

Student Guide

INTRODUCTION

Texas Ballet Theater School, Fort Worth, began as Fort Worth School of Ballet in 1985, founded by Mrs. Anne H. Bass. Mrs. Bass appointed Nanette Glashak and Michel Rahn to oversee the development of a professional company and school. In 2003, Ben Stevenson, O.B.E., was appointed Artistic Director and the school name was changed to better reflect our status as **Official School of Texas Ballet Theater**.

Programs and Divisions of Texas Ballet Theater School:

LOWER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Creative Movement 3, 4 and 5, Boys, Levels 1-A, 1-B, 2-A and 2-B

Children are introduced to movement through music and a creative approach to learning the fundamentals of dance.

Creative Movement 3, 4 and 5 and Level 1-A classes are designed to build interest in dancing, strengthen the muscles, learn the basic vocabulary and develop a sensibility of the artistic and performance qualities that make up dance. Classes do not focus strictly on classical ballet movements due to the ongoing muscular and bone development in this age group.

Levels 1-B, 2-A and 2-B begin a more formal approach to classical ballet steps.

The Boys class is in place to allow young men to explore the athleticism of men's dance.

Teachers and assistants use a "hands on" approach that is vital to teaching young dancers how their muscles work. Each student develops at their own pace within the group.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

Levels 3-A, 3-B, 4-A and 4-B

Students are introduced to a more demanding level of study incorporating elements from major training styles including Royal Academy of Dance (RAD), Cecchetti and Vaganova. In addition, modern and jazz are introduced. Classes meet three to five times a week. Pointe work begins with the permission of the School Director after at least one semester in Level 4.

UPPER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Levels 5-A, 5-B, Advanced 1, 2, 3 and Trainees

Study is more intense at this level with classes meeting five or six days per week. Increased class time is necessary for students interested in pursuing a professional career or higher education in dance.

OPEN SCHOOL PROGRAM

Beg/Int Ballet and Open Jazz

The Open School Program allows a recreational option for dancers with less experience or those that do not wish to make the time commitment to our regular school programs. We are unable to accept beginner ballet students older than age ten, with the exception of open classes.

Beg/Int Ballet is a less formal ballet class for pre-teens that is designed for older students with little to no ballet experience or those students that do not wish to make the commitment to their assigned class level.

Jazz is offered to ages 7-13 as an optional class to supplement their ballet training and to introduce a new style of movement. This additional class does not require enrollment in the ballet program.

Teenage beginner-level students are encouraged to take our open Teen/Adult “drop-in” classes.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Mommy & Me, Adult Ballet, Pilates and Workshops

Special Programs are offered throughout the year to populations not served by our regular school year program. Each program has specific requirements for admission that are announced when registration opens.

PROFESSIONAL DIVISION

The Texas Ballet Theater School Professional Division is designed to prepare advanced pre-professional dancers for a professional ballet career. Admittance to this program is by audition only and participation in the Senior Intensive is highly encouraged. Dancers in the Professional Division will participate in a variety of performances and community outreach programs. At the discretion of the Artistic Director, dancers may be given the valuable opportunity to attend Company rehearsals or perform with the Company.

TBTS does not provide housing or academic classes for out of town students but can offer recommendations. Students who have not completed high school are expected to continue their education at home.

Placement & Promotion Policies

POINTE WORK

Girls begin pointe work in Level 4 at the recommendation of the teachers and the final approval of the School Director. Regardless of level or age, students will only be allowed to go *en pointe* if they are able to do so safely without risking injury to their growing bones and joints. To ensure this safety, the staff assesses the following physical characteristics prior to recommending a student for pointe work:

- ⇒ Adequate flexibility of the foot to allow the students to align the bones of the foot with the tibia; to get up fully on the top of pointe shoes.
- ⇒ Adequate strength of the foot, ankle, leg and torso to sustain the required pulling up out of the hips, generally three years of intensive ballet training.
- ⇒ Adequate turnout and strength of the turnout muscles to sustain proper alignment.
- ⇒ General physical maturity that suggests the development of bones and that joints are stable. This is usually not until a girl is at least 11 years old. Age is not an accurate indicator of when a girl will begin pointe work.

PLACEMENT AND PROMOTION

Advancement through Texas Ballet Theater School is based on many factors including student’s physical strength, commitment, maturity, mastery of material, attendance and artistic development as assessed by the teacher and School Director. A student’s ability to execute the required material is

considered above all else, *including age*.

TBTS does not admit dancers over the age of 10 that have little or no previous ballet training. The Beginner/Intermediate Ballet class and Teen/Adult “drop-in” classes are designed as an alternative for inexperienced or recreational dancers to enjoy the art of ballet.

All dancers will receive an end of the year evaluation addressing overall progress, effort, attitude and improvement needed in various areas. Levels 3 and under receive a written evaluation, while Levels 4 and up receive oral evaluations with a written synopsis. Student placement for the following year will be announced during end of term evaluations.

Students are placed in levels based on four general criteria: technical ability, physique, interest and attendance.

Technical ability is defined as sufficient mastery of ballet technique and mastery at every level.

Physique is defined as strength, turnout, flexibility and bone structure, which will allow a student to safely perform the course requirements. Physical characteristics become increasingly important as a student progresses through the levels.

Interest is defined as demonstrating a willingness and desire to pursue this course of study, whether in ballet, modern or jazz.

Attendance is defined as attending all classes and rehearsals required of the student’s level.

Consistent attendance allows the student to keep up with the material presented, to practice and develop the muscles and to prepare for performances.

Conferences between the parent and teacher (or School Director) are encouraged, particularly when there is a question about a student’s placement. Please call or e-mail the school office to schedule a conference.

REPEATING LEVELS OF STUDY

Ballet classes do not progress at the same pace as traditional academic grades. Often a student will repeat a level and within the same class, he or she will continue to learn new steps and get stronger in steps already learned. Learning dance requires the mind to tell the body what to do and that can take months or years. Maturity level of the student is vital. It takes concentration and effort to make advancements. Since students physically grow and develop at different rates, advancement to the next level will vary from student to student. A good example of this is a child who has a growth spurt and needs extra time to re-develop the muscles to execute steps correctly. **Please do not be concerned if your child stays in a level for two or more years.** A student who develops their technique correctly early on will reduce their risk of injury and will improve their rate and likelihood of advancement in later years.

Dress Code, Building & Classroom Policies, Attendance Policies

DRESS CODE

Texas Ballet Theater School adheres to a dress code. **All students must dress in the required color and style leotard as outlined in the Uniform Guide.** All students are expected to maintain a neat appearance and to abide by their specified dress code. All dancewear should be cleaned after each use. It is recommended that each student carry an extra pair of tights and leotard in their dance bag. Warmers and skirts must be removed prior to entering the studio.

Hair must be worn in a ballet bun secured with a hair net and “u” shaped hair pins or bobby pins. Hair that is too short for a bun should be pulled back and pinned off the face. **No ponytails, braids or messy buns permitted.** Please inquire at the office if you need help with hair. Students in Levels 3 and above are expected to fix their own hair for class.

For the safety of the students, simple stud earrings are the only permitted jewelry. Hoops, dangling earrings, necklaces, bracelets, anklets and rings must be removed prior to class.

Dance clothes are not to be worn outside the building. **All students must wear an appropriate cover-up when entering or exiting the building.** This can be a dress or pants/skirt/shorts AND a shirt (a leotard is not an appropriate top/shirt), with street shoes. Booty shorts, short shorts and short/sheer ballet skirts are not considered appropriate cover ups.

Ballet shoes are never to be worn outside of the building. Dirt and oils from the outside will collect on the shoes and damage our special dance floors.

Students who do not fully comply with the dress code, including hair, may not be allowed to take class, but will be expected to watch from inside the studio.

DRESSING AREA AND BATHROOMS

A dressing area is provided for students. Students should take care to be respectful of the space by cleaning up after themselves.

Parents of students in Level 2-B *and below* are permitted to take their child to the dressing area. Levels 3 and above should not require assistance with dressing or hair.

CLASS OBSERVATIONS

Class observations are offered twice a year. Parents and family may see how the student is progressing in the classroom setting. **For the comfort and safety of all involved, we must adhere to a strict no photography, no electronics, no talking policy during observations.**

Observation of classes is not allowed outside of the designated weeks.

Please be aware that due to the beautiful windows in our studios a portion of classes and rehearsals will be visible to staff members, TBT board members and approved visitors who may be walking through the building.

CLASSROOM AND BUILDING ETIQUETTE

Students should show respect for the teacher by not talking during class and acknowledging corrections with a polite response. Students should address teachers and staff in an appropriate manner, as the individual teacher desires. Students should address Artistic Staff as “Mr.” or “Mrs.” followed by their *last* name.

Students should use the restroom before entering class.

Chewing gum, food and drinks are not allowed in the studios. Food and drink is limited to public areas only. Please be courteous and clean up when you are finished. Due to significant food allergies experienced by some of our students, we ask that you do not bring nut products into the school.

Parents may wait in the front lobby, as well as the kitchen or conference room when they are not in use, but please keep in mind that it is a working environment. In addition to studios, the building houses administrative offices and a call center. Please be courteous and make a special effort to keep

all noises and conversations to a minimum. Cell phone use is not allowed in the building.

Ridgmar Mall has a very nice indoor play area on the lower level which makes a good place for younger siblings during class time. There is also a nice park in the neighborhood across from TBT – the park is on Genoa Rd. past the Green Oaks Rd. intersection.

Students are expected to be courteous to staff, volunteers and visitors at all times.

All hallways and doorways must remain unobstructed at all times in order to adhere to the fire code. Dance bags may be stored under the benches. Please instruct your student to properly store his/her bag and not leave them in the middle of the hallway.

Texas Ballet Theater School reserves the right to enact appropriate discipline as circumstances warrant. Such discipline may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal without advance notice, or the right to not re-enroll a student in cases of extremely inappropriate conduct by a student or parent (i.e. theft, smoking in the building, physical or verbal aggression, illegal drug use or possession). In case of suspension or dismissal, there will be no tuition refund or credit.

Texas Ballet Theater School reserves the right to refuse service. All persons who work, study, volunteer or otherwise participate in TBTS activities are expected at all times to demonstrate respect for others, the facilities and to promote an environment which is safe and welcoming of diversity.

Texas Ballet Theater School maintains a policy of non-discrimination with regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin and sexual orientation.

COMMUNICATION

Our primary means of communication is e-mail.

Please make sure that the office has your correct e-mail address and add us to your contact list to avoid your spam filter. PLEASE check your e-mail frequently. **All important information is disseminated through e-mail.**

It is the responsibility of the parent and student to check for new communication through posted notices in the building and via e-mail.

SECURITY

For your child's safety, our building is locked from the outside. We typically have someone stationed at the door to open it during class hours, but if the door is not opened for you, please knock and then pull handle as the door is unlocked remotely from the front desk. We attempt to be fully staffed during drop-off and pick-up times, but there are instances when staff must leave the door for a few moments.

Do not leave valuables in the dressing area or hallway. It is better to leave all valuables at home. If necessary, students may place their purse or small bag in the office for safekeeping during class.

Texas Ballet Theater School is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

You may not leave unattended siblings at the studio. We cannot be responsible for children other than our enrolled students.

All students who drive themselves to class MUST park in the main (west) parking lot, so that they are in a well lit and visible area. We advise parents to do the same and discourage parking in the side (north) parking lot.

Parents must pull up to the door to pick up their child. Children will not be permitted to walk out into the parking lot unaccompanied.

Please report any suspicious individual or behavior to the school office.

LOST AND FOUND

A lost and found box is located in the ladies dressing room.

All items left behind (labeled or not) will go in the lost and found box. The box is emptied weekly and all left behind items are either thrown out or donated to a local charity.

You will greatly improve the chance of retrieving your lost/left behind items if they are clearly labeled with a name!

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

We will follow the Fort Worth ISD regarding inclement weather closings. If they are closed, or dismiss early, we will be closed. If they are open, including late openings, then class is in session.

If you feel that weather conditions in your area are unsafe, please do not bring your child to class. We do not want anyone to compromise their safety. Please e-mail the school with a note that your child will not be in class due to inclement weather in your area.

Students (including those that drive themselves) will not be allowed to leave if the storm sirens are sounding in our area. All students and parents will be asked to wait in a safe area of the building until the immediate danger has passed. We do have a staff person in the building at all times who can monitor inclement weather and take your phone calls. We will do all we can to keep your student safe while in the TBT building.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes for their level. Regular attendance is important to the training of each student and is a factor in determining performance placement and level advancement. **If a student is unable to attend a class, the parent must notify the school office at least one hour prior to class time.** Informing your child's instructor of an absence is considerate, but insufficient for attendance purposes. **To report an absence call 817-763-0207 Option 1, or e-mail ashley@texasballet.org**

Excused absences may be granted with a doctor's note documenting illness or injury, funerals, or mandatory school functions with at least three weeks written notice given to the school office. Excused absences will be given for an injury but the student is expected to be present and observe class until able to participate again.

The number of allowable unexcused absences varies with each class level. An undue number of unexcused absences may result in the student being removed from *The Nutcracker*, Spring Performance or other performance opportunities based on insufficient class time. In addition, excessive absences may prevent promotion to the next level or result in complete dismissal from the program.

No refunds will be given for missed classes.

MEDICAL CONCERNS AND EMERGENCIES

Please make sure the staff is aware of any medical concerns or conditions that your child might have.

You should report any changes or new medical conditions to the office, so that our records are current. In the event of illness/injury during class, we will attempt to contact the student's parent(s). If they cannot be reached, the emergency contact provided on the registration form will be called. If the situation warrants, an ambulance may be called prior to contacting the parents.

ARRIVAL AND TARDINESS

Students are expected to arrive at least ten minutes prior to class time to allow them to be adequately prepared to enter the studio. It is not necessary to call to notify us of tardiness (with the exception of rehearsals), however, students are expected to wait for a pause in class to speak with their teacher before joining the class. Students arriving more than fifteen minutes late will not be permitted to take the class due to risk of injury, but they should enter quietly to observe and take notes.

PICK UP AND LATE FEES

ALL students, regardless of age, must be picked up immediately after their last class.

Parents of students remaining more than 15 minutes following the end of their class will be charged an initial fee of \$10, and an additional \$10 for every 5 minutes thereafter. The late fee must be paid before the student can resume classes.

Repeated late pick-ups will be grounds for dismissal from the program.

DUAL PROGRAM STUDENTS

Students enrolled at a performing arts school (such as Fort Worth Academy of Fine Arts, Texas Elementary School of the Arts and Travis Academy of Fine Arts) or in another dance program (in their academic school) should realize that many times programs overlap. It is imperative to notify the school office if there are mandatory shows as soon as possible and to realize that participation in both shows at both schools may not work.

It is possible to balance enrollment at both TBTS and another program, but it does require a dedicated student, involved parents and significant cooperation between the two schools.

KEEP YOUR DANCER HOME:

- Fever of 100° or higher in the past 24 hours
- Vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours
- Strep throat– must be on antibiotic treatment 24 hours before return
- Chicken pox– until all sores are dried and crusted over
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)- until discharge is gone and/or doctor deems no longer infectious
- Skin infections– until sores are no longer draining and determined non-infectious by a physician (note required)

LET YOUR DANCER ATTEND AND OBSERVE CLASS:

- Strains/sprains that need rest
- No longer infectious, but still recovering from any illness listed above
- Allergy/asthma/colds/breathing problems that may be aggravated by activity.

INJURY PREVENTION

There are several steps all dancers should take to prevent injuries:

1. Warm up properly. Arrive at the studio with enough time to do light stretching and other warm up movements.
2. Pay attention to nutrition. Eat well to keep your muscles and bones strong and able to effectively deal with the extra strains and stresses of dancing. Upper level students are encouraged to consult with a nutritionist to obtain a peak performance nutrition plan.
3. Get adequate rest and allow your mind and body some “down time”. Occasional late nights are unavoidable, but they should not be a regular occurrence. “Energy drinks” are NOT a substitute for adequate rest and good nutrition. We recommend AGAINST these drinks for our students at all times.
4. Allow time to fully recover from injuries. Be diligent about physical therapy exercises you may have. You will not be penalized for taking recovery time.
5. See your doctor if you believe you may be injured. If your pain continues or increases with time, please see your doctor and inform your teacher. Early detection is the key to preventing serious injury. Please inform the teacher of what the doctor recommends for a recovery plan.
6. Ice massage. If you are unable to see a doctor immediately and you suspect an injury, apply ice to the affected area. Use a thin cloth or towel between the ice and your skin and keep the ice moving! Keep it on for 10 minutes, off for 5 and on again for another 10 minutes.
7. Most importantly— use your brain! ***Think it through!***

Enrollments & Payments

JACKRABBIT PROGRAM

All enrollments and payments are handled through Jackrabbit Dance software. All current students will already have an account in Jackrabbit.

If it is your first time logging on, click the link for “Forgot your password or need to get started?” and enter the primary email address on your account. You will be emailed a temporary password.

Parent Portal Link: app.jackrabbitclass.com/reg.asp?id=523397

ENROLLMENT OF NEW STUDENTS

An audition or trial class is required of all students ages 10 to 21. We are unable to accept beginner ballet students older than age ten, with the exception of open classes such as Beginner/Intermediate Ballet and Open Jazz. Teenage beginner-level students are encouraged to take our open Teen/Adult classes.

Parents should call the school office for information on class availability and to schedule an audition class. Open auditions are offered in August for new students. Placement during the school year is possible, based on availability within the appropriate class level.

ENROLLMENT OF RETURNING STUDENTS

Returning Texas Ballet Theater School families receive registration packets each year in April. A non-refundable deposit of \$50 per student, or \$75 per family, is required to hold each dancer's spot. Some classes fill up quickly! Register your child immediately in order to avoid disappointment. While we will make all efforts to place your child in a class at their appropriate level, we cannot guarantee availability and cannot always meet schedule preferences.

Enrollment of any student is subject to the discretion of the Artistic Staff and Administration.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM

If a student wishes to withdraw from the program, it is necessary to inform the school office in writing to ensure that the account is properly closed. Verbal notification is not sufficient.

Withdrawals are effective as of the date on which the office receives written notification. Any tuition that has come due between the last class attended and the date of withdrawal is still due in full.

There are no refunds for students who withdraw from the program. In the case of a serious illness/injury documented by a doctor's note, pre-paid tuition may be applied to future programs as a credit.

Students who are expelled from the program are not eligible for refunds and/or tuition credit in future programs.

CLASS CANCELLATIONS

Texas Ballet Theater School reserves the right to cancel any class during the year due to insufficient enrollment. Help keep our school strong by referring your friends and neighbors!

TUITION AND PAYMENT PLAN OPTIONS

All fees and tuition are completely non-refundable. If a student is unable to take class due to a prolonged illness or serious injury, tuition credit may be applied to a future program. Students must provide a doctor's documentation with their request for tuition credit.

We offer three payment plans:

Annual: Full amount due in August
(includes 10% discount)

Semester: Fall payment due in August
Spring Payment due in January
(includes 5% discount)

Monthly: Equal installments due
August through May

RETURNED CHECKS

Returned checks will incur a \$25 fee. Replacement funds must be in cash, money order or certified bank check.

AUTOMATIC PAYMENTS

Auto Pay: For your convenience, you may elect to have your tuition processed automatically to your credit or debit card on each due date.

Bank Draft: You may also have a check sent directly from your bank via their bill pay service. Unlike

credit cards, checks sent directly from the bank do not incur any additional processing fees, and thus are the preferred method for automatic payments.

LATE PAYMENTS

Tuition is due on the 1st of each month. After the 7th of the month, tuition is considered late and your account will be charged a \$10 late fee. An account refers to the total tuition owed by the family. Payments that fall two or more months behind in any account may result in your child(ren) being withdrawn from classes. Delinquencies may also prohibit all students on that account from participating in performance opportunities (including *The Nutcracker* and Spring Performance).

If financial difficulties arise, please contact the office. With open communication we can work through temporary setbacks. Late fees *may* be waived with advance notification and at the discretion of the administration.

EMERGENCY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

If your family is experiencing an unexpected financial crisis, please consider speaking to us before withdrawing your student from ballet. We are quite willing to work with you on alternative payment arrangements, or possibly provide a short-term tuition waiver.

If you would like to “pay it forward” by contributing to our financial aid program, consider adding a few dollars to your monthly tuition payment.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS

Limited financial assistance is available for existing students. Students must demonstrate financial need as documented by the family tax form as well as a high level of talent, interest and commitment as evaluated by the teacher and School Director. Students wishing to apply for assistance must return the financial assistance application and supporting documentation by the stated deadline to guarantee consideration. **Financial assistance is on an annual basis and must be re-applied for each year.**

Merit Scholarships are limited and awarded by the Artistic Director and School Director. Such scholarships are talent based and generally restricted to students in Advanced.

Financial Aid notification will be made in August. At that time, parents and students must sign the contract agreeing to the amount of tuition due. If the agreement is not received by the deadline, the offer will be rescinded and the monies redistributed to another student.

Students receiving financial support (merit or aid) must meet certain obligations during the year. They must have excellent attendance in all classes, including Saturdays. Students or parents may be asked to perform volunteer duties, such as taking shifts as door-monitors. They are to set a good example to others, work to the best of their ability, maintain technical progress in all classes and be present at all required rehearsals/events. They must further abstain from the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs. Permission must be received from the School Director prior to participation in classes or performances outside of Texas Ballet Theater School.

Texas Ballet Theater School staff has full discretion in revoking any and all financial aid for student failure to comply with their contract. Students who have previously had financial aid revoked are not eligible for further assistance.

Performances

SPRING PERFORMANCE

All students enrolled in Texas Ballet Theater School (CM4 and above) are invited and encouraged to participate in the end of year Spring Performance. The Spring Performance is an exciting opportunity for students to perform and showcase what they have learned through the year. There are two to three performances and dancers will perform in one or multiple shows. Parents should be aware that this performance requires extra work and the students must attend all classes.

Commitment contracts are usually handed out in January. Completed forms need to be returned as soon as possible so that the teachers can choreograph and teach their dance.

Absences between March 1st and the Spring Performance are not acceptable and will jeopardize your child's participation. If you anticipate missing multiple rehearsals for any reason, please discuss the possibility of an understudy role for your child with his/her teacher when you turn in the commitment contract. Addressing rehearsal conflicts early on with the teacher is essential to the teacher's ability to choreograph and cast in a way that optimizes all students' participation and experience.

Students who submit their commitment and later withdraw from the program or performance will become ineligible to participate in any performance opportunities for one calendar year.

It is to the teacher's discretion whether a child will be able to participate on stage and in what role based on attendance.

Costumes are property of Texas Ballet Theater School and do not go home with students at any time. Our wardrobe staff and chaperones will dress your child for rehearsals, performances and photographs. For your convenience, we allow parents to purchase professional portraits as a keepsake of your students in their costumes.

SPRING PERFORMANCE EXPENSES

There is only one mandatory fee associated with Spring Performance. It is a per student fee, based on their level, ranging between approximately \$70 and \$110. Fees collected help to offset the cost associated with putting on the production, including facility rental and staff, wardrobe, music rights and stage crew. It is not a "costume fee" and all wardrobe materials remain property of the school.

Show tickets must be purchased by parents and are available at several different pricing levels. We do offer several volunteer positions where you can earn free tickets.

Optional expenses may include flowers, performance t-shirt, DVD, studio portraits and action photos from the production. Families are under no obligation to purchase optional items, they are simply offered for those who want them.

PERFORMANCE GROUP

The Performance Group is a selected group of students from Level 4A-Advanced who may choose to participate in extra rehearsals and perform in the local area. Past performance opportunities have been at the Kimbell Art Museum, Scottish Rite Hospital, the Youth Dance Festival at Scott Theatre, DancePlanet at Booker T Washington, and other venues around the metroplex. Students must audition at the beginning of the school year on the schedule date. Students must be available for

rehearsals on the weekends or when necessary for the shows. There is a participation fee and there may be other fees involved depending on the venue.

COMPANY PRODUCTIONS

The ultimate goal of many Texas Ballet Theater School students is to perform on stage. We provide this chance to our students through an audition process for children's roles in productions such as *The Nutcracker*. Texas Ballet Theater Artistic Staff determines the eligibility requirements for all company productions. Eligibility requirements and casting may be based on age, class level, height and size requirements of the wardrobe department, technical ability and on the Artistic Staff's subjective aesthetic judgment. Due to the many unpredictable variables involved, casting in professional productions *does not* determine a student's promotion in the school. It also does not reflect on a child's evaluation or placement, except in the case where multiple class absences for any reason, including company productions, may impede their mastery of required skills for that level.

Students cast in company productions are expected to wear their school uniform for all rehearsals, whether at the studio or the theater. They are expected to attend all classes unless there is a direct conflict with a production or rehearsal. Parents should be prepared for inevitable schedule changes with little notice, providing transportation to/from the theater, late hours, as well as their student's ability to keep up with academic work and to tolerate disappointment should they not receive the part they want.

THE NUTCRACKER

Texas Ballet Theater presents over twenty performances of *The Nutcracker* each year at Bass Performance Hall. While performing in *The Nutcracker* is an exciting and rewarding experience, there is a considerable commitment on the part of the parents and the student. Students auditioning must be able to attend all rehearsals and costume fittings for which they are called, and to perform in all performances to which they are assigned; some of them being during the school day. Students are ON CALL for EVERY performance and should be able to get to the theater quickly with little notice.

NUTCRACKER AUDITION INFORMATION/ELIGIBILITY

Auditions for children's roles take place in September. Levels 2-A and above are eligible to audition. Texas Ballet Theater Artistic Staff has final say in all casting.

A handbook for students cast in *The Nutcracker* will go out in October outlining the policies and procedures for the rehearsals and productions.

NUTCRACKER PARENT PARTICIPATION

Although not required, parents of students cast in *The Nutcracker* are expected to volunteer at least three times during the run of the show. Volunteer opportunities include manning the photo booth, chaperoning costumed students during intermission and box office.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

The tuition and fees charged by Texas Ballet Theater School do not cover the expenses associated with operating a pre-professional ballet school. The deficit is made up through grants, donations and fundraising activities.

Our small fundraiser activities, such as logo wear and Nutcracker charms, are popular with students and families, and bring in a small amount of money beyond what is invested.

Larger fundraiser activities include our photo booth at *The Nutcracker*, the Dance-A-Thon, Masquerade Party, Father Daughter Dance and other events put on by the TBTS Society. In order for those activities to be successful, we need all of our families to get involved and participate in a manner comfortable for them. We need everyone– from the “behind the scenes worker bee” to the “just let me write a check”, please let us know how you would like to help.

Of course, one of the best ways to support TBTS is to tell your friends and neighbors about us!