



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

Studio Handbook 26-27



Welcome to our 41st Season!

Hello MSSoD Families!

Welcome to the 2026-2027 dance season at Melva Smith School of Dance, our 41st season in Coppell!

We are thrilled to begin another wonderful year filled with learning, growth, creativity, and the making of lifelong friendships and happy memories.

As we begin our 41st season, we are grateful for the generations of students who have been part of the MSSoD family. Whether this is your dancer's very first class, your family has been with us for many seasons, or you once danced with us and are now bringing your own child to class as part of our second generation, we are so happy to welcome you. We look forward to sharing another joyful dance season together!

Your [Parent Portal](#) is always available online to check account details, review class schedules, update contact or billing information, and stay informed about studio news.

Inside this handbook, you will find instructions for accessing the portal, along with important information about studio communication, tuition and payment policies, dress-code requirements, studio expectations, and everything your family needs for a smooth and successful dance year!

Miss Rachel

Owner / Director

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

Call us at (972) 393.7086 or email us at info@melvasmithdance.com

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

**“Anything is possible when
you have the right people
there to support you.”
- Misty Copeland**





2026/2027

Important dates at MSSoD

Saturday, May 22, 2027

Save the date for our Recital at the Majestic Theater!
We can't wait to see our dancers shine on stage.

- **Thursday, August 27 from 6:30 - 7:30pm: Studio Open House and Recital Reveal!** Come for the treats, tuition raffle, and an exciting sneak peek at our spring recital theme.
- **Tuesday, September 8: Classes begin!** We can't wait to welcome everyone back for a new dance season!
- **October 8 - 12: MSSoD Classes will be in session** while CISD has a student holiday
- **October 19 - 24: Halloweek & Bring a Friend Week!** Dancers can come to all classes in costume and bring a friend to join our silly and spooky fun Halloween-themed classes all week long!
- **November 14: Recital Lead and Supporting Character Auditions!** Dancers ages 10 and older from all classes are encouraged to audition! Those selected for a lead or supporting role will be required to attend additional classes and rehearsals during the spring semester to learn choreography and prepare for the recital. Please consider this added time commitment before auditioning.
- **November 16 - 21: Observation Week** - Parents are invited to sit in on classes and see what their dancers have been learning and how they've grown as dancers!
- **November 23 - 28: Thanksgiving Break** – No classes this week. Enjoy the holiday with your loved ones!
- **Saturday, December 12: Studio Holiday Party!** All dancers are invited from 2:00 to 4:00 PM after Saturday classes. We'll have treats, games, and a lively game of pass the present!
- **December 14 - January 3: Winter Break** - Enjoy the holiday! We intentionally begin our Christmas Break before CISD so our dance families and teachers have time to enjoy school performances, holiday events, and Christmas preparations. For our older dancers, it also provides extra time to prepare for midterms and finals during a busy time of year.
- **Monday, January 4th: Classes resume** - Happy New Year at MSSoD!
- **March 15 - 21: Spring Break** - Rest, relax and make happy memories!
- **March 29 - April 3: Recital Picture Week.** All classes come at their normal class time in costume, hair and makeup for class and individual recital photos done by Concept 7 photography

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.**



MSSoD Company at their Maverick's Performance!

EMAIL DIRECTORY:



- **Office** - info@melvasmithdance.com
- **Billing questions** - billing@melvasmithdance.com
- **Miss Rachel** (owner / director) - missrachel@melvasmithdance.com
- **Miss Jessica** (Performance Company Director) - missjessica@melvasmithdance.com
- **Miss Melva** (Founder) - missmelva@melvasmithdance.com
- **Miss Trina** (Studio Operations Director) - misstrina@melvasmithdance.com
- **Miss Emily** (STEP Director) - missemily@melvasmithdance.com
- **Miss Audrey** - missaudrey@melvasmithdance.com
- **Mr. Regis** - mrregis@melvasmithdance.com
- **Miss Jen** (Adult Classes Teacher) - missjen@melvasmithdance.com
- **Miss Makena** - missmakena@melvasmithdance.com
- **Miss Kyndall** - misskyndall@melvasmithdance.com
- **Miss Bella** - missbella@melvasmithdance.com



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



Email is our primary method of communication for studio news and events.

- Teachers may also periodically email their classes with updates on student progress and other relevant information.
- Please make sure your email address is correct in your Parent Portal and add MSSoD to your primary inbox or approved senders. If you are missing our emails, check your spam folder, as Gmail may filter messages sent through our Jackrabbit studio management system. If you still aren't receiving them, please let us know!
- Studio information is also available in your Parent Portal, and newsletters are posted on our website. As recital approaches, we will also provide a dedicated webpage containing all recital information.



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 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 emailed out after classes begin and after that will always be available in your Parent Portal.



Monthly Newsletter



Our first-of-the-month newsletter is the primary way we communicate studio news.

- It contains essential information about billing, upcoming events, important dates, and recital details.
- Please make it a priority to read the newsletter each month so you don't miss important information or deadlines.
- Current and past newsletters are always available in your Parent Portal, and the latest edition can also be found on our website homepage.



Website & Parent Portal



Our web site and parent portal are kept up to date with important info

- Important studio information is always available in your Parent Portal including current and past newsletters, important dates and policies.
- Current newsletters are posted on our website for easy reference.
- As recital approaches, we will also provide a dedicated webpage with all recital information conveniently located in one place.

Stay Connected with the MSSoD App!

The Melva Smith School of Dance app is an easy and convenient way to stay connected to the studio, all right from your phone!

Download it from your device's app store!



With a secure login, families can:

- Access the Parent Portal
- Manage their studio account
- Register for classes
- Add new students
- Read studio messages and announcements
- Access the information and helpful links such as recital info, dress requirements and more info available on our website

New This Season: App Messages!

This season, we are beginning to use a new app messaging feature that allows MSSoD to send important announcements to the entire studio or directly to families in a specific class.

As we begin using this feature, families may receive notifications about monthly newsletters, class reminders, schedule changes, studio closings, registration openings, special announcements and upcoming events.

Please be sure to allow notifications when downloading the app so you don't miss important information!

We will continue using our regular communication methods as we introduce this new feature.

Show Us Your App!

Once you have downloaded the MSSoD app, stop by the front desk and show us the app on your phone.

We'll give you a piece of chocolate as a sweet thank-you for staying connected!

PARENT PORTAL

[Click here to go to your 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.



Pre-Company at Synergy Competition!

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 between 32-34 classes in the season depending on the day of class, allowing for potential weather-related cancellations. To simplify payments, we divide the total tuition for 30 classes into nine 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 particular class 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.
- 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 class, several 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 in your dance uniform and you can't dance if you aren't in correct dance 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.

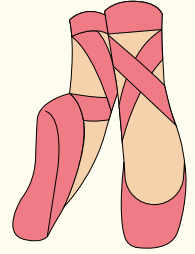
- **In all classes, ladies must wear a leotard for modesty and to allow teachers to see their body line. This includes drill prep and hip hop. It can be worn under a t-shirt in drill and hip hop, but must be worn.**
- **In ballet class ladies will not be allowed to wear shirts, shorts, leggings or any other attire over their leotard and tights. Ballet skirts are allowed.**
- **Dancers who are inappropriately dressed or unprepared may be told to sit out, watch and take notes.**
- **The next page is the dress code for our studio. It is also available at 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 and Tap 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.
- **Girl's Shoes:**
 - Jazz: tan laceless jazz shoes
 - Contemporary tan jazz shoes or lyrical half soles
 - Drill Team: white tennis keds and tan jazz shoes
 - Hip Hop: any sneakers worn only for dance classes.
- **Boy's Shoes:**
 - Jazz: black laceless jazz shoes
 - Contemporary tan jazz shoes or lyrical half soles
 - 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.

A graphic of a spotlight shining from the top left corner onto the text below. The beam of light is yellow and tapers as it goes down. The text is in black and red.

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,

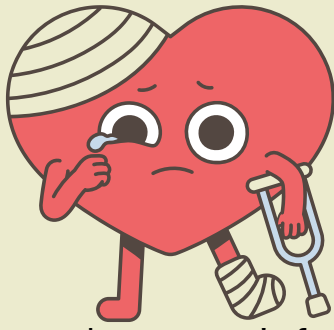
Our Annual Recital Production is scheduled to be held **Saturday, May 22nd at the beautiful and historic Majestic Theater in downtown Dallas!**

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

Important Recital 2027 Dates

(see our fees and terms page for exact amounts)

- **Recital date: Saturday, May 22nd**
- **Costume Fee - per class taken- with November tuition.**
- **First half of recital fee with February tuition**
- **Second half of recital fee with April tuition**
- **March 29 - April 3: Recital Picture Week. All classes come at their normal class time in costume, hair and makeup for class and individual recital photos done by Concept 7 photography**
- **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.**



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. They can still learn a lot by observing!

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, pizza, pretzels, chips, and cookies and more.
- If your child has any food allergies, please come in and check the food labels or you may always bring in your own meal / snack if you like.
- If you have any questions regarding this matter, please email 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 #MSSoD_Halloweek which coincides with Bring a Friend week and Trunk or Treat! 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!

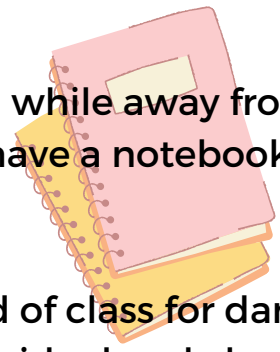
**Keep a lookout in the newsletters and on our
[new special event webpage](#)
for our details!**

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.



Some weeks teachers may 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 should 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.



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!

There's More to Explore!

Specialty Programs at MSSoD



Performance Company

is an audition-based program for dedicated dancers in grades 3 - 8 who are ready for more intensive training, performance opportunities, and competition. Company members grow in technique, confidence, teamwork, and responsibility while attending workshops, performing in our annual Company Showcase, competing during the spring, and enjoying other performances and special social activities together!



Pre-Company

is a sign-up-based program for dancers in grades 1-3 who are ready for additional performance opportunities. Members attend a weekly choreography class and participate in one spring competition. They also join our Performance Company for a dance workshop, the annual Company Showcase, and special social activities, including our much-loved lock-in!



STEP: Student Teacher Education Program

STEP allows advanced dancers to share their love of dance with younger students while learning the art of teaching. Under the guidance of our professional faculty, participants assist with classes and studio activities while developing skills in mentorship, lesson planning, time management, communication, leadership, and classroom management. Dancers also earn volunteer hours and gain valuable experience for college applications and résumés. Whether or not they pursue a career in dance, STEP helps prepare participants with a strong work ethic and skills that will serve them throughout life.



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:** Everyone's 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 Hair 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 on time, being on time is late, and being late is unacceptable! Late dancers may be told to sit and watch the remainder of class or stretch on their own before joining class for their safety causing them to miss more class. Warming up is important!

Miss Rachel's final word...

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

Encourage your dancer to stay committed, attend class regularly, and practice at home. When your dancer enrolls, they are making a commitment to a full season. Allowing them to quit when class becomes difficult or their enthusiasm temporarily fades can unintentionally teach them to walk away when something is challenging. Encouraging them to finish the season teaches perseverance, responsibility, and the confidence that comes from discovering, "I can do hard things."

If they say they are bored, remind them that repetition is an important part of learning and that they can always challenge themselves by focusing on the "micro-details" such as technique, musicality, precision, performance quality, and personal improvement.

If they say class is too hard, encourage them to keep trying and remind them that working through challenges builds grit, perseverance, and confidence. Dance is not about perfection, it is about progress and taking pride in doing something difficult!

Of course, dancers are always welcome to speak with their teacher about any concerns. Even with our youngest students, we encourage you to let your dancer address the issue with us themselves so they can learn to advocate for themselves. It is our privilege to help our dancers learn so much more than dance!

The structure of dance class also teaches valuable life skills, including focus, patience, attention to detail, time management, responsibility for their paraphernalia, to their classmates and their choreography, respect for others, and awareness of the space around them.

Parents, please be proactive in reading the first of the month newsletters, keeping up with class information, schedules, and important updates.

Your involvement, communication, and encouragement help create a positive experience while fostering your dancer's growth and love of dance!

See you in the studio!
Miss Rachel



Thanks for reading
through our
policies and
allowing your child
to be a part of our
MSSoD family!
~ Miss Rachel