



MELVA SMITH  
School of Dance  
LIFE LESSONS THROUGH THE ART OF DANCE

# Studio Handbook

24 - 25



# WELCOME TO OUR 39TH SEASON!

Dear Melva Smith Dance Families and Fans,  
Welcome to the 2024-2025 season at Melva Smith School of Dance—our 39th year in Coppell! We are excited to embark on another wonderful year filled with learning, growth, and the creation of lifelong friendships and memories.

As we step into our 39th season, we cherish the countless students who have become part of our MSSoD family. Whether you are joining us for the first time or returning, we are grateful to have you with us and eager to make new happy memories together!

Remember, you can always access your parent portal online to view account details, check schedules, update contact or billing information, and receive news updates. This packet includes instructions on how to log in. Inside, you'll also find important information about our communication methods, tuition and payment, uniform guidelines, studio policies, and everything else you need for a successful and joyful dance season!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our office at any time.

Call us at (972) 393.7086

To email your child's teacher, the office or billing see email listings below.

**"You dance love,  
and you dance joy,  
and you dance  
dreams."  
—Gene Kelly**



# Speaking with your child's teacher

We believe that open communication between dance teachers, students, and parents is essential for a successful dance experience!

We encourage our students to use their time at MSSoD to learn how to advocate for themselves. Our nurturing environment helps students learn how to communicate with teachers, whether it's asking about a dance step or addressing a classroom issue. Speaking up for oneself is a vital life skill, and we're here to support our students as they develop this important ability. However, we also welcome parents to reach out to our teachers when needed.

Please note that teachers have very limited time between classes—just enough to transition from one class to the next. If you have a question that requires a longer discussion, we kindly ask you to email your child's teacher or schedule a conference time.

**We encourage you to contact our office  
or your child's teacher with any questions that arise throughout the year.**



## EMAIL DIRECTORY:

**Office - [info@melvasmithdance.com](mailto:info@melvasmithdance.com)**

**Billing questions - [billing@melvasmithdance.com](mailto:billing@melvasmithdance.com)**

**Rachel Allison - [missrachel@melvasmithdance.com](mailto:missrachel@melvasmithdance.com)**

**Jessica Wooldridge - [missjessica@melvasmithdance.com](mailto:missjessica@melvasmithdance.com)**

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**Emily Baril - [missemlily@melvasmithdance.com](mailto:missemlily@melvasmithdance.com)**

**Regis Allison - [mrregis@melvasmitdance.com](mailto:mrregis@melvasmitdance.com)**

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**Jen Bunting - [missjen@melvasmithdance.com](mailto:missjen@melvasmithdance.com)**

**Miss Molly - [missmolly@melvasmithdance.com](mailto:missmolly@melvasmithdance.com)**

**Miss Addison - [mossaddison@melvasmithdance.com](mailto:mossaddison@melvasmithdance.com)**

**Miss Trina - [mistrina@melvasmithdance.com](mailto:mistrina@melvasmithdance.com)**



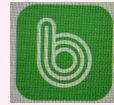
## HOW DO I KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE STUDIO?

All information information will be sent through email. Email helps us efficiently keep everyone up to date on news and events at MSSoD.

Be sure we have your correct email address on file through your parent portal and add us to your primary box. If you believe you are not receiving emails please check your spam as Gmail can block our studio management system emails. If you still aren't receiving them, let us know!

All info will also be available in your Parent Portal and newsletters are always posted on our Facebook.

### BAND APP



We use the BAND app each year to provide class notes, reminders, and videos, helping students catch up and practice at home.

To join BAND either create an account at [band.us](https://band.us) or by downloading the BAND app. You will then need an invitation code to join the specific BAND'S for each of your dancer's classes.

Invitation links for each class's BAND will be included in the September newsletter and are always available as a Google Sheet in your parent portal.

### MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

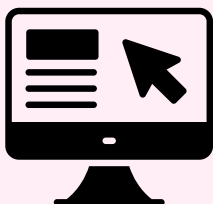
Our newsletters and mid-month updates are the main way we communicate what's happening at the studio. Each month, we send out a studio newsletter on the 1st and a mid-month update on the 15th.

These updates include important and upcoming studio news, program and recital details, special events, and billing reminders. Teachers may also email classes periodically to update parents on class progress and other relevant information.

Please make sure to read these communications each month, as they contain essential updates, billing information, upcoming events, and recital details.

You can always find the current newsletter and all past newsletters in your parent portal for easy reference. The latest newsletter is also available on our website homepage.





## PARENT PORTAL



You can always access the Parent Portal from our homepage!

MSSoD is happy to offer an online solution for parents and account holders to access all of their account information, current news, past newsletters and class registration online!

This service allows users to process payments for charges, enter and modify contact information, and register for select classes from the comfort of their home – 24 hours a day.

If you've logged in to your parent portal before, just visit our website, click the "Parent Portal" Students" button and log in with your email address and password.

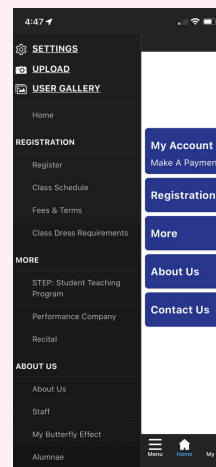
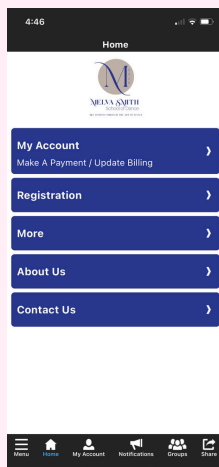
If you don't remember your password, you can have your password emailed to you by clicking "Forgot Password?"

For your security, our office is not able to look up your password, but Miss Rachel can issue a temporary password via email.

## MSSoD STUDIO APP!

The new app connects both our website and your Parent Portal in one place!

Visit your app store and search for Melva Smith School of Dance and download our app making it easy to stay informed, register for classes, camps and more!



# TUITION AND FEES POLICIES

Please be sure and visit our website's Enrollment and Fees page under the registration tab and review our complete policies in advance of classes beginning, including how to drop a class or from the studio entirely to avoid being charged for classes not being attended.

- **Why is tuition the same each month even with varying class numbers?** Great question! Our annual tuition is based on a total of 30 classes per season, even though there are typically 32-35 classes, allowing for potential weather-related cancellations. To simplify payments, we divide the total tuition into equal monthly installments. As a result, we do not prorate for months with vacations or breaks.
- **Missed Classes:** There are no discounts or refunds for missed classes. However, make-up classes are available through April for any absences. After April please note that make-up classes may be unavailable due to each class rehearsing their classes recital dance.
- **Family Discounts:** Family discounts apply only to immediate family members. Studio Management will determine eligibility for these discounts.
- **Overdue Balances:** Students with an overdue balance of more than 90 days will be unable to attend classes until the balance is paid in full or payment arrangements have been made.
- **Costume Fee refunds:** Costumes fees will not be refunded and instead the paid fee will be used for shipping and restocking. If a student did order a costume but withdraws from the studio, the costume may be picked up after the recital.
- **Payment Processing:** All lessons are paid in advance and are due on the 1st of each month. Payments are auto-processed via our parent portal around this date.

**If you have any questions or concerns about tuition or payments, please feel free to contact us.**

## TUITION AND FEES CONTINUED

- Late notices will be emailed to all past due accounts from [billing@melvasmithdance.com](mailto:billing@melvasmithdance.com).
- There will be a \$10 added charge for any account not paid in full by the 15th unless arrangements are made with Miss Rachel or the billing office.
- This charge will continue to be added each month it remains late.
- We accept Cash, Check, Money Order, Visa, MasterCard, or Discover.
- There will be a \$40.00 returned check charge for all checks returned from the bank.
- Refunds and credits: No refunds are issued on paid fees, tuition, costume, recital, company or any other fees paid for any reason including Covid-19.

## DROPPING CLASSES & STUDIO WITHDRAWAL

- If for any reason it becomes necessary to withdraw a student from a single or more classes or the the studio entirely **THIS DROP FORM** must be submitted at least two weeks before the first of the month. If submitted less than two weeks you will be charged for the following month.
- Please note within seven days of submitting the form below, you will be sent a confirmation email which is your official withdrawal confirmation. If you do NOT receive the withdrawal confirmation email, please contact the office ASAP, at 972.393.7086. as the form submission may not have been successful.
- If you are withdrawing more than one student you will need to fill out a separate form for each dancer.
- If the drop form is not received, fees will continue to be billed at the regular amount and you will be responsible for payment.
- Emailing the studio, telling a staff member or non-attendance is not considered withdrawing from class or studio and tuition will continue to be charged.



# CLASSWEAR, SHOES AND HAIR

**We ask our dancers to take preparing to come to class seriously. It shows everyone, including themselves, that they are ready to work hard and puts your dancer in the correct frame of mind.**

**You couldn't play soccer if you showed up and a leotard and tights and you can't dance if you aren't in our correct dress code!**

**We require dance students to wear a specific uniform for several important reasons:**

**Focus and Discipline:** Wearing a uniform helps create a sense of discipline and focus in class. It minimizes distractions, allowing students to concentrate on learning and improving their dance skills.

**Freedom of Movement:** Dance clothes are designed to provide flexibility and freedom of movement. This enables students to perform dance movements with ease and precision, enhancing their technique and performance.

**Safety:** A proper dance uniform ensures that students can move safely without the risk of tripping over loose clothing or accessories.

**Professionalism:** Wearing a uniform instills a sense of professionalism and pride in students, helping them develop a strong work ethic and respect for the art of dance.

**Teacher Feedback:** A uniform allows teachers to easily observe students' body alignment and posture, providing more effective feedback and guidance during class.

- **In all classes ladies must wear a leotard for modesty and to allow teachers to see their body line. This includes drill prep and hip hop.**
- **In ballet class ladies will not be allowed to wear shirts, shorts, leggings or any other attire over their leotard and tights.**
- **Dancer who are inappropriately dressed or unprepared may be told to sit out, watch and take notes.**
- **Below is the dress code for our studio, it is also available at [melvasmithdance.com](http://melvasmithdance.com) > Registration > Class Dress Requirements.**

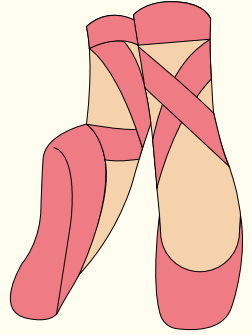
**We appreciate your support in maintaining our uniform policy to provide the best learning environment for all our students.**

**If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to us.**



## Girls Ballet, Pointe and Tap Attire

- Black leotard
- Pink tights
- Pink ballet or pointe shoes
- Black tap shoes.
- Young dancers should have the laces removed and elastic ties inserted.
- Hair up away from face and tight to their head if long enough, preferably in a neat bun.



## Boys Ballet Attire

- White t-shirt
- Black dance pants or shorts
- Black ballet shoes and tap shoes

## Jazz, Contemporary, Modern, Hip Hop, Drill Team, Musical Theater Attire

- **Girls:** Any color leotard and tights, leggings, jazz or yoga pants
- **Boys:** t-shirt, jazz pants or sweat pants
- **All:**
  - Knees must be covered to avoid injury when doing floor work
  - Longer hair up away from face preferably in a neat bun.
- Shoes as follows for boys and girls:
  - Jazz: black laceless jazz shoes
  - Contemporary tan jazz shoes or lyrical half soles
  - Drill Team: white tennis keds and black jazz shoes
  - Hip Hop: any sneakers worn only for dance classes.

## OTHER NOTES

- Ballet shoes should be worn snug, with ties tucked in at all times.
- Hair up away from face and tight to their head if long enough, preferably in a neat bun.
- A bun is preferred for girls in all classes.
- Younger dancer's tap shoes must be secured with elastic or tap shoe ties. NO ribbons.
- Apple watches, necklaces, bracelets, & large earrings may not be worn in class and students will be told to remove them and leave them in their dance bag for safety.



# ANNUAL RECITAL PRODUCTION!

**Our Annual year end recital is a very important part of your student's dance education; and a wonderful celebration to end our season!**

Every student participates in our recital which is held annually in the spring. Each student will be required to attend classes regularly, attend rehearsals associated with the recital, and pay for any costume(s) needed for their number as well as the recital fee that goes to rent our venue, pay the venue staff,

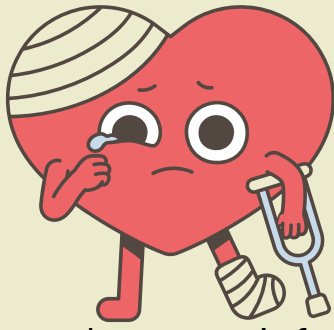
**Our Annual Recital Production is scheduled to be held **Saturday, May 31st** at the beautiful and historic Majestic Theater in downtown Dallas!**

We chose this venue because of it's state-of-the-art facilities, professional stage crew, seating capacity allowing you to invite as many guests as you wish!

## **Important Recital 2025 Dates**

*(see our fees and terms page for exact amounts)*

- **Recital date: Saturday, May 31st, 2024 @ Majestic Theater**
- **Costume Fee- per class taken- with November tuition.**
- **First half of recital fee with February tuition**
- **Second half of recital fee with April tuition**
- **In-Class Dress Rehearsal / Recital Picture Week: TBD**
- **Stage rehearsal for level 1 classes and older is held the same day as recital at the Majestic. Rehearsal begins at 11:00am followed by Performance which begin at 5:00pm.**
- **Kinder and Preschool classes have their dress rehearsal in class and not at the Majestic. They arrive at the Majestic by 4:00pm to check in to their dressing room.**



## Dancer not feeling well?

- If your dancer isn't feeling well due to any contagious illness: flu, colds, strep, covid etc, please do not send them to class.
- Any dancer with any fever, vomiting may not attend class.
- Make up classes can be arranged through April. In May each class is focused on rehearsing their class recital dance.
- Students unable to dance due to non-contagious illness or injury should still attend, sit, watch and take notes in their notebook.

## Cell phones and smart watches in class....



- Dancers who bring cell phones or wear smart watches into the classroom will be told to either leave them in their dance bags or hand them to the teacher before class begins.
- During shoe changes or breaks, dancers will be reminded to avoid checking their devices as it disrupts the flow of the class and can cause delays.
- Parents and guardians can be assured that their dancer is focused and engaged in class without the distraction of phones until class is over.

## STUDIO PARTIES / FOOD ALLERGIES

- Please let the office staff and your child's teacher know of any food allergies your child may have so it can be added as a note on your account.
- During Holiday Party Weeks, the studio will provide juice/water, pretzels, chips, and cookies and more.
- If your child has any food allergies, please come in and check the food labels or you may bring in your own snack if you like.
- If you have any questions regarding this matter, please email [missrachel@melvasmithdance.com](mailto:missrachel@melvasmithdance.com)
- If your dancer keeps / has epi-pen in their bag let us know.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

Throughout the year, you'll find many exciting events happening at MSSoD! From a not-so spooky #Halloweek and Trunk or Treat, to our November Thankful Tree. From Nutcracker week to #**ROCKYOURROYAL** Spirit week in the spring, we love mixing it up with fun activities and sometimes and chance to win a great gift card or prize!

**Keep a lookout in the newsletters  
for our special events!**

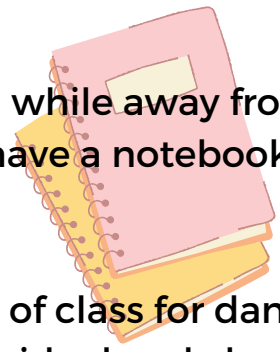
We're also proud to offer workshops throughout the season for our older dancers! We take our dancers to workshop weekends and have brought in Broadway stars and national touring cast members from shows such as CATS and Hamilton in which students learn real choreography from the show.

Workshops are a great supplement to dancers' weekly education in class, by learning additional choreography, trying different styles, and enhancing their movement vocabulary.



# DANCE NOTEBOOKS

To help all our dancers continue to grow in their dancing while away from the studio, we encourage all dancers in level 1 and older to have a notebook with them in class.



Many weeks teachers will allow a few minutes at the end of class for dances to sit and take notes on choreography, corrections both individual and class wide, thoughts about the class and other info that will help them retain what they learned in class. Dancers might also take time at home to write down what they've learned to help keep them on track with their at home practice. They will not be allowed to take notes on any electronic devices.

Preschool and kinder will be working to earn stickers in a folder we provide for them as they complete learning new steps!



## BUN BUCKS, DANCER DOLLARS & BIRTHDAY BUCKS

**Bun Bucks and Dancer Dollars are incentives and rewards handed out by your dancer's teachers and they are earned in a number of ways!**

- Working exceptionally hard in class
- Being extra prepared and on time
- Achieving a skill they've been working on and more!

**They may be given to the entire class or to individual dancers. They must be earned and are handed out at each teachers' discretion.**

Once enough are collected they may be turned in for prizes much like Chucky E. Cheese.

The store opens the first full week of each month October - May.

**Birthday Bucks** are given out at the start of their birth month or in May for summer birthdays. Dancer should and ask your teacher for one during their birthday month!

# 24/25 IMPORTANT DATES AT MSSOD

- **Tuesday, September 3:** Classes begin!
- **October 21-26:** #Halloweek - one of our favorite weeks!. Dancers may come in costume and bring a friend to class!
- **October 26:** Trunk or treat- produced by MSSoD Company for all our students to enjoy!
- **Thursday, October 31st:** No classes so our dancers can enjoy Halloween with their family & friends.
- **November 18-23:** Parent Observation Week- join us in class as our audience!
- **Nov. 25-30:** Thanksgiving Break - no classes.
- **Saturday, December 21:** Studio wide holiday party for all students at the studio from 2:00pm - 4:00pm
- **December 23 - January 6:** Winter break - no classes
- **Tuesday, January 7:** Classes resume
- **Saturday, February 22nd:** All Kindergarten and older ballet classes perform in our in studio show of our original ballet: "The Candy Store Suite, A Confectionary Cautionary tale!". More details to come!
- **March 17-23:** Spring Break - no classes
- **April 18 & 19:** Easter Break - no classes
- **Monday, May 26, Memorial Day:** No classes. All Monday classes will instead meet Friday, May 30th from 3:30pm - 5:00pm at the studio to rehearse for recital.

**May 31st Recital 2025- Add this very important date to your calendar!**



## **TOP FIVE TO DOs BEFORE THE FIRST CLASS**

- **Try on Last Year's Dance Gear:** Kids grow fast! Make sure all dance shoes and clothes from last year or this summer still fit.
- **Label Everything:** Items look alike and can easily get mixed up or left behind, so make sure everything is labeled with your child's name.
- **Pack a Labeled Dance Bag:** Have a dedicated bag for your dancer's gear, clearly labeled, to keep everything organized.
- **Stock Up on Bun Supplies:** Long hair must be up in all classes, so ensure you have plenty of hair ties, pins, and nets.
- **Be Punctual:** For dancers, arriving early is being on time, being on time is late, and being late is unacceptable! Also, late dancers may be told to sit and watch watch or stretch before joining class for their safety. Warm up is important!

# *Final word...*

**Consistent communication and support are key to your child's success and enjoyment in dance.**

**Encourage your child to stay committed, attend classes regularly, and practice at home.**

**Be proactive in reading newsletters, attending parent meetings, keeping up with class information, schedules, and any important updates.**

**Your involvement and encouragement will help create a positive experience and foster your child's growth and love for dance!**





***Thanks for reading  
through our policies  
and allowing your  
child to be a part of  
our M S S o D family!  
~ Miss Rachel***