

TEACHER HANDBOOK (MUSIC)

Please read through this handbook carefully, even if you have been teaching with us for several years. This handbook is revised frequently.

Contact Info

Please direct all issues to the office manager at the studio.

If there is an emergency and you can't make it to class, (eg. Major health issue, car accident), you should immediately call the phone numbers below in the listed order until you reach someone.

You must call - DO NOT EMAIL – we may not get it in time.

Please be aware that since our office is open 6 days a week, our office manager takes a different day off each week.

Studio Main Phone:	O: (504) 737-5977	info@dancetumblemusic.com
Pam Maag, Office Manager	C: (504) 231-7056	pam@dancetumblemusic.com
Morgan Wilson, Program Director	C: (504) 258-7515	morgan@dancetumblemusic.com
Marc Fouchi, Payroll / Facilities,	C: (504) 908-8388	marc@dancetumblemusic.com
Kelly Fouchi, Studio Director	C: (504) 390-5359	kelly@dancetumblemusic.com

Please ensure that all your contact numbers, birthday and email address are correct at the front desk.

Pay / Pay Periods / Time Reporting

You are paid on the 15th and last day of each month via direct deposit. If that day falls on a weekend or holiday, you will be paid on the closest preceding business day.

The two pay periods are as follows: 25th thru 9th – paid on 15th; 10th thru 24th – paid on last day of month.

At the end of each day, log your hours in Jackrabbit, and select the type of hours (Teach, Admin, Private, etc..).

Use hours in decimals when logging hours. (Ex: If you work 75 minutes, you log 1.25. Be careful NOT to log 1.15) Any issues regarding pay should be directed to Marc.

Schedules

In September you are given preliminary schedules. There may be gaps on your schedule initially, but August and September are the busiest months for us to register students. We typically register the majority of our new students over the month of Sept. Please be patient with us as we will do all we can to ensure that you have a good schedule and we add new students all through the year. Remember it is also in our best interest to ensure that your schedule is full.

First Week of Lessons

At the end of each night it is very important that you tell the desk staff who missed their lesson, especially if it was their first lesson. We can call and make sure they are coming or replace them with another student. This is extremely important for us to know or we won't know that you have a gap that needs filling.

Holds on the Schedule

If you see "Hold" beside a student's name on the schedule that means that they are not yet confirmed. This happens when a student calls to register, wants to start the same week and can't get to the studio to take care of the payment before their first lesson. As September is so crazy at the front desk, the desk staff can't notice if all the teachers have every single student show up. Please be extra vigilant to write down if a hold did not show up and give the note to the desk staff at the end of night. Sometimes people do get lost when they first come to the studio, so please do wait around for them to show up.

Weather closures/Power Failure Closure

If we have to cancel a day or a partial day of teaching due to weather closures or power failures, we add an extra day onto the end of the teaching year. If you wish to make-up the lessons before then you may, pending the students can make it in and the studio is available. Payment for these lessons is only issued once the lessons are made-up.

Payment for Make-Up Lessons

If you had to miss and could not get a substitute you will be paid for the missed lesson when it is made-up. Also, if a student is receiving a make-up lesson due to missing one allowed for illness, you will be paid when the lesson is made-up.

Messages

We use email and text for most of our communication with you.

Also, please check with the office manager before your classes in case she has information for you.

Dress Code

Please do not wear old, tired clothes to teach in. Please dress professionally. No shorts, jeans, tee-shirts, running shoes or hats.

Timeliness

It is essential that you arrive at least 10 minutes early for your teaching day – you can close the door to the studio, but please do not arrive after the students are already there waiting. Please also stay on time with your students. Please be aware of the time and do not go over with your students as this makes you late all night long. Also please do not short the time that you give to your students. Each student should get their full ½ hour, 45 minutes or 1 hour. If a student arrives late, just give them the remaining portion of their time. Do not go into the next student's lesson time.

Teacher Absences and Substitutes

Illness and Missing

We enforce a very strict policy with the students of no make-up lessons unless due to illness. We expect them to respect your time. However, we also expect the same in return from you. Please do not schedule performances or other activities on days that you teach with us. It is very difficult for us to get substitutes, especially last minute, and we think it is important that the students have the consistency of the same teacher every week. Try to muster through if it's something minor like a headache. If it is absolutely unavoidable, please give us as much notice as possible.

If you miss, we expect you to find your own sub from our existing teachers or our sub list. However, if you are extremely ill and cannot do it yourself, we will try and find a substitute for you. Please call the desk staff first thing in the morning. If you cannot reach them, please call Kelly. The more notice we have, the better chance we have of finding you a sub.

Teacher missing for other reasons other than illness

One of the reasons students choose to take lessons with us is that we promise consistency. If we have to get substitute teachers for any reason other than the teacher being ill, we are in a very awkward position. The students need the consistency of the same teacher, every week. It is even worse when we can't get a sub and we have to inconvenience the student by arranging a different day and time to make up their lesson. Please do not schedule other activities on the days that you have committed to work with us. Please also schedule Thanksgiving, Christmas, Spring Break and all holidays so you are back when we are open, not after. Absences due to lack of transportation will be considered inexcusable.

Switching Students' Lesson Times/Scheduling Make-up Lessons

Any change of lesson time must be done at the front desk. If you have a gap on your schedule and ask a student to come then for a make-up lesson, the front desk may have already booked a new student in that spot. If you are scheduling a make-up lesson it must be done through the front desk so they can keep a record that the lesson was made up and to avoid double booking a lesson spot.

Please do not ask a student to come at a time other than their regular lesson time if you know that you have another student absent that one time. People pick the day and specific time that works for them and often have another lesson time scheduled to coincide with their lesson with you. Many times people are too polite to tell you that this is an inconvenience for them, but they let the desk staff know. Again, we stress how important it is to take your time seriously, so we need to do the same for the students.

Student Attendance, Lateness

Please do not forget to let the desk staff know about every student absence. We will keep it in their record in case it comes into question later. Also, please tell the desk staff once a student has missed 3 times so we can call the parents. We will enforce the attendance policy to help you, but we don't want to be in a situation at recital time where we find out that a student has missed over 4 times and you don't want them in the recital and then we have to call the parents. We always want to have the opportunity to give the warning call first.

If a child shows up for a lesson and is not on your schedule, please address it with the front desk. It is very important that we have the child registered in our system before he/she is allowed to take any other classes.

Student Make-up Lessons

We cannot have inconsistencies with our make-up policy. All the parents sign a policy sheet that states that students only get a makeup lesson if they are sick and that is limited to 1 time per semester. Our desk staff goes over that with them and reinforces that your time is very valuable and that we enforce this policy. We cannot have some teachers give makeup lessons for reasons other than illness while others have not. Parents have found out that their child did not get a make-up lesson while another teacher gave one and this has created a real customer service nightmare at the front desk. We need your help to avoid this situation. Please do not offer makeup lessons except for illness.

Greeting Students – Staying on Premises

If your next student is not sitting directly outside your door, please try to find them. We have had students miss part of their lesson waiting somewhere else for the teacher to come get them, while the teacher was expecting the student to walk down to the room to meet them. If a student is late, please do not leave the building. Also if a student is late, leave your door open in case they come directly to the teaching studio. Please also keep checking the waiting room to make sure they are not waiting for you. If a student is very late, like half way through their lesson or more do not leave the building without telling the desk staff where you are going so we can come get you if your student shows up. If a student shows up for the last 10 minutes of their lesson, it is annoying but they are paying for that time and you need to give them what time you can.

If at all possible, when you are leaving the building please take your cell phone with you. During a gap in your schedule, do not leave the building without telling the desk staff. Also if you finish before 9:00pm please check that we have not booked a new student for an 8:30 time slot for that night.

Class Time

Please do not leave students in a classroom unattended

DO NOT make phone calls, text, browse the internet, or use social media while you are teaching a class.

This will not be tolerated. Parents pay for the full lesson time and should get the full time. Your cell phone or any mobile device may only be used for music unless there is an emergency. If you have a medical emergency and need to leave right away, please let the office manager know before you leave so someone can supervise the students.

Personal Social Media

- **You are not permitted to initiate, solicit or accept “Friend/Follow” requests with enrolled Encore students on any personal Social Media Account.**
- When posting online, please remember that your online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, decency, and consideration that you use face-to-face.
- You are responsible for all that you do, say, and post online. Anything posted online should represent you in a professional manner as others will see you as connected to Encore.
- Do not post negative public messages/media about Encore
- Do not post photos or video of fellow instructors or staff without their permission.
- Do not use photos or video taken at Encore without permission.
- Do not post photos or video that contain students without parental consent.
- Do not encourage students enrolled at Encore to create social media accounts of any kind.
- Do not post material that would be deemed inappropriate by students or their families, such as, but not limited to: provocative or sexually explicit messages/photos/videos, drug use, hate speech, cyberbullying. If students / parents obtain access to such material posted by you, it will be investigated by Encore staff and if warranted, will be disciplined up to and including termination, depending on the severity of the offense, and may be forwarded to the appropriate state department for review and possible further action.

Staff-Student Relations

You are prohibited from establishing unprofessional and thereby inappropriate personal relationships with Encore students. Examples of unprofessional relationships include, but are not limited to: fraternizing or communicating with students as if you and students were peers such as writing personal/intimate letters or emails; “texting” students; calling students on cell phones or allowing students to make personal calls to them unrelated to Encore; sending inappropriate pictures to students; discussing or revealing to students personal matters about their private lives or inviting students to do the same, and engaging in sexualized dialogue, whether in person, by phone, via the Internet or in writing.

Contact with Parents

It’s ok to take a minute or so between classes to chat with a parent, but anything beyond that should be done on the studio telephone. If a parent asks to speak with you after the class, and you have another class waiting, please ask the parent to leave a message at the front desk and you will call them during your office hours. We will never give your contact information out to a family. If you need to call a parent, use the studio telephone. Please do not use your own phone or email. Never give your phone number or email to a parent. All communication must go through the office manager or the studio phone.

Outside organizations / events

Some instructors teach at or perform with other studios, or have their own related organization or business. This is perfectly fine, but Encore is also a business trying to build its own student base. As you saw in your teacher contract, you are not allowed to solicit Encore students to take class elsewhere, or encourage them to join outside organizations or participate in events that are not sponsored by Encore that would cause them to drop their classes. Furthermore, you are not allowed to discuss these organizations in any way during your classes. Your intentions may be good – thinking you are exposing students to other opportunities, but we consider these outside organizations and events to be a conflict of interest, because it can ultimately cause students to drop their classes to make time for those activities.

Encore offers master classes and performance opportunities for our students throughout the year, and we control the scheduling and time commitment to make sure they do not conflict with classes.

We also do not allow students to wear attire from other competing schools, studios or programs while at Encore, as we consider this to be the same as our competitors advertising inside our own business.

Handing out Memos

From time to time, we need your assistance in getting memos out to students. We will let you know and have them ready in the studio. With items such as recital program lists, please ensure that you hand them in by the date requested as we have printing deadlines to make.

Trial Students

We offer trial classes to give a child a chance to see how fun class can be and introduce prospective new students to our studio. If you have one or more trial students in your class, please introduce them to the returning students, and choose a ‘class buddy’ to pair them up with so they don’t feel like an outsider. This is our chance to make a great first impression on the child, and of course we want them to go back to their parent in the lobby after class smiling from ear to ear wanting to return.

Please conduct the class as you normally would, and have some ‘homework’ prepared for the class, especially when a trial student is attending. Something that they can work on and look forward to bringing back to class next week. It can be anything – coloring sheet, a song, a dance step, etc...

Finally, thank the trial student for joining us and remind them to go back to the lobby for their special gift. This will give the office manager a chance to see if the family would like to register for classes instead of the parent picking up the student and the door and leaving right away.

We also have ‘Bring a Friend’ days, which will work in a similar fashion to a trial student, except they already have a class buddy.

Handing out Memos

From time to time, we need your assistance in getting memos out to students. Please check your message box in the message center to see if there are any memos that need to be handed out. With items such as recital program lists, please ensure that you hand them in by the date requested as we have printing deadlines to meet.

Recital

We will have music recital guidelines/etiquette notes that we want you to give to all the students you have performing. We are enclosing a copy of what we will have you give to the parents.

Teachers need to educate the students on proper recital etiquette. Leaving after performing is very rude. Talking during the recital is both rude and distracting. Students need to come on time and early if they have an instrument that needs to be tuned. Students using the accompanist should thank her. Also let them know the appropriate dress for performing. We certainly don’t expect party dresses or suits, but some students come looking very unkempt or in really, really immodest clothing. We of course would never insist on a style of dressing, and often they just don’t know what is appropriate as they don’t have any previous performing experience.

Even if the music is memorized, the students must always bring a copy in case nerves kick in and they forget the music.

If a student is not ready, do not put them in a recital. Wait until the next recital.

Please put a post-it note or a paper clip to mark the page in the book that the student is playing from. Often students sit at the piano and page through their books looking for their piece.

Voice Teachers:

- Voice students must be able to project or should not go into the recital – no microphones are used and sometimes we can't even hear the singers from the 1st row – you must emphasize projecting to the back of the room.
- Voice pieces should not repeat sections and must be the absolute maximum of 2 minutes – shorter is much better – if a piece can't be shortened, pick another piece

Do not force your students to go into the recital if they do not want to. We do not want the students to feel like they are being pressured. Even if your students have memorized their music they should take it with them as a backup. Pieces may not be more than 2 minutes long. Cut out repeats or stop at a logical point to keep it to 2 minutes.

Time Lengths

Please respect our 2 minute maximum for our recital pieces. We like to keep our recitals short and comfortable for the families. Even if you have a student that you want to showcase, another parent might think that their child is fantastic too so why didn't they get to perform the longer piece they wanted. In reality that child might not be so great and the teacher was able to use the time restriction as a gentle way out of a long painful performance. Students should play pieces they play well. Suzuki pieces are notorious for repeats. There is no need to repeat. Cutting the repeats is a great way to shorten the piece. Voice students also may not be able to sing every verse of a song if it is too long.

Voice Lyrics

As obvious as it would seem, we sometimes have inappropriate music surface at recitals. Please let your students know that the audience will have a lot of very young children. It is school policy not to allow songs with coarse language or swearing. Please also don't perform songs that are sexually suggestive even if the student is older, again we have a young audience.

Buying Music

You have full control over which books your students will use. You can either direct your student's parent to the store or website where they can purchase them, or you can buy them and have them reimburse you directly at their next lesson. If they don't have cash or check, they can charge it to their studio account, and you can submit the receipt to the desk staff, and we will reimburse you in your next paycheck.

Loud Instruments

Please do not teach with the door open. Voice teachers – if you are practicing by yourself during regular teaching hours, please keep your volume down, as it can be distracting in the office / waiting room.

Teaching hours for the following session

Every year in March or April, to prepare for summer lessons and fall pre-registration, we start our hiring for summer and the following fall (September). In March or April you are given a sheet that you fill out with your following fall availability. Please do not put down availability for days that you are not positive you can commit to us. It creates major bad will among our parents when they line up for pre-registration for a lesson spot and then we call them a month later to tell them the teacher doesn't want to work that day anymore.

Recommendation Forms

Every year we have you fill out a mini report card on how each of your students did and then recommend what lesson length they should take in the fall. You fill these out, Kelly will read them, and then they go back to you to be handed out to the students. These are a great tool to get your students to re-register with you for the fall. You will be given sample recommendation forms and a set of guidelines to follow.

Pre-registration

Every year we hold special pre-registration for our existing students before we open up the fall times to new students. Your current students do not automatically get a lesson day and time held for them in the fall. They must register for a time each year. Pre-registration is a way for us to jump start your fall schedule. You will be given a lot of memos to remind the students of this. If you can help by ensuring that they know that it is important, this creates urgency and again helps ensure that your schedule fills more quickly.

Bring A Friend Days

We have been very successful in introducing prospective new students to our school with Bring a Friend Days. You are not required to do anything special on these days except give any friends that attend a package of info to take home. This is a way that we can help fill your schedule. If a student likes a lesson with you and brings a friend to observe, this can turn into a new student for you. You just conduct the lesson as you normally would and the friend observes. If you can include the friend that is great, but it is meant as a way to show prospective new students what happens in the lesson.

Maintenance

We have the studio cleaned on a weekly basis; however, we do ask that you keep the piano and chairs clean and tidy. If you need notice the bathroom needs toilet paper, napkins, or trash bags, or if any equipment is broken or not working properly, please let the desk staff know right away so we can get it fixed for you.

Food and Drinks

Please feel free to eat in your studio, or in the office, but please do not eat in the lobby area. Do **NOT** place any beverage on or near the piano under any circumstances. Please put your drinks on the table or on the floor. Please make sure that your students do not place their drinks anywhere near the piano. **Water is the only beverage that a student may bring into the studio.** Please do not leave any empty bottles or garbage in your studios. The studio has a fridge for the teachers use. The desk staff can show you where it is located.

Garbage

Please do not leave half-full coffee cups, soda cans etc. in your room and please no food garbage. It attracts bugs and causes odors.

Heaters and Air Conditioners

The air conditioner and heaters are pre-set on timers. Please do not adjust the temperature. If the setting is uncomfortable for you, please let the desk staff know so they can adjust it permanently for your class. If for any reason you feel that they are not working, please let the front desk know right away so they can be repaired.

Parking

Parking spaces are very limited. We try our best to stagger large classes to help the situation. We ask that instructors park “next door” in the parking lots of the businesses next to us. This leaves spots in our parking lot for our customers with young children. These two businesses are usually not open when we are. This has worked well and we have not had any complaints.