



fort wayne  
**ballet**  
**AUER ACADEMY**

**KAREN GIBBONS-BROWN**  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Academy Handbook

*Revised as of May 2021*

# **Fort Wayne Ballet**

## **Mission & Structure**

The mission of Fort Wayne Ballet, Inc. is to feed the spirit and spark the imagination through the highest caliber of dance education, performance experiences, and community engagement.

## **General Academy Information**

Auer Academy of Fort Wayne Ballet is the official school of Fort Wayne Ballet, Inc. Enrollment at the Academy is open to students 3 years of age and older, regardless of race, nationality, or ethnic origin.

Administrative staff available during business hours.

(10:00am-5:00pm during academic year)

Telephone: 260-484-9646, Fax: 260-484-9647

\*\*Meetings with faculty are available by appointment. Please contact the registrar to schedule a meeting. \*\*

**Registrar/Front Desk:** Raleigh Sparrow

[registrar@fortwayneballet.org](mailto:registrar@fortwayneballet.org)

**Christine Jones**, Chief Financial Officer

[cjones@fortwayneballet.org](mailto:cjones@fortwayneballet.org)

**Christina Brinker**, Chief Operating Officer

[cbrinker@fortwayneballet.org](mailto:cbrinker@fortwayneballet.org)

## Curriculum

The academic curriculum is a safe but immersive curriculum, designed with childhood development (physical, cognitive, and emotional) concepts at the core. Our curriculum is based largely in the American Ballet Theater (ABT) National Training Curriculum (NTC). The curriculum combines child psychology, child physiology, and dance education into a comprehensive and complete dance education curriculum. With a solid curriculum in place, we rely on staff and faculty to engage your child as an individual who will develop in his/her own time. Our staff are ABT NTC Phase I, II, and/or III certified instructors.

### Invitation to Dance:

As your young child grows, 3-6 year olds can enroll in the Pre-Ballet Division, a graduated creative movement program. Creative movement combines skill development, musicality, and self-expression. All classes require the student to be the age of the class level by August 1<sup>st</sup> of the academic year the student is enrolling.

#### Invitation to Dance:

Class Name	Age	Recommended Times/Week	Class Length
<b>Come Dance</b>	3 years old	Once per Week	30 min
<b>With Me</b>			
<b>Dance Around the World</b>	4 years old	Once per Week	30 min
<b>Creative Movement I</b>			
<b>Creative</b>	5 years old	Once per Week	45 minutes
<b>Creative Movement II</b>			
<b>Creative</b>	6 years old	Once per Week	1 hour

#### Movement II

#### Uniform:

Girls- pastel pink Mirella FWB style leotard (Style # M207C), white ankle socks, pink leather ballet slippers. Girls enrolled in Creative Movement I and II will also need a short, pink skirt for class.\*\*

Boys- White shirt, black pants or shorts, white ankle socks, black leather ballet slippers.\*\*

**\*\*All dress code items available through the Fort Wayne Ballet's Boutique.**

## Lower School Division

The goal of the Auer Academy of Fort Wayne Ballet is to provide a complete structured curriculum that stresses a firm but safe foundation of quality dance regardless of future plans in the dance field, and to nurture students' natural love of movement.

### Ballet Technique Classes

Class Name	Times/Week	Class Length
------------	------------	--------------

<b>Ballet IA</b>	Two classes per Week (recommended)	1 Hour
------------------	------------------------------------	--------

**Uniform-** White leotard with pink tights (Leotard Style #M207L\*); short pink skirt, pink leather ballet slippers.

<b>Ballet IB</b>	Two classes per Week (recommended)	1 Hour
------------------	------------------------------------	--------

**Uniform-** White leotard with pink tights (Leotard Style #M207L\*); short pink skirt, pink leather ballet slippers.

<b>Ballet IIA</b>	Three classes per Week (recommended)	1 Hour
-------------------	--------------------------------------	--------

**Uniform-** Pink leotard with pink seamless tights (Leotard Style #M207L\*); pink leather ballet slippers

<b>Ballet IIB</b>	Three classes per Week (recommended)	1.25 Hours
-------------------	--------------------------------------	------------

**Uniform-** Pink leotard with pink seamless tights (Leotard Style #M207L\*); pink leather ballet slippers

<b>Ballet IIIA</b>	Three classes per Week (recommended)	1.5 Hours
--------------------	--------------------------------------	-----------

**Uniform-** Forget Me Not (light blue) leotard with pink seamless tights (Leotard Style #M207L\*), and a wide light pink elastic waistband (Hip alignment belt); pink leather ballet slippers *\*Young men please see Men's Ballet Technique Dress Code below.*

<b>Ballet IIIB</b>	Four classes per Week (recommended)	1.5 Hours
--------------------	-------------------------------------	-----------

**Uniform-** Forget Me Not (light blue) leotard with pink seamless tights (Leotard Style #M207L\*), and a wide light pink elastic waistband (Hip alignment belt); pink leather ballet slippers *\*Young men please see Men's Ballet Technique Dress Code below.*

### Men's Ballet Technique Classes (In addition to curricular ballet classes)

Class Name	Times/Week	Class Length
------------	------------	--------------

<b>Men's 1, 2 &amp; 3</b>	Once per Week (recommended)	1 Hour
---------------------------	-----------------------------	--------

**Uniform -** white t-shirt, black tights/pants, white socks, and black leather ballet slippers

\*All style numbers listed are for Discount Dance's website.

\*\*All dress code items available through the Fort Wayne Ballet's Boutique.

## Alternative Class Descriptions for Lower & Upper School

**Tap – Ballet I or higher:** Tap classes are the alternative dance class the Artistic Staff recommends first for students because of how it strengthens students' sense of rhythm, versatility, and teaches control of the ankles and feet. Tap shoes are required, so families incur that extra cost for this class.

**Uniform:** Bloch "TapFlex" lace up, split sole tap shoes (black), level appropriate uniform, with dance shorts or pants

**Jazz – Ballet III or higher:** This alternative dance form encourages students' flexibility and self-confidence. The student finds greater success if they are 12 years or a Ballet III level.

**Uniform Ladies:** Black Mirella Pinch Front Seam Camisole Leotard (Style # M210LD\*), black Capri Pant (Style #TH5521\*), and black jazz oxford shoes.

**Uniform Men:** Class dress code with black oxford jazz shoes and black jazz pants.

**Modern – Ballet IV or higher:** Many styles and techniques comprise modern dance. Considered an alternative dance form to classical ballet, it involves a kinetic exploration of movements that lead to a more complete dancer.

**Uniform:** Black Mirella Pinch Front Seam Camisole Leotard (Style # M210LD\*), black Capri Pant (Style #TH5521\*), bare feet

**Uniform Men:** Black Tights, white or black athletic fit T shirt, bare feet

### **Character- Ballet IV or higher**

**Uniform:** Class color leotard, Black Character skirt (Style # N8108), pink tights, and black Character shoes (Style # 550)

### **Performance Opportunities**

- **Youth Company (YC):** Typically open to dancers Ballet III and up or at the instructor's discretion. They perform the Family Series throughout the year, as well as at various festivals or community events. These students are automatically cast in *The Nutcracker* and do not have to audition. They may have more than one role or be in both casts, meaning performing in four in-theatre performances.

- **Uniform for Women:** White leotard with pink seamless tights (Leotard Style #207L); leather ballet slippers
- **Uniform for Men:** White t-shirt, black tights/pants, white socks, and black leather ballet slippers

**\*All style numbers listed are for Discount Dance's website.**

**\*\*All dress code items available through the Fort Wayne Ballet's Boutique.**

## Upper School Division

### Ballet Technique Classes

Class Name	Required Times/Week	Class Lengths -1.5 Hours
------------	---------------------	--------------------------

<b>Ballet IV</b>	Five classes per Week (Recommended)	
------------------	-------------------------------------	--

**Uniform-** Lilac leotard with pink seamless tights (Leotard Style #M207L\*), and a wide light pink elastic waistband (Hip alignment belt); pink leather ballet slippers

<b>Ballet V</b>	Five Times per Week (Recommended)	
-----------------	-----------------------------------	--

**Uniform-** Navy leotard with pink seamless tights (Leotard Style #M207L\*), and a wide black elastic waistband (Hip alignment belt); pink leather ballet slippers

<b>Ballet VI</b>	Six Times per Week (Recommended)	
------------------	----------------------------------	--

**Uniform** - Blackberry leotard with pink seamless tights (Leotard Style #M207LD\*), and a wide black elastic waistband (Hip alignment belt); pink leather ballet slippers

**\*All style numbers listed are for Discount Dance's website.**

**\*\*All dress code items available through the Fort Wayne Ballet's Boutique.**

## Examinations

Our syllabus is structured with a balance of honoring the traditions of classical dance, meeting the needs of the developing child, and providing a safe space for blossoming artists to grow. An examination process establishes a clear and concise assessment of our faculty and student progress with the syllabus over the course of the academic year. Yearly evaluations/examinations are held to ensure the excellence of each teacher's class/level. Select levels participate annually in the American Ballet Theater (ABT) National Training Curriculum (NTC) examination process. Although the examination process is voluntary, we highly encourage participation.

### Transfer Student Placement

Depending on experience students usually take a placement class and afterwards, Faculty make recommendations on their placement within the curriculum. Academy Faculty will continue to watch students' development and adjust their placement if needed.

## Open Division

### Open Adult/Teen Ballet

The goal of the Open Adult/Teen program is to expose adults to ballet as an art form, all while learning control and toning of the body. The Academy offers classes for the adult with no previous experience, as well as for the advanced adult student or past professional. Flexible enrollment options are available as adult students' lives vary in time availability and family responsibilities.

**Open Division Uniform** – Comfortable, form-fitting exercise clothing that allows full range of motion.

### Pre-Professional Program:

#### Pre-Professional Levels (Pre Pro):

These students take ballet classes 6 days a week, 4 alternative dance classes per week, and 1 academic class. Pre Pro students must attend an approved Summer Intensive study program of at least 3 weeks.

#### Pre Professional

**Uniform:** Royal blue leotard w/ pink seamless tights (Leotard Style #M207L\*), a wide black elastic waistband (Hip alignment belt); pink leather ballet slippers.

#### Pre Professional Men

**Uniform:** White t-shirt, black tights, white socks and leather ballet shoes.

#### Pre Pro Character

**Uniform Women:** Pre-Pro class leotard with Black Natalie elastic waist character skirt with the length to hit just below the knee; Character Shoes: Black with Cuban heel.

**Uniform Men:** White shirt, black jazz pants, black character shoes.

#### Pre Pro Jazz

**Uniform Ladies:** Black Mirella Pinch Front Seam Camisole Leotard (Style # M210LD at Discount Dance), black Capri Pant (Style #TH5521), and black jazz oxford shoes.

**Uniform Men:** Class dress code w/ black oxford jazz shoes & black jazz pants.

**Pre Pro Modern**

**Uniform Women:** Black Mirella Pinch Front Seam Camisole Leotard (Style # M210LD\*), black Capri Pant Style #TH5521 or Natalie Capri, bare feet.

**Uniform Men:** White t-shirt, black tights, bare feet

**Pre Pro Musical Theater**

**Uniform Women:** Black Mirella Pinch Front Seam Camisole Leotard (Style # M210LD at Discount Dance), Character Shoes: Black with Cuban heel.

**Uniform Men:** Class dress code w/ black oxford jazz or character shoes & black jazz pants.

## Performance Opportunities

Performances serve a variety of functions in our organization. Performing is a showcase for skills, talents, and accomplishments of local artists. In Academy-related productions, performing should be a continuation of the educational process.

**End of Year Performance**

Students are eligible for participation in an end of the year Academy Showcase. **Dancers' accounts must be at a ZERO Balance by May 1<sup>st</sup> in order to participate in the End of Year Performance.** This performance highlights the material they learned during the year and introduces them to the performance experience. It is a voluntary experience and students are not penalized if they are unable to participate. Students participating in the Showcase must adhere to the following requirements:

- Students' account must be current. This means that their account must be at a zero balance by May 1<sup>st</sup> in order to participate in the Academy Showcase.
- Students in the Invitation to Dance who have more than four (4) unexcused absences are ineligible to participate in the Academy Showcase. (Make up classes will cancel out a missed class.)
- Students in Ballet IA and above who have more than two (2) unexcused absences are ineligible to participate in the Academy Showcase. This is 2 absences for their ballet level and 2 absences per alternative dance class. (Make up classes will cancel out a missed



class.) Please speak with our Academy Registrar for make-up opportunities.

- Students participating in the Academy Showcases, all girls will wear pink tights and the color leotard appropriate for their level with a class skirt or a tutu (provided by FWB costume shop). Boys will wear their classroom dress code.

### **The Nutcracker**

Fort Wayne Ballet presents 15+ performances of *The Nutcracker* every season for our community. With two casts and about 170 roles (including understudies), it is a Herculean task to mount the production with professional quality. Families will find the audition date for *The Nutcracker* on the Academy Schedule and information will come separately about this opportunity.

- Pre-Professional Levels and Youth Company: No audition required, automatically cast.
- Ballet Levels IIA-VI: Audition required, roles cast based on ability, technical mastery, and casting needs.
- **Roles for small children**: These roles are costume size & often hair length dependent. For those families who have children in Creative II or Ballet I: if you are interested in your child participating please watch for the informational letter to come out late August and keep the day of the audition open for your family. Casting is non-negotiable.

\* \* \*

## Rules & Expectations

### Registration

A \$40.00 registration fee is required to register a student in the Auer Academy classes. Additional children of the same immediate family pay \$20.00. As we do have a limit on class sizes, this registration fee will hold their spot in their class(es). ALL male students pay \$50.00 registration fee regardless of the number of children enrolled per family.

### Classroom Etiquette

Students are expected to be courteous and attentive in class. They will be asked to leave if they become too disruptive. Negative behavior is not tolerated, though faculty will partner with parents to understand and to obtain positive behavior.

### Attendance:

1. **LATE POLICY:** It is essential that students come to class on time. Lack of proper warm-up at the beginning of class can cause injury. **Students more than ten (10) minutes late to class will be asked to sit and observe.** This prevents unnecessary absences.
2. Fort Wayne Ballet cannot be responsible for the safety of students leaving the building with or without parental permission.
3. Students are encouraged to make up all classes missed. Missed classes may be made up within the current academic year.
4. **Excessive absenteeism (excused or unexcused) may lead to exclusion from performances or Company at the discretion of the Artistic Director.**

### Excused Absences:

An excused absence is one the student does NOT need to make up in order to participate in the End of Year Showcase. Excused absences include:

1. Death of a family member.
2. Hospitalization of dancer.
3. Religious obligation.
4. Dancer has a fever, the flu, or other illness.
5. Mandatory school obligation.

## **Rules & Expectations *Continued***

### **Class Make-up Policy:**

Pre-ballet/Ballet classes: Students can attend a different class in their level or below to make up a ballet class. For example, a Ballet III student can take another Ballet III class or a Ballet IIB class to make up an absence.

Ballet students in level V and above may also make up classes during the Garrett-Keyser-Butler class which is held 8:00 – 9:10 a.m. Monday through Friday. These make up classes must be coordinated with the Academy Registrar prior to the student attending the class.

### Alternative Dance Classes:

1. Students can make up an alternative dance class by taking a lower level class in the same discipline. (Ex. Taking Tap I to make up a Tap II absence).
2. Students can take an extra ballet technique class to make up an alternative class. Ballet classes can always make up an alternative dance class.
3. Students in introductory alternative classes can also observe a higher level class of the same alternative class.

### **Emergency Closings**

In the event of inclement weather, Auer Academy of Fort Wayne Ballet will remain open for classes unless there is a Travel Warning for Allen County, Indiana (meaning that travel is restricted to emergency management workers only).

<https://www.in.gov/dhs/traveladvisory/>

As always, we urge you to exercise prudence as you will have the better sense of the road conditions in your areas. Please email the [registrar@fortwayneballet.org](mailto:registrar@fortwayneballet.org) if weather conditions will impede your child from attending class to ensure we are notified.

### **No Smoking**

The Auer Center for the Arts and Culture is a smoke free facility.

### **Volunteer Hours**

- Fort Wayne Ballet relies heavily on volunteers to assist with productions and special events. As an academy parent, you are in a unique position to help us. You understand our needs and how your time and talents directly benefit Fort Wayne Ballet and its students.
- **We ask each Academy Family to contribute at least 10 hours of volunteer time.**
- If you are unable to commit to the 10 hours of volunteering, you may make a donation of \$50 per child.

### **Male Students and Students on Scholarship**

- **ALL** male students enrolled in the year-round academy program must complete a scholarship application prior to registration. These can be found on the Fort Wayne Ballet website or at the ballet offices. Please complete and return to the Academy Registrar.
- **ALL** male students must pay a \$50.00 registration fee to hold their place in the class.
- **ALL** male students or students on scholarship must complete volunteer hours as part of their scholarship agreement. Scholarship or male students in Ballet I or Pre Ballet must complete 12 hours volunteer time per semester or 24 for the academic year. Scholarship or male students in Ballet IIA or above must complete 25 volunteer hours per semester or a total of 50 volunteer hours within the academic year.

### **Auer Center for Arts and Culture**

Arts United has asked that all children under 12 years old be accompanied by an adult while in the Auer Center of Arts and Culture. Please keep a watchful eye as this is a public space and we share the building with other tenants. No running, please.

For security reasons students must not wait outside. We are downtown and this is a public space; please help us as we strive to ensure your child's safety. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. The Auer Center for Arts & Culture closes at 9:00pm M-F; 6pm Saturdays. **Students left after classes end and the Academy closes will be charged \$15.00 for every fifteen minutes for a staff member to remain in the building. Fort Wayne Ballet faculty and staff are not responsible for driving a child home and it is considered a liability issue for them to do so.**

**\*\*\***

## Harassment Policy

Board Approved on December 13, 2005

In promoting dance and the requisite skills, the Faculty, administrators, students and their parents must practice civility, good manners, courtesy, consideration for the abilities and talents of others, and good community. Consequently, behavior that degrades or is contrary to these aspects of learning, performance, and community have no place at Fort Wayne Ballet. The following statement is intended to identify unacceptable behavior:

Fort Wayne Ballet has **no tolerance** for any statements, behaviors or actions of a derogatory or threatening nature, weapon possession, use of profanity or obscenity, intimidation or other behaviors by any student, parent, staff person, Faculty, or other individual that might pose a threat to the well-being of any person, whether such behaviors occur on Fort Wayne Ballet grounds or in Fort Wayne Ballet's facility, or at any other place where an educational, performance, or outreach function is occurring and Fort Wayne Ballet students, parents, staff, Faculty and others are present.

The policy applies to Auer Center for Arts and Culture premises before, during and after Fort Wayne Ballet hours; anytime Fort Wayne Ballet buildings or grounds are used by a Ballet group; off Ballet grounds at any Ballet function or event; when traveling to and from a Ballet activity, function or event; or at any time or place which may affect an educational, performance or outreach function or could be identified with Fort Wayne Ballet. All potential safety concerns will be investigated thoroughly with appropriate action taken, up to and including discipline, expulsion of the offending party and/or dancer of the offending party, and criminal justice intervention. This is not an area for practical jokes or offhanded comments. Events in recent years have demonstrated the importance of investigating thoroughly any potential safety concerns.

If you become aware of a threatening situation, please report to the Academy Registrar, Artistic Director or Executive Director.

## **Conduct Constituting an Interference with Purposes of Fort Wayne Ballet**

Any conduct which causes, or which can reasonably be foreseen to cause, a substantial disruption or material interference in carrying out the purposes of Fort Wayne Ballet, Inc., will result in disciplinary action to the student. Also, any conduct which would be grounds for suspension or expulsion from an Indiana public school would be grounds for suspension or expulsion from the Auer Academy of Fort Wayne Ballet.

### **General Rules**

Do what's right.

Do your best.

Treat others the way you want to be treated.

If each of us follows these three basic rules in each of our interactions throughout the school year, Fort Wayne Ballet will truly be a place where students can reach their fullest potential.