

# Minnesota Dance Theatre & School

## STUDENT HANDBOOK

### LEGACY

Since its debut in 1962, Minnesota Dance Theatre & School has led the Twin Cities in performing, teaching, and celebrating the art of dance. The School was founded by internationally acclaimed choreographer, producer, and teacher Loyce Houlton, who masterfully integrated ballet and modern techniques to create her own contemporary aesthetic. Our legacy is a virtual library of dance repertoire from classical ballet to our own unique contemporary voice.

With a history spanning over five decades, Minnesota Dance Theatre ranks as one of Minnesota's most enduring arts organizations and aspires to maintain the highest international artistic standards, while attracting audiences, dancers and students from all cultural and economic backgrounds to the art of dance.

- 54 years of tradition
- Training tomorrow's dancers today

### INTRODUCTION

Students and professionals work together to share in their goals and accomplishments of this extraordinary art form. Dancers in our school inherit knowledge from our renowned and committed faculty, who nurture each child's potential for artistry and self-confidence. Joy and agility are encouraged through training, mentoring, and performing experiences furthering their skills and talents. Central to our purpose is inspiring and challenging students to achieve their best. Students ranging from pre-school to adults take part in classes designed to meet a variety of abilities.

MDT&S does not discriminate in admission, employment or student enrollment on the basis of race, creed, sex, disability, national origin, or sexual preference.

### MISSION

The mission of Minnesota Dance Theatre is to create masterful and inspiring dance through performance and education.

## MDT&S DIVISIONS

**Young Children's Division:** Children explore movement through imagery, music and self-expression and are introduced to rhythms, basic steps and terminology in an age appropriate curriculum. It is a joyful prelude to formal ballet and contemporary training where they learn the fundamentals of both aesthetics. Placement for YCD is determined by age. This program is for children ages 3 - 11.

**Boys Classes:** Part of the Young Children's Division, MDT's Boys Classes are designed to enhance athletic skills, flexibility, coordination and strength, all important aspects of this performance art form and cross-disciplinary training. The Boys Classes are tuition-free, based on acceptance into the program, and provide weekly classes in movement, including beginning ballet and contemporary dance.

**Performing Arts Division:** The school offers a curriculum designed to meet the needs of today's dancer with a sequential curriculum based in the classical Russian tradition and enhanced by contemporary dance forms and ideas. PAD students must enroll for the full year program and should expect to be in each level for a minimum of two years with training hours increasing accordingly each year. Placement for PAD is determined by the faculty and based on technical ability and strength. Performance, showcase and outreach opportunities will encourage and further their skills and talents. New students are required to take a placement class. Students aged 8-18 are eligible for PAD. Placement for pointe is a decision made at the discretion of the faculty. Appropriate strength and muscular development is necessary for pointe work. Students must be in level III to be considered for pointe. Enrollment in MDT's PAD program does not guarantee participation in *Loyce Houlton's Nutcracker Fantasy*.

**Pre-Professional Trainee Program:** Part of the Performing Arts Division, the Pre-Professional Trainee Program provides students interested in additional training opportunities the ability to partake in more classes and expand their experience. Pre-Professional Trainees are expected to attend all classes outlined in the PPT schedule with the option of taking all Level VI classes.

**Company Trainee Division:** The Company Trainee level provides a professional full-time experience with the MDT Company. Each participant is expected to fully commit to the company's schedule of classes, rehearsals and performances, as well as Friday PAD Level VI class/rehearsals. CTD is the precursor to a contract and is by invitation only.

**Open Adult Division:** Accommodating the business day schedule, the Open Division offers opportunities to adults of all ages to have a full spectrum of class offerings from beginning to advanced/professional. Students must be at least 16 years of age to participate in Open Adult Division classes.

## DRESS CODE

YCD Girls: Pink tights, any color leotard, ballet slippers and hair pulled back and secured.

YCD Boys: Black shorts, white socks with white ballet shoes and white fitted t-shirt tucked in. T-shirts and shorts will be provided to students in the Boys Classes.

PAD Ladies: Pink tights, leotard style and color as specified by level (see website for order form) and no excessive or large jewelry, with hair pulled neatly in a bun.

PAD Gentlemen: Black tights or black shorts (boys), white socks with white ballet shoes and white fitted t-shirt tucked into the tights or shorts.

## ENROLLMENT

**Registration** is required for all students, new and returning, including a one-time \$25.00 new family fee for students new to the School. Registration forms include Payment Information and Plans, Release and Indemnification, and a Family Commitment Contract. All required forms are available online and must be completed at the beginning of the school year.

**Tuition** for the session must be current on the first day of class. MDT offers three Payment Plan options for PAD students for the school year, not including summer intensives. Students will not be able to take class if payment is past due. Fees and tuition are non-refundable and non-transferable once the session has begun.

**Financial Aid/Work Study** is available on a limited basis for PAD students in Level IV and above. Financial Aid/Work Study forms are available from the office. If you have any questions, please contact MDT&S at 612-338-0627.

**Communication** with the school community is primarily through email and website updates. The bulletin board on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor and the online Parent/Student Bulletin Board on [mndance.org](http://mndance.org) are both resources for schedule changes, upcoming events, rehearsal schedules and announcements. If you do not use email, please let us know the best way to contact you.

**Policies & Procedures** of MDT&S are to maintain a positive, healthy and productive environment for all dancers, students, professionals, and staff. Students are expected to behave in a responsible disciplined manner and to adhere to the school's rules and regulations, both inside The Cowles Center and outside in the greater community as representatives of MDT&S. Only water is allowed in dressing rooms, studios and carpeted areas. Snacks may be eaten in tiled hallways. The use of powders, lotions, hair products, jet glue or other substances that damage and make dangerous the dance floors are prohibited in the studios. Students are expected to respect the facility and clean up after themselves in the studio and dressing room. The dressing room is a common area, shared by company dancers, teachers, guests and students. MDT&S is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Please leave your valuables at home or bring them with you into the studio.

MDT&S reserves the right to suspend or dismiss any student whose conduct or attitude is found to be disruptive or disrespectful. Any of the actions listed below will result in dismissal from the program and will be reported immediately to the parents/guardians and leadership of MDT:

- The possession of drugs, alcohol, weapons or firearms.
- Willful destruction or misuse of MDT&S' or another person's property.
- Filming or photographing in locker rooms, bathrooms or studios during class or rehearsal.
- Inappropriate use of the internet while on the premises.
- Inappropriate internet postings that feature MDT&S facilities or use of the MDT brand name.

MDT&S is not responsible for injuries sustained during class sessions, rehearsals or performances. Ice packs are available in MDT's office. To avoid injury, there is no hanging on the barres in the studio or running in the hallways. Class observation through an injury is expected and can be very beneficial to students. Tuition refunds due to injury or illness are at the discretion of the administration and require a Doctor's note.

MDT has a minimum enrollment policy of 5 students per class. If minimum enrollment is not met by the end of the third week of classes, MDT may cancel the class and provide alternative options to students.

## SAFETY CONCERNS

The safety and well-being of students is a concern to the staff of both MDT and The Cowles Center. We encourage parents and students to help us in making their dance experience a safe and enjoyable one. We strongly recommend young children be met at the studio or be accompanied by an adult when leaving the 6<sup>th</sup> floor. We recommend that no one travel alone in the building. When classes are held in studios 7A or 5B, students should meet on 6<sup>th</sup> floor and go to the studios with the instructor and classmates. The faculty is available to help in emergency situations and as needs arise, but MDT&S is not responsible for the students once they leave the classroom. If MDT&S faculty or staff is unavailable, please contact Cowles Center Security at 612-375-1922. Students should enter and exit the building through the Hennepin Avenue Cowles Center doors, **not** through the doors of the adjoining restaurant. For reasons of physical safety students are not allowed to participate in class if fifteen minutes late. Promptness to all classes and rehearsals is expected.

## PARENT ASSOCIATION

All parents of students attending MDT&S are members of the Parent Association. This Association is an integral part of the MDT organization and we encourage involvement. Dedicating time and support to various activities such as performance preparation, costume repair, overseeing safety of young dancers and more, fulfills the necessary volunteer needs. By becoming an active part of the Parent Association you will meet other MDT&S parents and share in the commitment of your child's aspirations.

## PARKING, PARKING METERS, LOTS & RAMPS

**Parking** is available on surrounding streets and in many nearby ramps and lots. Parking ramps and meters may change their prices, especially during downtown events. Many parking ramps have discounted rates after 3 or 4 PM. There are 15 minute drop off/pick up parking meters located on 6th street next to the building.

[Ramp and Lot Map](#)

[Meter Map](#)

**Discounted Parking Validations** are available for purchase in the MDT Office for the Butler Park parking lot (100 N. 6<sup>th</sup> St.) located at 6<sup>th</sup> Street and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, the block surrounding our building. The purpose of these validations is to allow parents the ability to drop off or pick up students in close proximity to the dance studio. If the parent exceeds the 30 minute time limit they will be responsible for any additional fees. Validation tickets cost \$2.00 each and are worth \$3.00 of parking time (30 minutes). **During events**, the validations need to be presented to the attendant as you enter. The attendant will take your validation ticket and the event ticket along with your name and vehicle plate number. When you exit, you must use the 6<sup>th</sup> Street exit and will have to identify yourself to the cashier so that they ring the proper ticket. During events, there is no guarantee of open spaces.

### Biking

There is ample bike parking outside The Cowles Center. There are bike lanes on Hennepin Ave, First Ave and 6th St.

### Public Transportation

MDT&S is one block from the Warehouse District stop on the [Light-Rail system](#). Many bus lines run on Hennepin Ave and 6th St. Visit [www.metrotransit.org](http://www.metrotransit.org) to plan your public transit route.