



Exhale Dance Youth Intensive
Rules and Expectations
2026-2027

Please read the following carefully. A copy of the R & E is posted to the EDYI blog for reference.

1. COMMUNICATION

Good communication between parents, dancers, EDYI teachers, and administrators is crucial to the success of our team. The team blog is our primary means of communicating to you about upcoming events, schedule changes, deadlines, performance opportunities and master classes. Updates are posted when needed. It is the dancer's/guardian's responsibility to respond to all questions by the deadlines assigned. Failure to respond results in increased work for our administrators and puts a strain on communication.

Any conflicts, absences and/or injuries **MUST** go through Miss Melissa.

Weekly Update: Please save <https://exhaledc.home.blog> to your favorites and follow the site via email. This is where the updates are posted and will get sent automatically to your email. Updates due to schedule changes, closings or new information will be given throughout the week!

Responses: There will be a link posted on the blog for students and families to RSVP to events, performances or workshops when necessary. It will be each dancer's responsibility to submit their responses by the deadline; otherwise, they will not be able to participate in the specified performance. EDYI dancers are given dates for mandatory performances and are expected to maintain their commitment to the team by honoring those commitments. Acceptable conflicts are school events and major family events. Backing out of performances for any other reasons will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Email: Email is also a means for us to communicate imperative information. Please make sure your email address is kept current with the administration. **All EDYI related inquiries should be directed to Melissa using EDC@exhaledance.com.** All billing inquiries and general registration questions should be directed to Kristin Cobb at office@exhaledance.com

2. ATTENDANCE

Our attendance policy for EDYI is similar to our weekly students. Please understand that while we are sympathetic to illness, family vacation, and other outside activities, absences have an effect on the development of an individual dancer and the advancement of the company. By signing up for the EDYI program you are making a commitment to make this company your first after-school priority and attendance will continue to be the most important part of that commitment.

Your attendance and participation in class will be the most important factors to making consistent progress and maintaining your position with the Exhale Dance Youth Intensive. Please read these rules carefully.

- If you are going to be late or absent, YOU MUST EMAIL MELISSA (EDC@exhaledance.com) IN ADVANCE as soon as you know you are going to be absent! Emailing during or after class is not an appropriate way to notify us of an absence! Staff will be notified of absences. *****Texting the teacher or a teammate is not the appropriate way to notify of tardiness or absence.**
- You are expected to meet with a teammate to catch up on any missed material prior to your next class.

- If you anticipate an extended absence or regular late arrivals due to school related activities or outside dance opportunities, you must schedule a meeting and discuss it with Jen and Melissa BEFORE you make that commitment.
- If a student is absent the week before any performance, it may affect their ability to participate in the show.

Each team member is allowed **3 ABSENCES PER CLASS DAY PER DANCE SESSION** (Fall/Winter).

**Extended absences due to illness or injury will be dealt with on an individual basis.*

Students are allowed three absences in their individual technique classes per session (Fall/Winter). This means students may only miss 3 Monday classes, 3 Wednesday classes and three Friday classes per semester. Parents will be notified how many absences their student has to help keep track of attendance.

Friday production rehearsals are integral, as we are putting together large production pieces with many moving parts. We truly hope that dancers only miss when they absolutely have to. Or, tell us in advance that they will not be attending so we can make the appropriate arrangements!

There are several reasons for this, all of them aiming to benefit not only your progress but also that of the entire company:

1. The more you miss, the further behind you will be and the less time you will have to practice with the group. Missing choreography can make students feel overwhelmed.
2. EDYI pieces and production pieces often involve complex formations and partner work; therefore any time there is an absence, the whole class is affected by that missing dancer.
3. Each faculty member choreographs the piece taking into consideration the amount of time there is to learn the material. Attendance at each class is vital to the success of the routine.
4. We expect all dancers to improve as the year goes on and without consistent attendance in class, this is less likely to happen.

What happens if you exceed 3 absences and do nothing to make it up?

Continued missed classes, class observations, and habitual tardiness may result in:

- Change to swing position*
- Removal from a dance routine
- Change in EDYI status
- Dismissal from EDYI (This would be the worst-case scenario. Mrs. Jen managed a paraprofessional dance company for almost a decade, and NEVER had this happen! ☺)

**A swing position means that the dancer will continue to come to class and learn all of the material but will not have a place in the dance. The dancer will be called upon to fill in and perform in the event that one of the other dancers is sick, injured, or otherwise unable to perform. They may also be allowed to dance the piece in the next performance.*

What happens if you sustain an injury?

Dance is a physical activity where injuries can occur. In order to protect our young dancers in the best way we can, we have set up the following guidelines.

- If a dancer needs to sit out in class for illness or injury, they must remain observing for the duration of class. This is to prevent injury after the body cools down.
- Students who are observing class are required to fill out an observation note sheet.
- If any dancer feels unable to participate in dance class due to pain for 1 full week, a visit to the doctor will be recommended.
- If you are unable to participate for 2 consecutive weeks, a doctor's note is mandatory to return to class.

- If a dancer repeatedly misses class or is unable to participate due to an injury, a meeting should be held with the parent, dancer and teacher.
- More serious injuries will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Each dancer is given information on health and fitness guidelines for dancers during the first week of classes. We expect that our dancers are training and working on increasing flexibility and strength, as well as maintaining a healthy diet. Optimal health and fitness will help to avoid injuries.

What about attendance after shows?

To maintain your skill/technique level gained over a session/season it is expected that dancers maintain a good attendance record even after a show has ended. EDYI members are able to grow as technicians when we are not preparing for shows. Class time is crucial to each dancer's training. If a dancer does not attend class, they may fall behind and find it challenging to catch back up.

The regular class schedule will also remain the same up until Nationals!

What about attendance before a competition or show?

Due to safety, health (both mental and physical) and the betterment of the team, dancers must attend classes the week leading up to a show. If a dancer is unable to attend a class before any performance, it will deem them unready to perform, which is unsafe. The day before the competition is extremely crucial to the team and individual success. If a student is ill or has to sit out of class the night before a competition, we will always put their health/safety first and that dancer will not compete the following day. This will allow us time to reblock and get the team on the stage successfully and safely.

Please note that unfortunately competitions do not offer refunds.

3. PERFORMANCES AND DANCE EXPERIENCES

The Exhale Dance Youth Intensive's mission is to provide a dance education that is inspirational, thought-provoking, and motivational. To fulfill this mission, EDYI will perform throughout the year at community events. Each Exhale show should represent the best and most talented dancers in our company. Your full participation is needed to keep these traditions alive.

We are often invited to perform in additional other shows throughout the year. We will share details with you as we received them, for those performances that we deem most beneficial to EDYI dancers.

2026-2027 EDYI Performances/Events

Every Performances/Event is mandatory for ALL Exhale Dancers.

An updated performance calendar has been posted on the blog highlighting all performances of the year. Please email EDC@exhaledance.com for questions

Mandatory Workshops:

The Exhale Dance Youth Intensive prides itself on its diversity and dedication to studying with top teachers and exploring new styles of dance. Attendance at all Master Classes/Events is required of all EDYI Members. Outside dance opportunities will be posted and are highly recommended. Exhale fundraising projects greatly offset the cost of these additional classes.

Summer Dance Requirement:

All returning and new team members are required to continue their dance training (minimum 25 hours) during the months of June through August. Students that wish to have a lead role in our Nutcracker must attend our Technique Tuesday classes. These classes will be used as an audition and will ensure the students are technically ready for the roles.

We will begin working on material for upcoming shows during our mandatory EDYI Summer Intensive, which will be held **the 2nd full week in August**. Dancers who do not attend this camp will not be allowed to perform the pieces choreographed during camp in any shows that season. There is a chance that dancers who do attend this intensive will feel behind when they return in the fall.

4. SPECIAL PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

It is at the discretion of each EDYI teacher to decide whether to include dancer highlights within a performance piece. These highlights are based on multiple factors (which may vary by teacher) such as, but not limited to:

- Work ethic and/or enthusiasm (in class)
- Dedication to improve (outside of class)
- Special talent (improvisation skills, acrobatic abilities, performance quality)
- Ability to retain and master choreography
- Seniority

Not all teachers choose to include highlights in their performance pieces, but those who do choose to include highlights will not do so at the expense of other dancers' development.

All students in the same level of EDYI receive the same technical training when they are coming to class regularly and participating fully.

Additionally, all students have equal opportunities to demonstrate (through their energy, focus, work ethic, and behavior in class) that they are deserving of performance highlights if a teacher is inclined to include these in a piece.

Please also remember that each student is responsible for being attentive in class and applying themselves fully to the improvement of their technique. Teachers can only provide the direction and encouragement - dancers must provide the effort.

5. CODE OF CONDUCT/ETHICS

Because you represent Exhale A School of Dance, EDYI and, most importantly, yourself, we expect certain behavior from all of our company members.

All team members are to behave in a respectful manner at all times.

- Always treat your teachers, teammates, parents, and staff with respect.
- Personal conversations and comments should occur before/after class – NEVER during a lesson. It is important to keep your focus on the lesson when a teacher may stop to give feedback to an individual or small group.
- Body language is a strong indicator of respect and openness to learning. Dancers are expected to look at a teacher when they are demonstrating or giving notes. As a dancer you should always be ready and free to move. Hands on hips or across your body stops the energy flow and indicates boredom and a closed attitude. Dancers should never sit unless it is part of the choreography, lesson or designated break time.
- It requires self-discipline and maturity to be accepting and patient with each other. Negative comments directed toward fellow teammates and teachers are destructive and hurtful and will not be tolerated in or outside our building. Each dancer should focus on her/his own performance in class and strive to do their very best.
- Dancers show support for each other by cheering for one another after solo or group presentations!
- It is traditional and expected that dancers applaud each other and their teacher at the end of every class.
- Dancers should not be chewing gum or eating snacks during class, as it is a choking hazard. Food is not permitted to be brought into the studio and must stay in the lobby only
- Dancers must clean up after themselves after snack if a mess is made
- It is important for all dancers to be inclusive and welcoming to their teammates, parents, staff and guests whenever at an Exhale event.
- Phones are not allowed to be used during class under any circumstances.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR:

To ensure Exhale remains a safe, nurturing space for everyone involved we will not accept the following behaviors from any member while participating in Exhale activities.

- Swearing or vulgar language

- Unsportsmanlike behavior
- Disrespect shown to teammates, teachers, Exhale Dance staff, parents, or guests of the studio
- Bullying or dominant behavior of any kind
- Online bashing/cyber bullying
- Encroaching on someone's personal space without their consent

Any infringements made on these rules will consecutively result in these consequences:

- Asked to apologize verbally to the person you disrespected.
- Being asked to sit out for the remainder of class (if behavior was not corrected after several verbal warnings.)
- Write an apology letter to the person you disrespected (on a case by case basis.)
- Writing and reading an apology letter to the team (if your actions affected the entire team.)
- Suspension from a class until a parent/student/faculty meeting can be held (if behavior was not corrected after the above actions occurred multiple times.)
- Dismissal from the team (this would only be after several meetings were held and the rules/expectations continued to be broken even after being addressed.)

***Parents will be contacted immediately if we notice any unacceptable behavior.** We understand that our students are growing/learning and we are always here to guide and not judge. We want to work together to build a safe, judgment free environment where everyone feels safe to make mistakes, try new things and become the best version of themselves.

PARENT SUPPORT

In order to teach your children not only the technical and expressive aspects of dance but also the importance of teamwork and commitment it is imperative that we have your full support. We are always open to constructive feedback and ideas for improvement. Negative emails, gossip, text messages or talk about dancers or staff is unacceptable. The teacher's decisions regarding choreography are final.

Please know that the teachers and staff at Exhale always have the students' best interests at heart. We want you to contact us with any questions or concerns you may have. We cannot fix issues that we do not know about.

Using social media to vent your displeasure about Exhale is considered unsportsmanlike conduct. This type of behavior certainly does not create the proper role model and will NOT be tolerated in our company.

APPEARANCE

When traveling with the Exhale Dance Youth Intensive, we expect all team members to look professional. Whether we are attending a workshop, festival or performance you should be dressed appropriately in your Exhale Company gear. Jewelry is limited to company diamond studs. Necklaces, bracelets and excessive rings should be left at home. ****Watches or fitbits may not be worn in class, except in the case of medical need. If a student needs to wear a watch for medical reasons, please let Miss Melissa know so she can make teachers aware.**

6. DRESS CODE

Basic apparel rules for class

- Black leotards must be worn to every class.
- Pink tights and ALL dance shoes (dancers should bring all dance shoes to every class).
- Hair must be in a sturdy bun for each class that won't fall out.
- *It is mandatory for all dancers to wear their company dance attire to every class.
Clothing/footwear must appropriately fit each dancer and not run too big or too small. If your child outgrows or ruins their attire/dance shoes you must purchase new attire from The Dancer's Drawer. This ensures a professional look for our company programs.
- Dance sweaters are allowed during colder months. However, baggy sweatshirts and sweatpants are not allowed.
- **Jewelry:** No jewelry is to be worn in class, except for stud style earrings and as it can be both dangerous and distracting. This includes necklaces, bracelets, watches and excessive rings.

Students that don't come dressed appropriately may be asked to sit out or be sent home, especially if they are habitually not following dress code.

***Performance undergarment rules apply in class.**

Performances:

Earrings: Exhale will supply 1 set of performance earrings for each student. There are options for both pierced and unpierced ears. If lost, you must contact Exhale to purchase another pair.

EDYI Apparel: All dancers receive a company jacket every other season. These screened items are specially ordered. If a dancer's company apparel gets misplaced or ruined, we **may** be able to purchase a new one for a nominal fee. Dancers will receive a new updated company jacket as part of their tuition this season.

SHOES

Dancers are asked to purchase their own dance shoes. **We ask that shoes are not too worn or dirty for performances. Students will need new shoes throughout the year if they become dirty, worn or outgrow them. It is highly suggested that students have a pair of 'class shoes' and a pair of 'performance only shoes'. This will ensure dancers always have clean shoes for performances.**

HAIR

Your hair must be pulled neatly and completely away from your face IN A BUN for all classes and performances. Loose ponytails tend to require touch-ups and can negatively affect your progress. Please make sure your hair is pulled back in a way that will not be a distraction. If you have bangs, please keep them short enough for us to see your eyes and if necessary, use bobby pins or clips to keep them out of the way. For performances, dancers must have hair in a low, slicked back bun attached to the head with a middle part. **Hair donuts are not allowed for performances

***UNDERGARMENTS**

Undergarments should not be worn underneath the dancers' classroom attire. If completely necessary all straps/material from the undergarment should **not** be visible. Students should try their best to make sure undergarments are not seen. This will give the entire company a more professional, clean look. Professional/collegiate programs expect all undergarments to be hidden, so this is good practice for our students.

*Students must purchase a skin toned leotard with clear straps. These can be purchased at The Dancer's Drawer or online. However, it must be the correct style so it cannot be seen underneath costumes.

7. FUNDRAISING

General Fundraising Projects:

Because everyone benefits from the money raised, everyone is expected to support and participate in our fundraising activities. **It is mandatory for each parent to volunteer an hour of their time at each show or fundraising event.** This volunteerism may include helping with costumes, fundraising activities or any assisting backstage. A signup genius will be sent out before each show or fundraising event.

The money raised by these projects goes toward a variety of things such as offsetting master teacher fees, some outside dance class experiences, producing and costuming shows. This general fund also supports the many "extras" offered to team members such as guest teachers, banquets, and special class experiences.

Families are only charged approximately \$50 per costume, and with textile rates on the rise, professional competition quality costumes can cost up to \$100-\$125+. We provide fundraising opportunities for the team to cover the costume difference.

8. COSTUME CARE

Borrowed Costumes for Nutcracker: Team members are simply asked to return all borrowed costumes as they were given to you. Families are not responsible for cleaning the costumes. They are only

responsible for taking care of the costumes while they are 'in your hands'. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in costume fees for cleaning, repair or replacement.

Students should be responsible for their own costumes. Costumes should be returned to the studio directly following performances. This is a great life lesson in taking responsibility for our own belongings, a skill that will carry with them throughout life.

Owned Costumes: Dancers will be given all competition costumes prior to their first show. **It is each family's responsibility to prepare the costumes for each show/competition. This will include any alterations, steaming the costumes and keeping track of all accessories. Please note that accessories are often irreplaceable as they come with a costume set and are not sold separately!**

9. SOLO AND SMALL GROUP EXPECTATIONS

Participating in a solo or small group is an honor. Students are expected to attend all scheduled rehearsals (unless they notify the instructor in advance that they are ill or injured) and as many solo/small group rehearsals as they can.

Solo/small group run through rehearsals will take place biweekly on Fridays from 6:30-7:30. Due to faculty and space availability, if dancers do not attend a scheduled rehearsal and do not give at least 2 hours notice the lesson will not be rescheduled.

Dancers are also expected to practice their special dance at least one hour each week. Once a dancer has learned their piece they are accountable for retaining the choreography and practicing so it is show ready. Solo cleanings/extra rehearsals can be scheduled with available staff members for a nominal fee based on the choreographer's personal rate.