



2025-2026

STUDENT & COMMUNITY HANDBOOK:  
Policies, Guidelines, and Expectations

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# WELCOME.

We're so glad you're here.

Thank you for choosing the Ballet Conservatory of South Texas (BCSTX) to be part of your child's dance journey. Whether your dancer is stepping into ballet for the first time or training at an advanced level, you are now part of a school that values high-quality instruction, artistic expression, and a strong sense of community.

## ***Confidence on Stage Starts with a Sense of Belonging in the Studio***

At BCSTX, we believe ballet is more than movement—it's a powerful way for students to build confidence, discover their voice, and connect with others. We're proud to serve students from across San Antonio and are committed to creating a studio culture where all dancers feel respected, supported, and inspired to grow.

As you review this handbook, you'll find key information to help your family navigate the year ahead. From academy policies to performance season dates, our goal is to make expectations clear and help every dancer feel prepared and at home.

We encourage you to read through the materials carefully, keep them handy for reference, and reach out to our staff if anything is unclear. We're here to help—and we're looking forward to a meaningful and memorable season with you.

Welcome to the BCSTX community.

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*\*BCSTX reserves the right to change, modify, or update any policies within this document at its discretion and without prior notice. These changes will be effective immediately upon their publication unless otherwise specified.*

## GENERAL CONTACT INFORMATION

### **The Ballet Conservatory of South Texas**

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## FACULTY & STAFF CONTACTS:

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## COMMUNITY GUIDELINES

At the Ballet Conservatory of South Texas (BCSTX), we believe that every dancer deserves the chance to grow and thrive in an environment that values creativity, discipline, and belonging. Whether a student aspires to a professional career or simply finds joy in movement, our shared commitment to excellence and mutual respect is what shapes their experience.

BCSTX is more than a place to learn ballet—it's a community rooted in the belief that confidence on stage begins with a sense of belonging in the studio. We are committed to fostering a supportive, inclusive, and professional environment for all students and their families. This includes upholding values such as integrity, kindness, and accountability in all interactions, both in and outside the studio.

By enrolling at BCSTX, students and families agree to follow the expectations outlined in this handbook and to conduct themselves in ways that reflect the spirit and mission of our school. These expectations apply to all members of our community—including students, families, faculty, staff, volunteers, and guests—and are intended to promote safety, consistency, and respect.

While this handbook provides a framework for conduct, not every scenario can be anticipated. Behavior that disrupts the learning environment, compromises safety, or undermines our shared values may be addressed—even if not specifically listed—because maintaining a healthy studio culture is essential to every student's success.

These guidelines aren't just rules—they're part of our collective effort to create a place where every dancer feels supported, challenged, and inspired.

## DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Failure to adhere to the policies and guidelines outlined in this document will be reviewed per the protocols set forth by the Board of Directors (BOD) and the Executive Team (ET) at BCSTX. Any of the actions below may be taken to address a student or community member who engages in conduct that violates the guidelines outlined in this document.

1. **Disciplinary Warning:** A written statement expressing disapproval of conduct.
2. **Disciplinary Meeting:** A meeting between ET/BOD, parent(s)/guardian(s), and, if needed, the student(s) to discuss conduct. Goals and new approaches to address conduct will be established. Lack of behavioral progress or further violations may result in suspension or dismissal.
3. **Restitution:** Reimbursement to the studio for loss, damage, or unauthorized taking or use of property. Failure to reimburse the studio by the specified date will result in dismissal.
4. **Suspension:** Separation of the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), and family members from BCSTX for a specified time or until specific expectations are met. Immediate suspension may occur if the student exhibits harmful behavior towards themselves or others.

5. **Dismissal from Class:** Parents will be notified if their dancer exhibits disruptive behavior that the instructor cannot manage, and may be asked to take the dancer home immediately. Older dancers may be dismissed from class and asked to wait in the lobby.
6. **Dismissal from Studio:** Student's enrollment will be withdrawn without refund. A bar on readmission will be issued.

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

At BCSTX, we are committed to maintaining a positive and respectful environment where every individual can learn and grow. Bullying in any form is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

- **Definition of Bullying:** Bullying at BCSTX is defined as any behavior that:
  - Detrimentally targets another person.
  - Harms another individual.
  - Targets any actual or perceived characteristic.
  - Creates a hostile environment within the studio.
- **Forms of Bullying:**
  - Bullying can manifest in various forms, including but not limited to:
    - Direct Bullying: Physical actions such as hitting, pushing, or other forms of physical aggression.
    - Indirect Bullying: Actions that harm someone's social standing or relationships, such as spreading rumors or encouraging others to exclude someone.
    - Physical Bullying: Any form of physical harm or threat of physical harm.
    - Emotional Bullying: Actions that damage someone's self-esteem or emotional well-being.
    - Social Bullying: Behaviors that harm someone's social reputation or relationships, including exclusion or spreading false information.
    - Verbal Bullying: Hurtful comments, insults, teasing, or intimidation.
    - Written Bullying: Bullying through written means, including letters, notes, or any other written communication.
    - Electronic Bullying (Cyberbullying): Bullying through digital platforms, including social media, text messages, emails, or any other electronic communication.
- Any instance of bullying will be addressed promptly and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the studio.
- **Reporting and Protocols:**
  - Any instances of bullying should be reported to the appropriate authorities within the studio.
  - Reports will be taken seriously and investigated.

- Failure to comply with this policy will result in protocols being initiated by the Board of Directors and the Executive Team.

## ANTI-SLANDER POLICY

At BCSTX, we are dedicated to maintaining a respectful and positive environment for all members of our community. Slander in any form is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

- **Definition of Slander:** Slander is defined as the action or crime of making a false spoken statement that damages a person's reputation. This includes any false and harmful statements made verbally or in writing (text, social media, email, etc.) about another individual.
- **Policy Enforcement:**
  - Disrespect or slander directed towards any parent, staff member, instructor, or student will result in an immediate meeting with the ET/BOD. Depending on the severity of the incident, dismissal from the studio may occur.
  - Physical, mental, emotional, or cyberbullying by parents, staff, instructors, or students is also strictly prohibited and may result in dismissal from the studio.
  - If allegations are made and subsequently deemed untrue, the individual who made the false claims will face dismissal from the studio.
- **Protocols for Addressing Violations:**
  - Any instance of slander or disrespect should be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities within the studio.
  - Reports will be taken seriously and investigated.
  - Failure to adhere to this policy will result in the initiation of protocols set forth by the ET/BOD.

## OTHER PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against a member of the BCSTX community for any of the following acts:

**Harassment** - Conduct that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent to create an objectively hostile environment that interferes with or diminishes the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by BCSTX.

**Misconduct** - Physical abuse, threats, intimidation, retaliation, unwanted and/or repetitive contact, coercion, and/or conduct that threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person on any property controlled by BCSTX, or at any function, program, event, or assembly conducted, sponsored, supervised, or authorized by BCSTX.

**Retaliation** - Any adverse action (including, but not limited to, intimidation, threats, coercion, harassment, or discrimination) taken against someone because the individual has made a report or who has supported or provided information in connection with a report; or has participated or refused to participate in reporting misconduct.

**Stalking** - Engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for his, her, or their safety, or the safety of others, or suffer substantial emotional distress.

**Theft & Damage** - Taking unauthorized possession of or damaging any personal property of any BCSTX community member within the building controlled by BCSTX.

## DISMISSAL POLICY

BCSTX reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a student for any of the following reasons:

- Non-payment or excessive late payment of fees.
- Not observing the rules, policies, or guidelines of the studio.
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or students by a parent, child, or other family members.
- Sexual harassment of staff or students by a parent, child, or family member.
- Slander or defamation of staff or students by a parent, child, or family member.
- No refunds will be issued for dismissal by BCSTX.

## NO CELL PHONES AND OTHER HANDHELD ELECTRONIC DEVICES

To ensure a high-quality training environment and a positive atmosphere, the following cell phone policy is enforced at BCSTX:

- Student cell phone use is strictly prohibited in studios, restrooms, locker rooms, and the lobby unless explicitly permitted by an instructor.
- Cell phones must be stored in the dancer's bag and set to silent mode.
- If a dancer is observed using a cell phone, they will be instructed to put it away or store it in a common location.
- For recurring violations:
  - The instructor will confiscate the cell phone.
  - The student will retrieve their cell phone when they leave the studio for the day.
  - Failure to comply with this policy may result in additional disciplinary action.

## FEES & TUITION PAYMENTS

As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, **BCSTX does not issue refunds**. All fees, including but not limited to tuition payments, performance fees, summer intensive, summer kids camp, summer classes, seasonal workshops, master classes, adult class cards, and ticket purchases are non-refundable.

### Annual Registration Fee:

- A **\$50 per household** will be charged for all new and returning students. This fee is applied to the performance season. The fee is waived for summer programming and adult class cards.

### End of Year Academy Showcase Performance Fee:

- **\$130 per student paid annually** and is scheduled to be automatically withdrawn from your account on **January 7, 2025**.
- If your child will not participate in the End of Year Academy Showcase, written notification must be provided to our office staff no later than **January 5, 2025**.
- Refunds will not be issued for withdrawal from classes or withdrawal from the production after the performance fee deadline.

### Tuition Payments:

- **Monthly Installments:** Monthly installments are due on the 1st of each month and will be automatically drafted from your account. **A late fee of \$25 will be assessed to accounts that have not been paid by the 5th of the month.**
- Accounts must be current and have a \$0.00 balance before the student can participate in performances, receive a costume, or participate in private lessons.
- Instructors cannot accept tuition payments.

### Tuition Discounts:

- We offer a **5% Semester Discount** if you opt to pay for each semester in full at the start of the semester. The payment must be in a lump and the discount will be applied.
- We offer a **10% Family Discount** on tuition for each additional family member. The discount will be applied to the tuition of the lower-priced enrollment. Please note that this discount does not extend to performance fees.

- We also offer a 10% Military Discount to military families. This discount does not apply to summer classes, summer intensive, summer kids camp, master classes, workshops, performance fees, etc.

## WITHDRAWAL

- If a parent wishes to withdraw their dancer from classes prior to the end of the season, written notification must be provided before the anticipated withdrawal date. The current month's tuition will be charged. The withdrawal process will be completed after all outstanding tuition and fees have been paid in full.

## ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

For your child's safety:

- Escort students aged 7 years of age and under in and out of the building.
- Upon arrival, students should:
  - Quietly prepare for class.
  - Assemble quietly outside their assigned studio until invited by their instructor.
- Students in Ballet IV and above may:
  - Quietly enter an empty studio to warm up for class.
  - Arrange for prompt pick-up, as our staff cannot be responsible for watching your child after class.
- Do not drop off your dancer more than 30 minutes before their class starts. Our staff cannot be responsible for watching your child before class begins.
- Students being picked up after class should:
  - Wait quietly in the lobby until their parent(s) caregiver arrives.
- Students are not allowed to:
  - Wait outside.
  - Leave the premises until collected by their parent(s) or caregiver.
- Students with classes in Studio C must:
  - Wait in the main lobby until their instructor or a staff member escorts them to Studio C.
  - Note that parents are NOT allowed inside Studio C.

## IN-STUDIO VISITOR ETIQUETTE & GUIDELINES

- **Do not interrupt class under any circumstances.** Coordinate with our office staff if a message needs to be delivered to your student or their instructor during class. If your student must leave class early, ask one of our staff members for assistance.
- Only staff, faculty, and students in Ballet IV and above are allowed to enter empty dance studios. Parents, siblings, and friends are NOT allowed to enter empty studios for any reason.
- Adults and children waiting in the lobby should conduct themselves quietly and respectfully. **Loud games, running, or horseplay in the lobby or hallways will not be tolerated.**
- **Please avoid loud phone conversations in our lobby and hallways.** If you need to make or receive a call, step outside to limit distractions to our students and staff.

## GUIDELINES FOR PHYSICAL CONTACT

At BCSTX, we are committed to providing individualized, hands-on training in a safe and respectful environment. It is appropriate for a faculty member, visiting faculty, or hired professional to manually position a student to demonstrate a point of instruction or to correct their technique during class. This hands-on approach is intended to enhance the learning experience and support the development of proper technique.

### Guidelines for Physical Contact:

- **Respect and Professionalism:** All physical contact must be respectful, professional, and directly related to the instruction being provided.
- **Appropriate Boundaries:** Physical contact should be limited to areas of the body relevant to the instruction and should avoid any areas that could be considered inappropriate or invasive.
- **Minimizing One-on-One Contact:** Whenever possible, instruction that requires physical contact should be conducted in the presence of others, such as during group classes or with another staff member or student present. Private, one-on-one instruction that involves physical contact should be avoided unless absolutely necessary and must occur in a transparent and observable setting.

### Reporting Concerns:

- Students and parents are encouraged to report any concerns regarding physical contact to the appropriate authorities within BCSTX.

- Confidentiality and Sensitivity: Reports will be handled with confidentiality and sensitivity to ensure the safety and well-being of all students.

## CLASS PREPARATION, ETIQUETTE & CONDUCT

### Before Class:

- Arrive at least 15 minutes before class to dress appropriately, secure hair, store belongings neatly, and prepare for the session.
- Gather quietly outside your assigned dance studio while waiting for the instructor.
- Parents/Caregivers of beginner-level students: Ensure your dancer uses the bathroom before class to minimize disruptions and prevent accidents.
- Students must be properly hydrated before class. Intermediate and Upper Division students may bring spill-proof water containers into the dance studios.
- It is the responsibility of the students, not the instructors, to be present and ready; instructors will not seek out students in bathrooms, dressing rooms, etc.
- Notify the school office if your student will be absent or late.

### During Class:

- Late arrivals must wait for instructor's permission to enter the studio. If not properly stretched and warmed up, students may be asked to observe to prevent injury.
- Do not hang from or lean on ballet barres.
- No talking, yawning, or horseplay during class.
- Chewing gum and food are strictly prohibited in the dance studios.
- Street shoes are not permitted inside the dance studios.
- Maintain focus during class by giving eye contact and attention to the instructor.
- Listen and apply corrections appropriately.
- Do not stop in the middle of an exercise unless injured.
- Always do your best and maintain a positive attitude.
- Show respect to classmates, instructors, and staff.

- Gossiping, name-calling, and destruction or theft of property are not tolerated.
- Only water bottles are allowed inside the studios

#### **After Class:**

- Show appreciation by verbally thanking and applauding instructors at the end of class.
- Exit class quietly as other classes may be in session.

## **DRESSING ROOM ETIQUETTE**

To keep our facilities clean, safe, and organized:

- Dressing rooms are designated for changing clothes and using restroom facilities.
- Dressing rooms and restrooms are not to be used for socializing.
- Upper Division dancers are permitted to use the dressing rooms for breaks and warm-ups.
- Students are expected to clean up after themselves and neatly store their belongings in the available cubbies.
- Lockers will be assigned to senior company dancers for secure storage.

## **CLOTHING & HAIR ETIQUETTE (ALL AGES)**

- Dancers must wear clothing that covers their leotards when entering and exiting the premises (e.g., shorts, sweatpants, t-shirts, jackets).
- No bare feet allowed.
- Nail polish is not permitted and must be removed.
- Do not wear ballet shoes outside to prevent damage and contamination of studio floors.
- Adhere to the assigned uniform for your class level.
- Only small stud earrings are allowed; other jewelry must be removed.
- **Tights:** Must follow the uniform dress code and be free of runs and tears.

- **Shoes:** Soft ballet shoes should have securely sewn elastics, with adjustable elastics tied and tucked in. Pointe shoes must have securely sewn elastics, laces, and ribbons with loose ends tucked in.
- **Hair:**
  - Should be in a neat, classical ballet bun with plenty of hairpins.
  - A hairnet matching the dancer's hair color is recommended for class and required for performances.
  - Loose wisps of hair should be sprayed down.
  - Students 6 and under may wear bangs that do not cover their eyes.
  - Hair too short for a bun should be pulled back and secured with a headband or hair tie.

## CLASS CANCELLATIONS

- In the event of inclement weather, BCSTX will follow the Alamo Heights Independent School District's closures.
- When conditions beyond our control occur, we reserve the right to cancel classes while making our best effort to notify those students affected.
- Families may be notified via text message in the event of a school closure or emergency. Information pertaining to cancellations and studio closures will also be posted via social media.

## MAKING UP MISSED OR CANCELED CLASSES

- Tuition will not be pro-rated or discounted if a student is absent from class.
- Students are strongly encouraged to make up missed classes by attending another class offered in their level or a level below.
- Students or parents must contact the studio office staff to schedule a make-up class.

## PRIVATE LESSONS

- Private lessons are optional and offered at the discretion of the parent and student. To request private lessons, communication between the instructor and Artistic Director is required in order to establish proper objectives and duration.

## PARENT OBSERVATION WEEK

Parents will have an opportunity to observe their student's class from inside the studio twice each year in December and April. Please review the calendar for these dates.

## INDIVIDUAL YEAR-END CONFERENCES

Near the end of the academic year, students in Ballet I through Ballet VI have the opportunity to schedule a one-on-one conference with the Artistic Director. These meetings are designed to review the student's progress and identify areas for further improvement.

## LOST & FOUND

- BCSTX cannot be held responsible for lost, misplaced, or stolen items.
- Please label your student's belongings to ensure items left behind can be identified and promptly returned.
- Please ask for permission from a member of our staff before searching through the Lost & Found.
- Items in the Lost & Found that remain unclaimed will be donated to a charitable organization at the end of each month.

## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

We understand that birthdays are very special. Please do not bring any treats (i.e. cupcakes, cookies, party favors, etc.) into the studio. We are happy to recognize students by singing "Happy Birthday" to them after class.