Lipscomb Academy School of Dance Handbook
2025-2026

***updated August 2025

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Lipscomb Academy
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Nashville, Tn 37204
lipscomb.edu/academy

Dear students and parents,

We are thrilled to continue the journey of cultivating our dance program at Lipscomb Academy. This is a great opportunity for students to grow in their talents, engage in our arts community, and to glorify God by telling truthful stories through dance.

Please use this handbook as a reference throughout the year. If there are any updates, we will send emails to our registered families. I am thrilled to begin this school year, and excited to see what great work our dancers do this year!

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Patterson

Dance Coordinator, Lipscomb Academy

Mission Statement

The Lipscomb Academy School of Dance seeks to train the whole student in dance as an art form. Our highly qualified instructors will guide students as they learn the technique and artistry of dance and provide training in performance and storytelling. LASD emphasizes positivity and a healthy environment for students to learn and grow as dancers.

Lipscomb Academy Dance Class Schedule

Fall and Spring 2025-2026

Please use this schedule to determine classes that would be appropriate for your child's experience and availability.

2-semester Classes

Fall semester will focus on technique and combinations in the style of the class, and spring semester will build on that as we begin to learn choreography for the Showcase. **You WILL need to re-register and pay again in the spring.** We will allow students to join in the spring if they were not able to join in the fall, but preference will go to students who took the class in the fall.

In the spring, each student will pay for a costume for each class that they are in, and you will own these costumes and be able to take them home after the show. For this reason, the spring class payment will be slightly more than the fall semester payment. More information will be shared as the fall semester gets started.

****We do not plan to inquire about vaccination status or require masks of our students or teachers. Please follow public health guidelines regarding exposures as we avoid the spread of infections.*

Lower School classes offered:

All classes at the Lower School will be held in the Cafeteria or our NEW dance room located inside the library to the left. SEED school students in 2:45 classes will change into their dance clothes in the restroom after school and will then proceed to the cafeteria for their class. Students in the 3:05 classes will change clothes in a restroom and then proceed to the NEW dance space inside the library to begin class. For easier transition, we suggest having students wear their dance clothes under their uniforms on the days they have dance class. If your child is in a class later in the afternoon, they can either go to extended day, sign up for back-to-back classes, or parents may pick up after school and then bring them back for a later class that afternoon. Your child's teacher will email more detailed instructions to the parents of students registered.

Monday

Class: Boys' Hip Hop
Age: 5 years old by Labor Day - 2nd grade
Time: 3:05 - 3:50
Location: New dance room
Teacher: Miss Aaliyah

Tuesday

Class: Girls' Hip Hop
Age: 4th - 5th grade girls
Time: 3:05-3:50
Location:New dance room
Teacher: Miss Tara

Class: Girls' Hip Hop
Age: 1st - 3rd grade girls
Time: 3:50 - 4:35
Location: New dance room
Teacher: Miss Tara

Wednesday

Class: Ballet -FULL FOR THE FALL SEMESTER
Age: 5 yrs old - Kindergarten
Time: 2:45 -3:30
Location: Cafeteria
Teacher: Miss Ava

Class: Ballet
Age: 1st - 3rd grades
Time: 3:30 - 4:15
Location: Cafeteria
Teacher: Miss Ava

NEW Class: Beginner Tap
Age: 3rd - 5th grade
Time: 3:05-3:50
Location: New Dance Room
Teacher: Miss Tara

NEW Class: Lyrical/Ballet
Age: 4th - 5th grade
Time: 3:50 - 4:35
Location: New Dance Room
Teacher: Miss Tara

Thursday

Class: Ballet
Age: 5 yrs old - Kindergarten
Time: 2:40 -3:25
Location: Cafeteria
Teacher: Miss Sellers

Class: Ballet
Age: 1st - 3rd grades
Time: 3:25 - 4:10
Location: Cafeteria
Teacher: Miss Sellers

Class: Jazz/Musical Theatre
Age: 1st - 5th grade
Time: 3:05-3:50
Location: New Dance Room
Teacher: Miss Tara

Upper School Class Level Descriptions:

- Level 1 classes--the student has limited or no experience in dance or has had a large gap in time between lessons.
- Level 2 classes--the student has 1-4 years of recent dance training.
- Level 3 classes--the student has 4 or more years of recent dance training.
- Open level--any experience level is welcome to take this class.

Upper School Classes offered:

All upper school classes are located in the Dance Studio in Harding Hall, room 139. Please make sure to take note of the grade level of each class. If you have questions about what level your child should sign up for, please contact Elizabeth Patterson (elizabeth.patterson@lipscomb.edu)

Monday

Class: Hip Hop
Age: 6th-12th grade
Time: 4:05 - 3:50
Location: Dance Studio
Teacher: Miss Aaliyah

Tuesday

Class: Advanced Tap (Level 3)
Age: 9th -12th grade
Time: 3:10 - 4:05
Location: Dance Studio
Teacher: Miss Caren

Class: Intermediate Tap (open level)
Age: 6th -12th grade
Time: 4:05 - 4:50
Location: Dance Studio
Teacher: Miss Caren

Class: Beginner Tap (open level)
Age: 6th - 12th grade
Time: 4:50 - 5:35
Location: Dance Studio
Teacher: Miss Caren

Wednesday

No Classes Scheduled

Thursday

Class: Jazz/Musical Theatre
Age: 6th - 12th grade
Time: 4:00 - 4:45
Location: Dance Studio
Teacher: Miss Tara

Class: Lyrical
Age: 6th - 12th grade
Time: 4:45 - 5:30
Location: Dance Studio
Teacher: Miss Caren

Performance Opportunities

The Lipscomb Academy School of Dance will present a year end Showcase in Acuff Theatre at the upper school on May 12. There will be a rehearsal in the space on Monday, May 11th for Lower School classes, and upper school classes will rehearse in the space the week before the show. More information will be sent out about call times for those days as we get closer to the Showcase. Other performance opportunities may arise during the year.

Studio Instructors

Elizabeth Patterson--Studio Director



Elizabeth Patterson has been teaching in the fine arts department at Lipscomb Academy since 2012. She is a 2005 graduate of Lipscomb Academy, where she sang, acted, and danced in multiple musical theatre productions. Elizabeth went on to major in vocal music education at Harding University where she took on leading roles in many musicals as well as hosting their annual musical review show "*Spring Sing*". She choreographed "*Spring Sing"* shows for 4 years, and danced in many styles for the musical productions, including tap, jazz, and hip hop. Elizabeth has choreographed over a dozen shows at Lipscomb Academy. A strong believer in the "lifelong learner" philosophy, she has continued to study alongside students in the School of Dance since it began. She sees dance as a great way to stay mentally and physically sharp.

Caren Lyons-- Tap Instructor



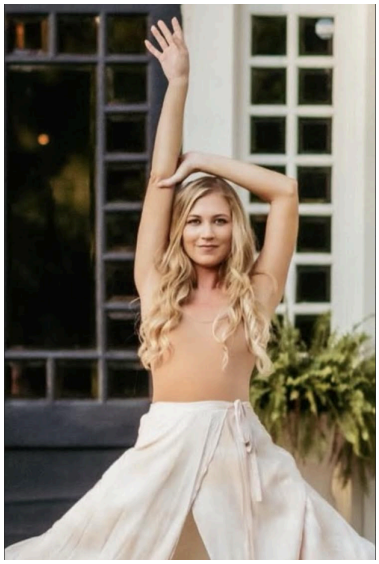
Caren Lyons holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance Performance from Oklahoma City University and a Master of Arts in Dance/Movement Therapy from Lesley University. She is a current member of the American Dance Therapy Association. She performed professionally from 2008-2014; regional credits include Carnival Cruise Lines, Oklahoma!, Seven Brides for Seven Brothers, Sandcastle, Inc. and the Rob Lake Magic Show. Caren's choreographic work has also been recognized with high scores and overall awards at multiple regional and national competitions. More recently, Caren has increased her focus on dance education for students of multiple ages and levels. Caren enjoys emphasizing technique, embodiment, and creative self-expression as the vessels through which performance and dance education can be enhanced. Within her classes, Caren also focuses on the development of character skills to drive the process through which her students can develop and succeed.

Ava Montgomery - Ballet/Jazz Instructor



Ava Montgomery is a recent Harding University graduate from Resaca, Georgia. She fell in love with the arts at a young age, and always loved to perform! She grew up attending Rome Civic Ballet where she took ballet, tap, contemporary and jazz. In high school and college, she was heavily involved in theatre, which grew her love for the stage even more! Some of her favorite shows she has done include Oklahoma!, Hello, Dolly!, and Matilda. During her time at Harding, Ava was a two-time Spring Sing hostess, in the Spring Sing ensemble, and helped choreograph Spring Sing and a number of musicals. Ava is currently an organizer at A Fresh Space, the Miss Tennessee Tri-Star Princess Program Director, and is working on choreographing Bright Star at her alma mater, Calhoun High School. She is so excited to teach young performers and help encourage their love for dance!

Tara Howse Mitchell - Hip Hop/Ballet/Jazz/Musical Theatre/Lyrical/Tap Instructor



Tara is a passionate artist, mentor, and choreographer dedicated to inspiring dancers of all levels. She trained in multiple styles from a young age, earning a B.F.A. in Dance Performance and Choreography from the University of Southern Mississippi. She later competed professionally in Theatre Arts dance and trained with world-renowned ballroom champions, performing alongside Dancing With the Stars pros. Her choreography has been showcased nationally, earning recognition at prestigious competitions like the Youth America Grand Prix. She holds an M.F.A. in Dance and Creative Practice from Saint Mary's College of California and has created award-winning work on the West Coast. Tara continues to teach, choreograph, and mentor, shaping the next generation of dancers in the Nashville area.

Aaliyah Thomas - Hip Hop/Ballet Instructor



Aaliyah is a passionate and dedicated dancer originally from Las Vegas, Nevada. From a young age, she immersed herself in various dance styles, including ballet, contemporary/modern, jazz, and hip-hop. During her time at St. John's University, Aaliyah was an integral part of the hip-hop dance team. Her talents were also recognized in the theater

world when she assisted with choreography for the production of "The Wiz". From teaching in Las Vegas, where she instructed youth in both ballet and hip-hop, to now as a dance instructor at the YMCA, she continues to inspire students of all ages, teaching a variety of dance styles with a focus on hip-hop. With a deep love for dance, Aaliyah aims to use her God-given gifts to create a supportive and empowering environment.

Sellers Farley - Ballet Instructor



Sellers Farley is a Nashville native who began her training as a ballerina first with the School of Nashville Ballet. She went on to train under Aaron Orza, of the San Francisco Ballet, at Nashville Classical Ballet Academy. She then began a stint at the Grainger Academy of the Joffrey Ballet in Chicago. After graduating from Joffrey, she moved to Belgium to dance with the Brussels International Ballet. She has performed in many classical ballets, ranging from variations to small excerpts, as well as performing in contemporary and neoclassical pieces, too. Some of her favorites include The Nutcracker, Paquita and La Bayadère.
Sellers has now stepped away from dancing herself but is so looking forward to helping implement the love of classical ballet to this next generation!

LASD Policies and Procedures

Tuition, semester schedule, and Make-up classes

Fall semester of tuition is $270. There are 2 options for a payment schedule for dance classes. Each price below is per class, per child. Parents will get a discount of $30 by paying for the whole semester up front. ***Spring semester of tuition is $320, which includes the costume fee,*** *which the students will get to keep.*There are 2 options for a payment schedule for dance classes. Each price below is per class, per child. Parents will get a discount of $30 by paying for the whole semester up front.

Semester deposit and balance:

This option for fall breaks down the semester into equal payments of $135 due in the fall by Sept 2nd & Oct 24th. In the spring semester - equal payments of $160 are due by January 20th & March 20th.

Full Semester Payment:

Fall full semester payment of $430 due by Sept 2nd for the fall semester.

For the Spring, one semester payment of $290 is due by January 20th.

Each semester is 12 weeks of class with a possible 13th week at the end of the semester that counts as a make-up class. If a student misses more than one lesson in the semester, they may take a different class as a make up. This class should be at their same age and skill level. Please schedule this type of make-up class with Elizabeth Patterson ahead of time by emailing her.

In the fall, classes will begin Labor Day week, starting with Tuesday Sept 2nd. Since school is not in session on Mon Sept 1st, **the Monday classes will have their first meeting the following Monday, September 8th.** The last week of fall semester will be the full week of December 1st (except the Monday classes will go one more week). The first week of spring classes will be the week of Jan 19th. There will be no classes during school holidays (Fall Break, Thanksgiving Break, Christmas Break, MLK day, Spring Break, Good Friday, Monday after Easter, etc). If your child has a class that must be canceled due to a one or two day school holiday like Fall Break or a Teacher Work Day, your child's teacher will share info about making up that class on an upcoming Friday.

In the spring semester, classes will begin AFTER Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

In the event that Lipscomb Academy returns to virtual school at any time during the semester for any reason, the LA dance classes will continue on zoom. Your child's teacher will be in touch about how that will work.

*** The Showcase for Spring 2026 will be Tuesday May 12, 2025 at 6:30 pm in Acuff Theatre at the Upper School. A stage rehearsal in Acuff on Monday, May 11 will be after school for the Lower School classes. More information will be shared as we approach the end of the semester.

Registration and payment

Parents should register their students online and make all payments online unless arrangements are made ahead of time.

Link to Registration:
REGISTRATION LINK HERE

Link to payment:

PAYMENT LINK HERE

Payments are non-refundable. Due to the contractual commitments of securing instructors, School of Dance participants are obligated to provide full payment even if they choose not to participate at a later date. If you choose to not continue with a class, please email Elizabeth Patterson at elizabeth.patterson@lipscomb.edu

Solly School students: If your student is enrolled in our Solly School, please email elizabeth.patterson@lipscomb.edu before registering for a class.

Class rules and procedures

- Entering the studio for class
  - Our high school/middle school studio is located in Harding hall Room 139
  - Lower school space is in the Cafeteria AND the library
  - Students, please be on time for class, dressed and ready to dance.
  - If a class is taking place when you arrive, please enter the studio quietly and stand on the sides of the room and wait for your class to begin.
  - Store all bags and shoes along the edges of the room. No food or drink (except for water) in the studio, please.
  - Please do not wear street shoes on the marley floor (upper school).
  - After class, please exit quickly so that the next class can begin. There is no window of transition time for the teacher.

- Studio attire
  - Note: Some classes might require 2 different pairs of shoes. See below and contact your dance teacher with questions.
  - Ballet
    - Girls--black leotard, pink tights, pink ballet shoes (we prefer the canvas split sole shoes)
    - Boys--white or black t-shirt and black dance shorts or pants; dance belt; white ballet shoes (split sole)
    - Hair should be pulled back in a bun or a ponytail
  - Tap, Hip Hop, and Musical Theatre

        - Please wear form fitting clothing that shows the lines of your body (leotard/tights, dance leggings and a tank, etc). No bulky sweats or shirts unless they are needed to warm up.
        - Hair should be pulled back in a bun, ponytail, braids, etc. Hair should be out of the dancer's face.
        - For hip hop, you may add looser clothing to your base dance wear (flannel around the waist, sweatpants, etc)
        - For Musical Theatre/Jazz, girls may be asked to occasionally wear a rehearsal skirt.
        - Shoes
            - Tap--beginners should wear black oxford lace up tap shoes. Bloch or Capezio are good brands to start with. More experienced tappers can purchase split sole taps. Girls with and extensive tap backgrounds may wear heels (please contact Miss Caren if this is something you would like to do)
            - Hop Hop--Tennis shoes are great for hip hop, but they must not be shoes that you use for everyday street wear because of our marley floors (at the upper school). Please purchase a pair of tennis shoes that you like and can move in, and keep these solely for dance.
            - Musical Theatre/Jazz--For this class, a variety of shoes can be used. Typically we will start with jazz shoes (Bloch or Capezio, either tan or black). Upper level ladies might find that taking this class with a pair of character shoes (at least 2") is also helpful. Speak with your child's teacher or Elizabeth Patterson about how to purchase these shoes. Occasionally a pair of tennis shoes will be needed in this class.
    - Modern/Lyrical
        - Dancers should wear form fitting clothes like (ex: workout pants, tank tops, leotard/biker short combo, etc) Sweatpants and loose items may be worn during warm up but must be removed after warm up is complete. Class will be taken in bare feet.
    - Jazz
        - Dancers should wear form fitting dance clothes (ex: leotard/tights, dance pants, tank tops, etc) Sweatpants and loose items may be worn during warm up but must be removed after warm up is complete. Barefoot warm up is ok. For class, students should have jazz shoes.
- Taking class
    - Be on time for class, dressed and ready to dance.
    - Make sure you have spent time practicing between class sessions.
    - Please be respectful of your instructor and of other students. If you have a question about instruction, please raise your hand to ask.
    - Do not talk or have side conversations during class.

    - Respect the personal space of others.
    - No cell phones in class. Please place them in silent mode before class begins.
    - No food or drink in the studio except for water
    - If you are struggling with a concept or technique, make sure you have spent time trying the steps on your own at least a couple of times before seeking help from the instructor. We are happy to help, but we do want to see students actively working through things on their own because this is how we grow and excel in dance.
    - You may ask permission from your teacher to record combos so that you can practice at home. Anytime we record in class, it will be for practice and archival purposes only. Please do not post dance class recordings on social media or the internet.
    - Retain a positive attitude in class, and try not to compare yourself to others. We will meet you where you are and help you grow and excel in dance.
    - Always thank your teacher for the class at the end of each lesson.

- Pick up after class
    - If your child is in the Upper School, his or her classroom will be in Room 139 in Harding Hall. After their class is over, they can be picked up in front of Harding Hall.
    - If your child is in the Lower School, please plan their after school arrangements with both the classroom teacher, the after care teachers, and with the dance teacher. Please let us know how we can help!
    - If a parent needs to speak to the teacher, please email the teacher beforehand and make arrangements to speak to them. Many of our teachers have other classes before and after teaching at our studio, so work with them to arrange a time to chat.
    - Dance classes will be closed to observers.

Please contact Elizabeth Patterson at elizabeth.patterson@lipsomb.edu if you have questions.