

**Greater Atlanta Christian School**  
**School of Ballet**

***Policy and Procedures Manual***

***Fall 2007/Spring 2008***



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## **Mission Statement**

*"Dancers are the athletes of God."  
Albert Einstein*

The mission of Greater Atlanta Christian School is to help each student grow as Jesus did: in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and man. The GACS School of Ballet was created to give students the opportunity to develop technical skills, to nurture the spirit of grace, to encourage poise, to use gifts and talents and enhance artistic expression: but above all to explore, to enjoy, and to share with others God's wonderful gift of dance.

## **Academic Philosophy**

*"There are times when the simple dignity of movement can fulfill the function of a volume of words."  
Doris Humphrey 1937*

It is our beliefs that dance can be used to touch hearts in ways that words and music alone cannot reach. We seek to provide quality ballet training for children in a safe, Christ centered environment. Building character is equally important with an emphasis on developing discipline and guarding modesty. Our hope is that we will instill the desire to do all, whether in the studio or in performance, to the glory of God.

There are no short cuts to strong dancers. Our approach to training begins at the earliest academic levels. Through practice of gross motor skills, musicality, and encouraged imagination; students progress to more challenging courses. A new vocabulary is taught as the entire body learns to move in coordination. As ones technique improves the level of difficulty increases. Repetition is required to refine movements, which produces excellence necessary to achieve the level of an accomplished dancer.

## **Student Qualifications**

*"I don't want people who want to dance...I want people who have to dance!"  
George Balanchine*

All GACS students are eligible to enroll in classes within the GACS School of Ballet.

To ensure success and growth of a student, it is essential that the relationship between teacher and student promote learning and achievement. In the event of difficulties between teacher and student, conferences will be arranged with the Program Director to determine the most beneficial course of action.

## **Teacher Qualifications**

*"It's what I always wanted to do, to show the laughter, the fun, the joy of dance."  
Martha Graham*

### **Mrs. Amy Daniel, Lead Dance Instructor**

Mrs. Daniel began her professional dance training at the Academy of the Washington School of Ballet under the direction of Mary Day. In addition to Ms. Day, her instructors included Igor Swetozoff, Oleg Tupine, Mme. Scholar, Mr. Norbert Velzak, Edward Caton, Giles Fontaine, and Anna Benna. She performed and toured with the Washington Ballet for four years.

In Atlanta in the 70's, Mrs. Daniel studied with Fiona Farrie at the Callanwolde Fine Arts Center and performed and taught with the Lay Foundations of the Callanwolde Dance Department.

Upon moving to Birmingham, Mrs. Daniel received her dance degree in 1976 from the University of Alabama. She performed extensively with the Ballet UAB and Steven Grebel in productions of Nutcracker, Swan Lake, Balanchine's Serenade, Cinderella, and Raymonda in addition to many repertory

works. While at Ballet UAB, Mrs. Daniel was able to work with Michael Folkinge, Frederick Franklin, and Gennadi Vostokov.

Mrs. Daniel has taught ballet and choreography throughout the South, including Perimeter Ballet Academy, the Children's Dance Foundation, Etgen-Atkinson School of Ballet, Tuzer Ballet, North Atlanta Dance Academy, Praise In Motion, and other various private ballet schools. She has also staged musicals for churches she has attended as well as performed in several productions. Mrs. Daniel co-founded the Dance Ministry of Perimeter Church, choreographing works of various function.

Mrs. Daniel resides outside of Atlanta with her husband, Keith.

### **Miss Dana Ciccotello**

Dana Ciccotello graduated Magna Cum Laude from Greater Atlanta Christian School in 2005, and is an incoming freshman at Agnes Scott College. She is a pre-professional dancer with the Atlanta Ballet, and has been dancing ballet for the past fourteen years. Dana has trained with the Ballet Theatre of Central Pennsylvania, Rotaru International Ballet School, and most recently the Atlanta Ballet Centre for Dance Education. Dana has studied under such renowned teachers as Cherie Noble, Thom Clower, Arthur Leeth, Helen Starr, Angela Whitehill, and Fernando Bujones. Dana has performed in professional productions with the Louisville Ballet touring company and the Atlanta Ballet. She has performed in many full-length ballets including *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Nutcracker*, *Snow White*, *Firebird*, *Cinderella*, *Pictures at an Exhibition*, *Peter and the Wolf*, and *Swan Lake*. Recently, Dana performed the Heliotrope Fairy Variation in *Cinderella and the Flower Fairies* at the Festival Fringe in Edinburgh, Scotland.

### **Miss Jillian Hanes**

To say that Jillian Hanes is a versatile performer is an understatement! She is a gifted dancer/singer/actress who is also well known for her inspiring and award-winning choreography. She was born in New York, where she started dancing at the age of three. At seven, Ms. Hanes received the prestigious At&T Scholarship to train at the Florida Ballet. Upon moving to the Atlanta at the age of ten, she received scholarships to the Ruth Mitchell Dance Studio and, later, the Atlanta School of Ballet. She combined her ballet training with studies at various Dance Masters of America studios to incorporate all styles of dance, including ballet, pointe, lyrical, partnering, jazz, tap, hip-hop, swing, Latin, and modern. While taking summer programs and master classes from some of the greatest names in dance, Ms. Hanes also began training in drama and she began studying vocal performance.

While a member of the Ruth Mitchell Dance Company, Ms. Hanes played many roles including those of Clara, Snow, Mirliton and Flower in The Nutcracker. She also appeared in many other ballets and concerts with the company. She performed at SERBA for many years, and participated in countless regional and national dance competitions. Ms. Hanes won first overall in photogenic, solo, duet and group numbers, as well as choreographic recognition for her many prize-winning entries.

The holder of numerous regional and national dance titles and scholarships, including DMA's Petite Miss Dance, Petite Miss Dance of America, Cobb County's Talented Teen, Miss DEA and Junior Miss Starpower of America, Ms. Hanes was also a winner on the television talent series STAR SEARCH. She filmed the pilot "Georgia Girls", frequently appeared as a guest vocalist and/or dancer, and performed in various live and film industrials.

Described as a "Triple threat", incorporating her vocal and acting abilities with dance in the musical theater genre, Ms. Hanes has enjoyed a working relationship with the Atlanta Workshop Players for many years, as a performer, choreographer, director and creative manager. As a teen, she toured the southeast with the Atlanta Workshop Players Tour Show in *A Play On Words*, *Rewind*, *Class Encounters*, and *Ultimate Reality Tours*. She appeared at Lake Lanier Islands in *Magical Nights of Lights* and *Happily Ever After* and also at Callaway Gardens in various performing venues. Ms. Hanes has performed throughout the United States and has had contracts at Fiesta Texas where she appeared in the acclaimed *Rockin' at Rockville High*, *Love at First Fright* and *A Magical Christmas*, at Opryland in Nashville where she was featured in *I Hear America Singing*, *Zombie Mambo* and *A Gift for Santa*, at Opryland Hotel in *A Country Christmas* and as a featured performer in *Swingin' the Night Away* on the General Jackson Showboat.

In addition to choreographing routines for competition and pageants, Ms. Hanes also choreographed *The Monster Mash Bash* for Feista Texas, The Motown Café Las Vegas Audition tour, *West Side Story*, *Grease*, *Dreammaker*, *Fame*, *You're A Good Man Charlie Brown*, *The Oobnod Follies*, *Once Upon A Mattress* and *Masquerade*. She served as musical director for various shows, including *How To Eat Like A Child* and *Rewind*.

Having recently moved back to Atlanta from New York, Ms. Hanes is currently enjoying teaching dance and musical theater. Due to her extensive and versatile credentials she is much in demand as a choreographer and performer. She travels extensively throughout the United States judging talent competitions and teaching master classes. It is Ms. Hanes' desire to help her students recognize and develop their God-given talents and to communicate her love of performing and the arts to all those lives touch hers. She considers it a privilege to teach the performers of tomorrow.

**Miss Mary Branick Ujda**  
Gaelic Commission Dancing Teacher

Mary Branick Ujda began dancing at the age of 5 with the Healy Irish Dance School of San Francisco. She performed and competed at the Open Championship level throughout the Western region, and was part of several award-winning teams at the Western Region Oireachtas (qualifying competitions for the World Championships in Ireland).

While studying at the University of Notre Dame, Mary performed with the traditional Irish music group, Seamaisín. Later, while teaching high school overseas, she introduced Irish dance to her students through various clubs and workshops.

After coming to Atlanta, Mary joined the Drake School of Irish dance and studied with Karl Drake for 5 years before earning her TCRG\* in 2005. She is a member of the Irish Dance Teachers Association of North America (IDTANA), the IDTANA-Southern Region, and An Coimisiún le Rinci Gaelacha (the Irish Dancing Commission) in Ireland.

\*TCRG stands for Teasgíochair Choimisiúin Le Rinci Gaelacha, or Gaelic Commission Dancing Teacher. It signifies that a teacher has passed the exams administered by the Irish Dancing Commission of Ireland to achieve certification.

**Course Offerings**

*"Dancing in all its forms cannot be excluded from the curriculum of all noble education."  
Friedrich Nietzsche*

Ballet 2 and 3 (Audition only or one year of Ballet 1)	\$550
Monday 4:15-5:40, Wednesday 4:15-5:45	
Ballet 1 (Audition only or one year of Intro. to Ballet)	\$405
Monday 3:15-4:10, Wednesday 3:15-4:10	
Intro. to Ballet (K5 Beginners/Young Elementary)	\$220
Thursday 3:15-4:10	
Overflow Class Tuesday 4:15-5:15	
Pre-Ballet (K4)	\$220
Tuesday 3:15-4:15	
Irish Dance for Village (Kindergarten)	\$220
Monday 2:30-3:30	
Irish Dance 1	\$220
Monday 3:30-4:30	
Irish Dance 2 (One year of Irish Dance required)	\$220
Wednesday 3:30-4:30	
Jazz (Audition only or one year of Ballet)	\$550

Tuesday 3:30-5:00, Thursday 3:30-5:00

<i>Registration Fee (due at the beginning of the Fall Semester)</i>	\$30
<i>Recital Fee (due at the beginning of the Spring Semester)</i>	\$60

### **Attendance and Location**

Classes will begin the second week of school classes, August 20<sup>th</sup>. Classes will meet in the Ballet Studio on the second floor of the GACS Fine Arts Building: WFA211A.

If there is no school at all the entire day, there will be no ballet class. Please keep an eye on your LACE calendar.

If there is an early release day, there will be class at its regularly scheduled time. Because of shared classroom space, we cannot manipulate the schedule within a school day.

Modest attire is required to and from class. It is important to be on time for the start of each class. If a student arrives after class has begun to warm-up, she will be asked to observe and not participate. This is to minimize the risk of injury.

Please notify the ballet office at 770/243-2396 if your child will be absent. Classes missed due to illness can be made up within the month in a different class or in a Guest Artist class on a Saturday. Check with your teacher for the appropriate class for make up. Continued absences by a student will be reviewed to determine if withdrawal will be best for the student.

### **Class Observation**

Starting at the end of September, we welcome you to observe your son or daughter's class several times throughout the year. This will enhance your appreciation for her hard work and our training practices. Younger children who can sit quietly without distracting are welcome as well.

### **Ballet Attire**

Hair should be secured in a bun on the back of the head for all classes.

Shoes – pink ballet slippers.

Tights -- "Theatrical Pink" (split soled tights must be worn over the feet)

Leotard – Pre-Ballet and Intro. to Ballet – Pink Eurotard Style #1043

Ballet 1 – Black Eurotard Style #1043

Ballet 2 and 3 – Black Eurotard Style #1043

Ballet 4 – Any black, modestly cut leotard and \*chiffon skirt

Ballet 5 – Any black, modestly cut leotard and \*chiffon skirt...of your choice!

\*Skirts must be worn at the waist.

Small earrings are permissible, but no other jewelry is allowed.

As you child grows out of his/her ballet shoes, donate them to the studio to our **Ballet Shoe Bank**. As we accumulate shoes we will be able to pass them down. Good shoes are expensive and are sometimes worn only for a few months before it's time for new ones. This is a smart way for us to be more cost effective while helping someone out in the process.

### **Irish Dance Attire**

Dancers are asked to wear black shorts of modest length and white t-shirts. The clothing must be easy to move in! Girls' hair should be pulled away from the face for class.

We encourage all of our new Irish dance students at GACS to purchase dance shoes. Not only will the shoes protect the dance floor in the studio, but also they will improve the students' focus on foot positioning and technique.

Beginning dancers will only need 'soft shoes.' During the second year of Irish dance, we will begin work on the 'hard shoe' dances (the dances more reminiscent of tap).

For girls, you have two options:

- Irish ghillies, or 'reel shoes,' can be ordered on-line from several different vendors. We recommend Rutherford Shoes at [www.rutherfordshoes.com](http://www.rutherfordshoes.com). Their website includes information on determining shoe size. \*\*Note that Irish dance shoes generally come in European sizes which differ from U.S. sizes!! The basic 'Rutherford Products Ghillie' is \$42 plus shipping. Some of the local dance supply stores also carry a Scottish ghillie, slightly different than the Irish, but close enough for beginning dancers.
- If you're not sure you want to invest in ghillies just yet, you can get a simple black ballet slipper at any of the local dance supply stores. Call ahead to make sure they have the size you need.
- In addition to the shoes, the girls will want to wear thick white socks to give them some extra cushion. Irish dancers wear 'poodle socks' which can be ordered from Rutherford Shoes as well, \$8, no extra shipping if ordered with shoes. Look under 'Accessories.' Once again, if you're not sure you want to purchase dance socks yet, any plain white socks will do.

For boys, the best option for beginning dancers is the Capezio Split Sole Jazz Shoe in black, with any plain white sock. These shoes can be purchased at any local dance supply stores. Call ahead to make sure they have the size you need.

### **Theatrical Dance Attire**

Hair: Pulled back away from face

Shoes: Capezio Pedini 321 in Tan

Dress: Leotard and tights. A fitted t-shirt and either "Sofie" shorts or capri pants may be worn over as well. Clothing needs to fit well so that instructor may see body lines.

### **Discipline Policy**

The key to an efficient and productive dance class is discipline, personally and communally. Unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated. If after one month a student shows destructive or distracting behavior, they will be put on probation. A School of Ballet Behavior Report Card will be completed after each class by the teacher and sent home for parents to sign and return to the program Director. If behavior does not improve after one month, the child will be dismissed from the program.

### **Studio Expectations**

- Look and listen when the teacher is speaking
- Show self space
- Respect the teacher and students
- Wear the traditional, modest dance attire and hairstyle
- Raise your hand and wait to be called on before speaking
- Participate in all activities and follow directions to the best of your ability

## **Ballet Etiquette**

### Traditional Rules of Ballet Etiquette

- Respectful and correct posture, as well as attitude (towards the teacher and the other students) must be maintained throughout the entire class. This includes wearing the traditional, modest ballet attire and hairdo.
- Attention should be directed towards the instructor at all times.
- Finish each exercise in the stance it began from.
- Turn toward the barre between exercises.
- Sitting down is allowed only with the expressed permission of the instructor.
- Learn and assimilate the exercises quickly in order to receive the most out of the class. This is an art in itself and must be practiced.
- Pay attention to and assimilate corrections given to other individuals. If the correction is directed toward another person apply it to your own learning.
- When another group is dancing, prepare yourself to begin dancing as they finish...but do not interrupt.
- When executing a combination in the center of the room that advances forward; finish the exercise and move directly to the front, then to the side, before returning to the back of the room to repeat the exercise. This will enable other dancers to begin.
- When you are finished with an exercise in the center, leave the floor as soon as possible.
- At the end of an exercise, move only after the last note of the music has finished ringing.
- Give thanks to the instructor and the accompanist at the end of each class.

And it goes without saying:

*The GACS Honor Code will be strictly enforced at all times.*