



Parent & Student Handbook

2024 - 2025



2204 Highway 35, Sea Girt, NJ 08750

Welcome!

We have an exciting dance school year planned for you. This booklet is filled with information covering the entire school year. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to someone in the office at your earliest convenience.

We request that you keep all communications for the school year as you receive them from our office. In March/April 2025, you will be receiving information about your participation in our annual recital.

Please note that the waiting rooms are made available for the convenience of our students and their families. The waiting rooms are for waiting, reading, snacking, conversation, video viewing, homework, and children playing with toys or games brought from home. We ask that you please respect the activities of others and the classes in session. Your courtesy will be greatly appreciated.

We request that you arrive at the studio with adequate time to prepare for class, parking, changing, restroom, etc. Parents, for your children's safety, please be available to receive students when dismissed from class if under the age of ten. Please call whenever delayed for class start time or pickup time.

If any parent/student wishes a private conference concerning your individual dance goals or financial concerns, please do not hesitate to ask. We are happy to work with you to ensure that your dance school year will be one of pleasure and growth. The entire faculty and staff wish you a fantastic year of dance. We are so excited to have you as a part of the East Coast Dance Company family!

Sincerely,

Amanda M. Calpini

Studio Director/Dance Instructor

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Studio Philosophy

East Coast Dance Company offers high quality instruction in all areas of dance. We employ only the finest instructors, provide a new, clean facility and workable class sizes so that students receive personal instruction at a reasonable cost. At East Coast Dance Company, our classes are designed to stimulate the enjoyment of dance while laying an important foundation for further training. As the student advances, the variety and intensity of the class work increases. We offer programs that allow our students to go on to careers in dance, as well as offer classes where students participate in dance for exercise and pure enjoyment of the art form. We offer classes for beginning through advanced students, ages two through adult. Our classes and programs are designed to help all levels of dancers thrive in self-confidence and inspiration!

Mission Statement

The East Coast Dance Company is committed to providing professional dance instruction in a safe, high-quality studio environment. The staff at East Coast Dance Company is comprised of vibrant and energetic teachers who are well trained in the field of dance. They understand what it takes to be a good dancer and make it a priority to pass that knowledge on to their students. We encourage students of all ages and skill levels to build an appreciation for the art of dance and to excel to their fullest potential while having fun. Our students are our priority. It is our goal that they receive a positive and excellent education in dance.

Teaching Staff

The teaching staff at East Coast Dance Company is chosen with great care. We have regular staff meetings where we discuss curriculum and teaching methods. Teachers monitor and discuss students' progress across each of the disciplines to make sure that each student is performing to the best of his or her ability.

Our staff strives to give each student the individual attention and instruction he or she needs to reach their potential. Each of our teachers brings a unique perspective, personality and skill set to the classroom environment. Students benefit from these differing approaches and environments as they mirror the professional environment dancers will encounter throughout their dance career.

We are fortunate that the New Jersey area is rich with wonderful dance teachers and make a strong effort to expose our dancers to them. Throughout the year, we offer Master Classes from professional choreographers and dance instructors and encourage our students to take advantage of these classes.

Studio Design

Our facility is designed for the dancer. Our 4,700 square foot facility has 4 studios, each with suspended wood or suspended Marley floors. Our dance flooring enhances dance performance and greatly reduces the risk of injury. Each dance room is equipped with a fixed barre systems, as well as wall mounted mirrors and a state-of-the-art sound system. Studios A, B, and C have a one-way mirrored viewing window for your convenience.

We offer a comfortable waiting area, two bathrooms, a lost and found bin, and a front office television with our “News & Views” to keep you apprised of studio announcements and information about our dance world.

Classes

All our classes are divided into different levels, which are based on a student's ability. We believe that it is important for a student to be placed appropriately so they may get the most out of a class. Our dress code was established to promote the students' freedom of movement and the instructor's observation of correct technique. Hair should be worn off the face and neck, in a bun if possible. This enhances the dancer's vision and enables the instructor to observe proper alignment of the body.

Combo Class consists of two or more styles of dance within a 45 minute to hour and a half class (depending on the day & time). Students in this class will learn multiple dance techniques, as well as play fun dance games that assist with their understanding of fine motor coordination and flexibility. Along with key introductory skills, these classes focus on how to properly warm up, do progressions across the floor, and will work on a different themed dance each month! Combo classes are set by age and can include: Ballet/Tap, Ballet/Jazz, Ballet/Hip Hop, Hip Hop/Jazz, Ballet/Hip Hop, & Tap/Ballet/Jazz.

Creative Movement is a special music and movement class designed for our little ones! This class will include fun dance games to assist with the development of fine motor coordination along with singing and circle time. Multiple props are used including scarves, maracas, parachute, colored dots, and more! There is no recital routine for this class.

Jazz is an hour-long class set for the ages 8 and up. This class will consist of a 20-minute warm-up that will help increase flexibility and focus on the essential jazz techniques across the floor. A dance combo will be taught at the end of every class. This is a great, high energy class for every dancer!

Tap class is an hour-long and set for the ages 8 and up. This class will teach the students rhythm made by movement of the feet. Tap is essential in developing timing, rhythm and coordination!

Hip Hop is an hour-long class set for the ages 4+ and up. This is a fun class that requires no previous experience; just lots of energy and dynamic expression! This class consists of warm-ups along with funky and cutting edge choreography. Appropriate music from the hottest singers and recording artists are played throughout the class! All boys hip hop classes are available depending on the season.

Lyrical/Contemporary class is an hour to an hour and a half in length and geared towards ages 8 and up. These classes require technique along with a strong passion for dance! These styles of dance help dancers incorporate their feelings with their movement and spatial awareness. The student's expression and emotional feelings are emphasized within each class. Ballet is HIGHLY

recommended if taking lyrical/contemporary, as it heavily assists in the mastering of the class.

Ballet class is an hour to an hour and a half long depending on the level and age of the student. Ballet is the foundation and discipline of all other dance styles! Students will complete barre exercises in each class, working towards a strong foundation of ballet technique. A recommendation from the teacher will determine if the student will be put on pointe. Both recital class and technique only classes are available.

Acro/Tumbling at East Coast Dance Company is an hour-long class learning basic tumbling floor work and contortion. The Beginner level will work on basic techniques such as cartwheels, round-offs, hand stands, chin stands, forward rolls. The Intermediate and Advanced levels will work towards skills such as front and backhand springs, side ariels, front ariels, and many more challenging tricks. There are no recital routines for these classes.

Jumps & Turns technique classes are geared towards working on a dancer's technique, specifically in jazz, lyrical, and ballet. This class will serve as a great supplement to every dancer's weekly schedule. The class will consist of flexibility training, floor work, and improving many popular jumps and turns taught in other classes. There are no recital routines for these classes.

Stretch & Strength is a great supplement to any dancer looking to improve his or her flexibility, core strength, and balance. This class is designed to help dancers understand proper body alignment, balance techniques, and work on flexibility and strength exercises. There are no recital routines for these classes.

Modern This class focuses on interpretive and contemporary movement as opposed to structured steps. Our modern class encourages dancers to express themselves in through emotion and breathing techniques. This class is an excellent supplement to any dancer looking to enhance their overall dance training.

Private Lessons are available in all styles of dance. Private and semi-private lessons are arranged by appointment. Please see one of our front desk to schedule or email us at eastcoastdancenj@gmail.com

INTENSIVES & MASTER CLASSES are offered throughout the year. We encourage every dancer to take advantage of these opportunities to study with the guest teachers who not only have exceptional credentials but provides our dancers with the opportunity to learn new and different techniques. We feel it is important for our students to be exposed to different styles of teaching as it makes a dancer well-rounded. Intensives and master classes will be made available periodically throughout the year and registration information and requirements will be posted in the studio.

Dress Code – Recreational Dancers

COMBO Classes

Any color leotard with white, pink, or black tights and correct shoes, tutus and skirts allowed

Jazz/Modern/Jumps & Turns/Contemporary/Lyrical/Tap/Musical Theater/Acro

- Girls: Convertible tights with any color leotard OR bra top with shorts/leggings. Hair must be up and out of face in ponytail or bun
- Boys: T-shirt or tank top with form-fitting pants, leggings, or shorts
- No t-shirts or baggy clothing allowed

Ballet

- Girls: Any color leotard, pink tights, MUST have a hair in a bun
- Boys: White t-shirt with black form-fitting shorts, leggings, or pants
- No baggy clothing – ballet wrap skirts and ballet sweaters only

Hip Hop

Comfortable, loose-fitted clothing is allowed. No jeans. Dancers MUST have the correct shoes. No street shoes allowed as it damages our floors.

Dress Code – Competitive Dancers

Jazz/Modern/Jumps & Turns/Contemporary/Lyrical/Tap/Musical Theater/Acro

- Girls: Any color leotard OR bra top with shorts or leggings. Hair must be up and out of face in ponytail or bun
- Boys: T-shirt or tank top with form-fitting pants, leggings, or shorts
- **No t-shirts or baggy clothing allowed**

Ballet

- Girls: Any color leotard, pink tights, MUST have a hair in a bun
- Boys: White t-shirt with black form-fitting shorts, leggings, or pants
- No baggy clothing – ballet wrap skirts and ballet sweaters only

Hip Hop

Comfortable, loose-fitted clothing is allowed. No jeans. Dancers MUST have the correct shoes. No street shoes allowed as it damages our floors.

Uniform Required

- Rehearsal Days Only – Thursday & Saturday with hair in bun

January thru April

- Team dancers are to wear all black (leotard, shorts, bra top, leggings – no baggy clothing) to all classes labeled “ROUTINE REHEARSAL” classes. Invite Only Ballet & Pointe “Routine Rehearsals” must wear ballet attire listed above.

Petite Team Attire Requirements

- Wednesday – Uniform, hair in bun
- Thursday – Black leotard, pink tights, hair in bun

Required Shoes – Recreational Dancers

Ballet (ages 8+)

Girls - Capezio “Hanami” Style #2037W in light pink canvas

Boys – Capezio “Hanami” Style #2037W in black canvas

Lyrical & Contemporary (ages 8+)

Bloch “Eclipse” Canvas Lyrical Shoe – tan half sole

Jazz & Musical Theater (ages 8+)

Capezio “E-Series” Style #EJ2 in caramel

Tap (ages 8+)

Capezio “Fluid” Lace Up Style CG17 in black

Hip Hop (all ages)

- Child Sizes - Nike Force 1 Low EasyOn Style #FN0237-111 in all white (no black logo)
- Youth Sizes - Nike Air Force 1 LE_Style #FV5951-111 in all white (no black logo)
- Adult Sizes - Nike Air Force 1 ‘07 Style #DD8959-100 in all white (no black logo)

COMBO Classes - Tap, Ballet, Jazz, Hip Hop

- Tap – Capezio “Mary Jane Buckle Strap” – Style #3800C in matte black
- Ballet – Capezio “Lily” – Style #212C in pink or Capezio “Luna” – Style #V100C in pink
- Jazz – Capezio “E-Series” Style #EJ2 in caramel
- Hip Hop - Nike Force 1 Low EasyOn Style #FN0237-111 in all white (no black logo)

Studio Policies

CLASS LEVELS are divided into levels based on a student's ability, not necessarily by age (except for some early age classes). Unlike grade levels in school, students do not necessarily move to the next level each year. We have a great deal of curriculum to cover in each level and we want to make sure that the student is comfortable, strong, confident, and technically correct before moving up. Some students may take a level for a couple of years, others may move through a level in less time. The determination is made on an individual basis by the instructor.

Each student progresses at his or her own pace. Students advance to more challenging levels as they safely master the requisite skills and techniques, not specific combinations. Please be patient and encouraging with your child. Dance is an art form and cannot be rushed. Often our levels do not coincide with other studios. Some studios have three levels while others may offer ten.

STUDENT PLACEMENT is critical to a child's success as a dancer. East Coast Dance Company believes that it is important for every student to be placed appropriately so that he/she can get the most out of the class. Our instructors take a personal interest in each student. Initial student evaluation involves determining a student's present ability considering previous dance experience, individual skill and muscle development. New students age 8 and younger should register for a class according to our age guidelines. We encourage older new students who would like to register for an hour-long class to try a class before committing to the entire year in that specific class.

Please contact the studio for information about our placement. Our instructors closely monitor the progress of each student to maximize the benefits of their dance training while minimizing the risk of physical strain.

TUITION

Summer Tuition is due upon registering. Full season tuition can be paid in full, or in monthly payments. **Payments are due on the first of each calendar month. If tuition is late and past the 10th of the month, there will be a \$25.00 late fee added to your account and your credit card on file will be automatically charged on the 11th of each month.** If another payment

method is preferred, tuition balances must be paid using another method before the 11th or else the card on file will be charged.

All payments made to ECDC can be as cash, check, or credit. We accept Visa, Master Card, Discover and American Express. There will be a \$30.00 fee for any returned checks. No credit is given for student absences or snow cancellation. If you make a payment late, please include your late fee or you will be billed. If you make your payments by mail, be certain to allow adequate time for mail delivery. Thank you for your cooperation.

Any student with an overdue balance of more than 45 days will not be allowed into class until payment in full is received. Overdue balances must be paid by cash, money order, or bank check. If you change your class style, add or delete a class or have any questions concerning the monthly charge, please inform someone in the office. Please make up any missed class within **one month** of your absence if possible; no credit will be given for missed classes.

The quality of our facility and faculty depends upon a system of mutual respect and cooperation. We understand that anyone may make a late payment from time to time, but please be respectful of our tuition policies. Thank you.

REFUNDS & WITHDRAWALS

Are not made once a session is underway unless the studio must cancel a class.

If a student must withdraw from a class, **please notify the dance school in writing immediately**, as you will be charged for classes until that time. Refunds are not given on tuition paid. If you withdrawal your child from dance after December 1st with no notification, your account will continue to be charged until the studio is properly notified in writing.

MEDICAL SITUATIONS

In the case of medical condition which prevents a student from dancing and exists for 30 days or more, a credit will be issued toward the next semester under the following conditions:

1. A letter must be presented from a doctor stating the medical condition and the number of days a dancer is unable to participate in class
2. A credit, determined by the number of days as indicated by the doctor, will be issued toward tuition for the subsequent semester only and cannot be carried over to subsequent semesters
3. Dancers, if physically unable to participate in class, must continue to attend and observe their classes so they do not fall behind in the curriculum.

CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS/LICE

If your child/children have contracted a contagious illness/head lice, he/she are not permitted to enter the studio for 24 hours of diagnosis. Upon return, a doctor's note must be presented to the front desk indicating they are no longer contagious and can resume normal activity.

REGISTRATION

Registration is on a first come, first served basis. All registrations are processed in the order received. Class size limitations will be observed, and we do not hold spots for returning students, so please register as soon as possible. After the priority registration, ALL registrations (for new and returning students) are processed in the order received. Registration

confirmations are not sent. You will be notified only if we cannot register you for the class you requested. We require a minimum of 5 students to run a class.

LOST ITEMS

Please label all belongings. A lost and found box can be found in the studio's dressing area. All valuables should be securely put away in one of our student storage areas. The studio will not be held responsible for lost items.

CLASS GUIDELINES

- We request that students carefully observe our dress code outlined in this booklet.
- All students are encouraged not to leave the room once class has begun. Please allow for appropriate restroom use prior to class. Very young children will be treated sensitively as the need arises. Preschool children may need a parent's attention from time to time for various reasons including bathroom or behavior issues. Please do not leave the waiting room when very young children are in class without informing the office or having another parent responsible during your absence. We make every effort to have all children feel safe and cared for in a loving and inspiring learning environment.
- School age children and teens: *please practice respect*. Students are not to be socializing in a disruptive manner during the class with other students. Please come early or stay late to enjoy friends in the waiting area. Please honor your teacher and fellow students by giving full attention and co-operation. You will be advised if we feel any student is not well adjusted to the classroom environment for any reason over time.
- During class if a student complains of being ill, or sustains an injury and cannot participate, the instructor will send them to the office where the parents will be notified if not on the premises.
- Only students with a pre-existing sickness/injury are allowed to observe class. The parents must notify the office if a student is to observe class.

RECITAL SHOWCASE

If you have a child in more than one class or more than one child attending ECDC we do our very best to keep them in one show; however we cannot guarantee it. Tuition, costumes and all remaining balances must be paid in full prior to the sale of tickets. Tickets will not be sold or held aside for anyone with an existing bill. NO EXCEPTIONS!

MAKE-UP CLASSES

If your child is sick or was unable to attend his or her scheduled class, we will allow them to make-up the class if the class you picked was level and age appropriate for the dancer. ECDC does this as a courtesy to our clients, so please do not ask for a credit or refund. All students who are attending a makeup class are to sign in at the front desk upon arrival.

STUDIO CLOSINGS & CANCELLATIONS

Weather closings will be emailed as well as posted on our website (www.eastcoastdancenj.com), Instagram account, and Facebook page. If the class is canceled due to bad weather, we are not required to make the class up.

OBSERVING CLASSES

ECDC encourages parents, relatives and friends to come in and observe a class from our viewing windows. Instructors will not allow parents to sit in the studio rooms; it is a distraction to all involved. Parents are not allowed in classroom until the class is over. Out of town guests may request to visit at any time throughout the year as long as it is in advance. Parents and friends will be invited by the instructors to come observe periodically throughout the dance year as well as during our Observation Week.

STUDENT AND PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

I understand that it is my responsibility as a parent to monitor my dancer's social media accounts including but not limited to text messages, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, House Party, etc. Any dancer who posts negatively about the studio, the competition team, or any staff member or fellow dancer will be immediately dismissed from the studio. This includes posts on a dancer's "fake" accounts. Every student that wears the East Coast Dance Company logo is expected to carry themselves in a way that brings dignity and pride to themselves, their fellow classmates, their teachers, and the studio as a whole.

In the event that an incident that is considered bullying occurs, the student, the student's parent, and the studio teachers will have a meeting to address the behavior. If the negative behavior continues, the student will be asked to leave the studio. This is possible at any time throughout the year, from the first day of practice to a week before the recital.

I understand that I am a role model for my dancer. Any negative talk, text, email, or social media engagement about the studio, teachers, staff, other parents or dancers is prohibited. Those who engage in such type behavior will be immediately dismissed from the studio with no refund. No parent is to negatively talk, text, email, etc. about any other parent or dancer in the studio. Parent to parent communication must stay civil and friendly. Passive aggressive behavior will not be tolerated. Any dancer (or parent) showing an extreme emotional outburst or negative behavior towards any staff member will be automatically dismissed from the studio.

Respectful dance studio etiquette is expected and upheld at all times. East Coast Dance Company reserves the right to dismiss any student, client, or parent whose attitude, attendance, or conduct is found to be disruptive or unsatisfactory whether on our premises or at an event that ECDC is attending.

Parent Involvement

We encourage parental involvement by emailing monthly newsletters with information about important studio news and events. Parents are encouraged to watch their children from our one way mirrored viewing windows. Combo classes and Creative Movement classes may be invited once a month to observe the last ten minutes of class.

Health & Wellness

We encourage our dancers to be healthy. Dancers are athletes and should treat their bodies accordingly. A dancer's body is his/her instrument. Please encourage your child to eat healthfully and drink plenty of water. If a student is sick, please do not attend class. We do not want the dancer to end up sicker and we want to minimize the transmission of disease.

Studio Safety

The studio has security cameras recording at all times using a closed-circuit system. Cameras are recording in all areas of the studio except the restrooms. East Coast Dance Company reserves the right to review and investigate footage should an incident arise on studio premises. This is for the safety and well-being of all our students and their families.

Recital Showcase

We conclude each year with a Recital Showcase in May. This performance is a celebration of the skills and techniques the students have mastered over the course of the year. The performance consists of short dances choreographed from steps that the students have been working on all year. Students begin learning the pieces after Winter Break, in the second half of the dance year. **Recital is mandatory for all dancers participating in a class.** The only classes without a recital routine are designated on our schedule with a (*).

Good classroom attendance is vital to the choreography of the piece and to developing a strong working relationship with the other dancers in the piece. This relationship helps the student feel comfortable, confident and relaxed on stage. It is frightening to a student to be on stage in front of hundreds of people and not know what he/she is doing. Only a portion of class time is dedicated to learning the recital dance. Learning a routine helps the dancer understand sequencing and timing. We find that the Recital Showcase provides our dancer's a chance to perform is a rewarding and confidence building experience.

DRESS REHEARSALS are scheduled prior to the recital showcase and are designed to help the dancer understand the expectations for the performance. It helps the dancer get his/her bearings on stage, develop a level of comfort in front of an audience and allows teachers to set the lighting, finalize blocking and address any costuming issues. Dress rehearsal should be a priority for every dancer.

COSTUMES Costume payments are due November 1st, are generally \$100.00, and are nonrefundable.

TICKETS Each audience member is required to purchase a ticket for our recital showcase performance. Ticket sales cover the cost of the theater rental, stage technicians, studio employee compensation, program printing, and much more.

Competition Team

The competition team at East Coast Dance Company is our highest level performing ensemble. Company members must have a strong focus and desire to fully commit themselves to our program. Our competition team has specialized classes during the dance school year as well as all rehearsal time built into their weekly schedules. We take great pride in our performing company and love training well-rounded, diverse dancers who have a passion for dance and performance! The ECDC competition team is a commitment for both the dancer and their family. All dancers and their families must sign contracts of agreement to participate in our competitive program.

COVID19 POLICIES

Please take a moment to familiarize yourself and your dancer with our current procedures. These are subject to change based on state guidelines and regulations.

- Parents must conduct their own health assessment of their dancer prior to arriving at ECDC. Dancers may not enter the facility if they are exhibiting any symptoms or have been exposed to COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
- Missed Classes - If a class is missed you may make it up in person if, and only if, space is available in that classes due to limited space being available. If you need to make up a class you must make a reservation to ensure space is available. Available space is first-come, first-served and there are no guarantees space will be available. There are no refunds for a missed class.
- In the event where we are unable to hold classes in person at the dance studio, alternate arrangements will be made including but not limited to: outdoors, an alternate location, or an online service (Zoom). Your contract is for dance classes not the location of the classes. In the event that a class is unable to be held at the studio due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, classes will convert to an online learning platform within 3-4 days until in-studio classes can resume. If the studio is required to close by the state, department of health, or any other government establishment as part of their protocol to the Covid19 pandemic, there will be no make-up classes held for those days required to be shutdown. All policies and requirements for dancers will remain in effect for online classes. There will be no full or partial refunds given to those who choose to drop out of classes mid-month due to a Covid19 closure.
- Any parent or child refusing to adhere to the studio safety guidelines will not be allowed in the dance studio. No refunds for missed classes.
- If a student must withdraw from a class, **please notify the dance school in writing immediately**, as you will be charged for classes until that time. Refunds are not given on tuition paid. No refunds will be given for missed classes, shoes, apparel, or costume purchases.
- If a mandatory government shutdown occurs and we are forced to close in the middle of the month, we will not refund that month's tuition or credit accounts. The dancer can finish out the month on Zoom before withdrawing.
- If you choose to remove your dancer from the studio due to the studio being forced to go virtual by required government shutdown, your dancer will lose their spot in the class. If you plan on re-enrolling your child once in-person classes resumes, the only option for re-registration will be classes with space available.

PLEASE NOTE

Upon registering your child, you agree to this handbook and all guidelines set forth.