

The Fremont Ballet School

Information and Policies Handbook

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Index

1. Introduction
2. Levels of Instruction
3. Technical Advancement & Mid-Year Check-in
4. Registration Policy
5. Dress Code
6. Absences & Makeup Policy
7. Regular Season Information
8. Tuition, Payment Policies, and Price Guide
9. Annual Spring Production
10. Christmas Show
11. Summer Program
12. Inclement Weather Regulations
13. Parent Observation Policy
14. Photo & Video Policy
15. Student Drop-Off and Parking

1. Introduction

The Fremont Ballet School has been a staple of art education in northwestern Ohio since 1964. Founded by Ernst L. Hillenbrand, the ballet school has been educating students in the art of classical ballet and other disciplines for over half a century. The Fremont Ballet School holds a high standard of dance education that includes expansive, precise, and accurate training. Our teachers are educated and experienced; they strive to provide their students with the best training they can possibly offer. Although proper dance technique is a very important part of our educational philosophy, we also believe dance is a discipline that fosters passion, perseverance, creative thinking, physical fitness, and teamwork.

At the Fremont Ballet School, the students always come first. We are dedicated to giving each student the dance education that is best for their learning style. We encourage our students to challenge themselves through their dancing; we view each day as an opportunity to improve and grow physically, mentally, and emotionally. We believe that a healthy learning environment is one of the most important details to help our students thrive as young artists. We are aware that each student is unique and believe each student deserves equal opportunity, no matter the circumstances. At the Fremont Ballet School, we advocate a positive learning environment that promotes self-confidence, educational growth, and the use of one's internal voice as a means of expression through movement.

2. Levels of Instruction

● Pre-Ballet Levels I & II

- Pre-Ballet is the most introductory level of dance for students aged 3-5. Students aged 3 turning 4 after September 1 will typically be placed in Pre-Ballet I, and students aged 4 turning 5 after September 1 will typically be placed in Pre-Ballet II. Students attend class 1 day per week for 45 minutes. Pre-Ballet is an introduction to movement provided in a nurturing and captivating environment. Students will learn basic coordinated movements and also are introduced to and will begin to become familiar with ballet terminology.

● Beginner Ballet I, II, & III

- Beginner Ballet is offered to beginner students who have either graduated from the Pre-Ballet level or are entering ballet as an elementary-aged

student. Beginner Ballet students continue to explore movement through furthering their knowledge of classical ballet technique and improving their balance, strength, and flexibility. Beginner Ballet students will also be learning the basics and importance of musicality through dance and will be working to find expression through movement. Beginner Ballet students attend class one day per week.

- **Intermediate Ballet I, II, & III**

- Intermediate Ballet students are students who have graduated from the beginner level, or who are placed in this level according to age or previous skills. Students work to improve upon correct and precise execution of their classical ballet technique, as well as integrating musicality and expression and continuing to improve upon their level of strength and flexibility. Intermediate students attend class two days per week. Pointe work may be introduced at this level. Intermediate I students begin to learn the importance of strengthening the foot and ankle in order to begin pointe work, and Intermediate II students may begin pointe work with pointe shoes, within the discretion of the instructor.

- **Advanced Ballet I & II**

- Advanced Ballet students have graduated from Intermediate Ballet and are at a level of pre-professionalism that is characterized by more intense, serious training. Advanced students are expected to strive toward the goal of mastering correct technique and are working to mature as artists in the realm of musicality and expression. Advanced Ballet students attend classes four days per week.

- **Fremont Ballet School Company Dancers**

- Dancers of the Fremont Ballet School Company are dancers of high esteem. They are students who have graduated into the final level of ballet instruction, Advanced Ballet II. When Advanced Ballet Levels I and II are combined, dancers must have one full year of experience in the Advanced Ballet class before being considered a full “Company Member”. Company members are held to a very high standard; dancers are required to attend technique class *at least* three days per week. Advanced and Company dancers are required to participate in the annual Christmas Outreach Program (see 10.), as well as receive lead/principal roles for our annual Spring Production. The Fremont Ballet School Company are, in many ways, the group of students that become the “face” of the school. The younger dancers know who they are, and they look up to them immensely! Company dancers are expected to model mature behavior as well as take on the attitude of leadership with our younger students.

- **Pointe & Pointe Requirements**

- Pointe work is introduced to students starting in Intermediate I Ballet. Intermediate I students do not wear pointe shoes, but will be introduced to exercises that prepare them for pointe work. Intermediate II-Advanced II students will have weekly pointe classes integrated into their schedule, even if the student has not been cleared to wear pointe shoes.
- The decision to clear a student for pointe work depends on the following variables: Age, physical strength of feet and ankles, proficiency in proper ballet technique, and level of experience.
- Because the bones of the student are soft and likely have not finished developing, it is very important not to start a student on pointe too early. Students may be placed in pointe class with the goal of strengthening the feet and ankles in preparation for pointe shoes if they do not yet meet the requirements to wear pointe shoes.

- **Acrobatics I & II**

- Acrobatic art classes are available for students starting at age 6. Students will learn basic tumbling and learn to increase their strength through acrobatic movement. Acrobats are broken up into two levels, depending on the student's age, ability, and experience with acrobatic arts.

- **Jazz Levels I & II**

- Jazz technique is available for students aged 6+ and separated into two levels. Level I consists of students aged 6-9 and level II is ages 10+. Jazz dance offers the knowledge of jazz movement and instruction through basic jazz vocabulary.

- **Tap Levels I & II**

- Tap dance is also available for students aged 6+ and separated into two levels, the same as jazz. Tap I is ages 6-9 and tap II is ages 10+. Tap dance focuses on the expansion of rhythmic knowledge as well as musicality and coordination.

- **Adult Beginner Ballet**

- Adult beginner ballet classes are offered to anyone looking to improve coordination, balance, strength, and flexibility in an environment that promotes new experiences and having fun! No previous training is required to participate in Adult Ballet. Students will learn the basics of classical ballet while working to improve their overall physical health during this course

3. Technical Advancement and Mid-Year Check-in

- **Policy:** The advancement of a student to the next consecutive level of instruction is placed under the review of several factors: age, level of technical proficiency, maturity, and technical knowledge of ballet vocabulary.
- **Mid-Year Check-in:** In late January/early February, parents/guardians will participate in a proficiency check-in via phone or email with the student's instructor. This check-in will serve as an informational progress report of each dancer. Parents/guardians will learn how their student is progressing in the class and what they may need to improve regarding technical proficiency, knowledge, and other behavioral factors during class. This check-in can help families know what is going well and what might need to change in regards to advancement into the next level of instruction.

4. Registration

- **Policy:** Registration of new students in the upcoming season of the Fremont Ballet School opens February 1. The registration deadline for the season in progress is December 31. (e.g. a student registering any time between Feb. 1 and Dec. 31 2020 will/may be registered for the 2020-2021 season.)
- **Registration form:** Registration forms must be completed and updated annually.

5. Dress Code

Female Students

Ballet: Black leotard, light pink tights, light pink leather (or canvas for Intermediate-Advanced students) ballet shoes, hair secured off the neck in a bun or twist. Chiffon skirts no lower than mid-thigh are permitted. Pre-Ballet students wear a pink tutu, available for purchase at the ballet school.

Acro: Gymnastic leotard or form-fitting athletic wear such as leggings or spandex shorts. No baggy clothes permitted. Any color is permitted. Students may either choose to go bare-foot or wear leather acrobatic shoes. Hair secured off of the neck in a bun or braid. Long hair can easily get caught during acro, so please secure long hair (no long ponytails).

Jazz: Black leotard and pink or tan colored tights, spandex shorts of any color are permitted. Students should have black leather jazz shoes. Hair off of the neck in a ponytail, bun, or braid.

Tap: Black leotard and pink or tan colored tights, spandex shorts of any color are permitted. Tap shoes should be black. Students are permitted to wear socks with their tap shoes. Hair off of the neck in a ponytail, bun, or braid.

Male Students

Ballet: White t-shirt (preferably form fitting, not baggy), and black tights/leggings/athletic shorts. Black leather (or canvas for intermediate or advanced) ballet shoes. Socks may be worn with ballet shoes if the student is not wearing tights. If hair is long, it must be pulled off of the neck.

Acro: Form-fitting athletic shirt and athletic shorts. No baggy clothes permitted. Any color is permitted. Students may choose to go bare-foot or wear leather acrobatic shoes. If hair is long, it must be pulled off of the neck.

Jazz: White shirt and black or dark colored jazz pants/athletic shorts. Students should have black leather jazz shoes. If hair is long, it must be pulled off of the neck.

Tap: White shirt and black or dark colored jazz pants/athletic shorts. Tap shoes should be black. Students are permitted to wear socks with their tap shoes. If hair is long, it must be pulled off of the neck.

Adult Students

Adult students are permitted to wear anything they feel comfortable moving in. Preferably no baggy clothing (e.g. sweatpants and a loose t-shirt), but tights and leotard are optional. As for footwear, adult students should have leather or canvas ballet shoes.

6. Absences, Lateness, & Makeup Policy

- **Absences:** Please notify the instructor the week prior to an absence if possible. If absence occurs because of an illness or other emergency, please notify the ballet school via phone or email. If the student has a contagious illness, please keep them at home. It is important for students to recover from illness, as well as keep their peers healthy!
- **Lateness:** If a student is more than 10 minutes late to class, the level of participation for the rest of the class is up to the instructor's discretion. It is important that each student is properly warmed up in order to safely execute movement with a low risk of injury, so the instructor may ask the student to warm up on their own or observe the remainder of class depending on how late the student has arrived.
- **Makeup Policy:** Students are permitted to make up class in the level directly above or directly below their own. In the case of Acro, Jazz, or Tap, a makeup time may not be available due to limited levels offered. Monthly tuition remains constant with no refunds & missed classes will be

given a makeup time. Missed classes may be made up at any time during the year.

7. Regular Season Dates/Information

- The Fremont Ballet School's regular season runs from the week of Labor Day through the end of May. In regards to observation of holidays, the Fremont Ballet School is closed in observance of MLK jr. day and Presidents' day. As for Christmas and Easter, announcements are made annually regarding the dates of winter and spring break.

8. Tuition, Payment Policies, Price Guide, and Payment Procedures

- Monthly tuition is due on the first class of the month each month. Tuition may be paid in cash, check payable to Fremont Ballet School, or through our website. Please select on registration form which payment plan you choose for your student:
 - Monthly Payment Plan: Payment due on your student's first class of each month. Late fee of \$15 added onto payments made after the 15th of the month.
 - Annual Payment Plan: Full tuition due at time of registration. 5% discount offered.
- New students will be charged a one-time registration fee of \$30. Registration fee is waived for each consecutive year the student is enrolled. If the student takes one or more years off and then returns, the registration fee must be repaid upon second registration.
- Costumes for the recital will be paid in two deposits. \$35 deposit per costume due in the fall (dates announced annually), and the remaining balance of costume(s) due at the time of costume pickup in the spring.
- Pricing for classes is as follows:
 - 1 class per week – \$65 per month
 - 2 classes per week – \$90 per month
 - 3 classes per week – \$105 per month
 - 4 classes per week – \$120 per month
 - 5 classes per week – \$135 per month
 - 6 classes per week – \$150 per month
 - Drop-in rate – \$20 per class
- No refunds.
- Payment Procedures:
 - **Online Payment:** Online payments can be made through our website, fremontballetschool.com. This method is through PayPal,

but you do not have to have a PayPal account in order to use this method. All online payments have an added 3% service fee.

- **Credit or Debit:** Payments can be made with a credit or debit card in the ballet school. There is a 3% service fee for credit or debit payments.
- **Cash or Check, Envelope Method:**
 - Cash or checks are accepted if sealed in a Fremont Ballet School envelope. Envelopes can be picked up at the ballet school.
 - Returned checks will result in a \$20 fee
 - Envelopes must be filled out - information regarding student/family name, date, and category of payment (tuition, costume, clothes, month applicable).
 - Envelopes can be sent in with your student or deposited through the mail slot during non-operable hours.

9. Annual Spring Production Information

- **What & When:** Each year, the Fremont Ballet School holds an annual production held at Old Fort High School in mid-May. Students will begin to prepare their pieces for the production beginning in January/February. This production requires a few extra rehearsals, which are typically as follows:
 - Two Friday evenings in the 2 weeks prior to the recital held at St. Joseph School's gymnasium
 - Show weekend: Friday (Spacing/Technical Rehearsal), Saturday (Dress Rehearsal), Sunday (2 Afternoon Performances), all held at Old Fort High School.
- **Costumes:** Pre-Ballet, Beginner Ballet, and Intermediate Ballet I students will be required to purchase one costume for the recital. Intermediate II, III, will be required to purchase 2 costumes, and Advanced students will be required to purchase 2-4 costumes, depending on the roles of the students in the show. Each costume requires a non-refundable deposit of \$35. This deposit is your commitment to participation in the production. If students are registered in Jazz, Tap, or Acrobats, an additional costume per class will be required. Costumes must be paid in full before the student takes the costume home. Please see section 6 for more information on costume deposits.
- **Recital Meeting:** On the last "parent observation" day of the year, a recital meeting will take place. We will discuss the rehearsal schedules, costuming, and what to expect for the recital weekend.

- **What to expect:** Recital weekend is everyone's most anticipated weekend of the year! Performing a full-length ballet on a stage for an audience is an experience we are so proud to be able to give our students each year. Upon arrival on the morning of Show Day, students will get their hair and makeup done by our wonderful team of volunteers. Each separate class will be assigned a "dressing room" area to set up camp for the day. Although it is a fun weekend, there will be some waiting involved, so students should bring some quiet, clean activities to keep them busy during the day, as well as a packed lunch and clean snacks. Clear liquids only, please!
- **Parent/Family Volunteers:** Our show would not be possible without the help of our volunteers. Each spring, a sign up sheet will be available for each class for parents and family members to volunteer during the recital. Roles include dressing room supervisors, hair & makeup, and backstage help.
- **Cookie Donations:** During intermission of our recital, we have always been happy to offer refreshments for our audience members. Cookies and punch are served in the lobby, and we ask families and friends for donations of cookies for our refreshment table. A form including your name and the number of dozens of cookies you plan to bring will be available at the studio. Any help is greatly appreciated!
- **Patrons:** Because of the magnitude of this production, we ask the support of families and businesses in Fremont and surrounding areas. Patron Sponsor forms will also be available during the spring, and all patrons are so greatly appreciated.
- **Picture Day:** Before recital, typically in late April or early May, a picture day will be held at the ballet school. Sign ups and order forms will be available in the ballet school during the weeks prior to picture day.
- **Tickets:** Tickets for the recital are available for purchase at the ballet school usually beginning in late March. Two types of tickets are available: general admission (\$12) and reserved seating (\$15). Tickets are sold at a first come, first serve, basis, so stay tuned on our website, social media pages, and email list for availability information.

10. Annual Christmas Outreach Program (Advanced Ballet Levels/Company Only)

- **What & When:** Each holiday season, the Advanced Ballet levels at FBS put together an educational Christmas Outreach Program performed at elementary schools in the area. This show is held during the second week

of December during the early afternoon. We perform this show 2-3 days, depending on the year, typically Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of that week. Excuse forms are given to students for the excuse from a half day of school in order to perform during the school day for the elementary students. This show is always very well received and is an effort on our part to expand the knowledge of arts in our community.

- **Costumes:** Costumes for the Christmas Show are re-used from previous years. No costumes are required for purchase for this show. Students may be asked to loan a costume for use during the show.
- **Audience protocol:** Because these performances are presented to the elementary students of Fremont and surrounding areas, our top priority for these shows are the students. However, immediate family members are permitted to attend. All audience members must enter the school through the main entrance and stop in the office to obtain a visitors pass. Some venues may offer standing room only. No tickets are required.

11. Summer Program Information:

- **Summer Ballet Camp:** Summer ballet camp offers a variety of experiences for your littlest dancer. Camps range from 1 to 4 days. Each day they will participate in a ballet lesson, create a themed craft, have a movement-driven story time, and will also be given a snack. At the end of the camp, families are welcome to view a mini-performance to show what the dancers have been learning all week! Ages 3-10 (students will be placed in a group with students their age). No previous dance experience is required for ballet camps, and students do not have to be previously enrolled.
- **Summer Ballet Intensive:** In addition to their weekly classes, summer intensives are offered with the purpose of giving dancers a series of classes focused solely on developing technique, dance vocabulary, and strength to improve their experience during the regular season. Students do not have to be currently enrolled in the Fremont Ballet School to attend an intensive. New students are always welcomed! Intensives are designed for students with ballet experience, in intermediate and advanced levels. Please contact the ballet school to be placed.
- **Summer Dance Intensive:** Similar to the ballet intensive, the summer dance intensive is offered with the goal of expanding and developing on dance technique, but in multiple styles. Along with ballet, dancers may have the opportunity to participate in the following styles, depending on the year: jazz, tap, contemporary, yoga, and strengthen & stretch.

Students do not have to be previously enrolled in the ballet school to attend. Intermediate and advanced levels are offered for the summer dance intensive. Please contact the ballet school to be placed.

- **Weekly Classes:** Students enrolled in the previous regular season will be assigned a weekly time to attend summer classes. The summer class schedule runs through June and July, and the class times will be different from the regular season. Summer classes are not required to participate in the regular season, but they are strongly encouraged.

12. Inclement Weather Regulations

- **Closings:** The Fremont Ballet School follows the Fremont City Schools schedule for closings. If school is closed for the day, all FBS classes are also cancelled for that day. If Fremont Schools are delayed, classes are still in session. In the event that inclement weather happens later in the day, information regarding closings will be given through email, website, and social media.

13. Parent Observation

- **Policy:** In order to give our students a learning environment free of distraction, parent observation is not permitted during regular class. Parents are welcome to wait in the seated area in the front of the building, or drop their students off and return when class is complete.
- **Pre-Ballet/Beginner Ballet Observation Days:** Pre-Ballet and Beginner Ballet levels I-III have 4 designated “observation days” throughout the season. During these days, parents and guardians are welcome to quietly observe class. Observation days of the year will be announced at the beginning of the season, and reminders will be sent via email.

14. Photo & Video

- **Photo Release Policy:** Each family will be asked to sign a photo release form for the possible release of their student’s photo on the Fremont Ballet School’s website and social media pages as well as advertising materials (brochures, etc.). Student names will not be disclosed on social media.
- **In-Class Photo & Video Policy:** Photos and videos of students are not permitted during class. Please take any photos **before** or **after** class, and do not include anyone else’s child in your photo unless given permission by their parent or guardian.

15. Student Drop-off and Parking

- **Drop-off:** A parent or guardian must enter the school to drop off and pick up students age 3-8. Students between these ages will not be permitted to leave the building without a parent or guardian. Starting age 9, students are permitted to enter and exit the building without a guardian at each family's own discretion. Parents and guardians are able to pull into a parking spot in the front or back of the building to drop off students. Please do not park in or block the one-way driveway on either side of the school.
- **During class:** During your child's class, you are permitted to leave the premises and come back when class concludes to pick your child up. You are also permitted to stay in the building in the waiting area, if you choose. To give students the best chance at a distraction-free class, parents and guardians are not permitted inside the studio during class except on designated observation days.
- **Parking:** Parents, guardians, and students are permitted to park in the front four parking spots or the diagonal parking spots behind the ballet school. No parking is permitted in the one-way driveway or in front of the garage that is located in the parking lot behind the school.