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Friday, July 31 2020

Saint Mary's Hall
9401 Starcrest Drive
San Antonio, TX 78217
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Dear Dance Parents:

I hope that you and your families are doing well during this uncertain time. We have missed sharing the love of dance with your students and this letter is to update you on our return plans for dance this coming school year.

Dance and Virtual Learning

As you learned from Head of School Len Miller's communication, Saint Mary's Hall will begin the year in the One-SMH Virtual phase for at least the first three weeks of classes. It is my intent, and that of the entire dance faculty, to continue to offer your students the quality dance instruction that you have come to expect from Saint Mary's Hall Dance.

Our primary goal for distance learning is to improve the artistry, technique, and physical strength of each dancer. The Dance faculty has spent time over the summer working on ways to refine our ability to deliver online instruction. While nothing can replace the experience of dancing together in the studio, we are confident that your dancer will find joy and growth through their online dance experiences this fall.

One|SMH Hybrid Phase

Once our school moves to hybrid instruction, dance classes will be offered to students both on-campus and at home. We have incorporated the following safety measures for dance at SMH during this time of COVID-19. These plans are based on recommendations from professional educational organizations, as well as arts leadership through the Fine Arts directors of the Independent Schools of the Southwest.

One|SMH Hybrid Instruction Plan for all In-School and After-School Dance Classes

- In-school and after-school dance class schedules are being revised to accommodate new divisional schedules and cohorts
- All performances will be recorded without an audience and streamed online
- Dance students will be placed 10' apart when moving and 6' apart when stationary both in class and in performances
- For larger classes, alternative (non-dance spaces) will be used
- Barres and floors will be disinfected between classes and each evening
- No more than four students will be permitted in the dance locker rooms at the same time



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- Congregating in the Dance Building Lobby will not be permitted
- Costumes, hair pieces, and makeup will not be shared. Costumes will be cleaned between each use
- Mask requirements will follow school rules

Dance Productions

It is our plan to record students' dance performances for a streamed audience for as long as health officials recommend limits on live audiences at performing arts events.

The Dance faculty and I are developing choreography that will allow your dancer to perform solo work and in physically distanced groups, following the spacing requirements recommended by experts. We are also prepared to present Zoom performances should we find ourselves in another shutdown. This year, the show will go on ... it just may look and feel a bit different than in years past!

The viewing dates of our productions will follow our traditional schedule:

November 6-7, 2020	Kaleidoscope, The Middle and Upper School Contemporary Dance Production
February 26, 2021	Montessori-Kindergarten Dance Recital
April 16-18, 2021	The Middle and Upper School Ballet Production
May 6-7, 2021	The Lower School Dance Production

Once our school enters the "green phase," we will return to normal operations for performances.

Dance Program Survey

I am interested in hearing from you regarding SMH Dance. I am inviting you to share your thoughts, ideas, and concerns with me through this brief survey below. The survey is anonymous, but there is an opportunity for you to leave your name and number for me to contact you if that is of interest.

To complete the short survey, click here: <https://forms.gle/a4TyNynuhCjnuxgN9>

I thank you in advance for taking the time to help us with our planning.

Dance Schedules

As noted above, the in-school dance schedules will accommodate the new schedules for each division. We will be sharing those at a later date. I have attached the after-school dance brochures to this email for your reference.



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Dance Registration

Registration for 2020-2021 Dance opens August 3. The first day of in-school and after-school dance is August 17. To register for dance, log onto the portal or visit: <https://www.ultracamp.com/clientlogin>. If you need help with registration, please contact add her title Stephany Rayburn at danceregistration@smhall.org.

Dance Zoom Info Sessions

We will be holding three informational Zoom meetings to answer any questions that come in from the survey, as well as some live questions. The dates and times are below.

Wednesday, August 12, 5:30 pm
Montessori-Kindergarten Dance Information Session

Thursday, August 13, 5:30 pm
Lower School Dance Information Session

Monday, August 17 9 am
Middle/Upper School Dance Information Session

I will send out the links to the meetings next week. We look forward to seeing your faces and answering your questions!

In closing, I hope that you and your students know that while we are eager to have your dancer back on pointe, learning the latest moves in hip-hop, or developing their artistry through one of our many other dance classes, your students' health and well-being are of utmost priority for me and the entire dance faculty.

I also know that you may have general questions regarding Dance at Saint Mary's Hall. Please feel free to note them in the survey, or contact me directly. My contact information is below.

While this year will be different from years past, it is my promise to you that the dance faculty and I will do all we can to support and nurture your student's love of dance.

Most sincerely,
Yosvani Cortellan
Head of Dance
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