by students and additional financial support from Friends of Metro Dance subsidize the cost for students to attend the festival which is held in different locations around the country each year. CYB Students participating in the festival audition have been the recipients of numerous scholarships to summer dance intensives, universities and colleges.

The festival's opportunities include:

- Opening ceremonies with a professional dance company performance
- Scholarship auditions for dance programs, colleges, and summer intensives in front of prestigious schools from across the country
- Gala concerts and informal concerts featuring students from high schools across the country and abroad
- More than 150 master classes led by guest artists, choreographers, and industry professionals
- Workshops about the college admissions process, careers in arts management, business management, marketing for dance and performing arts, as well as creating and managing a professional dance company, mental and physical health.
- Closing ceremonies where scholarships are awarded to students

Contact Katie Eliason-Kropf at kathryn.eliason@nashville.gov for more information.

Faculty and Staff

The Metro Parks Dance Division staff and faculty are dedicated to the success of each student. They are carefully selected for their expertise in the dance and education fields, as well as their ability to motivate and nurture students. Our faculty is acclaimed nationwide. They come from many professional dance backgrounds and have performed in many different professional companies. To read our faculty bios, click here. All Metro Parks Dance Division faculty members adhere to the school curriculum and syllabus, while bringing their unique background to the studio, giving students a broad dance background designed to meet the eclectic needs of the dance world today.

Dress Code

The Classical Ballet Program dress code is designed to encourage unity and discipline among our students.

For the purposes of this document: “Girls” & “Boys” refer to anyone who identifies as such. Non-binary dancers may choose ANY of the approved dress code options for their level.

Pre-Ballet and Beginning I

Girls:

- Black cap-sleeved or long-sleeved leotard (no camisole or halter leotards)
- Pink or skin tone footed tights
- No-tie pink or skin tone ballet slippers*
- Skirts and tutus not permitted
- Tights and shoes should be the same color.

Boys:

- White T-shirt
- Black tights
- Black ballet slippers

*We have transitioned to “no-tie” ballet slippers for younger ballet classes to cut down on distractions in class. If your child already has ballet slippers with a tie, please make sure they are double-knotted and tucked in when class begins. No satin “house slippers.”

Beginning II + Beginning III

Girls:

- Black cap-sleeved or long-sleeved leotard
- Pink or skin tone footed tights
- No-tie pink or skin tone ballet slippers*
- Skirts and tutus not permitted
- Tights & shoes should be the same color
- Hair must be secured away from the face in a bun with a hairnet and bobbi-pins. For dancers with shorter hair, clips or a low ponytail is allowed.

Boys:

- White fitted T-shirt
- Black tights
- Black ballet slippers

Levels 1-6

Order leotards *through friendsofmetrodance.org (click link to purchase) and pick up at CPAS. Tights, skirts, and shoes can be purchased through a dancewear store or website.*

Hair must be secured away from the face at all times as texture allows.

- For long hair: in a bun with a hairnet and bobbi-pins.
- For shorter hair: clips, headbands, or a low small ponytail is allowed.

***Girls*:**
Shoes and tights must MATCH in color tone. (Either all pink or all skin-toned)

- Leotard: Color appropriate for the Level (see color chart below).
- Tights: Pink or matching skin-tone convertible tights.
- Skirts: For Intermediate and Advanced levels ONLY. An optional high-low skirt matched to your leotard color may be worn for technique classes or black if a match is not available (See chart below)
- Technique Shoes: Pink or matching skin-tone ballet slippers. For Levels 3-6, ballet slippers should be sewn with elastic *and* ribbons. Tights, shoes, and ribbons should be the same color. Level 2 dancers will have a ribbon sewing class in the Fall to put on their shoes.
- If en pointe: pointe shoe color should align with tights. *Please Note:* If you are en pointe, please do not put your pointe shoes on unless instructed to do so by your teacher. **Do not put your pointe shoes on at home.**

Boys:

- White or level color appropriate (see chart below) fitted T-shirt
- Tights: Black. No short cut-off tights or shorts at any time
- Dance Briefs are required for Intermediate I and above.
- Black ballet slippers
- Socks: Thin white crew-length dance socks (no tube socks)
- Students must wear a shirt or leotard at all times.

Centennial Classical Ballet Division | Dress Code for Leotard and Skirts

Class Level	Leotard Color	Leotard Cut/Style	Skirt
Level 1	Dark Teal	Pinch front camisole, scoop front camisole, or tank	Dark Teal
Level 2	Burgundy	Pinch front camisole, scoop front camisole, tank, or mock turtleneck	Burgundy
Level 3	Royal Blue	Pinch front camisole, scoop front camisole, tank, or wide racerback	Royal Blue/Black
Level 4	N/A		
Level 5	Navy	Pinch front camisole, scoop front camisole, tank, double x back camisole	Navy
Level 6	Black	Pinch front camisole, scoop front camisole, tank, double x back camisole, or mock turtleneck	Black

***On Saturday and Sundays**, students may opt to wear any color leotard as long as they are clean and tidy and not distracting to the dancer.*

Orders will be placed with Weissman on Monday every week in August & January, and the first Monday of October and February. Contact kathryn.eliason@nashville.gov for questions regarding uniform.

Extended Curriculum Classes | Levels 2-6 Dress Code

Contemporary:

Girls**:** Black leotard (camisole, cap-sleeve, or long-sleeve); black footless or convertible tights or leggings; black socks (ideally 50/50 cotton poly blend); Optional long-sleeve layer for floor work

Boys**:** Solid black t-shirt; black leggings, shorts, or sweatpants; black socks (ideally 50/50 cotton poly blend)

Strength & Conditioning:

(All students) Students should wear their ballet class uniform, or tight-fitting clothing (i.e, leggings or yoga pants), with an optional long sleeve layer for floor work.

All Strength & Conditioning supplies will be provided in class however students may purchase a Conditioning Kit (includes a TheraBand, a small Pilates ball, and a pinky ball) to use at home here.

Additional Dress Code Guidelines

- No shirts, legwarmers, warm-ups etc., may be worn in class.
- Jewelry should be minimal: small earrings etc.,
- No watches are allowed during class unless medically necessary and we are given written permission by a parent/guardian.
- Shoes should be neatly sewn with matching-color thread. **No safety pins**.
- Dancewear is to be kept laundered and in good repair. Any holes should be mended with the same-color thread. Fabric softener (including dryer sheets) should not be used for any clothes worn in the CPAS studios because it takes the coating off of the marley floor.
- Please mark clothing, shoes and dance bags with the student's name and class level. Extended curriculum dress code requirements are mandatory as announced.
- Students that do not have proper hair or attire should speak with the staff member at the Front Desk so they may borrow the correct uniform.

Dress Code for Arriving & Leaving the School

No *dancers* *are to arrive or leave a Metro Parks building wearing only a leotard and tights. No technique shoes may be worn outside.* This policy reflects our concern for the safety of our students and maintaining our studio floors.

Dress Code Reminders for Holidays

At the discretion of the teacher.

Dressing Rooms

When your child arrives for class, please instruct them to change their clothes in the dressing room or bathroom. Each studio is prepared with cubbies for dancers to store their dance bags.