



BALLET PROGRAM STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

ADMISSION & REGISTRATION

Students may register for the upcoming year online by visiting www.grballet.com, or in person at the School Office

New students will be placed according to age for the first week of class in order to be evaluated by the faculty and positioned in the appropriate level. Returning GRBS students will have received their fall placement in the previous spring evaluation.

TUITION

GRBS students enroll in two 18-week semesters. Tuition can be paid in full for the year (receiving an 8% discount), by the semester, or on a monthly payment plan (incurring an 8% charge per month). Monthly payment plans are automatically deducted the first Monday of each month from the credit card information provided. Scheduled holidays, breaks and weather-related school closings do not alter monthly tuition.

The Grand Rapids Ballet School maintains a policy of offering no refunds. All tuition is non-refundable whether or not the program in question has begun. Tuition will not be reduced or refunded due to common illness or family vacation. Students who wish to may schedule a make-up class through the School Office.

Scholarships/ Financial Aid

Each year GRBS awards over \$65,000 in financial aid to students who demonstrate financial need. The financial aid fund is made possible through contributions from the Brookby Foundation, Wege Foundation, Porter Foundation and James H. Schindler.

Families are invited to apply for financial aid each August for the upcoming School Year and each May for the Summer Programs. Scholarship/financial aid applications can be downloaded from our website, and should be turned in to the School Office with a copy of the family's previous year's tax return. All financial aid students are expected to keep their attendance in good standing, display exemplary behavior, and to respond to the need for volunteers whenever possible.

EVALUATIONS

Evaluations

Written evaluations for Ballet 1 through Ballet 7 and Boys 2 are conducted at the end of each semester. All instructors who teach each level participate in the evaluations.

Parents wishing to discuss their child's evaluation further may request a conference through the School Office.

Level Progression

Advancement from one class level to the next is done through the evaluation process. Progression is determined by the student's physical and mental preparedness for the challenges of the next level. Our curriculum is based on students spending an average of two years (or four semesters) in each level. Due to our class curriculum structure spanning the entire year, students should not expect to advance a level mid-year.

PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

End of the Year Program

Each year, students in Ballet 1 through 7 and Boys 1 & 2 showcase the skills and growth they have acquired over the past two semesters.

The Nutcracker

Each year, Grand Rapids Ballet performs *The Nutcracker* at DeVos Performance Hall for thousands of audience goers. *The Nutcracker* has many roles for children, and showcases the talent of our School alongside GRB's company dancers. Casting decisions are made based upon height, musicality, technique, and overall presence. Auditions for *The Nutcracker* are held each fall semester; students ages 8 – 19 are welcome to audition.

Junior Company

Students between the ages of 10 and 19 (as of the audition date) are invited to audition for the GRBS Junior Company. Auditions are held twice a year. Being part of Junior Company is a wonderful opportunity for young dancers to flourish and explore new performance opportunities. Junior Company dancers participate in a number of performances throughout the year.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Policies of the Grand Rapids Ballet School

The Meijer Royce Center for Dance houses both the Grand Rapids Ballet and Grand Rapids Ballet School. With respect to those who work and attend classes here, we ask that if you choose to wait in our lobby that it is done in a quiet and organized manner, or you will be asked to leave. Below are policies for GRBS Families.

- Food and drinks are restricted to the lobby area
- Only plain water is allowed in the studios and theatre
- Cell phones are not allowed in the studios, except if kept inside a bag/purse
- Students/parents/siblings are responsible for picking up after themselves; this includes garbage, bobby pins, Band-Aids, etc.
- All pianos are for GRB faculty use only
- Students are expected to wait for class quietly in the lobby
- Valuables not stored in a locker may be kept in the School Office during classes and/or rehearsals
- GRBS is not responsible for lost or stolen items
- Animals (other than working service dogs) are not permitted in the building
- While waiting in the lobby, any sibling of a GRBS student must be accompanied by a parent/guardian
- **No filming or photography of classes or rehearsals**
- No cameras or recording devices permitted in Dressing Rooms

CODE OF CONDUCT

GRBS aims to provide a positive, creative working and learning environment for all of its students and faculty. Students and parents are asked to behave in a respectful manner. GRBS reserves the right to suspend or dismiss any student whose behavior is found to be unsatisfactory.

The following are forbidden at Grand Rapids Ballet School:

- Physical intimidation or injury
- Theft

- Verbal abuse
- Sexual Harassment
- Unacceptable public displays of affection
- Possession of drugs and/or alcohol: *Any student found using/possessing/under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be expelled.*
- Smoking: The Meijer Royce Center for Dance and Peter Martin Wege Theatre are smoke free facilities. Smoking is prohibited on the entire GRB grounds. *State law prohibits anyone under the age of 18 from smoking. Disregarding this policy will result in suspension and/or expulsion from the School.*
- Firearms or weapons of any kind
- Self-destructive behavior
- Intentional destruction or misuse of GRBS (or another person's) property
- Filming or photographing in the Dressing Rooms or bathrooms
- Inappropriate use of the internet
- Improper use of cell phones
- Slanderous or defaming comments about other students or faculty

Please report immediately any of the above actions to the School Office. Legal action will be pursued when necessary.

DRESS CODE

Listed below are the guidelines regarding GRBS Dress Code:

- If a student is not in proper Dress Code attire, he/she may be asked to sit and observe class.
- No warmers in class.
- Jewelry should be minimal (no bracelets or watches in classes or rehearsals).
- Shoes should be neatly sewn (no safety pins or tied elastics).
- Ladies hair must be neatly secured in a bun, short hair needs to be fastened away from the face.
- Gentlemen should have neatly combed hair; long hair secured away from the face.

Ladies

All leotards must be solid colored tank, camisole, or short sleeve styles.

Ballet 1: Lavender leotard (no attached skirt), soft pink tights, pink ballet shoes

Ballet 2: Light blue leotard, soft pink tights, pink ballet shoes

Ballet 3: Royal blue leotard, soft pink tights, pink ballet shoes

Ballet 4: Burgundy leotard, soft pink, pink ballet shoes, and pointe shoes

Ballet 5: Navy blue leotard, soft pink tights, pink ballet shoes, and pointe shoes

Ballet 6: Dark purple leotard, soft pink tights, pink ballet shoes, and pointe shoes

Ballet 7: Black leotard, soft pink tights, pink ballet shoes, and pointe shoes

Gentlemen, Ballet 2 – Ballet 7

White fitted athletic shirt (no big logos or writing), black footed tights, and black ballet shoes (with the elastics neatly sewn).

Gentlemen, Boys 1 & Boys 2, Ballet 1

White fitted t-shirt, black leggings, black socks, and black ballet shoes.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes. If a student is injured, parents are instructed to inform the School Office and the student should observe class. Sick children need to be fever free or on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to class. Attendance is critical to a student's consistent improvement and advancement. Poor attendance negatively results in slower progress, advancement, and participation in productions. It is also essential that students arrive a few minutes prior to class. Arriving early allows the student to properly warm up and prepare themselves mentally and physically for class. If a student is more than 15 minutes late to class they will be asked to sit and observe.

Please notify the School Office with all cases of absence, so that we can properly notate the absence in our records. Call (616) 454-4771 or email school@grballet.com.

Injuries

Please report all injuries sustained in or outside of ballet class to the School Office. The School Office will document the incident and any medical guidelines given by the student's physician.

If an injury occurs, please do the following:

- Ask your physician to fax a report on the student's injury to the School Office. Or, bring a signed copy of the report to the School Office prior to the student's next class.
- Any student with an injury requiring limited participation in class or a significant leave of absence should contact the School to discuss the recovery plan.

Lockers

Lockers are the property of Grand Rapids Ballet School. Lockers are assigned to upper level students, beginning with Ballet 7 and moving to Ballet 4, given availability. It is the responsibility of each dancer to supply his/her own combination lock and provide the School Office with the combination.

Lost and Found

The Lost and Found is located in the School Office. The bin is emptied at the end of each month. Any items not claimed will be donated to the Armoire or Goodwill.

Communication

Families receive weekly updates from the School Office via email. GRBS also has a Facebook page that remains updated with information regarding upcoming events. **Please contact the School Office as soon as possible if you are not receiving the weekly email.**

Questions or Concerns

All questions and concerns should be directed to the School Administrator who will address your issue through the appropriate channels. Appointments with the School Director/Junior Company Director, and/or faculty members are to be made through the School Office by emailing school@grballet.com.

Parent Watch Week

Parents are invited to observe class during designated observation weeks. This is an opportunity to experience your child's ballet class. This observation is NOT open to the public (siblings, friends, etc.) but is for parents/guardians to observe their child's progress. Observation weeks and parent sign-up will be posted on the Parent Board in the School Lobby. Please note, there is no filming or photography during this parent watch class. The opportunity to take photographs will be after the class finishes.

Student Bulletin board

Every student is responsible for checking the bulletin board when he/she comes in each day. General announcements, weekly schedules, rehearsal schedules, and costume fittings are all posted there as well as any important notices. It is important for students to check the board daily to keep track of their own schedule and important information.

School Closing/Cancelled Classes

When GRBS will be closed and/or have classes cancelled due to the weather, it will be posted in three locations:

- The Grand Rapids Ballet School Facebook Page
- WZZM13
- Email

As a general rule, if Grand Rapids Public Schools are closed due to the weather, GRBS will not hold classes.

Student Drop Off/ Pick Up

Students should be dropped off and picked up in a timely manner. Preferably, students should not be dropped off more than a half hour before class, and be picked up within 15 minutes of their scheduled class time/rehearsal ending. If the student is not picked up within 15 minutes of the scheduled class time/rehearsal, their account is subject to a \$20.00 charge.

GRBS Student Ticket Discount

All students enrolled full time at GRBS have the opportunity to purchase one ticket per GRB Company show at the starting discounted price of \$20.00. This ticket may be purchased at the Ballet Box Office, using your name and GRBS level, up to 48 hours prior to the scheduled performance. Please note, this student discount ticket is not available when purchasing tickets online through Ticketmaster. Offer is available for the student only. Offer is subject to availability.

TRANSPORTATION & PARKING

Grand Rapids RAPID

The Grand Rapids RAPID has a stop on Grandville, adjacent to the Grand Rapids Ballet campus. This is a reliable form of transportation that makes regular stops in many of Grand Rapids' neighborhoods.

Meijer Royce Center for Dance/PMW Theatre Parking Lot

Families should only park only in legal parking spaces and drive slowly to avoid accidents. Vehicles need to enter from the Grandville entrance and exit onto Ellsworth to keep the flow of traffic moving. If you are dropping off /picking up a student, please do not park your vehicle in front of the building's main entrance.

Due to limited parking availability during performances at the Peter Martin Wege Theatre, the parking lot will be reserved for patrons beginning at 6:30pm (Thursday and Friday) and 1:00pm (Saturdays).

On busy evenings, please also consider the available parking in the Amtrak lot, located directly across the street from GRBS on Ellsworth Ave.

ADAPTIVE DANCE & COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Dancing with PD

This program is the result of collaboration with Priority Health Care and Spectrum Health Services. In the spring of 2010 our three organizations joined together to bring *Dancing with PD* to the West Michigan community. *Dancing with PD* is an hour-long class for individuals with Parkinson's disease that teaches introductory ballet movement. Students gain flexibility, balance, increased coordination and range of motion.

Explorer Dance

Explorer Dance is a program offered for students ages 7 and older who have Down syndrome. In this class students learn concepts of rhythm, coordination, balance, and spatial awareness through a traditional ballet class. This creative environment allows students the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of ballet movement while discovering new possibilities. All students participate in performances throughout the year.

Dance Immersion

Dance Immersion offers students the opportunity to learn ballet right at their school. Through an application process, several schools are chosen to participate in the program, and through the cooperation of the principals, teachers and coordinators, every child in the school receives ballet class throughout the school year. In addition to ballet class, the students attend a Grand Rapids Ballet performance. Students from the program are also invited to engage in educational opportunities such as Escape to the Ballet, Lecture Demonstrations, and Master Classes.

GETTING INVOLVED

Annual Fundraising

The Grand Rapids Ballet School strives to provide its students with the highest quality of dance education. The dedicated faculty and pianists in our state of the art theatre and studios give students every opportunity to grow and discover in a safe, enriching environment.

As a non-profit organization, tuition only covers a percentage of the cost of operating GRBS. Gifts from parents and alumni are a vital part of our Annual Fund. Many of our current parents give through our Friends Campaign or are members of En Pointe. To discuss your giving options and benefits, please call the GRB Development Office at 616.454.4771 ext. 11.

Armoire

The GRBS Armoire is a sale made up of gently used dance apparel that is donated by GRBS families. The money raised benefits our scholarship fund. Armoire sale dates will be posted in the monthly newsletters.

Parent Meetings

Meetings will be held at the beginning of each Fall Semester. Join our School Director and/or other members of GRBS faculty as they highlight our handbook and policies, and discuss the exciting opportunities each School Year brings for our students.

En Pointe

En Pointe is a dedicated group of volunteers that assists Grand Rapids Ballet with fundraising and audience development. Members plan special events, staff the boutique during Company performances, and provide many services to GRBS. Being a member of En Pointe is a great way to get involved and receive some wonderful benefits! Visit <http://www.grballet.com/support-us/volunteer/> for more information.