



Parent and Dancer Handbook

The Mission of Dance Express, a non-profit organization, is to educate, enrich, and enable the lives of children and teens in Livingston County and the surrounding areas, through the exposure to and instruction in the dance arts.

Dance Express welcomes all qualified dancers regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, or gender.

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Welcome to Dance Express!

What is Dance Express (DE)?

Dance Express is a non-profit 501(C)(3) Competitive Dance Troupe, which talented MSD students (ages 5-18) may audition for acceptance into. It is a separate entity from MSD in order to be a 501(C)(3) with the state of Michigan, allowing a wider range of participation by our students because of fundraising opportunities. Our goal is to instill in our students a passion for performing rather than merely the desire to win awards, and to develop within every student a genuine respect for dance as an art form. We consider participation in competitions an extension of our students' overall dance training and education, it is also an important part of how we influence them as people. By focusing on the experiences and growth achieved through competitive dance, students will gain more self-confidence as well as an appreciation for other dancers and dance schools. We are not out to beat anyone; instead, we hope to inspire and motivate our students and faculty by exposing them to the highest caliber of talent available.

The Audition:

Dance Express Auditions will be held August 24, 2025. Families will receive registration information and the Annual Calendar the first week of August. Students must be age 5 by January 1 of the competitive season. Dancers who will be older than 18 years of age as of January 1 of the competitive season are not permitted. Dancers with any outstanding balance for either Dance Express or Maria's School of Dance will not be permitted to audition.

How to Prepare for the Audition:

1. Submit the Registration Form, the signed Student/Parent Contract, and the \$350 Audition Deposit (see Fees, Tuition, Expenses, and Payments Policies for more information). All three must be submitted in order to gain access to the links for audition choreography videos and the audition sign-up link. BE SURE THE STUDIO HAS YOUR CURRENT EMAIL ADDRESS ON FILE. THE MAJORITY OF CORRESPONDENCES, INCLUDING AUDITION RESULTS, WILL BE EMAILED.
2. Sign up for an audition slot in the Sign Up Genius. This link will be emailed after receipt of the Registration Form, Student/Parent Contract, and Audition Deposit.
3. Download the choreography videos. Students must learn and practice the ballet, tap, and jazz choreography for the audition on their own via the videos before the audition date. If a student wishes to audition for hip hop, they must learn that as well. Each dance is approximately 1 minute long. No choreography will be taught at the audition.
4. Arrive early for your audition time. Come to the studio office to receive an audition number to wear during the audition. Warm up and stretch on your own in one of the open studios while waiting to be called into the audition room.
5. When entering the audition room bring a water bottle and your ballet, tap, and jazz shoes with you. If you are auditioning for hip hop, bring those shoes as well.
6. You will perform each of the dances in front of the Dance Express instructors. You may also perform any gymnastic tricks you know well and are willing to perform in competition choreography. Gymnastic tricks or tumbling is not a requirement of Dance Express.
7. Once the audition is complete, return your number to the desk. You are free to leave.

What to Expect After Auditions:

You will receive an email to inform you of your acceptance status. If you are accepted into Dance Express, a cast list of which choreography dances you will be participating in will be in this email.

Dance Express Requirements, Expectations, Policies, and Procedures

Choreography Placement:

Choreography placement decisions are final.

- **Group/Duet/Trio Choreography Placement:** Dance Express placement differs from MSD placement. MSD class placement is based on a student's level of knowledge and skill mastery in a particular genre, not their exact age, allowing students to develop their technical ability in a methodical step-by-step manner, which will build a student's confidence. DE instructors must take into consideration multiple factors when assembling groups for DE dances because teaching and refining choreographed dances is not like teaching techniques classes, there is not enough rehearsal time to teach skills which students do not already know. DE instructors look at the overall population of those who have auditioned and how they will best fit together. Instructors take into account a student's MSD class placement; how quickly a student learns, memorizes, and performs choreography as well as changes to choreography; who will dance well together; who will fit the choreographer's vision for the choreography; the size of the group and the level it will be placed in competitions; and a student's emotional development. This is the difficult and complex balance instructors must find so a group excels overall in competition. Some years a student may feel challenged in DE choreography groups and may feel less challenged other years. Both are excellent learning opportunities for students to grow as dancers, as leaders, and as team players.
- **Solo Placement:** Solo placement is determined by DE instructors based on auditions, previous years' work ethic and attendance, and by the number of available instructors. A dancer may compete in no more than three solos, all of which must be in different genres. Dancers may request the dance style, but the final decision about style is determined by the instructor. Graduating high school seniors, who have been members for at least three years, will be allowed to compete and perform as soloists, if they choose. Seniors may choose to forego the "Senior Solo" and compete as a duet/trio with other graduating seniors.

***Consideration for any placement in DE Choreography or Solo is also based on a student's previous year's class and rehearsal attendance, work ethic, Summer Workshop attendance, and proper conduct in the studio, outside of the studio, and during all Dance Express events.**

Communications:

Communication is the key to knowing what is going on at Dance Express. Attend all meetings. At least one responsible adult is to be in attendance at all meetings. It is imperative an updated email is always maintained with Dance Express. Dancer emails are welcome also. It is required that all emails are carefully read. Parent and dancer email addresses will be linked to the Dance Express Google Drive. Music for choreography is maintained in this folder as well as updated Rehearsal Schedules, the Annual Calendar, and various spreadsheets. It is easiest to have a Google email for this, but it is not necessary. Additionally, Dance Express maintains a group on BAND, an application available in the App Store, Google Play, etc. Videos for group choreography and group notes are placed in BAND by instructors for students to access for practice. Finally, conduct all communications with the instructors or the directors through the danceexpressmsd@gmail.com email address. Approaching instructors or the directors between or during classes, or calling/texting them on their personal time, should be reserved for urgent issues.

MSD Classes Registration Requirement:

All Dance Express dancers are required to be enrolled in ballet, tap, and jazz classes. If dancers have chosen to be considered for lyrical, contemporary, or hip hop choreography, and are placed in one of those genres for DE, then dancers must enroll in the respective genre class as well. All dancers must be registered for their MSD classes by September 1st.

- **Attendance Policy for MSD Classes:** Dancers are expected to attend all technique classes. If a dancer misses more than 20% of their technique classes, and has not completed the required number of make-up classes, they will not be eligible for a solo the following season and their current solo will be suspended from performing at competition.
 - To make-up a class, dancers may attend another class in the same genre at an appropriate level (ask your MSD instructor which class would be acceptable for a make-up). The instructor's approval is needed before a dancer may attend class.
 - If a student is in attendance but observing class, and is found to be distracting or distracted by playing on their phone, talking to others, etc., it WILL count as an absence. If a student is attentively observing class and is taking notes (if required by the instructor), the student will be counted as present.

Dance Express Sunday Rehearsals:

Rehearsals are a large commitment by dancers AND their families. Regularly scheduled rehearsals occur on Sundays. Rehearsals are required. (See attendance requirements below). Dancers need to arrive 15 minutes prior to the scheduled rehearsal time. Dancers are responsible for their warm-up as there is no group warm-up. It is very difficult for instructors, and is of poor etiquette, to be waiting for dancers to arrive in order to begin choreography in the limited amount of rehearsal time each dance has. Dance Express only has approximately 20 rehearsal days. Dances do not rehearse every week. Dancers must commit time every week to rehearse dances on their own at home or during open studio time.

- **How Rehearsal Schedules Work:** Monthly rehearsal schedules are sent via email usually 1 week prior to the new month. These are not the same every week. Many factors contribute to the constructions of a rehearsal schedule – instructor availability, student conflicts, the number of weeks in a month, workshops, and competition schedules. Every effort is made to work around these factors. When the schedules are emailed, they have gone through many revisions by DE staff in order to work around these factors. It is the parent's and dancer's responsibility to read the schedule immediately, identify any missed conflicts, and alert the DE staff. If missed conflicts are found, then a new schedule will be sent out. Additionally, the most recent version will be kept in the DE Google Drive, which all current members will have access to. Parents are NOT allowed in the classroom during rehearsals, unless the instructor has given them permission.
- **Rehearsal Attendance:** Attendance is required. No more than 2 absences are allowed between September and December. It is the student's and the parent's responsibility to be aware of all scheduled practices. If a student misses a posted rehearsal for any reason, the directors may schedule a private lesson with each instructor for each dance rehearsal they missed. Scheduled private lessons will occur PRIOR to the next rehearsal. Private lesson fees will be added to the dancer's account. The minimum private lesson will be 30 minutes. Additional rehearsals may be scheduled at the discretion of the instructor/choreographer with director approval. All dancers are required to participate.
- **Conflict Notification:** Conflict notifications need to be inserted into the Dancer Conflicts Spreadsheet in the DE Google Drive at least 3 weeks prior to the scheduling of rehearsals. Once the month is locked you may not submit a request. Be cautious about how many or how often you make these requests. You have committed your student and yourself to Sunday rehearsals. Scheduling around a dancer with many conflicts becomes difficult for DE faculty and the other team dancers.

AS OF JANUARY 1, ALL REHEARSALS ARE MANDATORY!

Any Sundays requested off in January, February, or March must be approved before auditions!

- **Rehearsal Dress Code:** A dress code is in place to build dancers' professionalism. Presenting oneself as a professional by wearing proper dancewear, shoes, and having hair tightly secured demonstrates a dancer's commitment and how serious a dancer wishes to be taken by teammates and instructors.
 - Dancers are required to wear ALL BLACK DANCEWEAR to rehearsals. This means tight fitting dance clothes. Baggy or poorly fitted clothing is distracting to the dancers and the instructors. This is dance, wear dance clothes.
 - Dancers participating in ballet choreography are required to wear a black leotard and pink tights.
 - All dancers are required to wear the proper style of shoes for each choreography group.
 - Dancers must be in the correct instructor chosen shoe (the shoes dancers will be wearing on stage) by October 1st, unless approved by the instructor. For the safety of the dancers, DANCING IN SOCKS IS NOT ALLOWED.
 - Hair must always be in a tightly secured ponytail, braid, or bun with all loose hair secured away from the dancer's face.
 - Dancers participating in ballet choreography are required to have their hair in a secured bun with all loose hair secured away from the dancer's face
- **Extra Practice:** Extra practice outside of rehearsal time is required. Dance is unique in that it is an individual and group artistic, athletic, and physical activity. As such, it requires many hours of extra practice on the dancer's own time. The MSD studio rooms are open and available many times during the week in which dancers may take advantage of and practice. There is no excuse for coming to rehearsal not knowing what was learned in the rehearsal before.

Dress Rehearsal:

Dress rehearsal is mandatory. See annual calendar for date. Dress rehearsal schedule will be sent via email closer to the date of rehearsal. This rehearsal usually occurs at the Alverson Center for the Performing Arts. All families are required to assist with either Load-in or Load-out. Information regarding this as well as a sign-up link will be sent via email closer to Dress Rehearsal. This is a long day and requires patience and understanding. This is the dancers' pre-performance, which allows them to become used to how the spacing and dance changes in a stage space. This is also a chance for final decisions to be made about costume refinement.

- **Preparation Tips:** Remember *"Preparation is the key to success!"*

2 Weeks Prior to Dress Rehearsal

- Assemble all costumes, tights, shoes, and accessories. Alert DE faculty of any missing or lost items. Purchase any missing items.
- Assemble all hair care items: color matched hair pins, bobby pins, hair nets, and ponytail holders; gel; hairspray; spray bottle with water; combs; and brushes.
- Assemble all makeup items: Primer, foundation, concealer, blush, contour, highlighter, bronzer, setting powder or spray, eye shadow, eyeliner, mascara, false eyelashes and glue, eyebrow liner, lip liner, lipstick, and makeup wipes. Color palette and brands will be distributed after January 1st.
- Practice each hairstyle necessary and applying makeup: There are tutorials for makeup application in the DE Google Drive to guide this process.

1 Week Prior to Dress Rehearsal:

- Steam all costumes (if you do not own a steamer, ask another parent if you can borrow theirs).
- Make sure shoes are clean and polished.
- Print the schedule and highlight the dancer's dances.

Day before Dress Rehearsal:

- Pack all items listed above plus a steamer, camera, snacks, and water. Have makeup and hair products easily accessible.

Day of Dress Rehearsal:

- Eat a healthy breakfast.
- Arrive early. Being late is unacceptable and holds up the rehearsal.
- Arrive with makeup and hair complete. Dancers do not have to arrive wearing their first costume.

Competition:

Members will participate in FOUR competitions. Location information will be listed on the Annual Calendar. Dancers may compete as a soloist, in a duet/trio, or in a group. Category and level placement is determined by the guidelines set forth by the hosting organization, and is final. Schedules for each competition will be emailed closer to the event. When the preliminary schedule is sent, be sure to read it over carefully. Usually a final schedule will be sent the week of the event, be sure to read this carefully as schedules may have changed from the preliminary schedule.

- **Competition Preparation:** See Dress Rehearsal Preparation (see above).
- **Competition Websites:** It is always ideal to familiarize yourself with each competition's website. Additional information, including Title Competitors and Photogenic Competitors as well as the additional associated fees, can be found on these websites.
- **Additional Optional Competitions:** The directors of Dance Express may allow soloists, duets/trios, or groups to attend additional competitions. This includes National Competition. Only groups with 51% or more attending and with the directors' discretion, will be allowed to compete. If an understudy is used to replace a dancer not attending a competition, then the replaced dancer needs to be prepared to lend out their costume. Details regarding such additional competitions and the associated fees will be distributed later in the competitive season. Dancers MAY NOT compete as an independent entry without the DE directors' approval. Additional rehearsals for these optional competitions will be limited. Additional practice will be the responsibility of the members and dancers. Be advised, DE instructors or directors may not be able to attend these competitions.
- **Competition Cancellation:** In the event a competition event is cancelled by the competition company, fees will be reimbursed to Dance Express. If there is an option to register for another competition at a later date, DE directors will notify members of this. Members will have a choice as to attend or not attend this competition. Only full groups will be registered. Additional rehearsals will be limited. Additional practice will be the responsibility of the members and dancers. Be advised, DE instructors or directors may not be able to attend this competition.
- **Competition Attendance:** Your attendance is mandatory for your competitive time slots. Your attendance is deeply appreciated by your teammates during their competitive time slots, but is not required. Everyone enjoys performing to a crowd of supporters more than empty seats. Plan to arrive at least 1.5 hours prior to your first scheduled dance. Competitions tend to run early. This also allows dancers time to mentally and physically prepare to compete.
- **Spirit Wear:** All dancers will receive one DE Spirit Wear shirt each competitive year. It is expected of dancers, who are on stage during awards ceremonies, to wear their DE shirt or other Spirit Wear clothing (jacket, sweatshirt, etc.) If dancers wish to order other spirit wear or bags, Sports & Apparel at 201 N. Grand Ave has items to choose from. Orders may also be placed through:

Sports & Apparel MSD online store:

<https://yhst-98511555289779.stores.yahoo.net/mascofdaap.html>

Dance Express Showcase:

Dancers will perform in the annual Dance Express Showcase. The date and time will be listed on the Annual Calendar. Attendance is required for this performance and is usually held at the Alverson Center for the Performing Arts.

Family Requirements for the Dance Express Spring Recital:

It takes a village to make a successful show happen. Supplies, props and flooring must be moved from MSD to the show venue and back again. The marley flooring material must be laid, washed, and taped into place for the show and untaped, washed, and rolled up. Only with the aid of all families can this be accomplished. As such, all families must participate in the Load-in or Load-out process. There will be a sign-up for families to choose load-in or load-out for their family. **If a family has not signed up or does not show up at their assigned time, the family will be charged \$100.**

Costumes, Rhinestones, Jewelry, Makeup, Tights, and Shoes:

- **Costumes:** Costume payments are the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian. Each competition dance requires a costume. Costumes will be chosen at the discretion of each instructor. The cost of a costume can run anywhere from \$30 to \$200. Costumes may also be rented from the studio from \$5.00 to \$30.00 each. All costumes rented or furnished by the studio will incur a \$10.00 cleaning fee. If any studio costume is not returned in acceptable condition, the dancer's account will be charged the additional cost for repair or replacement. Students with outstanding costume balances will not be allowed to compete. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY.
- **Rhinestones:** Most costumes will require rhinestones. A rhinestone list for each dance will be assembled and emailed with a link to Wholesale Rhinestone's website. It is the responsibility of each dancer to order and adhere to their costumes their own rhinestones with instructor guidance.

Wholesale Rhinestone:

<https://www.wholesalerhinestone.shop/>

- **Jewelry and Makeup:** An instructor may require jewelry for a particular dance. A link to the jewelry will be emailed out. Dancers are required to purchase all needed jewelry on their own. All dancers will purchase and wear the same makeup; details will be available after January 1st. Makeup is expected to be uniform.
- **Tights and Dance Shoes:** Instructors will choose the brand, color, and style of tights and shoes for each dance. Most tights can be purchased at the MSD office. A list of these will be shared via email and in a spreadsheet kept in the shared Dance Express Google Drive.

Attendance Policies:

Attendance Policies for MSD Classes, Rehearsals, Dress Rehearsal, Competition, Dance Express Spring Recital, and Workshops can be found under each of those headings.

Fees, Tuition, Expenses, Payments, and Ethical Policies

Audition Deposit:

Prior to auditions each student will make a deposit of \$350.00. This fee will be deducted from the Workshop Fee for each student. If a student auditions, and is not accepted into Dance Express, the deposit will be returned. If a student auditions, is accepted into Dance Express, then drops after audition results/cast lists are posted, the deposit will be forfeited by that student. There will be no refunds and no exceptions.

Workshop Fees and Competition Entry Fees:

All fees for workshops and competitions, as well as dates and venues are based on previous year's publications and are subject to change, if necessary. Fees are based on the assumption Dance Express will compete at four competitions and participate in three workshops. For current fees, see Dance Express's Fees and Tuition Payment Schedule.

Tuition and Expense Policy:

Part of the commitment to Dance Express is being up-to-date with all accounts related to participation (DE and MSD). In order to participate in Competitions, Dance Express Spring Recital, and Workshops, member's accounts must be current. Payments are as follows:

- Audition Deposit August: \$350 (as noted previously, must be paid to receive audition choreography)
- Costume Fees October 31st
- Account Balance Due November 30th (payments can be made at any time before this date, but must be paid in full by this date)

A \$10.00 late fee will be added to each account if funds are received after the 15th of the following month for all delinquent accounts. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.

Fundraising:

Fundraisers are optional. Dance Express will schedule various fundraisers during the year.

All fundraisers must be approved by the directors of Dance Express and according to internal policies. If a parent has an idea for a fundraiser and would like to facilitate and organize it, the fundraiser must be brought to the directors for approval. Families who anticipate auditioning for Dance Express may fundraise during the summer prior to auditions. Those monies will be deposited into the general fund and distributed appropriately upon acceptance into Dance Express. If a dancer is not accepted or withdraws after auditions, the money collected will be forfeited and will remain in the Dance Express general fund, as regulated by the state of Michigan.

Scholarships:

If a dancer or a group receives monetary scholarships based on overall scores from Competitions and Workshops, they will receive a credit on their account to be applied toward technique lessons. In the case of a group, the monies will be divided equally between each of the group participants. If a dancer does not continue dancing, scholarship monies will be forfeited. There will be no refunds given for any scholarship. All cash awards for choreography, costume, or any other title will be kept by Dance Express.

Ethical Policies:

Ethical policies are those pertaining to the professional ethics of a student and their family.

- **Attending Differing Studios:** Students may not attend multiple dance studios without the written consent of Maria Usher and the other studio director. Students may not compete for multiple studios. Families having more than one dancer in the household may not compete at various dance schools; this includes siblings or those under the care and/or guardianship of one household.

Educational Opportunities

Workshops:

Educational opportunities are opportunities for growth as a dancer, and should be seen as such. Dance Express dancers have at least 4 of these opportunities at different times of the year.

- **Attendance:** Dancers are required to attend all scheduled workshops. In-Studio, Convention Workshops, and Ballet Day/Festival workshops are mandatory. If a student does not attend, there will be no refunds given.
- **Dress Code for Summer, Fall, and In-studio Workshops:** Present yourself professionally. Dancers must dress in appropriate, tight fitting dancewear as well as the appropriate shoes for each genre. Bright colors are great for being seen by the workshop faculty, especially in convention style workshops. Hair must always be in a tightly secured ponytail, braid, or bun with all loose hair secured away from the dancer's face.
- **Dress Code for Winter Workshop:** Dancers must dress in appropriate black leotard, pink tights, and clean ballet slippers (no holes). Hair must be in a secured ballet bun with all loose hair secured away from the dancer's face.
- **Summer Workshop Series at MSD:** These classes are provided at no cost to current DE members. Prospective DE members, who register and pay for these classes, will have their MSD accounts credited for the cost of these classes if they are accepted into DE. Current DE members are REQUIRED to attend at least:
 - 1 of the Stretch and Strengthen Workshops
 - 1 of the Leaps & Jumps OR Turns & Balance Workshops
 - 1 of the Tricks Workshops
 - 1 Tap Technique Workshops
 - 1 Ballet Workshop
 - 1 Musical Theater Workshops
 - The week long intensive classes are highly encouraged

***Current DE members, all dancers' attendance will be carefully monitored for the workshop series and will be taken into consideration for DE choreography placement.** While dancers are only required to attend 6 of these classes, attending more will be favorable to a dancer's placement in the DE choreography groups. Dancing throughout the summer is necessary to maintain your skill level, but it is also necessary to the development and

progression of a strong dancer. Any attendance conflicts for the required classes must be submitted in writing to danceexpressmsd@gmail.com. The reason for the absence must be given and a suitable replacement class will be assigned by the directors to fulfill the requirement. If the reason for absence is medically related, a doctor's note must also be supplied in the email.

- **Fall Workshop:** This is a convention style workshop and usually takes place at a convention center. Location information will be listed on the Annual Calendar. Dancers will be placed in the appropriate master class levels by instructors for each convention. Placement is determined by the guidelines set forth by the hosting organization, and is final.
- **In-studio Workshops:** These workshops occur in the MSD studios. The date and time will be listed in the Annual Calendar. Dancers will be placed in the appropriate master class levels by instructors for each workshop. Often these workshops will be held in conjunction with Guest Choreographers (see this section for more information).
- **Winter Workshop:** This workshop is a ballet focused workshop. Location information will be listed on the Annual Calendar. Dancers will be placed in the appropriate master class levels by instructors for each convention. Placement is determined by the guidelines set forth by the hosting organization, and is final.

Guest Choreographers: Dance Express may contract additional Guest Instructors/Choreographers, to teach master classes and/or choreograph competition dances. All Dance Express members are required to attend these master classes. If a competition dance is contracted, Dance Express directors and instructors will assist the guest choreographer with auditions. Dancers' acceptance and placement into Guest Choreography is at the discretion of the Guest Choreographer. All decisions are final. All choreography, entry, and costume fees for Guest Choreographer's dances will be added to the account of each selected dancer. If a dancer is placed into Guest Choreography, it is the responsibility of the dancer to also register for that genre MSD class.

Behavioral Expectations for Dancers and Parents Inside and Outside the Studio:

IT IS SIMPLE

RESPECT, SUPPORT, ENCOURAGE, AND BE KIND!

RESPECT each other's differences

SUPPORT each other's accomplishments

ENCOURAGE each other to excel

BE KIND to each other at all times

Dancers and parents must always conduct themselves properly in the studio, outside of the studio, and during all Dance Express events. Any behavior deemed inappropriate by a dancer or parent may be cause for dismissal.

It is expected that Dance Express dancers and their parents **WILL NOT**

- Compare a dancer's progress, class, or choreography placement to other dancers in Dance Express. We encourage dancers to focus on their own accomplishments. Looking to others for inspiration is a good thing; however, a negative focus or comparison distracts from the energy which could be focused on becoming a stronger dancer.
- Speak negatively about instructors, directors, fellow dancers, other parents, or other schools/studios. Doing so could result in problems far beyond your original concerns. Parents, you are the leadership your children look up to. Dancers, you are the leadership other dancers look up to.
- Create conflict with the directors or judges of events in which Dance Express participates.
- Recruit dancers from other schools.
- Call or question the directors of any event. If you have a concern, contact the Dance Express directors. They will handle all communications with the directors of our outside events.

Children learn important lessons from their teachers and parents, acquiring important behavior patterns through their example. Dance Express' faculty takes that responsibility seriously. It's our philosophy to encourage our dancers to feel, think, and act respectfully to their peers, the adults in their lives, and themselves. If you have questions or concerns about your dancer's dance education, do not talk with other parents regarding your concerns. Make an appointment to speak directly to your dancer's instructors or the DE directors. If you do request a conference, please listen carefully to what your dancer's teacher(s) have to say. They spend a significant amount of time with your dancer and can offer expertise in the field of dance education.

*Dancers and Parents must **T.H.I.N.K**¹ before speaking. Ask yourself these simple questions:*

- Is what I am going to say True?
- Is what I am going to say Helpful?
- Is what I am going to say Inspiring?
- Is what I am going to say Needed?
- Is what I am going to say Kind?

You can control your actions. You are responsible for your own behavior and the outcomes of your behavior. You are the leaders. You are the role models. Others look up to you and will copy how you behave. What you do now sets the stage for the future members of Dance Express.²

Dealing with conflict between students: This is a tough situation that sometimes occurs with students. Parenting requires parents to guide their children through peer conflict and resolution. It is always best for affected students' parents to communicate directly with each other to bring about a resolution. Involving DE directors or instructors to moderate between parties should be a last resort. Involving DE faculty requires proof of the occurring offenses. If solid proof of any bullying (verbal abuse) or physical abuse amongst students is brought to the attention of DE faculty, this will be considered possible grounds for immediate dismissal from Dance Express.

¹ <https://fitkidshuntingtonbeach.weebly.com/bullying.html>

² http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-FEPN6tfAJuw/U4HGfUYHwCI/AAAAAAAAAB7g/k8agk2TRjnU/s1600/anti-bullying_contract.png

Grounds for Early Dismissal or Students Leaving the Program: Again bullying (verbal abuse) or physical abuse amongst students, if brought to the attention of DE faculty with solid proof of the offense, will be considered possible grounds for immediate dismissal from Dance Express. Any behavior deemed inappropriate by the DE directors may be cause for dismissal. If a dancer is dismissed or leaves the program willingly, an alternate may replace him or her. The student leaving Dance Express is required to cover all fees incurred by his/her replacement and to return all costumes to the MSD office until the end of the season. These costumes will be available to the dismissed/leaving student for pick up after the last Dance Express performance. If a student misses a mandatory rehearsal, competition, workshop, or performance they may be dismissed from the program. **PLEASE READ AND CONSIDER THE SCHEDULE THOROUGHLY—ENTRY AND WORKSHOP FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.**

2025-2026

DANCE EXPRESS CONTRACT

DUE 8/9/25

All dancers and parents must read the Parent and Dancer Handbook and sign this contract in order to be eligible to audition for Dance Express.

<u>Dancer Initials</u>	<u>Parent Initials</u>	
_____	_____	I have read, fully understand, and agree, that I am committing to Sunday Rehearsal Schedules, Dress Rehearsal Schedules, Workshops, Competitions, and Spring Recital Performance as well as all associated tuition and fees.
_____	_____	I have read, fully understand, and agree to the Choreography and Solo Placement Policies.
_____	_____	I have read, fully understand, and agree to the Communications Policy.
_____	_____	I have read, fully understand, and agree to the MSD Class Registration Requirement Policy.
_____	_____	I have read, fully understand, and agree to the Attendance Policies for MSD Classes, Sunday Rehearsal Schedules, Dress Rehearsal Schedules, Workshops, Competitions, and Spring Recital.
_____	_____	I have read, fully understand, and agree to the Dress Code Policies for Sunday Rehearsals and Workshops.
_____	_____	I have read, fully understand, and agree to the Costume, Rhinestone, Jewelry, Makeup, Tights, and Shoes Policies.
_____	_____	I have read, fully understand, and agree to the Fees, Tuition, Expenses, and Payments Policies and agree to keep my account up-to-date.
_____	_____	I have read, fully understand, and agree to the Behavioral Expectations for Dancers and Parents Inside and Outside the Studio.
_____	_____	I have read, fully understand, and agree to the Grounds for Early Dismissal Policy.

Dancer's Signature

Date

Parent's Signature

Date

Dance Express

"Dance Express welcomes all qualified dancers regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, or gender".

Dancer Audition Registration

Please fill out all information below and submit it by 8/9/25 to the MSD office with a \$350 deposit and signed contract.

Dancer's Name _____ Upcoming Grade _____ Birth Date _____ Age _____

Dancer's Cell _____ Dancer's Email _____

Street Address _____ City _____ Zip Code _____

Mother's Name _____ Mother's Cell _____ Mother's Email _____

Father's Name _____ Father's Cell _____ Father's Email _____

Preferred Costume Size for the Upcoming Season _____

Circle all dance styles you wish to be considered for to compete in this season (everyone must audition in ballet, tap, and jazz):

Ballet	Pointe	Tap	Jazz	Lyrical	Modern/Contemporary	Hip Hop
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

What are you auditioning for? Do not include Guest Choreography

Duets/Trios	Yes	No	Number of Duet/Trios	<u> </u>
Groups	Yes	No	Number of Groups	<u> </u>

What is the MAXIMUM number of dances you are allowed to participate in? (This number does not include solos or guest choreographer dances)

Guest Choreography will be auditioned for and in conjunction with our Fall In-studio Workshop. Information regarding this workshop and audition will be provided at a later date. If accepted, all choreography, entry, and costume fees will be the dancer's responsibility.

Instructors and guest choreographer(s) will place you in dances at their discretion. All decisions are final.

Solos:

Are you auditioning for a solo?	Yes	No
Do you wish to be placed in a solo because you won a scholarship at a convention or competition?	Yes	No
Do you wish to be placed in a solo because you are a senior?	Yes	No
What is the MAXIMUM number of solos you are allowed to participate in?		

Please provide the dance styles you wish to compete as a solo. This does not guarantee that you will be placed in your desired style(s).

Choice 1 _____ Choice 2 _____ Choice 3 _____

Is there any other information you would like to add (special requests or will you be participating in other sports, school activities, theater, etc.?)

Dancer's Signature _____

Parent's Signature _____