



BALLET NORTH TEXAS
NORTH TEXAS CONSERVATORY

**2023/24 BALLET NORTH TEXAS CONSERVATORY
STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK**

THE PROGRAMS

Ballet North Texas Conservatory is divided into two divisions designed to challenge the physical and technical abilities of each student. The conservatory's syllabus, developed by the Principal, and faculty, establishes classroom curriculum and defines how it is to be taught, thus ensuring consistency within the Conservatory. The syllabus is periodically reviewed by the Principal and faculty, and enhanced with the objective of offering the finest possible ballet training.

BNTC CHILDREN'S DIVISION

Children's Division classes introduce children to music and movement through a progression that stresses creativity and group interaction. Students enrolled in the Creative Movement all the way through Level V have the opportunity to participate in the conservatory's annual Spring Showcase, in May. No audition is required for enrollment, there is a one time showcase fee charged in November of the current season.

Children's Division make-up classes -

The last week of each semester is a make-up week for any quarterly classes missed.

Creative Movement-

Designed for children 2-4 years old. Classes encourage imagination, self-expression and group interaction while introducing students to basic movement and music concepts and proper classroom etiquette. Classes are offered on Monday and Wednesdays.

Ballet/Tap Combo-

Designed for children 3-4 years old. Students dance and move in a stimulating environment focused on creativity, group interaction and the joy of self-expression. Students must be ready to participate in class without parental supervision, as class observation is limited to designated watch days. Classes are offered Monday and Wednesdays 4:15pm - 5:00pm.

Pre-Ballet-

Designed for children 4-6 years old. Classes offer a prelude to formal ballet instruction. Students are introduced to ballet vocabulary and barre work while building flexibility of movement, dance exploration and classroom decorum. Classes are offered Mondays and Wednesdays 5:00pm - 6:00pm.

Level I - V

Designed for students ages 6-18 participation is through audition or placement only. Students are placed in one of five curriculum levels. Students learn progressive levels of ballet technique following the Conservatory's syllabus for each age-appropriate level. Yearly advancement is based on faculty evaluations of the individual student's technical ability, physical aptitude, strength, classroom effort and attendance. Women in Level III must meet the minimum standards required for beginning pointe work. Students enrolled in Level III classes are evaluated in the spring by the BNTC Faculty, in consultation with the Conservatory Principal, and BNT Artistic Director for suitability to the demands of the Pre-Professional Division.

PRE-PROFESSIONAL DIVISION and BNT II

Students invited to the Pre-Professional Division & BNT II concentrate on perfecting technique and developing artistry through an intensive, comprehensive program. Pre-Professional Division curriculum includes technique, pointe, variations, contemporary, modern, choreography, Pilates, Progressing Ballet Technique, Gyrotonics and seminars on such topics as nutrition, injury prevention and cross training. This program is designed to help students transition from student to professional dancer. Ballet North Texas Conservatory equips students with career planning by offering workshops and resources on resume writing and the audition/job search process, providing contacts for audition photos, and through individual counseling/conferences. Acceptance into the BNTC Pre-Professional Division ensures multiple opportunities throughout the year for students to dance roles in specific Ballet North Texas productions exempt from the audition process.

PROMOTIONS AND CONFERENCES

Student conferences are held each year (see attached season calendar) for students in Levels IV through V to discuss progress and goals (students in Level III and below do not receive a formal evaluation). Students will be evaluated by their current instructors in consultation with the BNT Artistic Director and Conservatory Principal. The evaluations address effort, attendance, technical development, strengths and weaknesses, behavior, potential; goal setting is included.

Physical attributes that are considered prerequisite for professional accomplishment in classical ballet such as feet, turnout, structure and proportions, are at the forefront of conferences in Levels IV through V. Conferences last approximately 15 minutes and involve the student, parent(s) or guardian, and two representatives of the conservatory (a current instructor and the Conservatory Principal). Students are expected to take notes in their class journal (see below) during the conference to use as a reference during the school year. It is important that parents discuss these reports and evaluations with their child to ensure that there is a shared understanding of the student's progress.

Advancement from one class level to the next is not automatic; therefore, students may receive an additional conference at the end of the school year to follow up on progress and class placement. Students will spend more than one year in one or more levels. Enrollment in Ballet North Texas Conservatory's Pre-Professional Division and BNT II (Levels IV through V) is by invitation only. BNTC Faculty, in consultation with the Conservatory Principal, evaluate each student for her or his suitability to the demands of classical ballet.

All students enrolled in the Children's Division receive written confirmation of class placement with registration materials in the Spring, if accepted into the program for the following school year.

The Conservatory Principal is available to answer any questions or concerns throughout the year. Appointments can be made through the Conservatory office.

PARENT OBSERVATION WEEK

Parents/guardians are invited to observe class during designated observation weeks. You can see the attached season schedule to see the scheduled observation week. The class observation schedule is subject to change. This is an opportunity to observe your student's progression and experience ballet class from start to finish: barre and center. We recommend staying to observe the entire class. This observation is NOT open to the public (friends, etc.), but is for parents/guardians to observe their student's progress.

PARENT OBSERVATION WEEK ETIQUETTE

We encourage attendance at parent observation week and believe this to be a special educational opportunity. Parents must follow the guidelines 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 reentering.

Please do not bring children under the age of 4, unless they can sit still for the entire class period without disruption. Color crayons and markers are not allowed in the studios.

No cell phones, cameras, camcorders, laptops or electronic equipment of any kind are allowed in the studios during classes. Absolutely no cell phone usage of any kind is permitted during the class you are observing.

No food or drink in the studios.

Please: no talking during class.

No taking notes.

Special permission may be given to observe at another time in cases of unforeseen circumstances. Such arrangements can be made by calling the Conservatory front desk.

Visitors are asked to restrict observation of classes to the dedicated observation week. Please remain in designated waiting areas at all other times.

OUTSIDE DANCE INSTRUCTION

Each class level follows a carefully planned curriculum each year, requiring students to attend a specific number of hours of class each week throughout the school year. We strongly advise against seeking outside training or private lessons, as this conflicts with the curriculum of Ballet North Texas Conservatory.

BALLET NORTH TEXAS COMPANY PRODUCTIONS

Students who are enrolled and attending all their required classes are given priority to participate in any BNT production. Students enrolled in Level I through Level V are able to audition for BNT's story ballets. Some Company productions have roles for children. Casting from the student body of the Conservatory for BNT productions is at the discretion of the Artistic Director and Ballet Masters (in consultation with the Conservatory Principal in some cases). Casting decisions are made with considerable thought and care, but are not an indication of professional potential. The Company in no way regards selection of students as a reward for students' efforts or merit or as a reward for families' time or financial investments. To do so would compromise the integrity of student's training and the artform itself. Many factors go into the selection of students - height, technical ability, movement quality, demeanor, behavior, spatial awareness, ability to learn choreography, among many others, and additionally, these conditions are weighted differently for every production and even differently for the same production from season to season depending on contextual circumstances. The Company encourages all the students of BNCT to focus on their ballet classwork and to remember that the annual conservatory Spring Showcase is the opportunity provided for all students to demonstrate their achievements each year.

Students who are part of the Conservatory's BNT II program are not required to audition to participate in Ballet North Texas productions that may involve student roles.

There are no make-up classes for ballet classes missed due to rehearsals or performances.

The Nutcracker has many children's roles. Participation in The Nutcracker is voluntary. Students in Level I through Level V are eligible to audition. Auditions are held in September and Conservatory families receive information prior to the event. BNT's Artistic Director and Ballet Masters (not the Conservatory) make Nutcracker casting decisions based on the criteria stated above. Students attending the audition should be fully committed to participation regardless of role decisions. Before deciding to audition for The Nutcracker, students and their families should carefully consider the extensive time commitment required for rehearsals and performances. Students must attend all rehearsals in order to participate in The Nutcracker. If a student's family anticipates difficulty with the rehearsal schedule, he/she should not audition. Being

cast in The Nutcracker (or any other Company production) is not an indication of professional potential nor is it a guarantee of advancement in the Conservatory.

REGISTRATION AND TUITION

To register, submit a completed registration form with the non-refundable registration fee. There is an annual registration fee that is to be paid at the time of enrollment and is good for the whole year, including summer classes. Registration can be done through our online portal, which can be done at the front desk or at home. Tuition accounts must be current to receive class placement notification. Students are responsible for the full year of tuition.

TUITION POLICIES

Students registered for Pre-Ballet, Level I through Level V and Pre-Professional Division enroll for 36 weeks (18 weeks in the Fall semester and 18 weeks in the Spring semester). Monthly installment payments are due by the first day of each month. There are three payment options available for tuition payments.

- Year in full payments are due by August 1, 2023 and are granted a 5% discount.
- Bi-Annual payments are due by August 1, 2023 and by January 1, 2024.
- Monthly tuition payments are due on the 1st of every month (August - May).

Students admitted after the school year/semester has begun are eligible to pay a prorated amount. Once classes have begun, tuition is not refundable. All accounts must be paid in full by May 2, 2024, or students will not participate in the end of year Spring Showcase. Students with outstanding accounts will not be registered in the following season. A \$30 fee is charged for returned checks. Late payments will be charged a \$50 late fee per month until the account balance is current. Accounts delinquent three months require enrollment in Auto-payments.

DROPPING ENROLLMENT

Students who do not participate in class or withdraw before the end of the semester/school year are obligated for the full semester/year's fees. Withdrawals will not be considered mid-month. A 30 days' notice must be received through our google form and request sent to info@balletnorthtexas.org for the student who withdraws. If this notice is not received before the first of the month, the following month's tuition will be charged. Students may be eligible for prorated tuition if they must withdraw from classes due to prolonged illness or severe injury (verified by physician's written orders). No full refunds will be given for an injury. Students who decide not to continue for the second half of the school year must formally withdraw (via our google form sent to info@balletnorthtexas.org) before December 18th in order to be eligible for prorated tuition. Students who follow this procedure may be relieved of responsibility for the second half of the year's tuition (January 8, 2024 - May 25, 2024). Again, this is upon approval of the Managing Director.

CONSERVATORY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CODE OF CONDUCT

It is the policy of Ballet North Texas/Ballet North Texas Conservatory to maintain a positive, healthy and productive learning and working environment for all students, staff and dancers. BNTC students are supported by a dedicated faculty, administration and consulting staff. Ballet North Texas Conservatory takes pride in offering students numerous performance opportunities, spacious facilities, one-on-one faculty/student conferences and a highly regarded conditioning program. As part of their training, BNTC students are expected to behave in a responsible and disciplined manner and to adhere to the Conservatory's rules and regulations, both inside the BNT/BNTC facility and outside in the greater community as representatives of BNT/BNTC. Students are expected to treat BNTC staff with respect and maintain a positive attitude. BNTC strives to ensure that all rules are clear and reasonable, and students are expected to observe the established Code of Conduct. BNTC reserves the right to suspend or dismiss any student whose conduct or attitude is found to be unsatisfactory. Please respect the expertise and decisions of the BNTC faculty and staff.

The following are absolutely forbidden at Ballet North Texas

- Firearms/Weapons: Any student possessing a firearm, explosive, knife, incendiary device, or any other weapon of any kind will be expelled.
- Physical intimidation or injury
- Any student possessing, buying/selling, using, or under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs (including marijuana), or any student providing alcohol or drugs (including prescription drugs) to another student will be expelled.
- Self-destructive behavior
- Sexual harassment
- Smoking: BNT/BNTC is non-smoking. Texas State law makes possession of tobacco by anyone under the age of 18 a misdemeanor punishable by a \$50 fine and four hours of community service. Students disregarding this policy face suspension and/or expulsion
- Theft
- Verbal abuse, bullying, intimidation, or harassment of any kind
- Improper use of the internet
- Willful destruction or misuse of BNT/BNTC or another person's property
- Photography and/or video recording in BNT/BNTC studios at any time without prior written permission from BNT/BNTC staff.

Any of the above actions will be reported immediately to the Conservatory Principal, who will, in consultation with the Artistic Director, decide appropriate disciplinary action. Penalties may include but are not limited to:

- Dismissal from the conservatory
- Retracting scholarship and/or stipend assistance
- Suspension from classes
- Referral to counseling
- Fines and Probation

ANNUAL FUNDRAISING

Ballet North Texas Conservatory provides the highest caliber dance education. However, as a non-profit organization, tuition only covers 70% of the cost of operating Ballet North Texas Conservatory. Gifts from BNTC Parents, both past and present, are vital to our Annual Fund. Many of our current parents give through the Annual Campaign. The money raised from this campaign is essential in helping the Conservatory bridge the very real gap between tuition and the actual cost of running BNTC. Visit <https://www.balletnorthtexas.org/give-now> to view membership benefits and/or make your gift or pledge easily and securely over the Internet. To discuss your giving options and benefits, or to make your gift today, please contact Nicolina Lawson at n.lawson@balletnorthtexas.org. There is no correlation between parents' personal gifts to the Conservatory and a child's progress in BNTC classes or in the casting of BNT productions.

[2023/24 SEASON SPONSORSHIP PACKAGE](#)

BNTC conservatory Calendar 2023-2024 Academic Year

<u>Fall Semester Begins</u>	<u>August 7, 2023</u>
Labor Day – CLOSED	September 4, 2023
BNT The Nutcracker Auditions	September 9, 2023
Trainee & Student Nutcracker Rehearsals Begin	September 30, 2023
BNT Fall Performance/Gala	November 10 - 11, 2023 (Moody Performance Hall)
Thanksgiving Break – CLOSED	November 20 - 25, 2023
BNTC Parent Observation Week	December 4 - 9, 2023
BNT Nutcracker Performances	December 15 - 17, 2023 (Moody Performance Hall)
Winter Break – CLOSED	December 17, 2023 - January 7, 2024
<u>Spring Semester Begins</u>	<u>January 8, 2024</u>
ADC IBC Competition	January 13 - 15, 2024 (TBD) (Houston)
YAGP	January 4 - 7, 2024
BNT Sleeping Beauty Performance	February 9-11, 2024 (Moody Performance Hall)
Spring Break - CLOSED	March 11-17, 2024
ICON	March 15 - 16, 2024 (TBD)
Dance Planet	March (TBD)
BNT II 2024/25 Auditions	March (TBD)
BNT Spring Performance	April 26 - 28, 2024 (Moody Performance Hall)
End of Year Student Evaluations	May 6 - 11, 2024
BNTC Student Showcase	May 25, 2024 (Moody Performance Hall)
<u>END OF SEMESTER</u>	<u>May 25, 2024</u>
Summer Course / Classes	June 10 – July 20, 2024 ?
4 th of July – CLOSED	July 4 th , 2024
BNT II Audition	July/August (TBD)