

## Dear Level 3 and 4 dancers,

This weekend I will post the school year brochure and the placement postcards are already in the mail. Soon, you will start trying to figure out the best possible schedule for your new class levels.

**I am sending this email to help you get the most out of your dance education.**

### ***Here are guidelines for selecting the best possible schedule for your dancer:***

#### ***Ballet 3, Jazz 3, and Modern 1 are all back to back on Wednesday, should I take them all?***

In a word: NO! Although it would be POSSIBLE to take all 3 classes in one day, **I do not recommend EVER taking more than 2 on any school day.** Why?

- Taking 3 classes in 1 day is an unrealistic expectation for ANY dancer after a full day of school. Dance is physical, but also requires mental strength and stamina. **Dancers need to be able to focus on class**, and there is a limit to how much school followed by dance school can actually be retained in one day.
- **Injury Risk!** Taking 3 or more classes in a day makes a dancer tired and increases the likeliness of not having the strength to prevent injury! Also, if you take ballet, jazz and modern all in one day, you will do 3 vigorous stretching/conditioning workouts in one day... and then not do any for 6 days. By having this “marathon” type schedule your likelihood of increasing flexibility is very small.
- **One day of absence means 2 weeks of not dancing!** If you have all your classes in one day, and then have to miss that day... it will have been 14 days between dance days for you. Again, this does not help anything.
- **Muscle Memory and Cumulative Teaching:** Ballet, Jazz and Modern all have terminology and technique that are similar. By taking (for example) one of these classes on Monday, one on Wednesday and one on Saturday you get **repetition and reinforcement** of proper placement in addition to having them spread out to have workout days and recovery days – just like other athletic training. Also you are fresh and attentive and will get a lot of out of each class.

Example: If you wanted to increase your cardiovascular shape, flexibility or strength, a trainer would not tell you to work out really hard for 3 or 4 hours in 1 day after a full day at work, and then not do anything for 6 days. That just doesn't make sense. **A trainer would advise several shorter workouts each week.**

#### ***If your dancer is in more than 3 dances, split them up between both casts:***

Although it might seem like a good idea to you, if your dancer is in more than 3 dances I am BEGGING you to try to get them split between both casts. Why?

- Winter recital we combine classes, and your student will certainly end up with ALL quick changes (1 song in between dances) for several if not all of their dances. While this is POSSIBLE, again, it is extremely undesirable for all involved. The dancer will be stressed out and NOT focusing on preparing for the dance. Often we are holding the blackout waiting for a quick change student, which means your dancer has not even THOUGHT about the dance s/he is about to do until the lights come up. This can lead to kids messing up and being upset. They all work so hard, and this is a really unfortunate situation to put them in if avoidable.
- **Exhaustion!** Dancers doing their 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> dance in a single recital are often EXHAUSTED by that time and this can lead to lack of focus, lack of strength and injury becomes more likely.

***What do we recommend?*** After weeks of analyzing all of your surveys, charting when to put classes to work with the most schedules, I have tried to create lots of combinations of 2 classes back to back on lots of different days.

**If you have 3 classes: try to put them all in one cast, and split them up into either 2 or 3 days.**

**If you have 4 classes: try to put them in both casts, and split them into 2, 3 or 4 days.**

**If you have 5 or more classes: try to put them in both casts, and split them into 3, 4 or 5 days.**

If you plan to take a piano, voice, acting or swing choir class see if there is an option of putting a dance class together with that!

If you want me to help, please ask! I know this schedule pretty much by heart already and can help negotiate the most successful plan for you.

Basically, think about the tasks you are asking your child to do, think about how much money you are investing in their dance education... and let's help them be the MOST successful!

Good luck, I'm off to the post office with the post cards!

*Miss Amy*