



Company Intensive Program

technique * performance* community*
character

HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Company Intensive Program A Guide for Students and Parents

About This Handbook

Melissa Kathleen's School of Dance has, over the course of more than twenty years, established itself as a studio which provides quality dance education as well as a safe and fun learning environment for its students. We believe that this success stems from our solid training and quality service, along with the support of our parents and students. The dance industry is always evolving and this program was implemented in order to help us grow and evolve along with it and to best serve our students.

The Company Intensive Program will ultimately focus on four pillars: technique, performance, community, and character.

We understand that being a part of this program is a significant investment of time, finances, and commitment, and we have spent a considerable amount of time determining options that will result in the best return on investment for your dancer(s). We understand that our program may not work for every dancer, and we encourage you to consider our program **ONLY** if our infrastructure works for you.

After reading the following information, if you are interested in joining the program, you will be required to complete the MKSD Company Intensive and Audition and either the Mini Intensive or Junior/Senior Intensive during our summer session. We will hold auditions and interviews that will finalize placement for each MKSD Company Program Class for students ages 6 & up (must have a minimum of 3 years dance experience and director recommendation).

Please note this placement is unrelated to class placement and will be based on technical ability, stylistic ability, performance skills, behavior/class etiquette, focus and maturity, and potential ability.

Melissa Zaleski
Owner/Artistic Director

Abby Zaleski
Company Program Assistant Director

The Goal of the Program

The goal of the MKSD Company Intensive Program is to encourage dancers to utilize their dance training and education within the community and to provide a solid performance base for any future endeavors. To accomplish this in a positive manner, we will direct the focus of parents, students, and teachers to the enhancement of the learning experience.

MKSD has never been a competition based studio because the competitive dance industry is ever evolving, and the current shift is transitioning towards an extremely competitive environment that lacks focus, direction, standardization, and regulation. We feel that it is in the best interest of the student dancer to have a solid technical background that will provide opportunities for local performances, community theater, college level dance and beyond.

Long-term, the technical foundation that dancers will receive in our program will prepare them to be adaptable to various styles and methods of instruction while remaining versatile and humble.

The goals of the Company Intensive Program are as follows:

- (1) Provide strong technical and performance training in a variety of dance styles
- (2) Create a flexible environment that will accommodate the exploration of additional interests (auditioning and participating in theatrical performances, participating in school/extracurricular activities, training in music/acting/voice, etc.)
- (3) Explore opportunities that focus on community and character, encouraging our dancers' success on and offstage

The MKSD Company Intensive Program wants to encourage children to focus on their technical dance training, have opportunities to perform quality dance entertainment, and to give back to their community.

Achieving the Goals

The goals of the program will be achieved the following ways:

Company Intensive Program Focus Sessions: Date and Time TBA on Calendar

Focus Sessions will be reserved for learning combinations, conditioning and training in diverse skills, and group performance opportunities.

Our dancers will benefit from the Company Intensive Program Focus Sessions in the following ways:

(1) Learning Combinations

- a. Studio instructors expose dancers to a variety of stylistic movement within genres.
- b. The goal of learning combinations will allow dancers to adapt to various teaching styles and execute unique styles of choreography in a way that will make them stand out- preparing students for future success in performance affiliated opportunities.

(2) Conditioning & Training in Diverse Skills

- a. Our dancers will be conditioned to safely execute skills. This conditioning will develop the strength and stamina required to support consistent performance and technique.
- b. Training in Diverse Skills will help the dancers' focus on supplemental training that will further support their success. Examples include: acting and performance, voice training, and how to prepare for and behave in auditions/interview, speaking in public, and general stage presence/communication skills.

(3) Group Performance Opportunities

- a. Although valuable lessons are taught within the studio, the experience one receives from performing in front of an audience cannot be replicated in the studio environment.
- b. Our group performance opportunities will focus on community events, allowing our dancers to prioritize the art of performing.
- c. Routines will be learned in the weeks leading into the particular opportunity and routine casting will be based off of dancer availability, skills, and casting needs. Some pieces may be catalogued into our repertoire for the season.

A Company Costume will be used for such performances.

(4) Educational Opportunities

- a. Dancers will attend conventions and workshops as a way to enhance and expand their dance education.

Program Logistics & Costs:

- ❑ Membership in the program requires a minimum enrollment of 1 ballet class, 1 jazz class, 1 tap class, and 1 elective class per week.
- ❑ Focus Sessions will be billed at the rate of \$40/Month.
- ❑ A calendar will detail the varying options and experience requirements.

Participant Expectations

In choosing to be a participant in the MKSD Company Intensive Program, you are committing yourself to Melissa Kathleen's School of Dance, which means that we, in turn, are committing ourselves to a higher investment in training your dancer and preparing them to perform as a representative of our studio.

Classes, events, training, and rehearsals set forth by MKSD must be a priority for all program participants. This guarantees that we are all working together, in the most productive way, to maintain the integrity, transparency, and quality training of all of our dancers. Dancers that do not properly communicate are subject to immediate dismissal from the program.

Choreography is to not be rehearsed, performed, discussed, or altered at any time, at any point, outside of studio affiliated and approved circumstances. Home review and practice is permissible and encouraged for all students.

CLASS ETIQUETTE & ATTIRE: We expect our students to have first-rate, focused, non-disruptive behavior in our dance classes. If a student misbehaves in class, we excuse him/her from the room. If it happens again, we will request a call to his/her parents. If this happens a third time, a student's position in the Company Intensive Program may be compromised.

Correct attire for dance class includes:

- Ladies: Pink or Tan Tights, Solid Leotard, Hair in a Bun or Neat Ponytail, Black Dance Shorts, Appropriate Dance Shoes, No Cover-Ups
- Gentlemen: Fitted Workout Attire, Appropriate Dance Shoes

Cell phones, tablets, and other technological devices will not be permitted in class.

For all classes, rehearsals, workshops, conventions, and private lessons, a leotard must be the base.

CLASS & CHOREOGRAPHY PLACEMENT:

It is our policy to offer appropriate opportunities to every child. Placement will be determined after careful review by our highly qualified instructor(s). This will ensure that each student is a strong and successful dancer.

Class placement decisions are derived from our teaching and in-class experience. A student is placed in a particular group or class where he or she will feel confident, in order to promote the dancer's self esteem. Some dancers who are placed in a higher level become discouraged, only to lose their passion for dance. Others respond to the challenge of being in a class with dancers who are more proficient by pushing themselves to work harder. Placement is highly individual and the factors that contribute to the decision are complex. We will move a dancer if we discover they are not placed correctly. Our teachers see the students several times a week, and they know the level that is best suited for your dancer. **If you do not trust our instructors or our programming, we are unable to adequately serve your dancer to his/her fullest ability.**

Dos & Don'ts:

Some parents may compare their child's progress or class or choreography placement to that of others in the program. Watch for this behavior in your children as well and encourage them to focus solely on their own accomplishments. Looking to others for inspiration is a good thing; however, negativity or making comparisons distracts from the energy that could be focused on becoming a stronger dancer. In addition, speaking negatively or critically about your child's teachers, the policies and rules of the studio or program, the office staff, the events we attend, fellow dancers, or other parents in front of your child (or other students) are seeds for gossip and will likely exacerbate an issue or problem. This behavior will not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the program.

Children learn important lessons from their teachers and their parents, acquiring important behavior patterns through their example. We take that responsibility seriously. It is our philosophy to encourage our students to think, feel, and act respectfully to their peers, the adults in their lives, and themselves.

If you have questions or concerns about your child's dance education, don't panic. **Please don't initially talk with other parents when questions arise.** Email the studio or call for an appointment. Please conduct all communication through email, phone call, or appointment time; do not approach the teacher between, before, or after classes. This will ensure your privacy with no distractions.

Parent Responsibilities:

- Maintaining your dancer's financial account
- Getting your dancers to and from all Company Intensive Program related events **on time**
- Maintaining a positive attitude
- Making any hotel reservations and planning travel arrangements
- Supervising your dancer at events
- Doing your dancer's hair and make-up
- Making sure your dancer is properly stretched
- Making sure all accessories are brought to performances (tights, costumes, jewelry, shoes, etc.)

Company Requirements:

- Your commitment to the program is June of the current year through Recital of the following year.
- Parents must provide an email address. Dancer email address is optional.
- Maintain the program class requirements

- All program participants are required to complete the MKSD Company Intensive and Audition and either the Mini Intensive or Junior/Senior Intensive during our summer session.
- Dancers must purchase a program uniform (Jacket for Everyone plus Leotard(s) for Females)
- Dancers must be present in all enrolled classes the two weeks prior to a performance. If you miss a rehearsal two weeks prior to performance, you risk being cut from that particular performance.
- Dancers must follow the dress code as designated for each event.
- Program uniforms should be worn unless otherwise specified. This includes wearing the Program Jacket at all events when you are not dancing or performing.
- Dancers must have the correct style & color of dance shoes and tights for all performances.
- Dancers are expected to say nice things to dancers within and outside of our school at each performance or event.
- All accounts (Studio & Company) must be paid in full by **May 15th of the recital year** in order to participate in the annual recital as part of the company.

Appearance/Conduct

- The only acceptable piercing is the earlobe for girls. There is no acceptable piercing for boys.
- Hair should maintain a natural color throughout the entire season.
- Only small earrings may be worn during classes. No other jewelry allowed.
- Tattoos of any kind (permanent or henna) should not be visible for performances.
- Company Intensive Program Students are to show respect and consideration to all teachers, staff members and other parents.
- Questions, concerns, comments, problems, or any issues are to be discussed with the Owner/Artistic Director **only**, not with other parents.
- Parents or Dancers DO NOT email, text, or communicate with other studio owners or teachers regarding events that you may or may not like about any event we attend.

Possible reasons for dismissal from the MKSD Company Intensive Program:

By the Dancer:

- Missing more than four required, unexcused classes or four rehearsals per year.
- Poor school grades.
- Spreading rumors or gossip about other company members or dancers.
- Disruptive classroom behavior.

- Rudeness, disrespect, or lying to teachers, staff, or any parent or adult while inside or outside of the studio.
- Bad attitudes, lack of participation, or unsportsmanlike behavior at any event
- For talking “ugly” or making “observations” about any dancer, you will be given a warning the first time. If it happens again (at the same or a different venue), you will be dismissed from the company.
- Posting or writing negative comments on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, or any social media site about MKSD, company members, teachers, staff members, parents, other students or performance events.
- Participation in illegal or inappropriate activities (i.e. underage drinking, drugs)

By the Dancer’s Parents:

- Late payments, returned checks, or non-payment.
- Gossip or spreading rumors.
- Being late to a program-designated event.
- Not following proper communication protocol with the studio and its instructors.
- Interfering with the selection or choice of music or costumes.
- Negativity regarding choice of music, choreography, costumes, or class placement.
- Rehearsing studio choreography at an offsite location (other than independent, home practice).
- Performing studio choreography at an offsite location without explicit, written permission.
- Rudeness, disrespect, vulgar language, lying to any MKSD staff member or volunteer.
- Posting, insinuating or writing negative comments on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, or any social media site about MKSD, company members, teachers, staff members, parents, other students or performance events.

If a dancer is dismissed or quits the program for any reason, there will be no refunds given for any rehearsals, costumes, private lessons, or entry fees paid.

- If your dancer quits or is dismissed from the program, you must turn in all costumes to the office within 48 hours. The costumes will be returned to you at the end of the season.
- If your dancer quits the program mid-season, he/she is ineligible to re-admittance. The only exception is severe, documented illness or

circumstance that will be considered and approved on a case-by-case basis.

Please keep the following in mind:

- We never speak negatively about the teachers, dancers, or parents from other studios.
- We never create conflict with the directors or participants of events in which we participate.
- All communication must go through the studio (email, phone, text, etc.).
- No parent or dancer may call, email, or question the directors of any event.

The Focus Is Not on Competition

Since it is our goal to instill a passion for performing and learning rather than merely the desire to win awards, MKSD Company Intensive Program Dancers will have non-competitive based performance opportunities. These events build character and are important in our dancers' overall development and growth.

Leave of Absence

Many of our Program Participants enjoy experiences such as theatrical performances, community commitments, etc. To accommodate participation in these experiences, students may fill out a Leave of Absence Request Form to excuse their absences in particular classes/rehearsals during a designated time period.

Costumes/Uniforms/Attire

Costume payments are the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian. Group performance costumes are estimated at \$25-\$65/costume. You are responsible for purchasing your tights and shoes in the proper, designated color and style for each routine. Performance shoes must be clean.

Each Program Participant is required to purchase a studio leotard, program jacket, performance accessories (ie; rhinestone choker and rhinestone earrings), and appropriate hair/make-up supplies to adequately convey the designated company look.

Program participants are required to wear leotards and tights and/or shorts (if specified) for all events/venues where they are performing or participating in

dance related events. This includes all workshops, conventions, rehearsals, and performances.

Tips:

Costume Common Sense:

- ✓ Always have a second pair of tights available.
- ✓ Place steamed costumes in a garment bag for travel.
- ✓ Carry hats in a hatbox or container to prevent them from damage.
- ✓ Hang costumes between performances.
- ✓ Place your name in all costumes, accessories, and shoes.
- ✓ Check to make sure you have all your costumes, accessories, and shoes before leaving for an event, prior to leaving an event, and when you return home from an event.

Possible Performance Shoes:

- ✓ Pink Ballet Shoes
- ✓ Half Soles
- ✓ Tan or Black Tap Shoes (designated style)
- ✓ Tan or Black Jazz Shoes
- ✓ Hip-Hop Shoes (designated style)
- ✓ Character Shoes

A list of style numbers and colors will be sent out. Do **not** buy any performance shoes until you receive the list. When you receive a designated shoe style, please order immediately to guarantee a timely arrival.

TUITION & EXPENSE POLICY

Part of your commitment to the MKSD Company Intensive Program is being up-to-date with all accounts related to participation. All accounts must be kept current at all times and paid in full by May 15th of the recital year.

Monthly membership is due on the 1st of each month. Workshop and performance fees (if applicable) have specified due dates. Late fees are applied to any not paid within 5 days of the due date. All Company fees must be paid separately from regular tuition.

Refunds

There are no refunds given for rehearsals, entry fees, uniforms, costumes, workshop fees, private lessons, or tuition for any reason.

Private Lesson Scheduling

If you are interested in private lessons above and beyond your designated class and routine rehearsal times, you may email mksdcompany@gmail.com for requests and instructor availability. Private lessons are available at the teachers' discretion, usually Friday afternoons and on some weekends. Private lesson cancellations must be made 24-hours in advance in order to avoid being charged for the lesson. Private lesson booking will occur only one month in advance to avoid unnecessary amounts of cancellations. Only students participating in the Company Intensive Program will be eligible for solos/duets/trios during our Winter Show. Only Graduating Seniors will be eligible for solos/duets/trios during our June Recital.

CONTACT INFO

Melissa Zaleski (Owner/ Artistic Director)
mksdcompany@gmail.com
(704) 982-0528

MELISSA KATHLEEN'S SCHOOL OF DANCE COMPANY INTENSIVE PROGRAM Handbook Acknowledgement

We look forward to an exciting, rewarding year!

We have read, understand, and agree to the rules and expectations of being a member of the Company Intensive Program at Melissa Kathleen's School of Dance as outlined in the Handbook.

Dancer

Date

Parent

Date



Company Intensive Program Audition Form

Dancer's Name	Age	Date of Birth
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Parents' Names	Home Phone	Cell Phone
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Mailing Address (Include City/State/Zip Code)

_____	_____
Parent Email (Please Print)	Dancer Email (Optional; Please Print)

My child, _____, will be auditioning for the MKSD Company Intensive Program. I/We understand the following:

- **Dancers will be auditioning for placement in the Company Program. This does not guarantee the dancer a spot in the Program or on a specific division/track of the Company.**
- **No Score Sheets will be distributed.**
- **MKSD Staff will contribute to the selection process. Dancers will be given specific dance skills/combinations to determine placement in the program.**
- **For all participants: past attendance, participation, behavior integrity, and conduct (both parent and dancer) play a significant part in the final selection process.**
- **Good sportsmanship is expected from parents and dancers.**
- **The program schedule is non-negotiable- NO EXCEPTIONS.**

_____	_____
Parent Signature	Date

_____	_____
Dancer Signature	Date

Please note that Summer MKSD Company Intensive and Audition fees are non-refundable if a dancer chooses not to participate in the audition or if he/she is not accepted into the program.



Company Intensive Program Event Commitment Form: General Membership

Our format allows you to mix and match our offerings to create a season that best works for your family! There will be other offerings for performance based on requests from community event planners.

Program Participant's Name: _____

Ages 6+ Only:

Albemarle Downtown Christmas (Required)

Ages 9+ Only:

CDM Winter Workshop

Ages 13+ Only:

Junior Member Program

Opportunities for All Program Participants:

CDM Fall Convention (Required)

Albemarle Christmas Parade (Required)

Additional Performance Opportunities:

Dancers will be given the opportunity to participate in additional performance opportunities both in and out of state. The director will send information to parents as these opportunities come available.

TENTATIVE COMPANY ACTIVITY CALENDAR

***Prices are an estimate and may be slightly higher or lower than the amount given.*

MEMBERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

CDM JR MEMBER PROGRAM

WHO APPLIES: Program Participants Ages 13+

EVENT DESCRIPTION: Program participants will participate in the Junior Member Offerings of Carolina Dance Masters. This includes Fall Convention, Winter Workshop, and the October Educational Jam (for second-year participants).

GOALS & OBJECTIVES: Leadership Opportunity, Organizational Opportunity

COST: \$40 Dues Plus Event Fees

PAYMENT DUE DATE: September 10th

THE HEART AND ART OF DANCE SERVICE & ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE SOCIETY

WHO PARTICIPATES: All Program Participants

EVENT DESCRIPTION: Students will participate and create a number of community service events and opportunities, including an organized event in the Fall and Spring. Academic Excellence and Focus will also be emphasized and encouraged.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES: Commitment to Community & Character, Philanthropy, Sharing the Art of Dance

EVENT PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES:

CDM FALL CONVENTION GREENSBORO, NC

WHO ATTENDS: All Program Participants (Required)

WHERE: Koury Convention Center, Greensboro, NC

WHEN: **NOV. 11-13, 2020**

EVENT DESCRIPTION: The CDM Fall Convention is a GREAT opportunity for taking classes and participating in or watching the Title Competition. This convention is a great time for our studio to come together and celebrate. Students love the semi-formal banquet offered by CDM on Saturday evening.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES: Education through Master Classes, Inspiration through Performance, Company Team Building & Bonding through Banquet

COST: Approx. \$200 for the weekend for Convention (not including hotel, etc.)

PAYMENT DUE DATE: September 20th

ALBEMARLE CHRISTMAS PARADE Date TBD ALBEMARLE

WHO ATTENDS: All Program Participants (Required)

WHERE: Downtown Albemarle, NC

WHEN: TBD

EVENT DESCRIPTION: Program Participants age 6 will be able to ride on the float and students ages 7 & up will walk and perform the parade route.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES: Performance Experience & Opportunity, Performing in a Group Environment

CDM WINTER WORKSHOP Date February, 2021 TBD

WHO ATTENDS: Dancers Ages 9+

WHERE: TBD

WHEN: First weekend in February

EVENT DESCRIPTION: Dancers ages 9+ will enjoy this one-day educational event offering Master Classes.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES: Educational Experience

COST: \$40-\$75

PAYMENT DUE DATE: January 10th

**Dance the World – Walt Disney World Resort Date July 5 - 9, 2021
Orlando, FL**

WHO ATTENDS: Company Dancers

WHERE: Walt Disney World Resort, Orlando, FL

WHEN: July 5-9, 2021

EVENT DESCRIPTION: Dancers will participate in parades at Magic Kingdom or Epcot (based on class – must be at least 7 years old to attend) and all will participate in a stage performance of our own choreography at EPCOT. Birth certificate required by Disney/Dance the World for participation.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES: Educational Experience/Performance Opportunity

COST: \$1000+

PAYMENT DUE DATE: April 24, 2020 for current Company members; following acceptance into Company program for new members.

(Dancers will have more local, community performance opportunities throughout the year. Advance notice will be given prior to the performances.)

Please note that the Company Intensive Program Dancers will be expected to perform in the Winter Extravaganza and June Recital. Dates for both these events TBD.

