



2026 - 2027 PRESCHOOL PROGRAM HANDBOOK



HoustonBallet

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HOUSTON BALLET MISSION STATEMENT

To inspire a lasting love and appreciation for dance through artistic excellence, exhilarating performances, innovative choreography, and superb educational programs.

In furtherance of our mission, we are committed to maintaining and improving our status as:

- A **classically trained company with a diverse repertory** whose range includes the classics as well as contemporary works.
- A company that **attracts the world's best dancers and choreographers** and provides them with an **environment where they can thrive** and further develop the art form.
- An **international company** that is accessible to broad and growing local, national, and international audiences.
- A company with a **world-class Academy** that provides first rate instruction for dancers.
- A company that offers **high-quality dance educational programming** prioritizing historically underserved communities in Houston and the surrounding area.
- A company with **state-of-the-art** facilities for performances, rehearsals, and ongoing operations.

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Statement

Houston Ballet is dedicated to creating meaningful change by cultivating a space that honors what is unique in all of us. Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) are instrumental in the fulfillment of our mission and values. We recognize our responsibility to be an inclusive and open organization for students, artists, staff, trustees, and volunteers of all backgrounds.

Join us, together we are Houston Ballet.



ACADEMY GENERAL INFORMATION

All HB Academy classes are held at the Margaret Alkek Williams Center for Dance.

Margaret Alkek Williams Center for Dance Address:

601 Preston Street
Houston, TX 77002

Administrative Offices Phone Number:

713-523-6300

Please send all Academy questions to:

hbacademy@houstonballet.org

Houston Ballet Academy Programs Webpage:

<https://sites.google.com/view/houston-ballet-academy/home>



HOUSTON BALLET ACADEMY LEADERSHIP

Julie Kent and Stanton Welch, AM, Artistic Directors

Sonja Kostich, Executive Director

Jennifer Sommers, Director of the Academy

ACADEMY STAFF

- **Yahudi Castañeda**, Associate Director of Academy Artistic Operations
- **Katie Wesche**, Associate Director of Academy Administration
- **Kaitlyn Louis**, Associate Director of Student Life
- **Carla Cortez**, Academy Communications Manager
- **Jamie Cegelski**, Academy Programs Manager
- **Reagan Quandt**, Academy Artistic Operations Coordinator
- **Angela Flores**, Academy Student Support Coordinator
- **Kaitlyn Watson**, Academy Administrative Coordinator

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM FACULTY

LOWER SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Betsy McMillan is the principal and contact for Level 1 through Intermediate. Mrs. McMillan can assist in directing questions regarding students in the studio to the students' teacher. You can email Mrs. McMillan at emcmillan@houstonballet.org.

PRESCHOOL COORDINATOR

Lucinda Rohrer assists with coordinating the Preschool Celebration and other Preschool needs. Ms. Rohrer can assist in directing questions regarding the Preschool Celebration. You can email Ms. Rohrer at rohrer@houstonballet.org.

For additional faculty and staff, please visit our website [HERE](#).

GENERAL ACADEMY INFORMATION

ACADEMY OFFICE HOURS

MON-FRI 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM
SATURDAY 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM
SUNDAY 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found is located in the Academy office. All items in the Lost and Found bin are discarded monthly.

ACADEMY CALENDAR

All information relating to the Academy calendar can be found [HERE](#).

ACADEMY WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Weekly schedules are posted on all call boards and on the Academy Google Site [HERE](#).

ENROLLMENT

The Preschool Program is for students 2-6 years old as of September 1, 2026. An audition is not required to enroll in the Preschool Program. Registration is accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Classes close once capacity is reached. Students interested in a closed class may be added to the **waitlist** by contacting the Academy Administrative Office.

Students enrolled in the Preschool Program will be given **priority registration** for the Summer Program and the following school year. Students in Elementary Ballet do not need to audition for the Pre-Professional Program. Placement for the following school year is sent in May. Students not registered by the deadline will be required to abide by the general registration procedures.

TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM IN THE 2026 - 2027 YEAR:

PARENT & ME

Age 2 as of 9/1/2026
Birthdates 9/2/2023-9/1/2024

JOY OF MOTION

Age 3 as of 9/1/2026
Birthdates 9/2/2022-9/1/2023

CREATIVE DANCE

Age 4 as of 9/1/2026
Birthdates 9/2/2021-9/1/2022

PRE-BALLET

Age 5 as of 9/1/2026
Birthdates 9/2/2020-9/1/2021

ELEMENTARY BALLET

Age 6 as of 9/1/2026
Birthdates 9/2/2019-9/1/2020

Houston Ballet Academy maintains a policy of non-discrimination regarding race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender, gender expression, physical/neurological ability, sexual orientation, and economic status.

REGISTRATION

REGISTRATION IS FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVED UNTIL ALL SEATS ARE FULL.



PRESCHOOL PROGRAM REGISTRATION:

PARENT & ME/JOY OF MOTION

Registration:

7-Week Sessions

Tuition for each session is due at the time of registration

CREATIVE DANCE/PRE-BALLET/ELEMENTARY BALLET

Registration:

34-Week Academy Year

¼ of tuition + \$125 registration fee due at the time of registration.

Currently enrolled students will access the enrollment form via the [PowerSchool Parent Portal](#). New students will be emailed an invitation to complete the enrollment form.

After your enrollment form is processed, you will be notified via email to sign your student's tuition contract and complete the registration process.

PAYMENT PLAN OPTIONS FOR CREATIVE DANCE/ PRE-BALLET/ELEMENTARY BALLET

**2026 - 2027 Year
Round registration
is open May - July**

PAY IN FULL: A discount of \$50 will be applied at the time of payment.
The option must be selected with auto-pay by Friday, August 28th.

QUARTERLY: Payment in four installments

MONTHLY: Payment in seven installments (incurs a \$20 fee to each installment due September through February)

**2027 Summer
registration is
open December -
February**

Invoice Date	Due Date	Pay in Full	Four Installments "Quarterly Plan"	Seven Installments "Monthly Plan"
At Registration		100% minus discount	25%	25%
September 1st	September 15th		25%	12.5% + \$20
October 1st	October 15th			12.5% + \$20
November 1st	November 15th		25%	12.5% + \$20
December 1st	December 15th			12.5% + \$20
January 1st	January 15th			12.5% + \$20
February 1st	February 15th		25%	12.5% + \$20

Please note that students with delinquent accounts will not be able to register for future programs until their accounts are current.

PAYMENTS & FEES

- **HOUSTON BALLET ACCEPTS THE FOLLOWING FORMS OF PAYMENT:**

- Checks: If a check is returned for any reason, a \$25 fee will be charged. The fee must be paid in cash within one week from the time the owner of the account is notified.
 - Cashier's Checks
 - Cash
 - ACH: ACH payments incur a processing fee of \$1.50 per transaction.
 - Credit Cards: Credit card payments incur a processing fee of \$2.75 per \$99.99.
- Payments may be mailed, hand-delivered, completed online, or phoned into the Academy office.
 - A \$25 late fee will be applied on the next business day following the 15th of each month if payment is not received by the due date.
 - Please note that students with delinquent accounts will not be able to register for future programs until their accounts are current.

SCHOLARSHIP DONATIONS

Houston Ballet is dedicated to offering the highest caliber of training while keeping ballet accessible. However, tuition covers only 70% of Academy costs. Gifts from parents/guardians and other supporters are vital to ensure every professional and non-professional dancer, despite capacity, has access to the finest instruction. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to Houston Ballet to assist with our annual merit scholarships, please contact Erika Jordan at ejordan@houstonballet.org or (713) 535-3241.

REFUND POLICY

TUITION AND FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.

Should a student withdraw who has paid, the remaining tuition and all fees will be forfeited to Houston Ballet Academy. Forfeited tuition may not be considered a tax-deductible donation.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Should a parent/guardian desire to withdraw a student before the end of the Academy year, the Academy Administrative Office must receive a completed Withdrawal Form. THE PARENT/GUARDIAN WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL TUITION PAYMENTS DUE UNTIL THE DATE THE ACADEMY OFFICE RECEIVES A COMPLETED WITHDRAWAL FORM FROM THE PARENT/GUARDIAN. Verbal notification of withdrawal will not be accepted. Should a student withdraw in the beginning, middle, or a quarter that has been paid, the remaining tuition will be forfeited to HBA. The HBA is not liable or obligated in any way to process any refunds or issue any tuition credits.

ALL WITHDRAWAL FORMS ARE AVAILABLE IN YOUR POWERSCHOOL PARENT PORTAL.

CLASS ATTIRE

Parent & Me	Joy of Motion Creative Dance	Pre-Ballet Elementary Ballet
<p>Student: Comfortable clothing to move in freely.</p> <p>Parent/Guardian: Comfortable clothing to move in freely.</p>	<p>Leotard: <u>Wear Moi style Coralie - cap sleeve leotard</u></p> <p>Tights: FOOTLESS TIGHTS Bloch T0985g Color: Pink</p> <p>Shoes: None</p>	<p>Leotard: <u>Wear Moi style Coralie - cap sleeve leotard</u></p> <p>Tights: CONVERTIBLE TIGHTS Bloch T0982G T0982L Color: Pink or Skin Tone</p> <p>Shoes: S0205g/S0205L Full Sole Leather Ballet Shoe <u>Color: Pink or Skin Tone</u></p>
	OR	
	<p>Shirt: <u>Wear Moi style Conrad - white Eurotard 33440C/33440</u> Unisex Long Legged Dance Short Color: Black</p>	
	<p>Shoes: none</p>	<p>Shoes: Bloch S0205g/S0205L Full Sole Leather Ballet Shoe Color: Black</p> <p>Socks: White</p>

HOUSTON BALLET ACADEMY SHOE MATCHING GUIDE

	Blendz Tights	Shoe Options			
Confident Cocoa		Blendz Confident Cocoa 	Spray Fashion Brown 		
Brazen Brown		Blendz Brazen Brown 	Capezio Mocha 	Spray Tan 	
Maven Mahogany		Blendz Maven Mahogany 	Spray Bark 		
Tenacious Tan		Blendz Tenacious Tan 	Capezio Light Suntan 	Capezio Nude 	Spray Chamois

Check out the [Blendz website](#) for tights & shoes!

CLASS ATTIRE PROCEDURES

ATTIRE PROCEDURES

- All students must wear a cover-up to and from class.
- Students should have their hair neatly groomed, pulled back away from the face, and secured neatly in a ballet bun. Students with short hair should wear a headband and secure their hair at the back. For more information on Houston Ballet Academy's hair requirements for all students, please see our bun tutorial [HERE](#).
- Students with hair that is in braids, twists, or locs should secure hair back, without loose ends, and off the nape of the neck.
- Leg warmers and ballet skirts are not allowed to be worn in class.
- Students may wear one pair of earring studs. No other jewelry may be worn.
- Students should not wear dance shoes as street shoes outside the Houston Ballet.
- Students should not apply lotion in the studios or apply lotion to the skin on days when they will be doing floor work. Lotion and oils can create slick spots on the studio floor.
- Elementary Ballet students need to bring a notebook and a pencil to each class!

PURCHASING ATTIRE

Houston Ballet does not have a dance supply store on-site. Students should arrive at the start of the program with all required attire and shoes.

Uniform leotards and shirts can be purchased through our [online site](#) or in person at [Dance Trends](#) or [Apollo Dancewear](#).

If you have any questions or concerns about HB Academy uniform online orders, please contact Leslie Goodrum at lgoodrum@houstonballet.org.

For additional supplies, including tights and shoes, items may be purchased via online stores or one of the dance store options in the Houston area listed below. We recommend calling any store before arriving to ensure they have the needed items in stock.

Dance Trends
14520 Memorial Drive
Houston, TX 77079
(281) 558-1400

Apollo Dancewear
1502 Sawyer St #132,
Houston, TX 77007
(832) 205-1524

Jazz Rags Dancewear
25701 Interstate 45 N
#10a Spring, TX 77380
(281) 364-1600

ACADEMY PROCEDURES

CLASS ETIQUETTE

- Bring energy, enthusiasm, and eagerness to learn in classes.
- Students should arrive on time. Injuries can be caused by insufficient warm-up, and interruptions are distracting to the other students in class. If a student is more than 10 minutes late, the teacher must allow the student to participate in class.
- Students may bring water in a capped, sealed water bottle; no flip straws are allowed.
- Students should refrain from distracting others during class.
- Students should arrive wearing a cover-up over their class uniform, including proper hair.
- Parents/Guardians are permitted to wait in the lobby area during their student's class.

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES/MAKE-UP CLASSES

- Students should attend classes every week.
- Students who miss four (4) consecutive classes may be withdrawn from the program.
- Students in Elementary Ballet, who have more than three (3) absences in a semester, may be ineligible for advancement to the Pre-Professional Program.
- If a student is injured before attending the Preschool Program, they must submit a full clearance for dance by a doctor.
- Make-up lessons for Joy of Motion, Creative Dance, Pre-Ballet, and Elementary Ballet will be scheduled as follows.
 - Fall Semester: Monday, November 23rd
 - Spring Semester: Monday, May 24th
 - Registration for these classes will be sent prior to the classes being held.

CLASS OBSERVATIONS

FALL SEMESTER DATES

Joy of Motion:

Session 1: October 20th – 25th

Session 2: December 15th – 20th

Creative Dance/Pre-Ballet/Elementary Ballet:

OCTOBER 19TH- NOVEMBER 8TH

SPRING SEMESTER DATES

Joy of Motion:

Session 3: February 23rd – February 28th

Session 4: May 11th – 16th

Creative Dance/Pre-Ballet/Elementary Ballet:

MAY 3RD- 23RD

EVALUATIONS

Elementary Ballet students will receive evaluations once per year at the beginning of Spring semester.

Students in Parent & Me, Joy of Motion, Creative Dance, and Pre-Ballet do not receive evaluations.

HB Academy Communication Methods:

- Email: hbacademy@houstonballet.org
- PowerSchool Parent Portal
- Our Google Sites and Academy Website
- Academy Facebook Page
- Academy Instagram Page
- Virtual Townhalls

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Teachers will familiarize students with emergency procedures at the beginning of each semester. These drills include fire, tornado, and lockdown.

PERFORMANCES & SUMMER PROGRAMS

PRESCHOOL CELEBRATION

Who: Students in Creative Dance, Pre-Ballet, and Elementary Ballet

What: Performance and Observation

Where: Margaret Alkek Williams Dance Lab

When: May 3rd – May 23rd during class time

Other Information: Rehearsals are held during class time starting in February. The detailed schedule will be distributed in the Spring semester. This event is free to attend.

SUMMER PROGRAMS

Summer registration is emailed in December for students enrolled in the 2025-2026 Academy Year.

Students who attend a summer program will receive priority registration for the 2026-2027 Academy Year.

Students who do not attend a summer program will not need to audition for the following year placement and registration.

Partial attendance of a session is not allowed.

Students are highly encouraged to attend one of our summer programs.

PRESCHOOL SUMMER CLASSES

- Weekly classes
- Five-week period in July & August
- Parent & Me, Joy of Motion, Creative Dance, Pre-Ballet, & Elementary Ballet
 - Classes for ages 2-7
 - Levels based on age as of 9/1/2026

CHILDREN'S WORKSHOPS

No audition is required for any of our Children's Workshops.

Boys Workshop

Join us for an empowering dance workshop designed exclusively for boys! This week-long program will equip students with the essential skills to build strength, technique, and confidence on their dance journey.

Little Dancer Workshops

AGES 4 – 6

(MUST BE AT LEAST 4 YEARS OLD BY THE START OF THE WORKSHOP)

These week-long workshops explore creative movement and discovery alongside learning beginning ballet steps. Each child will gain awareness of music, rhythm, muscular strength, and coordination. This class emphasizes creative self-expression through movement to music.

Elementary Children's Workshop

AGES 6-7

(MUST BE AT LEAST 6 YEARS OLD AS OF 9/1/2026)

These week-long workshops are a young dancer's introduction to classical ballet techniques and vocabulary. Students will learn and develop musical appreciation – this includes both quality and rhythm, as well as the coordination of their movements to the music. Classes are structured to provide a strong foundation as students move into the Pre-Professional Program the following year. In addition to physical strength, students also develop memory and patterning skills, as well as following specific directions.

The Nutcracker Workshop*

AGES 4-7

(MUST BE AT LEAST 4 YEARS OLD BY THE START OF THE WORKSHOP)

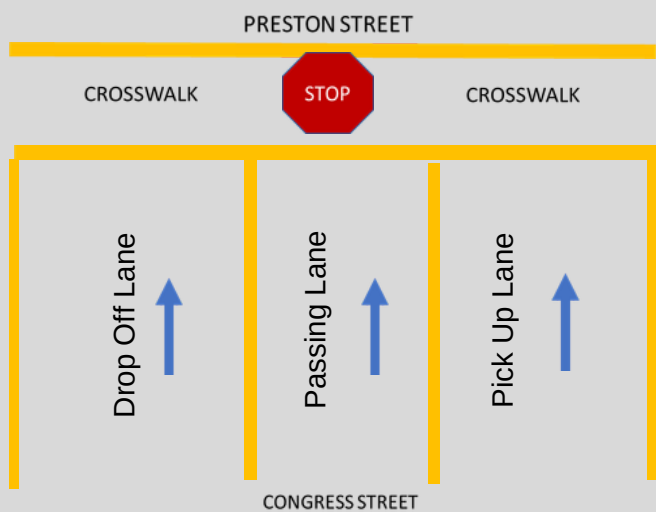
Step into the magical world of The Nutcracker! In this week-long workshop, students will explore the beloved story while engaging in movement and crafting activities inspired by the ballet.

*Enrollment includes a discount code for tickets to a 2027 performance of Houston Ballet's The Nutcracker.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

Academy families may either park and walk in with their students or utilize our covered driveway for arrivals and dismissals.

- Parking options are listed [HERE](#).
- Families who use the driveway must enter from Congress Street.
 - Students being dropped off should use the far-left lane.
 - Students being picked up should use the far-right lane.
 - The middle lane should be clear for those to pass.



Driveway Policies

- Students will not be allowed into the building until 15 minutes before the start of class.
- Please do not arrive to pick up your student until the end of the student's last class. For example, if your student's class ends at 3:15 PM, please do not enter the driveway until 3:15 PM.
- Do not drop off or pick up students on the roads next to the Center for Dance.
- Only students who can buckle and unbuckle themselves from their seatbelts can use the driveway for arrivals/dismissals.
- No one can park in the driveway at anytime.
- If you are in the driveway, do not drop off your student near the underground garage entrance or make the student walk up the ramp. They must be dropped off and picked up near the Preston Street side of the driveway

Always follow instructions provided by HPD officers, security guards, and class monitors at the Center for Dance.

CFD Lobby Etiquette

If you ever find yourself having to wait for your child while they are attending classes, families are welcome to wait in the Vestibule or Lobby. We do request the following:

- Families should not arrive more than 15 minutes before their student's class time.
- Students may have up to (2) guests, such as a guardian and a sibling.
- Students must wait in line by level for class upon arrival.
- All guests who wait in the lobby should remain properly seated. Please do not leave any children unattended.
- Pets are not allowed in the building. Only Service Animals are allowed to enter the building and stay in designated areas of the vestibule or lobby. The receptionist must be alerted to the service animal's trained task so that if needed, they can get assistance if an emergency arises.