



Professional Division

Training for a professional career

The Texas Ballet Theater School Professional Division is a one to two-year pre-professional program comprised of advanced students who have been selected through an audition. PD dancers range in age from 16 to 21 years old. Participation is by invitation only from TBT Artistic Director Ben Stevenson, Professional Division Director Kathryn Warakomsky-Li, and the Artistic Staff.

Dancers invited to the Professional Division concentrate on advancing technique and artistry through intensive full-day instruction. This comprehensive program provides the experience necessary to transition student to professional dancer, all while offering personal attention in an intimate and nurturing environment.

PD students participate in daily Ballet Technique class as well as Pointe and Variations classes taught by TBT School faculty members and Artistic Staff members. PD dancers have opportunities to take class with renowned guests artists and also are invited to take Company class throughout the year.

They rehearse and perform classical and contemporary works from the repertory of TBT as well as works staged specifically for them. The PD dancers have opportunities to perform throughout the DFW area at venues such as Bass Performance Hall in Fort Worth and the Winspear Opera House in Dallas. PD dancers may be asked to attend TBT Company rehearsals and may be invited to understudy and/or perform in company productions. Our dancers have performed in ballets such as *Dracula*, *Peter and the Wolf*, *Etudes*, *Sleeping Beauty* and Ben Stevenson's *The Nutcracker*. PD dancers also hone their craft by participating in outreach programs at schools and community centers, appearances at special events, local festival performances and TBTS shows.

The PD typically works Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM until late afternoon, finishing the day by 5:45 PM, though the dancers are usually finished by 4:00. The curriculum is rounded out by a Jazz and Modern class on Saturday afternoons. PD dancers may also choose to attend Ballet and Pointe classes with the Advanced Level of the School in the evenings for additional instruction.

Prospective students and their parents must consider living arrangements (TBT does not offer year-round housing) as well as academics. PD program candidates who have not completed high school must have a plan to continue academic studies while attending TBT School. The TBT Administrative Staff can provide recommendations for apartment complexes and potential roommates.

To Apply for the Professional Division:

Prospective students should begin by attending a live audition or submitting a DVD audition.

- **To audition in person:** Dancers may either attend a Summer Intensive audition as part of the National Audition Tour or may email professionaldivision@texasballet.org or call 817-763-0207 ext 108 to schedule a live audition at TBTS in Fort Worth.
 - Dancers should bring:
 1. A completed audition form (found on the website)
 2. \$35 Audition Fee (cash or check)
 3. A headshot and an arabesque photo

4. A dance resume

- **Dancers wishing to submit a video audition** may submit a video meeting the criteria below via DVD or YouTube. Dancers must submit:
 1. A video audition form (found on the website)
 2. \$40 video audition fee
 3. A headshot and an arabesque photo
 4. A dance resume
 5. DVD or YouTube Video
 - Center Work: Adagio, pirouettes (en de hors and en de dans, within a waltz combination), 2 petit allegro combinations (with glissade, assemble, brisé and jeté), grand allegro (with tour jeté and grand jeté)
 - Gentlemen: Tour en l'air, sissonne, cabriole
 - Pointe work for ladies: échappé, passé, pirouettes, relevé in arabesque, piqué turns, bourrées across the floor.
 - Classical Ballet Variation
 - Optional: Contemporary Variation
 - Barre work should NOT be included.
 - Video length not to exceed 20 minutes. Include an introduction of the students (name, age, date, studio, and hometown) at the beginning.
 - Video should be submitted to professionaldivision@texasballet.org or:

Texas Ballet Theater School
Attn. Professional Division
1540 Mall Circle
Fort Worth, TX 76116
- **All prospective students** should have a letter of recommendation sent from a current ballet instructor to the address below prior to attending an audition. Audition results will not be sent until a recommendation letter is received.

Texas Ballet Theater School
Attn. Kathryn Warakomsky-Li
1540 Mall Circle
Fort Worth, TX 76116

Dancers may be accepted or rejected after completing a live or video audition, or in many cases, will be asked to attend the Summer Intensive (highly recommended) or a follow up audition at the TBTS studios for further consideration.

Summer Intensive students are watched and considered throughout the duration of the program. There will be a formal audition scheduled during the program that is mandatory for Summer students who are interested in the program. Students are notified of their acceptance to the PD program within several days of the audition.

“Stay and Study” Extended Audition/Trial Program: TBTS offers a “Stay and Study” opportunity for an extended audition for potential students. This short term program will allow the potential student to experience the Professional Division firsthand while being further evaluated by the TBTS Staff and TBT Artistic Staff.

Dancers may participate in anywhere from several days to two weeks, based on availability of the student and the PD work schedule. Dancers are responsible for providing their own housing, transportation and meals during their stay. Please call the office to discuss possible dates.

“Stay and Study” Students will participate in the Professional Division’s schedule which typically includes a 9:00-10:30 Ballet Technique class followed by pointe class and/or rehearsals. These students may participate in learning new choreography off to the side of the studio or in the back, or they will sit and observe rehearsals of previously-learned choreography. These students are not permitted to participate in Company classes or rehearsals if they are scheduled during their stay. “Stay and Study” students are encouraged to attend evening and weekend classes with TBTS Advanced Level to complete their experience of all that TBTS has to offer.

Solid color leotards with pink tights and ballet/pointe shoes are required for PD classes and rehearsals; no warm-ups/skirts. Black leotards are required for Advanced Level classes. “Stay and Study” students will receive a handout of Professional Division policies/expectations.

Tuition and Fees:

Once accepted, PD students are required to pay a \$250 non-refundable deposit to hold their spot in the program. This fee is credited towards the first month’s tuition.

Tuition is due on the first weekday of the month and considered late after the 7th of the month, at which point, a \$10 Late Fee will be assessed. Students on a monthly installment plan will pay August 1-May 1. Monthly installments are based on the average number of classes for the year, therefore no discounts are given for shorter months. Preferred payment methods are check, bank draft and automatic credit card charges. **Cash will not be accepted.**

Tuition payments are NON-REFUNDABLE. If a student needs to withdraw during the year, the student (if over 18) or parent/guardian will be responsible for every payment that is due until written notification is submitted, at which point past-due payments will still be due and will not be refunded or prorated. If a student must withdraw due to prolonged illness or injury, paid tuition can be credited to a future enrollment if proper medical documentation is provided.

Payment Options:

Annual: Due in 1 payment by August 1 (includes 10% discount) - **\$5130**

Semester: Due in 2 payments by August 1 and January 1 (includes 5% discount) - **\$2708**

Installments: 10 equal monthly payments, August through May - **\$570**

Financial Aid and Scholarships:

A limited number of merit-based scholarships will be awarded, with preference given to returning students or new students that have attended the Summer Intensive or “Stay and Study” program, as this allows the Artistic Staff additional time to assess the student’s potential. Students will be notified upon acceptance to the program if they have been awarded a merit scholarship.

Need-based Financial Aid may be applied for. Dancers must request and submit a Financial Aid form (with a copy of family’s most recent tax return) BEFORE attending a follow-up/second audition. Returning students that are accepted for a second year or students that are accepted from an initial audition must submit a Financial Aid application **no later than March 31.**

Housing and Transportation:

PD Students are responsible for finding and coordinating their own housing. Most PD students rent local apartments with other dancers. The School staff can provide a list of recommended apartments and share contact information of potential roommates. At this time, TBTS does not coordinate host-families.

Dancers must provide their own transportation to and from the studio and events/performances. Dancers that do not have their own cars should arrange carpools with other dancers living nearby. It is highly encouraged to have a “back-up plan” as dancers with cars may have different schedules or conflicts. Dancers may take the public bus during the daytime (though we strongly discourage dancers from taking public transportation after dark) or call an Uber. Ubers are generally quick and affordable in the local area.

Opportunities:

Company Rehearsals: PD students may be called to TBT Company rehearsals. If called, students are expected to attend all scheduled rehearsals, whether or not they are cast to perform.

The Advanced Level Uniform is required in all Company rehearsals.

Company Performances: PD students perform in *The Nutcracker*. A select number of students may be cast in other productions throughout the season and other PD students will be invited to attend the rehearsals and/or be understudies. Performance rules and expectations for Professional Division students are provided in the PD orientation meeting prior to the start of the school year.

PD students may also be invited to perform in Tim O’Keefe’s *Peter & The Wolf* alongside TBT Company members. This production occurs in both Dallas and Fort Worth and has over 20 shows.

School Performances: PD students are involved in both the in-studio *Fall Showcase* and the School *Spring Performance*. The Spring Performance showcases a progression of TBT School students in all levels and the Professional Division. School Performances may feature PD students in works by TBT Artistic Director Ben Stevenson, invited choreographers, or original works by TBT Company members or TBTS instructors.

Outreach: In order to reach the widest possible audience, TBT is dedicated to developing the next generation of audience members. Participation in outreach programs for children and other selected groups is an important part of the TBT mission. TBTS PD participates in educational and outreach programs throughout the Dallas-Fort Worth area and beyond.

Teacher Assistants: PD students may be selected to assist with Lower School classes. Teacher Assistants gain valuable experience working with TBT School instructors, learning to manage children in a classroom setting through demonstration and verbal instruction. Applications are sent out during the Summer for this opportunity.

Resume/Audition Assistance: PD Instructors will conduct workshops to assist PD students with preparing for company auditions including advising dancers on resume writing. Instructors will also be available to assist with taking dance photos and coaching for variations and video auditions.

Summary

The PD program promotes a disciplined work ethic and encourages personal growth and exploration while pushing students beyond their preconceived limitations. The ultimate goal of the program is to develop strong, well-trained and well-educated artists, who will realize and achieve their full potential as they pursue professional careers.