

**Charter Arts  
Dance Department Handbook  
2024-2025**



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## Expectations for All Charter Arts Dancers

1. **Be Prompt and Prepared:** Arrive on time; otherwise, you're considered tardy. Warm up independently if you miss the warm-up due to a late arrival to school. Attend to personal needs before class and seek permission to leave once class starts. Come prepared with a positive attitude, proper attire, and required items.
2. **Respect Classmates:** Use polite speech and body language. Avoid confrontational behavior, rude language, or teasing. Contribute to a positive learning environment, appreciate diverse perspectives, and learn from each other.
3. **Respect your Dance Teachers:** Be ready to dance when the teacher arrives, follow class rules, maintain professionalism and thank your teachers at the conclusion of class. Accept your class placement and audition results with respect, trust the decisions of the dance faculty and our guest artists.
4. **Respect Personal Property:** Do not take or use others' belongings or put anything in a classmate's locker. Avoid touching the dance teachers' property or entering the dance offices without permission.
5. **Respect the Dance Spaces:** Street shoes are not permitted on the dance floors. Avoid eating in our studios and only water bottles are allowed. Remember to clean up after yourself.

## Charter Arts Dance Department Grading Standards and Criteria

Grades are based on effort, self-motivation, self-reflection, improvement of technical skills, responsibility for personal progress, proper dress, attendance and periodic formal assessments.

- **Effort:** Shown through physicality, positive attitude, focus, and respect.
- **Self-Motivation:** Demonstrates a desire to improve.
- **Improvement:** Monitored through daily and long-term observations as well as correction application.
- **Responsibility:** Involves awareness of challenges and effort to overcome them.

Students meeting these criteria will receive a grade reflecting their work. Support is available for students struggling to help them succeed.

## Technique Class Grading Policy

For all technique and movement-based courses, an overall point system of 20 daily points will be used:

- Attendance (5 points)
- Preparation (5 points)
- Active Learning, Development, and Performance (10 points)

Additional points, per quarter, are earned for the following:

- Movement assessments, written work and assigned preparatory homework



**Preparation Grade (0-5 points):** See #1 in the *Classroom Expectations* section of this handbook which will make up your class preparation grade. If a student observes the class, these points can be earned with a written assignment and/or by performing any assigned physical therapy exercises with the Athletic Trainer. (Please note: Each dress code violation is minus one point, however, no student shall lose more than three points total per class for dress code violations.)

**Active Participation/Performance Grade (0-10 points):** A student learns a technique and becomes physically stronger to accomplish this technique through physically being present and active in class. The largest part of a student's grade is determined by how well and fully they perform and engage in the learning environment provided in class each day.

## Attendance Policy

**Classes meeting once per week:** 1 "free" absence and 1 "free" observation per marking period

**Classes meeting twice per week:** 2 "free" absences and 2 "free" observations per marking period

**Creative Process elective:** 3 "free" absences and 3 "free" observations per marking period

Please note: free observations are exempt when the student completes their assigned observation assignment

**Exceeding free absences:** Students can request a make-up assignment for **up to two** additional absences per marking period with a specific due date to earn a grade. Additional absences beyond these will be recorded as a zero.

### Absences and Notes

All notes only go to the Charter Arts Main Office **UNLESS** a doctor's or parent's note contains modifications for dance classes. In this case, please be sure to bring a second copy of this note to the Director of Dance. A parent/guardian should communicate with the director of dance and their guidance counselor if their student will be out for an extended period due to illness.

### Tardiness

Being tardy to classes, when in a student's control, is unprofessional and may affect your privilege of performing. Late bus arrivals that are out of a student's control will not affect a student's grade.

### Attendance During Preparation for a Performance:

In the two-week period leading up to a performance, it is expected that any student who has been cast in that performance will be fully physically participating in all of their technique classes and rehearsals. If a student is unable to meet these standards, it will be at the Dance Faculty's and Athletic Trainer's discretion to pull the student from the performance.

**NOTE: If a student's attendance is compromised by a serious illness or injury, the Director of Dance and Athletic Trainer must be notified immediately by the student's parent/guardian.**

## Procedure for Sitting Out and Observing

An alternate writing assignment will need to be completed if a student needs to sit out of a technique class because of illness or injury:

1. If you do not have a Parent/Guardian or Doctor's Note, prior to the start of class, ask permission to go to the Charter Arts Nurse's office to be checked and get a note. Without a note from home, permission to sit out will be at the discretion of the Nurse and teacher together.
2. Bring your school-issued Chromebook to class.
3. Ask the teacher what location you should move to for completing your observation assignment. You will stay at that location until class ends.
4. Find the "Observation Assignment" your teacher has posted on Google Classroom or ask for an assignment.
5. At the end of the class, submit completed work to your teacher on Google Classroom. Your grade for the assignment will depend on how engaged you were in this learning opportunity.

You must complete a new assignment for EACH CLASS you observe unless your teacher or Director of Dance has given you a long-term assignment due to extenuating circumstances.

## Homework Policy

- **Homework Assignments and Due Dates:**
  - Given in class and listed on Google Classroom.
  - If absent, check Google Classroom and see each teacher upon return for missed work.
- **Tests and Assessments:**
  - Complete missed tests or assessments no later than the day you return to school unless an extension was requested.
  - Teachers will not track down students for missed assessments.
- **Extensions:**
  - Request an extension by emailing the teacher at least 24 hours before the due date.
  - If granted, a new due date will be set and documented in Google Classroom and PowerSchool.
  - Submitting by the new due date earns full credit; late submissions are penalized:
    - Within one week: ½ credit
    - After one week: Possible zero, subject to teacher discretion.
- **Missed Work and Zeros:**
  - Zero will be entered for missing assignments or assessments until completed.
  - This zero serves as a reminder of missing work.
- **Movement-Based Classes:**
  - No make-up work for physical activities unless medically excused.
  - Grades may be affected by absences and missed observations:
    - More than 2 absences/observations in classes meeting twice a week
    - More than 1 absence/observation in classes meeting once a week
    - More than 3 absences/observations in Creative Process for the Dancer
- **Monitoring Progress:**
  - Regularly check PowerSchool and Google Classroom for grades, absences, and missed assignments.

## Dance Department Dress Code

Every student is accepted for who they are. Every dancer should wear the option that feels appropriate for them. The selected attire is to support every dancer's safety and comfort.

### Dress Code Choices:

1. Female Presenting Dancers: Leotard (class color\*) and the following tights/shoes:
    - Ballet: pink or skin-tone transition tights (worn over the foot), pink or skin tone ballet slippers (slipper color matching the chosen tight color)
    - Modern: black or skin tone transition tights (worn at ankle), bare feet (no shoes needed)
    - Creative Process for the Dancer: one of the above tight choices worn at the ankle and class color leotard. (no shoes needed)
  2. Male Presenting Dancers: any form fitting tank or dance t-shirt (class color, white, black, or gray: full length) and black tights or leggings (transition tights worn over the foot for ballet and worn at the ankle for modern or Creative Process), black ballet slippers
  3. Non-Binary Dancers: May wear any combination of the above options that they feel is most appropriate for them (ballet slippers should match the tight or legging color)
  4. Specific footwear for Jazz, Pointe, or Rehearsal should not be purchased until a student has been assigned to an elective and rehearsal group in the early weeks of school.
- Proper supportive undergarments, such as dance belts and bras are required when necessary. Sports or dance bras that match the line of your leotard/top are preferred.
  - Warm-ups and layers are appropriate for the beginning of classes per the teacher's instructions, as well as in the Creative Process Elective and in between classes. Occasionally, we will have "movable clothing" days where you don't have to wear a dress code which will be announced in advance on google classroom. Athletic/dance wear is appropriate on "movable clothing" days, denim and bare midriffs are not permitted.
  - All hair must be pulled out of your face and well secured at all times. A clean bun is preferred, no ponytails for ballet.
  - For your safety, jewelry should not be worn. No necklaces, bracelets or rings. Ear and facial piercings are allowed but should be small studs only. (no hoops permitted)
  - For your safety, fingernails and toenails must be kept short and trimmed. (sport length)
  - Devices such as knee, ankle, and back braces are not to be worn by any student during a class or rehearsal without explicit directions from a doctor, in conjunction with the Charter Arts' Athletic Trainer.
  - Dance clothes must be washed regularly. It is recommended that dancers own at least four sets of their dress code dance clothes. Families in need of financial assistance in buying dancewear should speak with the artistic director of dance privately and help will be provided.

Class Color Leotards/Shirts: may have trim of a different color as long as the leotard is mainly your class color

- Freshmen: Black
- Sophomores: Any Green
- Juniors: Any Red/Burgundy
- Seniors: Any Blue

## Supply List

- Small Tupperware-like container (for locker jewelry storage while dancing)
- A dance bag of a size that will fit in your locker
- One box of Band-Aids (to donate to the Dance Department first-aid bin)
- One roll of flexible sports tape (to donate to the Dance Department first-aid bin)
- Three boxes of tissues to donate to the dance department
- Sewing Kit for you to keep in your locker (we have scissors): Thread, Needles, Safety pins (for you to make your own repairs)
- Hair Supplies: Hair nets, Hairpins, Bobby pins, Clips, Hair spray, Headband (for short hair) as long as it is tightly secured. **CURLING OR STRAIGHTENING IRONS ARE NOT PERMITTED**
- Extra dance clothes should be kept in your locker AT ALL TIMES for use in the event you forget your dance clothes at home.
- All belongings will be kept locked in the student's school-issued locker.
- **Should students have any trouble finding, purchasing, or affording the dance attire or supplies, please email Mrs. Weaver at [jweaver@charterarts.org](mailto:jweaver@charterarts.org) so we can help make sure you have what you need. This will be kept confidential.**

Needed donations:

-Hair bands, bobby pins and hair nets.

-Black and Pink transition tights-all sizes (adult small-XL)

-Black, Blue, Red, Green leotards-all sizes (adult small-XL)

(Tights and leotards can be new or used as long as in good shape with no holes)

We go through a lot of these and provide them for students who don't have their own or forget their clothes.

## Medical Policy

In the event of injury or illness that prohibits or restricts participation in their art form, it is the student's responsibility, in conjunction with their parent/guardian, to take steps toward seeking and receiving the necessary medical attention. Our St. Luke's Athletic Trainer, who is permanently on staff here at Charter Arts, can be of assistance in directing you to a St. Luke's physician in a very timely fashion.

Please note that if a student is sitting out of their Charter Arts dance classes because of illness or injury, **it is highly recommended that they will NOT be dancing outside of school.** This will hinder proper healing and will compromise a student's success in the Charter Arts Dance Department. The prompt and complete healing of a student's instrument—their body—is of utmost importance to us and will ensure their continued success in the Charter Arts Dance Department.

### **When an Injury, Illness, or Physical Complaint Seems Minor and the Student Reports to School:**

In the event, a parent/guardian would like the student to not physically participate on any day for the purpose of letting the injured part "rest," a note from their parent/guardian or doctor to the student's artistic teachers must accompany the student **EACH DAY** that they will be sitting out.

With appropriate notes, the student may be excused from physically participating in each dance class for **up to two days each marking period for a class that meets twice per week and one day each marking period for a**

class that meets once per week. If the student will be sitting out beyond these “free” observations, a doctor’s note will be needed for future nonparticipation days during each marking period.

#### **Injury or Illness During Preparation for a Performance:**

In the two-week period leading up to a performance, it is expected that any student who has been cast in that performance will be fully physically participating in all of their technique classes and rehearsals. If a student is unable to meet these expectations, it will be at the Dance Faculty’s and Athletic Trainer’s discretion to allow a student to modify or if need be pull the student from the performance. This policy promotes the safety and health of all dance students.

### **Long-Term Injuries or Illness**

If a student is diagnosed by a licensed physician or by the athletic trainer as having an injury or illness that will keep them from physically participating in any of their movement-based classes for three or more weeks, the student should bring their doctor’s note to a dance teacher and schedule a meeting with the department’s athletic trainer, if they are not already seeing the athletic trainer. The teacher of each of the student’s dance classes will design a long-term project that will replace the daily assignments that are usually completed during observation. When the student has healed, a physician’s note or a note from the athletic trainer should be given to the dance faculty, with any modifications if necessary. The Athletic Trainer will continue to work with the student as needed.

To receive attendance and preparation points for each class during a long-term illness or injury, the student must:

1. Report for attendance to the studio where your class is being held.
2. Bring your Chromebook to class.
3. Go to a location designated by your teacher to work on your assignment—if part of your assignment is to meet with the Athletic Trainer, you must still check in with your teacher first.
4. In-progress project assignment work completed during the class will be submitted via Google Classroom to the teacher at the end of each class.

You must follow this procedure for EACH CLASS during a long-term injury or illness.

### **Athletic Trainer Protocols**

An Athletic Trainer is a licensed health care provider who specializes in injury evaluation, rehabilitation, and Emergency care. The St. Luke’s Athletic Trainer on-site at Charter Arts has the following abilities:

- Evaluation of both new and old injuries.
- Rehabilitation and treatment of Injuries, Including posture evaluations, corrective exercise, manual therapies, taping, modality application, and home exercise programs.
- Concussion evaluation and rehabilitation.
- Emergency on-site services such as wound care, CPR, and management of emergency situations involving physical injury.
- Modification of activities for Dance class and rehearsals.
- Fast Track Referrals into St. Luke’s University Health Network’s Performing Arts Medicine Institute Providers including, Orthopedic Surgeons, Sports Medicine Physicians, Concussion specialists, and Physical Therapists.



The St. Luke's Athletic Trainer must have received confirmation via power school that the St. Luke's University Health Network Consent to Treat AND the HIPPA release form had been signed by the Parent or Guardian prior to services being rendered. These forms were sent out via the Power School Health Update and must be completed for each school year.

How to schedule an appointment for a **minor, old, or an injury that is sustained outside of school** (please **do not** email the athletic trainer directly unless it is a general question about the process or an already known injury)

- Go to the schools' Website
- Under the Student's Tab click on St, Luke's Training Room
- Click on on the link stating "Make an appointment with the Athletic Trainer"
- Once the form is filled out, the Athletic Trainer will set up an appointment slot for the student.
- Students will be notified of appointment time via a google calendar invite.

What to do if you sustain a **hit to the head, a major injury that severely limits your ability to participate in class or rehearsal during school hours:**

- Please speak to your teacher for the class about what happened and sit out of class
- The teacher will get in contact with the Athletic Trainer via Phone call, Google hang out, or via email.
- The Athletic Trainer will report to the class depending on the severity of this injury in a timely fashion to take the student down to the athletic training room for evaluation.

**If a severe injury is sustained by any student, Emergency protocol for the school will be followed.**

**After an evaluation**, and depending on the severity of the injury, either a phone call and/or an email will be sent to the parent and/or guardian of the student. The communication will consist of Injury diagnosis and plan of care including a suggestion of referral if deemed necessary by the Athletic Trainer, Rehabilitation goals, and modifications for dance class, to allow parents and/or guardians to share such information with Home Studio teachers if they so wish. The Athletic Trainer will then set up subsequent appointments with the student during study halls or Dance time to complete the rehabilitation and return to the activity process.

## Rehearsal Class and Creative Process Syllabus

### Course Description

Students will be educated and involved, in numerous ways, casting through performance, in the creative process of making a dance, producing a dance concert, and/or participating as a performer.

### Final Exams:

*Creative Process: Dance Soup Concert and/or Creative Process Informal Concert, Young Choreographers in Concert and all technical rehearsals.*

*Dance Major Rehearsal Groups: Quilt concert and all technical rehearsals.*

### Course Objectives

**Learn choreography craft** through observation and teacher-directed assignments.

**Master rehearsal and performance etiquette** and the language of theater.

**Develop discipline and responsibility** in rehearsal and performance.

**Contribute effectively** as a group member.

**Enhance flexibility, agility, coordination, and strength** by learning various movement styles.

**Utilize and manipulate dance techniques** to express creativity.

**Explore communication through movement** and develop artistry.

**Engage in production aspects** including lighting, costume design, stage management, and support elements.

### Method

1. Dance majors will be placed in a Rehearsal class with a faculty and/or guest choreographer by going through an audition/placement process during the first week/s of school.
2. *Creative Process Class.* (Dance Majors and some outside majors) Working groups will be established as part of this course through choosing your own groups, auditioning for groups if you don't have an established group, and/or choreographing a piece if desired.
3. Students are expected to be **fully engaged** in every rehearsal either as an understudy or full cast member and to learn the movement that is assigned to them, dancing it full-out in each rehearsal.

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Absences from rehearsals and performances impact the entire group** as dancers depend on each other for spacing, timing, and coordination. **Commitment to the performance and rehearsal schedule is essential.** If a student cannot meet these standards or participate as outlined, discuss it with the Director of Dance as soon as you receive the performance calendar. **Attendance is crucial** during rehearsals when roles are developed and perfected. If students surpass their allotted "free" absences/observations, their role may be reassigned. **Notify your choreographer in advance** if you will be absent for planning purposes. **Performances and technical rehearsals are graded exams.** Absences from these, without prior permission from the dance department, are serious and may result in replacement by an understudy and point deductions from the performance grade. **No make-up work is allowed** unless due to serious illness or injury. In such cases, parents must call the dance office and the student must see the school's Athletic Trainer. A doctor's note is required for any performance absence to be excused and may involve a make-up assignment, including attending missed concerts if possible.

### UNDERSTUDIES

**Understudies** may be assigned to learn a role as a backup for others due to injury, illness, or administrative reasons. They must learn the role through observation, questioning, and physical practice, often independently. When asked to perform, they must know the role thoroughly. **Understudy work is graded.**

**PROBATION:** If a student is failing two or more classes, the Dance Department will monitor their progress and they may be put on probation, which could result in being pulled from rehearsals and performances until grades improve. Students who have broken the Charter Arts Code of Conduct and received disciplinary actions could also result in being pulled from performances at the Artistic Directors Discretion.

Charter Arts Dance Department Performances include three full-evening concerts each school year with a complement of other smaller, but important, community performances.

**Dance Soup, November:** This concert is an outcome of *the Creative Process for the Dancer* elective. Only students enrolled in this course will have the opportunity to create works and/or dance in this concert. Participants will be mentored by faculty members. Student choreographers will audition or choose their casts from among the population of their elective class. (If not chosen for Dance Soup, Creative Process pieces will perform in the Creative Process Informal Concert during the school day)

**Young Choreographers in Concert, March/April:** This concert is also an outcome of the *Creative Process for the Dancer* elective. Only students enrolled in this class will have the opportunity to participate in this concert. Senior students' original choreography will be set on other members of the elective course. This performance serves as the capstone for a senior dancer.

**Dance Quilt, May:** All Dance Majors in good standing are cast for this concert and will have the opportunity to work with faculty choreographers throughout the year to create the works to be performed.

### Community Performances

ALL dance students need to be available for ALL dates included on the Rehearsal/Performance Schedule, including community performances. If a dancer is not cast in these performances (FINAL casting occurs two to three weeks prior to the actual performance), then they are released from the responsibility to these concerts, UNLESS a student is an understudy. Understudies are "on call" for the duration of the performance and will most likely be asked to be present on location.

### PERFORMANCE SUPPORT WORK

There are many opportunities for students to perform important production work behind the scenes by being a part of the Technical Crew, Hospitality Crew, and/or PR Crew. These volunteer opportunities develop additional skills and confidence in dancers as well as provide needed support to the concert director, faculty, and fellow students.

## **GRADING**

### Studio Rehearsals

Rehearsals will be graded by the daily point scale used in technique classes. See the *Grading Policy in the Dance Handbook*.

### Performance Exams

Each performance and accompanying technical rehearsals serve as an exam. Total points earned for the exam will be determined by the director of the concert. Professionalism, Responsibility, and Performance are the main categories considered in an exam grade.

## **Dance Department Rehearsal and Performance Dates 2024-25**

**Exact rehearsal times TBA. Students must be in school for each of the Monday-Friday dates. Call times are usually around 2 hours prior to show time. Please try to avoid being absent the week before shows as they are critical rehearsals.**

**Guest Artist Residency: 9/25-9/27** -Upperclassmen Piece Only (Underclassmen will have master class w/artist)  
9/25-Master classes and audition for upperclassmen during school. After school rehearsal for those cast 2:30-6:30  
9/26-Rehearsal for selected cast during upperclassmen dance block and after school 3:45-6:45  
9/27-Rehearsal for selected cast during upperclassmen the dance block

**Senior Solo Showings to Faculty/Juniors: 10/23 & 10/24** (periods 1,2,3-in school only)  
Dress rehearsal in senior seminar class 10/17. We will select a small number of solos for Dance Soup Concert-the rest perform in CP Informal Concert.

**Creative Process Showings: 10/28, 10/29, 10/30, 11/1** (periods 4,5 in school only)  
Faculty watch Creative Process dances and make selections for the Dance Soup or Informal Concert.

**Creative Process Informal Concert: 11/7 & 11/8** (periods 4,5 in school only-community invited)  
11/7-open dress for Informal Concert with both sections of Creative Process Classes  
11/8-Informal Concert with both section of Creative Process Classes

**Dance Soup Concert: 11/18-11/23** (All Dance majors except those not enrolled in Creative Process)  
**Tech Rehearsals:** 11/18, 11/19, 11/20, 11/21 **Open Dress:** 11/21 4pm **Performances:** 11/22 7pm, 11/23 2pm & 7pm

**National High School Dance Festival at Point Park University: 2/26-3/2**  
(25 Upperclassmen slots available, seniors/those cast in pieces/prospective college dance majors get priority but an application is required this year since we have 30 seniors-details TBA)

**YCC Showings: 3/6, 3/7, 3/10, 3/11** (periods 4,5 in school only)

**Charter Arts Mainstage Musical-OPTIONAL 3/19-3/23** (tech and dress the whole month of March)  
Those interested can audition for the show. Auditions are usually the week before winter break and rehearsals start in January when we return from winter break.

**Young Choreographers in Concert: 3/31-4/5** (All Dance majors except those not enrolled in Creative Process)  
**Tech Rehearsals** 3/31, 4/1,4/2, 4/3 **Open Dress:** 4/3 **Performances:** 4/4 7pm, 4/5 2 & 7pm

**Dance Quilt Concert: 5/5-5/10, 2025**  
**(Required for all dance majors and linked to rehearsal class grade)**  
**Tech Rehearsals:** 5/5, 5/6, 5/7, 5/8 **Open Dress:** 5/8 **Performances:** 5/9 7pm, 5/10 2pm & 7pm ALL GRADES

\*\*Written Requests to be exempt from any performances due to prior scheduled events are due **no later than Friday September 6th**. (Outside dance conflicts are NOT EXCUSED, this is for things such as a wedding, sibling college graduation, etc.) Email [jweaver@charterarts.org](mailto:jweaver@charterarts.org) with these requests and faculty will review them and you will be notified with our decision.

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Please Note: Additional performance opportunities often arise throughout the school year and will be announced ASAP and can be accepted or declined based on your availability.