



Official School of



# STUDENT HANDBOOK 2024-2025

**NEXT GENERATION BALLET  
PATEL CONSERVATORY YOUTH BALLET  
PATEL CONSERVATORY POPULAR DANCE  
STRAZ CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS  
1010 NORTH W.C. MACINNES PLACE  
TAMPA, FLORIDA 33602  
813.222.1079 DANCE OFFICE  
813.222.6459 FAX  
WWW.PATELCONSERVATORY.ORG**

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**Introduction by Philip Neal, Dance Department Chair, Artistic Director of NGB**

Welcome to Patel Conservatory Youth Ballet (PCYB) and Next Generation Ballet. Our goal is to offer the highest quality dance classes that prepare children for professional opportunities. An important part of the study of ballet is the commitment and discipline required by us from the students. These skills carry over into other areas of the student's lives. Several of our graduates are honor students maintaining outstanding academic grades while taking up to 20 hours of ballet a week. We move children forward based on their strength and ability. Pushing a child too quickly can result in frustration and injury. The policies set forth herein are to ensure a safe and constructive learning environment for all. We invite you to be part of the Next Generation Ballet family.

**Next Generation Ballet (NGB)**

Next Generation Ballet (NGB) is a steppingstone for great dance talent and is a part of the Straz Center for the Performing Arts. Under the direction of Philip Neal, NGB prepares dancers for professional employment through instruction, coaching and performance opportunities. The company is committed to the artistic, personal and professional development of outstanding young dancers. Performers in NGB have been awarded scholarship opportunities at the leading ballet schools worldwide including the Royal Ballet School of England, The School of American Ballet, and Hamburg Ballet School. Students have also received employment with ballet companies including New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Hamburg Ballet, Sarasota Ballet, and Boston Ballet, and have placed 1st in competitions including Youth America Grand Prix, Prix de Lausanne and the World Ballet Competition. Patel Conservatory Youth Ballet is the official School of Next Generation Ballet.

**Patel Conservatory Youth Ballet (PCYB)**

PCYB starts in the Enrollment Division where children are placed primarily by age (pre-K3-grade 2). The classes introduce structured movement and the demands of serious ballet study. Each level is designed to challenge students within the context of their increasing physical, emotional and cognitive development in Beginning Dance 1, II and III. Formal barre work is introduced as the students mature, typically during the Primary level. Student's progress to the Pre-Professional Division where students are placed by ability (grades 2-12). They begin in Preparatory, attending a minimum of two ballet classes per week and a class in tap or jazz to broaden their movement skills. As the students move at their own pace through Levels 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4, 5 and Trainee, emphasis is placed on discipline, musicality and technique. In Levels 3A, 3B, 4, 5 and Trainee, young women take pointe classes while young men take specialized classes for male dancers. Each division has a sequence of levels carefully designed to meet the developmental and technical needs of students as they train to be serious ballet dancers. The technique taught imparts an American speed and lightness in the lower limbs while maintaining a classical port de bras in preparation for today's dance marketplace.

**Patel Conservatory Popular Dance (PCPD)**

The Popular Dance program is a serious structured program preparing dancers in grades K through 12 for popular dance opportunities including Broadway, Television, Industrials, Cruise Ships, Theme Parks and Las Vegas. The program offers young dancers classes to diversify their dance skills in tap, hip-hop and Just for Kicks with additional options in ballet, pop dance, and stretch (by placement and approval of the PCYB faculty). Each student has the flexibility to create their own course of study by choosing available classes. A variety of performance opportunities are available depending on the attended classes.

**Attendance Policy**

- Parents/Guardians must report all absences prior to class time. The ballet office must be notified if a student (a) will be absent due to illness (b) will be absent for a period of time, or (c) is ceasing to take lessons. Taking a student out of class early will cost him/her valuable curriculum work and is disruptive for the entire class.
- If a student must leave early due to family schedules, appointments, etc, he/she may not be able to participate in class and will be asked to observe that day. Please arrange appointments and activities around the ballet class schedule to avoid absences.
- Students as tardy as 10 minutes for class will be instructed to observe class that day.
- Good attendance is an integral part of the training and is expected of the students, in order to achieve correct technical and physical development. If a student is going to be absent (planned absence), please contact the school in advance.
- Those students in the Pre-Professional Track are allowed 2 absences in the fall session, and 2 absences in the spring session, not including Nutcracker rehearsals and stage rehearsals. Those students enrolled in the Enrollment Division or PCPD are allowed 3 absences per year.
- The rules will be applied fairly and consistently to all involved in the dance program at the Patel Conservatory. It is very important that all students attend their weekly class schedule. Every absence adversely affects the rehearsal process and ultimately the performance. The Dance Department Chair reserves the right to dismiss students because of excessive absences. Students who are contagious from illness or have a fever should stay home. Those who are able must still attend class and watch, unless otherwise instructed by a physician. A physician's note is required to resume activity or return to class after prolonged absences from illness or injury.

**Please note: ALL schedules must be followed in full by every student. Any adjustments or revision requests must be put in writing and approved by the Dance Department Chair.** Submission of said application does not guarantee that the exemption will be granted.

A PCYB/NGB student (Preparatory through New Artist) is permitted to take extra classes in ballet free of charge in their level or any below provided that: A) all assigned classes for the student's level have been attended; B) there is room in the additional class for the extra student. Parents MUST contact the school to confirm availability and reserve a space for any child wishing to take extra classes. This does not apply to adult or open classes or any classes for which specific students have been selected – i.e. Partnering or Accelerated Program.

PCYB Students in the Enrollment Division (Beginning Dance I through Primary) may also be permitted to take extra classes in ballet on a case-by-case basis. Typically, this is beneficial for students placed in Primary, but not for younger students. Any extra classes MUST be approved by the Dance Department Chair.

### **Auditions**

Intermediate and advanced ballet students (Levels 3A and higher) and Intermediate and advanced PCPD students are encouraged to attend auditions for summer intensives. It is always important to think of auditions as learning experiences. Be grateful to have the opportunity to work shoulder to shoulder with the finest dancers of your level. Find out what other directors are looking for in dancers. You put yourself "out there" and are automatically better for it! Be sure your grooming, energy and joy are at peak level. All photos and resumes must have your name on them. Most auditions require some pointe work for the women, so be sure you have your shoes with you.

### **Partnering Classes**

Selected female dancers are sometimes called upon to work with young male dancers in partnering classes. This selection of students is at the discretion of the Dance Department Chair. Young men can get hurt if a female partner is out of proportion for the young man. Therefore, the young women selected will be based on

their own individual strength and technical capabilities as well as the number, strength and technical capabilities of the available young men.

### **Rehearsal Policy**

All casts chosen **MUST** be present for all rehearsals. However, all casts may not dance at each rehearsal. Attendance is necessary so that all students receive corrections and learn all changes up to date. Much can be learned by watching.

### **Recitals**

All recitals require purchased tickets and a recital fee. These expenses cover costume(s) (purchase or rental), a complimentary link to the student's performance, extra teacher planning and rehearsal time, and related theater production expenses.

Next Generation Ballet's annual show is staged as a professional dance production. Past productions have incorporated the finest of ballet's repertoire and have brought in guests from around the world to work with students on the staging of these pieces.

### **Summer Study**

Maintaining the momentum through the summer is essential for progress. For every class missed, it takes two classes to return to the same level of accomplishment. The Patel Conservatory offers many summer dance programs and classes. Summer study is **MANDATORY** for any serious pre-professional dance student.

### **Parent Concerns or Questions**

If you have concerns or questions, please speak directly to the specific class teacher or to the Dance administrative staff. If you need further assistance, they can schedule a meeting for you with the Dance Department Chair.

### **Dress Code**

The dress code rules are established for a purpose – to have uniformity and so that the teacher is able to see the full lines of the body. **This dress code is mandatory!**

- Proper fitting of classical ballet shoes, whether technique shoes or pointe shoes, should be determined with the help of the ballet teacher.
- Pointe work is begun when the student demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the classical ballet curriculum, and reaches the age, maturity, and strength that is necessary. The decision to start pointe work is made on an individual basis with the expert advice of the faculty.
- We prefer leather split sole ballet shoes because this is what will be required for performance. Ballet shoes must have an elastic strap sewn across the top of each foot. Please do not pin or tie the elastic straps, as this is not secure and can hurt your child's foot. The elastic laces on ballet shoes should be tied, trimmed and tucked in the top of the shoe. This prevents the laces from becoming untied during class or during recitals.
- No hip alignment belts, leg warmers, plastic pants, sweat pants or ballet cover-ups are allowed during class.
- No jewelry (including rings, necklaces, bracelets, anklets and watches) may be worn during class, with the exception of stud earrings. **No hoop or dangling earrings are permitted.** These items are not allowed because they can be broken during class, they can harm your child during class, and they can harm other students during work with partners in class and rehearsals.
- All girls must wear their hair in a bun or similar style for ballet class. Loose ponytails or loose braids are not permitted. All hair should be secured to the crown of the head with hairpins or bobby pins and a hair net (no bangs). Hair accessories should be secure so they do not fall off during class. Girls

with very short hair should secure their hair with a band, held in place with bobby pins, and should use hairspray or gel to prevent hair from becoming loose and falling in front of the face.

- **No eyeglasses may be worn for performances.**
- All boys must have neat hair, combed out of their face and, if necessary, held in place with hairspray or gel. Clean shaven faces are required.
- Dramatic hair color streaking of different colors is not permitted.
- Teenage female dancers are permitted to wear a black skirt **ONLY** for cover-up for that specific “time” of the month. **No shorts are allowed!** Ballet skirts are sold at Dance Tampa.

Due to hygiene rules, Patel Conservatory will not loan out ballet clothing or shoes if a student arrives without them. **Students arriving unprepared for class will be asked to sit and observe that day.** Arriving prepared for class includes wearing a neat bun at all times (for young women) and neat hair (for young men). Students who consistently arrive unprepared for class will first receive a verbal warning from the instructor, and if needed, a written warning that goes to the parents.

The Patel Conservatory partners with Dance Tampa. Leotards and unitards are embroidered with the Straz Center logo. Please refer to the dance class information sheets for specific dress code needed per level.

\*Levels 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 5, Trainee: Dress code leotards with logo must be worn Monday-Friday. Solid color leotards in classic dance styles may be worn for classes and rehearsals on Saturdays.

### **Partnering**

Normal class attire

Black wrap skirt **ONLY** – no shorts

### **Learning Process and Class Procedure**

- The ideal student is a healthy, well-portioned child, flexible, well coordinated, with a natural ear for music and willingness for intense work in a disciplined learning environment. Depending upon the technical and artistic progress, the student will eventually follow a structured sequence of training and curriculum that is designed to increase skill, endurance and discipline in keeping with their age, maturity and physical development. Corrections are inherent in ballet instruction; therefore, the student will be verbally and physically guided by the teachers to ensure proper body placement and execution of movement.
- Complete effort is required each day in order to make the experience successful. Any shortcuts in class or rehearsal postpone the ultimate goal. The classroom is your performance hall. Using energy produces more energy. Being easy on yourself diminishes the desired results. It is a wonderful feeling to complete your class or rehearsal knowing that you have done your best.
- Every class is a performance and all combinations must be completed whether or not it has gone well. You must never walk off the floor before finishing the step (except if injured). Take a mental note of all corrections and go over them in your mind after each class so you do not have to be corrected again for the same thing. Progress will be amazingly fast if you do this.
- Communication from teacher to students should be respected by all in a classroom environment. The majority of corrections will apply to all pupils in a similar situation. Observe other students, learn from them. Apply the information given whether in general or in particular. The classroom environment is where you will learn to love the process, the frustrations as well as the achievements. Ballet students need to learn to love repetition.
- Classes should be joyful and not seen as an obligation. You should be able to work by yourself without a teacher insisting that you work. Self-discipline is the only discipline. If class is something you look forward to each day, then you will be spending your energy wisely.

- When you feel lethargic and “not up to it,” that is the very day that you have the greatest learning opportunity. Your effort will provide you with a feeling of accomplishment. There is no room in the class to think how tired you are. Professionals will tell you that the second you appear on stage, pain and fatigue disappear. The love of dance takes over.
- It is extremely important that the teachers should not have to prod you into doing what you should do for yourself. Emphasize the full body movement and composite aesthetic. Quite often the head position, port de bras, epaulement are sacrificed for the attention placed on the legs and feet. Some dancers literally dance from the waist down and the resulting quality of movement is mechanical. Your face and head are mirrors of your dance passion. How you coordinate your arms and head positions will determine the beauty of the execution. Proper placement and correct use of energy define the nobility of the movement – tension in the body inhibits the flow of energy. The mirrors in the classroom are only for corrections; avoid looking in the mirror while you are dancing.
- A dancer’s musicality is vital. In class, music must be followed exactly. Be conscious of the music, don’t rush or fall behind. Do not take liberties with tempo to make it your own. Only in a solo performance may the music adapt to you, providing you have approval from the choreographer.

**SCHOLARSHIP STUDENTS** may not take class at or perform with any other local dance studio without written permission from the Dance Department Chair. Any student not complying with this rule is subject to have their scholarship revoked immediately.

#### **Performance Etiquette**

- Casting is to be determined by the dance department’s professional faculty and is not up for discussion.
- Children are expected to attend all rehearsals. Weekly rehearsals will be posted on bulletin boards and the electronic call board. Specific rehearsal schedules may be handed out in each class to take home or emailed.
- The theater is the temple of the arts. Children are expected to behave accordingly. No music playing of any kind is allowed. All students are to respect their theater. Costumes should be hung up after each wear. At no time should students eat or drink in costumes, sit in costumes, or place their hands on the waist of a costume while waiting for performance. Any abuse of costumes will be fined with a dry-cleaning fee of \$30.00. Makeup guidelines will be discussed before performances and must be adhered to.

#### **Instructions for Professional Ballet Bun**

1. Brush hair smoothly to remove all tangles, drawing towards the crown of the head.
2. Spray hair lightly with hairspray or gel. Smooth hair with hands and secure wisps, layers or short ends into a ponytail (at the crown of the head) and secure with a THIN cloth-covered elastic band.
3. Secure sides and back hair with clips and barrettes that match hair color, if needed.
4. Divide ponytail into two sections and twist or braid flattening tightly to the head as you go.
5. Wrap sections of twisted or braided hair clockwise around the elastic band and secure with hair or bobby pins as you wrap. Keep the bun as flat to the head as possible.
6. Place the hair net over the bun; twist the net over the bun at least two times. Tuck ends of hairnet into the bottom of the bun and secure with hair or bobby pins.
7. Spray hair and bun with hairspray or hair gel to set. Smooth with hands or comb. The bun should be secure, and held tightly in place.

## **Make-up Suggestions (for performances)**

- **Applying facial make-up:**

Use Foundation one shade darker than your own skin tone.

Use Concealer to cover under the eye and on the lid, as well as blemishes.

Use Powder to give a “matte” look, and to cover shiny areas.

When applying facial make-up, remember to go in order and to go slow.

Apply small dots of foundation at a time and blend in with upward strokes towards the hairline, including the jaw line and neck, then add small dots of concealer and blend well at the edges. Lightly apply powder over the face to set it.

- **Applying blush and contour blush:**

Always aim for a healthy, vibrant glow. Apply powder blush using a large “poofy” brush with bristles at least an inch long. The effect is a more natural look. Sweep the blush along the “apples” of the cheeks and towards the temples. Directly in the same line as the blush use a shade darker blush for contour, this will help define the cheeks for stage.

- **Applying eyebrow liner:**

Very lightly stroke the eyebrow pencil to add color to the brow, never pencil it dark or with a strong line. Just follow the natural curve of the brow.

- **Applying eye shadow and highlight:**

By using three different eye shadow colors, begin with by covering the entire lid with a soft color (light beige), start at right above the lashes and begin first with a light crème color, followed by a darker color for the crease, then finish with a vanilla or crème highlighter right below the brow.

- **Applying eyeliner:**

Use a sharpened eye pencil in brown or brownish-black, the underneath line should follow from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way to the middle of the eye from the outside in towards the nose. Hold outside corner of the eye with the finder tip to apply. The top line should be drawn from where the lashes begin towards the nose and extend out to the end of the lashes. This lower line can be smudged slightly to create a “softened” effect.

- **Applying Mascara:**

You might want to consider investing in an eyelash curler and an eyelash comb to help your lashes look their best with the mascara. Never curl your lashes after applying mascara, you could possibly have some lashes stick to the pad and pull out! Insert the wand, turn it a few times and pull it out. Put the mascara on by running the brush along your lashes – away from your face, in quick, even stroke. After applying the mascara, use an eyelash comb to get out any clumps and to separate your lashes.

- **Applying lip liner and lipstick:**

Condition the lips with lip balm (avoid chapstick and other waxy substances), and let it fully absorb before applying color on the lips. Apply the liner along the natural shape of your lips first, and then fill in the rest of the lips with the lipstick. When lining your lips, start at one corner of the lower lip and work your way towards the center. Use short, even strokes and never line directly onto your skin – always have the line touching the edge of your lips. Then line your top lip, concentrating on the small arches at the center of your upper lip, making sure they are defined but not too pointy. Use a lip brush to blend lipstick and lip liner together. Blending will also help keep the color on the lips longer.

**Next Generation Ballet**  
**Patel Conservatory Youth Ballet**  
**Patel Conservatory Popular Dance**  
**2024-2025 Calendar**  
*Subject to Change*



Mon.	Aug. 26	All Dance Classes begin
Mon.	Sep. 2	Labor Day- Patel Conservatory closed
Sat.	Sept. 14	Auditions for <i>Nutcracker</i> (level Primary, Preparatory, 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4, 5 & Tr. A only)
Mon.-Sat.	Oct. 21-26	Family Observation Week for PCYB, PCPD, and NGB
Mon.	Nov. 11	Observation of Veteran's Day-No Classes
Nov./Dec.		Class adjustments for the <i>Nutcracker</i> TBA
Mon. - Sun.	Nov. 25-Dec. 1	Thanksgiving Break - Patel Conservatory closed
Mon.	Dec. 2	Classes Resume
Mon.-Sat.	Dec. 16-21	PCYB/NGB adjusted class schedule for all levels for <i>Nutcracker</i>
Tues.-Thurs.	Dec. 17-19	<i>Nutcracker</i> staging/dress rehearsals TBA
Fri.	Dec. 20	<i>Nutcracker</i> performance, 7 p.m., Morsani Hall (cast TBA)
Sat.	Dec. 21	<i>Nutcracker</i> performance, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., Morsani Hall (cast TBA)
Sun.	Dec. 22	<i>Nutcracker</i> performance, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., Morsani Hall (cast TBA)
Mon.	Dec. 23	<i>Nutcracker</i> performance, 2 p.m., Morsani Hall (cast TBA)
Mon.-Sun.	Dec. 23-Jan. 12	Winter Break – Patel Conservatory closed
Mon.-Sat.	Dec.-Jan.	YAGP rehearsals will take place over parts of winter break- schedule will be provided to those participating
Thurs. –Sun.	Jan. 9-12	YAGP Regional Semi-Finals in Tampa (select students)
Mon.	Jan. 13	Classes Resume
Mon.	Jan. 20	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Patel Conservatory closed
Sat.	Jan. 25	Gasparilla Pirate Fest – Patel Conservatory closed
Mon.-Sat.	Feb. 17-22	Family Observation Week for PCYB, PCPD and NGB
Sat.	Mar. 15	<i>On the Edge</i> dress rehearsal, Ferguson Hall* (Advanced Contemporary and Jazz, Advanced Just for Kicks, Levels 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 5, NGB)
Sat.	Mar. 15	<i>On the Edge</i> performance, 7 p.m., Ferguson Hall* (Advanced Contemporary and Jazz, Advanced Just for Kicks, Levels 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 5, NGB)
Mon.-Sun.	Mar. 17-22	Spring Break – Patel Conservatory closed
Mon.	Mar. 24	Classes resume

<b>Fri.</b>	<b>April 18</b>	<b>Good Friday – Patel Conservatory closed</b>
<b>Mon.-Sun.</b>	<b>April 21-27</b>	<b>No PCYB or PCPD classes during YAGP Finals</b> (select NGB classes and rehearsals will occur offsite; select students may participate in YAGP finals)
<b>Wed.</b>	<b>April 30</b>	<b>Spring into Dance Dress Rehearsal, Ferguson Hall*</b> (for all students enrolled in BD2, BD3, Primary, Preparatory, 4A, 4B, 5)
<b>Thurs.</b>	<b>May 1</b>	<b>Breakin' Out Dress Rehearsal, Ferguson Hall*</b> (Intermediate Just for Kicks, Tap Dance 1-4, Beginning Jazz, Preparatory tap, Levels 1A tap/jazz, 1B jazz)
<b>Sat.</b>	<b>May 3</b>	<b>Spring into Dance Showcase, 12:00 p.m., Ferguson Hall*</b> (for all students enrolled in BD2, BD3, Primary, Preparatory, 4A, 4B, 5)
<b>Sat.</b>	<b>May 3</b>	<b>Breakin' Out Showcase, 4 p.m., Ferguson Hall*</b> (Intermediate Just for Kicks, Tap Dance 1-4, Beginning Jazz, Preparatory tap, Levels 1A tap/jazz, 1B jazz)
<b>Mon.-Sat.</b>	<b>May 5-10</b>	<b>Class adjustments TBA for NGB Performances*</b>
<b>Tues.-Thurs.</b>	<b>May 6-8</b> <b>Hall*</b>	<b>Ballroom, Broadway and Ballet Dress Rehearsal, 6 p.m., Ferguson</b> (for students enrolled in Levels 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, 5, NGB. Casting TBA. Students guaranteed one performance only.)
<b>Sat.</b>	<b>May 10</b>	<b>Ballroom, Broadway and Ballet Performance, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Ferguson Hall*</b> (for students enrolled in Levels 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4, 5, NGB. Casting TBA. Students guaranteed one performance only.)
<b>Sun.</b>	<b>May 11</b>	<b>Ballroom, Broadway and Ballet Performance, 2 p.m. Ferguson Hall*</b> (for students enrolled in Levels 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4, 5, NGB. Casting TBA. Students guaranteed one performance only.)
<b>Sat.</b>	<b>May 17</b> <b>TECO Theater*</b>	<b>Beginning Dance 1 Demonstration and Recital 10 a.m. and 11 a.m.</b>
<b>Sat.</b>	<b>May 17</b>	<b>Last day of regular dance classes</b>

*\* Students will receive a detailed rehearsal schedule and production packet closer to the time of the performance(s)*

#### **Summer 2025 Classes and Intensives:**

<b>Mon.-Fri.</b>	<b>June 2-13</b>	<b>Junior Intensive</b> All students who have completed Primary, Preparatory, and Levels 1A, 1B, 2A and 2B are eligible to attend.
<b>Mon.-Fri.</b>	<b>June 16- July 18</b>	<b>Next Generation Ballet Summer Intensive</b> 5-6 hours of classes Mon.-Fri., plus 2.5 hours on Sat. All students who have completed Levels 3A, 3B, 4, 5, Trainee are accepted to this program – no need to audition!

**Please check the summer brochure for dates and times for the following classes:**

- Extended Session Advanced Ballet Classes-for students who have completed Levels 3A, 3B, 4, 5, NGB.
- Young Children's Dance classes-for students age 3-7.