

Harris YMCA School of Dance
Program
Handbook
2026-2027

Welcome to the James J. Harris Family YMCA
Dance Program!

Dear Parents and Dancers,

We are so excited to get this year rolling! Welcome to all of our new families and welcome back to all of our returning dancers! We have some exciting things planned for you this year and cannot wait to get started! Our focus is on building technique, vocabulary, and friendships, but most of all, having fun! All of our instructors have a vast amount of knowledge and experience and are looking forward to sharing their passion with all of our dancers. Please read through this handbook thoroughly to make sure you are familiar with our program! If you ever have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to talk to your instructor or simply contact me at (704)716-6869 or at margaret.rhodes@ymcacharlotte.org

Let's Dance,

Margaret Rhodes

Performing Arts Director

James J. Harris Family YMCA

5900 Quail Hollow Road

Charlotte, NC 28210

Important Dates:

August 27th – Open House- Meet instructors, purchase new and gently used dancewear, dance bags/accessories and dance shoes. 10am-12:30pm and 5:30pm-7:30pm

Located in the dance building Studio A

September 12th – Dance classes begin

October 31st – Last day to makeup Fall

November 14th –20th Observation Week (parents invited in the studio)

November 23rd–28th – Thanksgiving Break, NO CLASSES!

December 5th – Last day of classes before Winter Break

December 19th–20th – 24th Annual Nutcracker – Halton Theater – CPCC

December 6th - January 8th – Winter Break, NO CLASSES!

January 9th – Classes Resume

January 31st – Last day to cancel classes

February 14th – Last day to make up a class for Spring

March 6th–12th – Observation Week (parents invited in the studio)

March 27th – April 2nd – Spring Break, NO CLASSES!

May 14th – 20th Costume / Picture Week

May 22nd – 23rd Spring Recital, Halton Theater (tentative)

****Unless noted above, we DO hold class. This includes all teacher workdays and individual holidays.**

Tuition/Fees/Cancellations

Please note all dancers are registered for the entire year 2026-2027 year. If you do not want to continue for the spring, you must drop before December 15th to avoid the draft for January's tuition.

Pricing:

30 min. class- \$81 monthly member/ \$109 monthly program participant

45 min. class- \$96 monthly member/ \$129 monthly program participant

60 min class- \$101 monthly member/ \$129 monthly program participant

****All extra fees are included in the price (registration, classes, costume, recital)**

Program Cancellations/Payment Schedule:

15 days notice until 2/1

No refunds if cancellation received after 2/1

No exceptions.

Session	Draft Date	Cancellation Date
Fall	At time of registration	NA
Fall	10/1/26	9/15/26
Fall	11/1/26	10/15/26
Fall	12/1/26	11/15/26
Spring	1/1/27	12/15/26
Spring	2/1/27	1/15/27
Spring	3/1/27	NA
Spring	4/1/27	NA

Class Attire and Regulations

KINDERKIDS DANCE (2½ – 3 ½ yrs)

Required Dance Attire Girls: Lavender leotard/dress, pink tights and pink leather ballet shoes.
Lavender skirt is optional.

Boys: White t-shirt, black shorts or pants and black ballet shoes.

PRESCHOOL DANCE (3 ½ – 4 ½ yrs)

Required Dance Attire Girls: Solid pink leotard/dress, pink tights, pink leather ballet shoes and black tap shoes.
Pink skirt is optional.

Boys: White t-shirt, black shorts or pants, black ballet shoes and black tap shoes.

PRIMARY DANCE (4 ½ – 5 ½ yrs)

Required Dance Attire Girls: Light blue leotard/dress, pink tights, black tap shoes and pink leather ballet shoes.
Light blue skirt is optional.

Boys: White t-shirt, black shorts or pants, black tap shoes and black ballet shoes.

HIP HOP I (4- 5 yrs) HIP HOP I (5-8 YRS) HIP HOP II (9-13 YRS)

Required Dance Attire Girls: Form fitting t-shirt, tank top or leotard
(If adding onto a Primary or a Ballet Rhythms class your dancer may wear the appropriate colored leotard), black leggings/and
TAN/Carmel jazz shoes.

Boys: T-shirt, athletic pants and TAN jazz shoes.
No Jeans or shorts.

BALLET RHYTHMS (Kindergarten – 7 yrs)

Required Dance Attire Girls: Solid royal blue leotard, pink tights, pink leather ballet shoes, black tap shoes.
Royal skirt is optional.

Boys: White t-shirt, black shorts or pants, black ballet shoes and black tap shoes.

BALLET FUNDAMENTALS (1st- 3rd grade)

Required Dance Attire Girls: Solid black leotard, pink tights and pink leather split sole ballet shoes. No skirt.

Boys: White t-shirt, black shorts or pants, black ballet shoes.

BALLET PRINCIPLES (3rd- 8th grade)

Required Dance Attire Girls: Solid black leotard, pink tights and pink leather split sole ballet shoes. No skirt.

Boys: White t-shirt, black shorts or pants, black ballet shoes.

TAP AND JAZZ

Required Dance Attire Girls: T-shirt and leggings.

Boys: T-Shirt and athletic pants.

Tan jazz shoes and black tap shoes.

No Jeans or shorts.

MUSICAL THEATER

Required Dance Attire Girls: Form fitting t-shirt, tank top or leotard

Boys: T-Shirt and athletic pants.

Tan jazz shoes

No Jeans or shorts.

Attire Regulations:

- No leotards with glitter, sequins, decorations, etc. will be allowed.
- Imitation ballet slippers are not permitted. All ballet shoes must have a leather sole.
- Any additional warm-up attire may be worn, but all articles must be removed after the class has finished warming-up/stretching.
- All belongings must have the dancer's name marked inside, especially shoes.**
- Laces and strings should knotted, trimmed, and tucked into ballet shoes. Tap shoes should be tied securely.
- No jewelry is allowed during class. Very small stud earrings are allowed.
- Dance shoes are only to be worn inside the dance studio!

Classroom Policies/Expectations

Dancers show respect for themselves by:

1. Being prompt for class.
2. Being dressed properly for class in required dancewear (leotard, tights, etc.), without jewelry (other than small stud earrings), and with shoestrings tucked in or tied in a knot and cut off.
3. Having their hair up off of their necks and out of their faces. Shorter hair should be pulled back from the face with a headband or clip.

Dancers show respect for others by:

1. Keeping their hands to themselves during class.
2. Waiting quietly for others to have a turn and for instructions from the teacher.

Dancers show respect for their teacher and the art form they are learning by:

1. Being properly dressed and ready for class on time.
2. Listening when the teacher speaks.
3. Always standing in a "proper dance stance" listening to the teacher.
4. Being prepared for their turn.
5. Always asking before leaving the room for any reason.
6. Using the restroom prior to the start of class.

Dancers show respect for the studio by:

1. Leaving gum, food, or drinks outside.
2. Never hanging or leaning on the Barre.
3. Never running or doing gymnastics in the studio or hallway.
4. Putting trash in its proper place.
5. Always keeping all belongings zipped inside their dance bag.

Parents show respect for the dance class, teacher, and studio by:

1. Knocking before entering the classroom if class is in progress.
2. Making sure child uses the restroom before class.
3. Having students in class on time, properly dressed, and picking them up promptly after.
*Drop Off and Pick Up will be located inside the dance studios. Your instructor will invite you in to drop off and pick up before and after class.
4. Viewing class from the appropriate Parent Viewing Area only.
5. Make ups are allowed until 10/31/2026 in the Fall and 2/14/2027 in the Spring. 3 total for any one dance semester.
6. Clearly marking all of their child's items with the child's name and leaving toys at home.
7. Always reading any and all dance program communication thoroughly.

FAQ's

Where can I buy dance apparel?

Right here! Open House 8/27/2026 10-12pm and 5:30-7:00pm. At the Harris YMCA you can purchase apparel through the dance office and pay right at the Membership desks. We offer leotards, tights, skirts, dance bags, and used shoes for sale! Each class needs specific colors/tights/shoes, so be sure you know what your class is required to have! Dance slippers are not allowed. Any shoe purchases should be done at a Lebo's location or similar dance vendor. Please be aware that dance shoes are sized differently than regular street shoes and each brand sizes their shoes slightly different.

Where/when is the recital?

Spring recital is set for the weekend of May 22-23, 2027. In order to accommodate all of our dancers and parents, we split our recital into several "sessions". Specific recital session assignments for each class are announced in January. Due to the large number of dancers participating in these shows, we unfortunately are unable to accommodate individual session date requests. The recital will be held at Halton Theater. **All music and costumes are selected with modesty and keep the YMCA mission in mind.**

Are there make up classes?

Yes and no. Make up classes are allowed until October 31st (During the fall session) and February 14th (During the spring session) only. Classes must be made up within 2 weeks of the original absence. A maximum of 3 make ups per semester are allowed. Students can only join a class as a make-up student, if the class is the same type as what they are enrolled in (ie. A Kinderkid cannot make up a class in a Preschool class). We do not allow make up classes past these dates because each class works specifically on their individual routines for the Winter Showcase and Spring Recital.

What about costumes/Recital recordings/pictures/etc.?

All communication regarding costume distribution dates, Recorded Recital links, picture dates/times, apparel orders, recital information, class updates, and more is done through email, monthly newsletters. If you are not getting the emails, please let your instructor know and check your spam folders. There is A LOT of information that goes out in emails!

Communication

Monthly Newsletters: Each month we will email a newsletter to our parents. We have found this to be the easiest way to communicate important information to our students' families about upcoming events, schedule changes, pressing deadlines, and general news about our program. If you do not receive them please let us know, so we can get your email updated in our system.

What to Expect Your First Week

1. The dance lobby is very crowded the first few weeks of classes. This will settle down after we get started.
2. There is a lot of switching around of classes as parents are trying to get settled back or into a new year. Please be patient. We will try to work with everyone to ensure your dancer has a schedule that works for your family.
3. It is best to get your dancer in class on time, ready to dance.
4. The youngest dancers will often have tears or anxiety the first few weeks. This is normal. The teachers are trained to get children "on task" quickly. It is not uncommon to have a few dancers on a few hips the first month of class! The best way to ensure success is for parents to assure them they are going to have fun.
5. **Please have all dancers use the bathroom before class.**
6. All ballet/tap classes will begin with ballet first, so please have your dancer put on ballet shoes before entering the studio.
7. You do not have to stay at the studio while your child has a class. However, you must be here to pick your child up on time. Please let us know if you will be going offsite during class, so we know how best to reach you in an emergency. We also have an app, Spot TV for viewing class. We will send communication for setting that up prior to the beginning of classes.
8. Please make sure we have the right emails to receive our newsletters and important updates. You can do this at either the sales and service desk or check with your instructors.

Always stop in the office or send us an email, if you have questions or concerns. We love what we do here and want your experience to be positive and rewarding!

