

Welcome to the Metro Parks dance program! In order to ensure a safe and vibrant dance environment for all students, parents and teachers, please read the following information carefully for some important information regarding your child's dance class.

The primary goal of the dance division is education. Our teachers want to offer your children the highest quality training possible in a supportive environment. Many 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 they have the requisite 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.

Performance is introduced in a developmentally appropriate way. For our early childhood 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 the little ones to dancing in front of an audience. When they are first eligible to perform in our program in *The Mini-Nutcracker* (students must be 9 years old and in Ballet: Beginning III or higher and must have completed the previous spring semester in ballet with Metro Dance), they will have had a positive, low-pressure experience before they actually go on the stage. Children who reach Advanced I or Advanced II are eligible to participate in the Centennial Youth Ballet, if they wish to commit the necessary time to class and rehearsal. Centennial Youth Ballet students perform in a spring concert in addition to *The Mini-Nutcracker*.

Because dance is a physical art form, "hands on" correction is often the most effective teaching method. It is one of the best ways to help children develop dance skills such as placement, turn out, balance, and proper stretching of feet, arms, and torso. However, not all children learn the same way and some are sensitive to touch. If you or your child would prefer only verbal corrections, please let the instructor or me know so that we can ensure a positive, comfortable dance experience for your child.

If your child has a problem that you would like to discuss with the teacher, please schedule an appointment. The limited time between classes does not make it possible for your child's instructor to address individual problems during the teaching hours.

Get involved in your child's dance education by joining Friends of Metro Dance, the dance division's non-profit support group. I encourage you to attend the Friends of Metro Dance fall membership meeting to learn about volunteer opportunities and to meet the parents of other dancers. Any level of membership is appreciated. Learn more by visiting FriendsofMetroDance.org and click on [GET INVOLVED](#).

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you have about the program. We are thrilled your child will be participating in our dance classes!

Sincerely,



Kathryn Wilkening

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STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Please review our expectations with your child before the first day of class

1. Dancers should **arrive at least 5 minutes before class begins****, dressed in the proper attire, and ready to work.
2. Dancers should neatly store their belongings in the cubbies provided in each studio.
3. Dancers should show respect to the teacher through listening when the teacher is giving instructions, asking questions only related to the task at hand and making relevant comments when addressed by the teacher.
4. Dancers are expected to respect the space of others.
5. Dancers are not allowed to chew gum or bring food into the studio. Only bottled water is allowed.
6. Dancers are not allowed to hang on the ballet bars.
7. Dancers should conduct themselves appropriately in the lobby and dressing room before and after class as well. Please no running, gymnastics or screaming. Please make sure to wear cover-ups when entering and exiting the building. If dancers arrive early and utilize the CPAS Makers' Lab, they are expected to clean up after themselves and put any unused supplies away 5 minutes before class.
8. Dancers should go to the bathroom before class.
9. Dancers should make sure to pick up all trash, take all of their belongings after class, and leave the studio as they found it.

**** This is the most important aspect of the class. Late arrivals interfere not only with the teacher's flow of information to the students but also with the learning process of the students who arrive on time.**

DISCIPLINE

Children who continually disrupt the class may be asked to sit to the side and observe quietly until they are ready to participate in class in a respectful manner. If a problem persists on a weekly basis, the child's parents will be called in to address the matter.

PARENT EXPECTATIONS

For Early Childhood Classes – For 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 his/her own and the teacher will work with you if your child has trouble making the initial adjustment. You will be welcomed into the studio on the last day of class during the fall and spring sessions for an Observation Day where the students will have the chance to show you what they have learned. 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.

For All Classes – All of our studios are in shared spaces. To respect those around us and ensure a friendly environment, please review our expectations.

1. Parents and family members are not allowed to watch classes inside the studio unless invited by the instructor or given permission by the director. We happily welcome you to watch classes during Observation Week, the last week of classes each term.
2. Please keep noise in the waiting area to a minimum.
3. Please keep children in the waiting area occupied with quiet activities. Children who use the CPAS Makers' Lab must clean up after themselves before they leave.
4. Please do not leave children unattended in the building.
5. Please do not block active hallways and doors in case an emergency exit is necessary. In the unlikely event of an emergency, please follow directions given by a Parks employee.
6. Please properly dispose of trash after eating snacks in the waiting area.
7. 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.
8. In an effort to keep a safe and secure building with limited staff, please note that the building is only open when classes and events are happening. The doors will be unlocked a half hour before classes begin and will be re-locked 15 minutes after the last class for the morning, afternoon, or evening block of classes has begun if a Parks employee is not present in the lobby.
9. In the case of inclement weather, the Dance Division generally adheres to Metro school closings unless we feel that a majority of students can travel in safely. We will post updates on the website, on our Facebook and Instagram, on the phone line and in e-mail auto-messages. If you are unsure whether classes are running, please check one of these places before traveling.

EXPECTATIONS FOR EVERYONE

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 parents will treat each other, faculty members, and Metro Parks employees with respect and will show support to each of our young dancers. I encourage anyone with questions or concerns about the program to arrange a time to speak with me so that we can ensure a productive learning environment for everyone.