

THOMAS ARMOUR YOUTH BALLETT

Parent and Student Handbook

ABOUT US

The TAYB provides ballet training to over 1,000 students annually, with nearly 600 on full scholarship in five locations. In addition, we provide the means for advanced students to take advantage of summer intensive trainings across the country, and present performances to over 10,000 audience members each year.

Our mission is to create a pathway to educational and professional opportunities for the youth of Miami-Dade County through the study and performance of dance. We believe dance is merely a vehicle that transports children through doors that maximize their options in life. We are thrilled when one of our graduates is accepted into a major dance company; however, our ultimate goal is to give children choices beyond their present limitations.

CONTACT US

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ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY

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PRINCIPAL BALLET FACULTY

Mariana Alvarez - **Ballet**
Rosario Suarez - **Ballet**

PART TIME FACULTY

Lucia Abbatemarco - **Ballet**
Leo Alvarez- **Broadway**
Angelica Diaz- **Ballet**
Stephanie Fuentes - **Contemporary**
Kelly Robotham - **Ballet and Contemporary**
Claudia San Feliz - **Ballet**
Natasha Williams - **Tap**

Board Members

Daniel Lewis, President
Dennis Edwards, Vice President and Treasurer
Quashone Perry, Secretary
Stephanie R. Altman
Brian Beasley
Jacqueline Calderin

Bridget Dadd
Lisse Kravetz
Lisa Sloat
Oliver Von Gundlach
Mary Lynn Young
Bruce Wilson

It is the intent of the Thomas Armour Youth Ballet that all students and employees will enjoy an environment that is free from discrimination and/or harassment of any student and/or employee by another student, employee, supervisor, or non-employee. Any infringement of these policies should be reported to the Director immediately.

CLASS DESCRIPTIONS AND SCHEDULES

MOMMY & ME (2 years old)

The Thomas Armour Youth Ballet's Mommy & Me program has been specifically designed for 2-year-olds and a parent, guardian or caretaker. Classes consist of basic dance movements for the toddler and exercises for the caretaker. Both toddler and Mommy work together in this fun-filled class and are able to meet other mommies and toddlers in the community who are also interested in staying in shape. Classes are 45 minutes long, and are offered twice a week (Tuesdays from 10:30am-11:15am and Thursdays from 1:30-2:15pm). This level focuses on stretching, strengthening, coordination and musicality for both mommy and toddler! (Other parent, guardian, or caretaker is welcome to take class in lieu of mommy).

Tuesday – 10:30 – 11:15 AM

Thursday – 1:30 – 2:15 PM

CREATIVE MOVEMENT AND PRE-BALLET

The Thomas Armour Youth Ballet's creative movement and pre-ballet program has been specifically designed for preschoolers, kindergarteners, and first graders. Classes are grouped according to age (3, 4, 5, & 6), in order to meet the highly specific developmental needs in each of these years. Pre-schoolers (3 & 4-year old) may attend a 45-minute creative movement class, once a week. Kindergarteners and first graders (5 & 6-year old) may attend a 1-hour pre-ballet class, once a week. All four levels focus on coordination and musicality, with an emphasis on body conditioning for pre-ballet groups. *Please note: All students must be potty trained.

Creative Movement I (Pre-K)

Tuesday – 3:15 – 4:00 PM

Thursday – 3:15 – 4:00 PM

Saturday – 9:30 – 10:15 PM

Creative Movement II (Pre-K4)

Monday – 3:15 – 4:00 PM

Tuesday – 3:15 – 4:00 PM & 5:00 – 5:45PM

Wednesday – 3:15-4:00 PM

Thursday – 3:15-4:00 PM

Saturday – 9:30 – 10:15 PM & 10:30 – 11:15 AM

Super Heroes (3 – 5 years old)

The Thomas Armour Youth Ballet's Super Heroes! class is designed to give young boys a movement outlet (ages 3-5). Instead of imagining princesses and ballerinas, this class takes young boys on an imaginative journey using super heroes! Through games, music and rhythmical patterns, this class creates an atmosphere where boys can feel free to explore movement and creativity.

Thursday – 2:30 – 3:15 PM

Pre-Ballet I (Kindergarten)

Monday – 4:00 – 5:00 PM

Tuesday – 3:30 – 4:30 PM

Wednesday – 3:30 – 4:30 PM

Thursday – 5:00 – 6:00 PM

Saturday – 9:30 – 10:30 PM

Pre-Ballet II (First Grade)

Monday – 3:30 – 4:30 PM & 5:00 – 6:00 PM

Tuesday – 4:00 – 5:00 PM

Wednesday – 3:30 – 4:30 PM

Thursday – 4:00 – 5:00 PM

Saturday – 10:30 – 11:30 AM

ELEMENTARY BALLET LEVELS

The Thomas Armour Youth Ballet begins academic ballet in its Elementary I class (7-year olds) and follows students through the advanced level. All instructors follow a uniform, time-tested and recognized ballet syllabus. Clean technique and proper alignment are emphasized throughout the levels. Classes range from one to one and one-half hours depending on level and are offered from two to five times a week.

Elementary I (Second Grade)

Monday & Thursday – 4:00 – 5:00 PM

Wednesday 4:00 – 5:00 PM & **Saturday** – 10:30 – 11:30 AM

Tuesday – 4:00 – 5:00 PM

Elementary II (Third Grade)

Monday & Thursday – 4:30 – 5:30 PM

Tuesday & Friday – 4:30 – 5:30 PM

Wednesday – 4:30 – 5:30 PM & **Saturday** – 11:30 – 12:30 PM

Elementary III (Fourth Grade)

Monday & Thursday – 5:00 – 6:00 PM

Tuesday – 5:45 – 6:45 PM

Wednesday – 5:30 – 6:30 PM

Elementary IV (Fifth Grade)

Monday & Thursday – 5:30 – 6:30 PM

Tuesday & Friday – 5:00 – 6:15 PM

INTERMEDIATE BALLET LEVELS

At the Intermediate I level, students begin pointe in January of that school year. Students in Intermediate levels are expected to take a minimum of 3 classes a week. Note that students are in Intermediate III/IV for two years.

Intermediate I

Monday & Thursday – 6:00 – 7:30 PM

Wednesday – 4:30 – 6:00 PM

Saturday – 11:30 – 1:00 PM

Intermediate II

Tuesday & Friday – 5:30 – 7:00 PM

Wednesday – 5:00 – 6:45 PM

Saturday – 11:30 – 1:00 PM

Intermediate III/IV

Tuesday & Thursday – 6:15 – 7:45 PM

Wednesday – 6:00 – 7:30 PM & **Friday** – 5:00 – 6:00 PM

Advanced

Monday, Wednesday, & Thursday – 6:45 – 8:30 PM

ACCELERATED BALLET PROGRAM

This program will give interested students, starting at intermediate I level, the opportunity to pursue a more rigorous course of study beyond required classes. This intensive training will prepare students for auditions and performance opportunities.

Requirements:

- Attending 3 Intermediate I classes plus either the Saturday Intermediate class or an Elementary IV.
- Attending the Intermediate I accelerated class on Mondays from 7:30 – 8:30 PM.
- Attending the Intermediate II accelerated class on Tuesdays from 7-8PM
- Good attendance and work ethic.
- Must discuss with your teacher your readiness for the program.

Adult Ballet Classes

The Thomas Armour Youth Ballet offers adult ballet classes on weekday mornings and evenings. Ballet class is a great way to stay in shape, maintain bone density, and improve cardiac functions. Both strength and flexibility will be gained, and all while enjoying classic tunes from the 1600's through today!

Beginner/Intermediate

Wednesday -7:30-9

Thursday – 7:30 – 9 PM

Saturday – 1:30PM-3PM

Advanced

Monday-Friday – 9:30 – 11:00 AM

TAP CLASSES

Beginner tap class is perfect for anyone brand new to tap. Students will learn all the basic tap steps. Students will work on technique, improvisation, choreography, tap and jazz history, and music theory. Technique work will include rudiments and exercises designed to help students execute steps clearly and correctly. Improvisation will include playing specific notes, trading bars with other students, and improvising with music. Students will learn various choreographies to work on putting steps together and performing. Classic dances such as The Shim Sham and Coles Stroll will be taught throughout the year. Tap history will include footage, biographies of tap dancers, and the history of how tap started. For jazz music history, students will learn a different jazz standard every class and about jazz musicians and the instruments they play. Music theory is a vital part of tap class because tap dancers are both musicians and dancers. Students will learn how to read and write music and create tap phrases. Music theory will also include understanding phrasing and song structure within jazz music.

5 - 6 years old Friday – 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Intermediate - Friday – 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Beginner - Friday – 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Adult Class - Friday – 6:00 – 7:00 PM

Advanced - Friday – 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Junior Tap Team - Sunday – 4:00 – 5:30 PM

Senior Tap Team - Sunday – 5:30 – 7:30 PM

CONTEMPORARY CLASSES

Contemporary dance classes cover a broad range of movement forms from the 20th and 21st centuries including traditional modern dance forms and adding elements of urban dance hip-hop and various other evolutions of movement.

Beginning - Friday – 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Intro - Sunday – 1:30-2:30 pm

Intermediate- Sunday – 2:30-3:30 PM

Intermediate/Advanced - Friday – 7:45 – 9:00 PM

Advanced - Sunday– 3:30 – 5:00 PM

Senior Modern Team - Sunday – 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Junior Modern Team - Sunday – 3:00 – 4:00 PM

BROADWAY STYLE DANCE

Our Broadway style dance class will expose students to Jazz and choreography from major Broadway musicals.

Intermediate/Advanced - Sunday – 11:30 – 1:00 PM

Beginner-Sunday – 1:00 – 2:00 PM

TUITION

Your child's tuition is based on an annual fee for the entire school year and not on a number of classes received each month. This is a standard private school policy. There are 9 payments due at the first week of each month. The first payment covers August and September. A \$50 registration fee is collected every August. Payments can be made with Cash, Check or Credit card. (If you would like to set up automatic payment each month speak to registrar, Marina Illinskaya) Remember that if your child misses a class, he/she has many opportunities within the week to make up that class. Marina can give you a list of days and times available.

Student Classes

Classes Per Week Tuition

| | |
|---------|-------|
| 1x/week | \$75 |
| 2x/week | \$125 |
| 3x/week | \$175 |
| 4x/week | \$230 |
| 5x/week | \$265 |

Adult Classes

Classes Per Week Tuition

| | |
|---------|-------|
| 1x/week | \$90 |
| 2x/week | \$130 |
| 3x/week | \$175 |
| 4x/week | \$230 |
| 5x/week | \$265 |

Tap & Contemporary Classes

Classes Per Week Tuition

| | |
|----------------------|-------|
| Beginner 1x/week | \$75 |
| Intermediate 1x/week | \$75 |
| Advanced 1x/week | \$100 |
| Advanced + Tap Team | \$150 |

Intermediate and advanced Tap and Contemporary classes can be added to your ballet schedule for an additional \$50. Beginner Tap and contemporary will be an additional \$40 when added to ballet classes.

Open classes – \$25

College Students – \$7

Professional – \$10

Annual Registration: \$50/family

Tuition is based on an entire school year, not the number of classes in each month. The school year tuition is broken into 9 payments for your convenience. The first payment is due when classes begin in August and covers August and September. Payment #2 is due in October and the first week of each month through May. We encourage students to make up any missed classes. See Ms. Illinskaya for a schedule of days and times. In cases of emergency or long-term injury a tuition refund may be possible per the Director. Keep in mind that TAYB does not close for MDCPS Teacher workdays or Religious Holidays.

THOMAS ARMOUR YOUTH BALLET 2017-18

| Event | Date(s) | Time | Location |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Classes Begin | August 21, 2017 | All Day | All Sites |
| Nutcracker Junior Auditions | August 26, 2017 | 2:00PM – 5:00PM | TAYB South Miami |
| Nutcracker Senior Auditions | August 27, 2017 | 1:00PM – 4:00PM | NWSA (25 NE 2nd ST) |
| Labor Day Holiday – No Class | September 4, 2017 | All Day | All Sites |
| Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class | November 23-25, 2017 | All Day | All Sites |
| Nutcracker Last Rehearsals | November 26, 2017 | | TAYB South Miami |
| Nutcracker Dress/Tech Rehearsal | November 28, 2017 | 2:00PM | NWSA (25 NE 2nd ST) |
| Nutcracker Morning Performances | November 29, 30 December 1, 2017 | 10:00AM | Miami Dade Auditorium |
| Nutcracker Evening Performance | December 2, 2017 | 7:00PM | Miami Dade Auditorium |
| Parent Viewing Week | December 18-23, 2017 | | All Sites |
| Tap Team Auditions | January 21, 2018 | 4:00PM – 6:30PM | TAYB South Miami |
| Winter Holiday – No Class | December 23, 2016 – January 8, 2018 | All Day | All Sites |
| Spring Break – No Class | March 26-1st, 2018 | All Day | All Sites |
| TAYB Spring Concert | TBA | Sat. 7PM Sun. 2PM | NWSA (25 NE 2nd ST) |
| In Studio Performances | May 21-26, 2018 | | TAYB South Miami |
| 2018-2019 Early Registration Begins | May 21, 2018 | All Day | TAYB South Miami |
| Last day of Classes | May 26, 2018 | All Day | All Sites |
| Memorial Day – No Class | May 28, 2018 | All Day | All Sites |
| 2018 Summer Workshop | June 11 – August 17, 2018 | All Day | TAYB South Miami |
| Classes Resume | August 20, 2018 | All Day | All Sites |
| Nutcracker 2018 Auditions | August 25, 26, 2018 | All Day | TAYB South Miami |

PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS

All students will be carefully placed in the classes matching their technical abilities. New students with no comparable ballet training must start in a beginning level. TAYB makes an effort to keep the age ranges as close together as possible. However, the main emphasis will be placed on a student's technical achievement. He or she will be placed in the level that encourages the most progress. Our philosophy is to put your child in a level at which he or she can succeed. Pushing students into more advanced levels creates dancers with many "steps" who lack quality of movement and therefore artistry. Students will be evaluated for class level for the next school year in May. The Faculty and Director may make a team decision to move a child mid-year.

POINTE

Letter will notify your child when she is ready for pointe. Elementary levels I-IV should be completed before being considered. We recommend that the students be fit by the team at Dance Plus or by Ms Gaby Martinez at Ballet Boutique. Please do not allow your child to wear the pointe shoes until her teacher has approved them. If there are any markings at all on the shoe, they may not be returned for a different style or size.

AUDITION COACHING

Many of the students are considering auditioning for an elementary, middle or high school magnet programs or entering a ballet competition. Coaching is available at the conservatory through any of the ballet faculty depending on their schedule and time constraints. Coaching fees are paid directly to the teacher, not to TAYB. See Ruth Wiesen if you have questions.

COMMUNICATION

Information is sent via email Facebook postings and is available on bulletin boards and at the front desk. Please make sure that we have a correct email address for you that will not be caught in a filter or spam. We will use the REMIND app for text blasts. If you have a concern about your child, please do not approach faculty between classes to address concerns. Instead, speak with Ruth Wiesen first and let her know that you would like to speak with the teacher. Leave your contact info and a brief summary of your concern.

OBSERVATION OF CLASSES

We welcome your observation of classes before deciding to register your child with us. We also welcome your presence in the classroom if a pre-elementary student needs the security of a parent until they are more comfortable. Otherwise, we ask parents to wait in the lobby and watch their child on camera. There are 2 observation weeks during the year: the week before winter break and the last week in May before Memorial Day. Cameras are welcome in the classroom. However, please silence your cell phone and refrain from answering it in the room.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP

Traffic continues to increase in South Miami. We will continue to do everything in our power to make your trip in and out as safe and as quick as possible. If you have a child old enough to be dropped off, please access the alleyway by Winn Dixie and pull into the west driveway to drop off. As we do not allow the children to wait outside without us, call and tell that you are pulling into the alleyway: 305.667.5543. We will bring your child to you. Please remember that this is an exit or the businesses to our west, so we must circle around unless actually loading a child in.

All students will be signed in by their teacher. For safety and security, all students must be picked up in the lobby by a parent or guardian. No child will be allowed to wait outside or leave the studio without a parent or guardian.

PERMISSION TO LEAVE PREMISES

Some of the older students leave TAYB premises and walk to Starbucks, Winn Dixie and sometimes even Sunset Place. Any student leaving the premises must have a written note from a parent or guardian. Please indicate exactly where the child is permitted to travel before or after class. We ask that the children always walk with a buddy and inform Marina of their departure and return. We will keep the note on file. (of course, this does not apply to students that travel on the bus or metro rail)

TARDINESS

Dancers will have a 10-minute grace period for lateness. If they arrive more than 10 minutes late, they can only watch class. The exception to this rule is the Elementary I students that attend Sunset Elementary. Upon entering the classroom, the student should wait on the side and wait until the teacher gives the signal to join the class.

ABSENCES

Please call the front desk to report prolonged absences. Front desk staff will notify the faculty. Please understand that repeated absences may prevent your child from moving to the next level, but more importantly, your child will begin to feel that they are behind the rest of the class.

MAKE-UP CLASSES

Your child is encouraged to make up any missed classes. There is no limit to how many may be taken in a week and there is no expiration within the school year. Classes may be made up in the same level or a level below. Classes may not be made up in a higher level.

FIRST AID AND ACCIDENTS

If a child is slightly injured while attending the program the parent/guardian will be contacted, first aid will be administered and an Incident Report with photos after the incident and prior to leaving will be filed.

ILLNESS

If a child has any of the following signs or symptoms of illness, he/she will be sent home from the program:

- diarrhea
- untreated skin infection
- severe coughing
- fever
- difficulty breathing
- vomiting
- head lice
- pink eye

If your child has potentially life threatening conditions such as severe allergies, diabetes, asthma or is insulin dependent please fill out our red medical consent form. Please be sure that if your child has severe allergies that they have an EpiPen on them at all times.

MEDICATIONS

If your child needs to take any medications while at the program, you must fill out a yellow or red medical consent form giving instructions and your permission for administering medicine. A prescription or doctor's note is preferred.

CANCELATION OF CLASSES DUE TO HURRICANE OR TROPICAL STORM

The decision to suspend TAYB classes will be in accordance with MDCPS safety precautions. We will close when public schools close and re-open when they re-open. Students are encouraged to make up any classes missed during closure.

LOST AND FOUND

TAYB will hold lost and found articles of clothing in the changing area basket downstairs and in the dressing room upstairs. Any unclaimed items will go to charity in December, May and August. It is advised that all clothing have the student's name printed on them so that we may return the items promptly. Please write your child's name on the bottom of their shoes or inside. Ballet slippers all look alike!

FOOD AND BEVERAGES

Food may only be eaten in the study area at the back of the lobby. No food will be allowed in the studios, bathrooms, dressing rooms, or studio hallways. All food must be thrown away in the garbage cans or recycling bins provided. Any infringement of this will necessitate a "water only" policy with food allowed only outside.

STUDENT LIBRARY

TAYB a small collection of dance related books. At this point, books may be used on site but not removed. A request for copies of DVDs may be submitted to Addyson Fonte.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

As a representative of TAYB, each student must be encouraged to achieve the highest standards of etiquette and professionalism.

Classroom Etiquette

- There will be no talking or hanging on barres in class at any time.
- There will be no food, gum, beverages except water, or cell phones allowed in the studios. Please clean up after yourselves (this includes Band-Aids, papers and tape!)
- The pianos will not be touched or played with at any time.
- The teacher and peers will be treated with the utmost respect at all times. The faculty will be properly thanked after each class.
- There is zero tolerance for inappropriate behavior in or outside classroom. If this general etiquette is not followed, the teacher has the right to dismiss the dancer from class. If the dancer is dismissed from class, they must see the Director.
- The use of alcohol, cigarettes, illegal substances, and weapons is strictly forbidden at the TAYB or anywhere on TAYB property. Students in violation will be dismissed immediately.

DRESS CODE

All students will come in uniform.

- Girls: black leotard and pink tights and pink ballet shoes.
- Hair must be in a bun. for all levels above Pre-Ballet II. If hair is short, please pull it back from the face and secure with barrettes.
- Creative Movement, Pre-Ballet and Elementary I students may wear white ankle socks instead of tights.
- Boys: white leotard, or fitted white T-shirt, and either black or white shoes.
- No leg warmers, sweatshirts, shorts or sweaters in class.
- Please do not wear jewelry to ballet class.
- No gum or food in class. The student may bring water.
- For the student's safety, there will be no jewelry worn in class, including watches, necklaces, and dangling earrings.
- Students must enter and exit the building with street shoes and a cover-up over leotards & tights.

PROPER BUN

- With one hand, gather hair into a “bunch” at back of head. With other hand, lightly spray hair around head with water.’
- Brush hair into a ponytail and secure with covered elastic. Ponytail should be no lower than middle from back of head. If hair is worn in braids, braids should be secured tightly to head and secured with covered elastic. Center ponytail between ears so that it is not leaning to one side or the other.
- Brush and smooth hair towards ponytail.
- Spray hairspray evenly around head.
- Twist ponytail and begin to spiral hair around elastic. Coil hair into bun a bit at a time, insert hairpins at every inch. Insert pins, coil a bit more, insert more pins, etc. until ponytail is wound around to make a “snail coil” (as flat against head as possible).
- Wrap hairnet around bun. The stylish “bun holders” are pretty but do little to hold a bun in place. The fine “grandma nets” at the drugstore are the best.
- Add a few extra hairpins to ensure that bun is closely attached to head.
- Children with hair at ear length or above must secure hair with bobby pins and light spray.
- Please make sure hair is done when children arrive at the studio.
- If hair is too short, please make sure it is securely off the face.

PLEASE NOTE: Proper hair is part of ballet etiquette. It is important for ALL students of ALL ages to have proper, neat, and appropriate hair for auditions, class, and rehearsals.