



Parent /Dancer Handbook

501C(3) Nonprofit Organization

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Welcome

Welcome to Ballet Folklórico Viva Mexico's dance organization. We look forward to a healthy, rewarding year with students, teachers and parents working together toward a proficiency in dance.

This handbook includes information about the organization, dance program, financial and general policies and parental involvement.

PLEASE READ THE DANCE HANDBOOK IN ITS ENTIRETY AND REFER TO IT THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

Ballet Folklórico Viva Mexico feels strongly about the educational partnership between dancer, teacher/s and parents and wants everyone to be informed.

Expectations for the Folklorico Dancer

The Ballet Folklórico Viva Mexico organization aspires to instill in all of our dancers a love for dance with a full understanding of the art of folklorico as well as the appropriate tools needed to pursue a professional dance career if s/he chooses.

No amount of written ballet instruction, exercises or videotapes can replace the expert instruction of a teacher. Based on an informal syllabus, a folklorico teacher will guide the dancers through the proper execution of steps and dance combinations appropriate for their level of study.

A dancer entering a ballet program will be quick to reply that the work is hard because it needs full concentration and dedication. Anyone who has studied folklorico dance understands the necessary physical and mental effort required to attain success.

Expectations for the Folklorico Dancer contd.

Dancers should aim to maintain their dance skills and work to improve them. Serious dancers recognize their strengths and weaknesses and through perseverance strive to maximize the benefits of their strengths and minimize the effects of their weaknesses.

A teacher's high standards and expectations serve to continuously motivate a dancer. Ultimately, a dancer needs to have a positive attitude and strong self-discipline in order to achieve their fullest potential.

Although a dancer's goal may not be that of becoming a dance professional, good training will never be wasted. If a dancer persists in his/her training, they will be rewarded with a heightened understanding of folklorico dance and of what it takes to achieve excellence in this art form. Dancers will develop strength, discipline and grace that will last a lifetime, often applying these attributes to other parts of their lives. Most importantly, dancers will learn to enjoy dancing for the pleasure of moving to music and will develop a strong appreciation for the performing arts.

Ballet Folklórico Viva Mexico

Ballet Folklórico Viva Mexico, (BFVM), a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, was founded in 1997 with the goals of upholding the authenticity of dance, traditional costuming, and style. The organization strives to preserve and share our Mexican culture with its students and community. Membership is comprised of dancers and their parents. All board members are volunteers, thus generated funds are used to defray expenses and to provide benefits to BFVM dancers and the general public.

BFVM is under the instruction of Maestra Cinthia Arredondo. Maestra Cinthia, is a licenciada de Danza Folklórica Mexicana from the Universidad "Escuela Superior de Danza Folklórica Mexicana C'ACATL" (Edo. De Puebla). Until 2014 Maestra Cinthia danced professionally with the Ballet Folklórico Nacional de Mexico de Silvia Lozano. Her performances have taken her throughout the Mexican Republic, Colombia, Italy, France and the United States. Her area of study is extensive from Aguascalientes to Zacatecas and everything in between.

Mission Statement

The Ballet Folklórico Viva Mexico is dedicated to preserving and enhancing the beauty of authentic Mexican folklorico dance and sharing this art form with the community.

Vision Statements

To provide opportunities for children and adults to learn authentic folklorico dance developing emotionally and physically stronger and more positive individuals.

To promote access of the folklorico dance art form to underserved populations, promoting self worth and esteem through advocacy and other initiatives.

To make significant contributions to our community by providing cultural entertainment.

Dance Program

The folklorico dance program is designed for students age 6 to adult who have an interest in folklorico and who may want to pursue intensive training and explore the possibility of a professional dance career, or for fun, and exercise. The folklorico program currently offers three divisions: Beginners, Intermediates and Advanced. Folklorico students will be placed in classes according to age and ability at the discretion of the Dance Instructor.

Beginner Division

To enroll, dancers must be 6 years old or first grade level of the current school year. This division consists of three levels. Level I focuses on correct posture and coordination of arms and legs. Level II builds on Level I skills and progresses to foot work, developing strength, memory and coordination. Level III builds on Level I and II skills and introduces the student to combining dance skills through dance presentation.

Intermediate Division:

This division consists of three levels. Level 1 consists of simple combinations of previously learned steps. Level II and III consist of faster more intricate foot and skirt work with an added focus on artistry and expression.

Advanced Division

Performance quality and artistic presentation are the primary focus of this division. Members of this division must meet Level II and III of the Intermediate division and are selected by the Dance Instructor with confirmation of the board.

Student Advancement

The following criteria will be used to advance a student to the next level:

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| A. Mastering techniques | D. Desire |
| B. Attendance | E. Behavioral maturity |
| C. Attitude | F. Physical maturity |

Student Evaluation

Dancers will be evaluated periodically by the Instructor and the Board of Directors. These evaluations address effort, attitude, strengths and weaknesses and will include suggestions for improvement.

It is important that parents discuss the revaluations with their child to ensure that there is a shared understanding of the dancer's progress. This report also provides an opportunity to identify issues parents may wish to discuss with the Instructor or board officers.

Dress Code:

The following dress code allows the instructor and dancer to do the best possible job of training and making corrections, and to create the best attitude for learning, therefore, dancers are expected to follow the dress code of the Ballet Folklorico Viva Mexico. **Please label all of your child's attire with their name to facilitate the return of items that may be left behind.**

Girls:

Beginners and intermediates members are required, to wear black leotard and black tights or leggings (black shorts may be worn over). Items not permitted include: wear watches, jewelry, big hair ribbons, oversized t-shirts, sweaters, sweatpants, or ankle warmers.

Advanced members are allowed to wear appropriate black exercise wear. Preferably black tights/ leggings for and long sleeved leotard.

All Girls must always have their practice skirts (triple vuelo) and black folklorico shoes and ballet shoes or jazz shoes with them. Hair MUST be worn up in a bun.

BOYS:

Boys are required to wear a black T-shirt, black sweat pants or shorts, and black folklorico boots. They are not permitted to wear watches, jewelry nor oversize t-shirts or jeans.

Performance Attire: Wear Group T-shirt, black leggings/pants and tennis shoes to all performances. Do not arrive in costume to a performance. Dress at the location.

Dance Bag Items: Black folklorico shoes and/or boots. Girls: hair brush, hair ties, bobby pins and bun cover, towel (optional), Antiseptic wipes (to clean up cuts or scrapes), Band Aids, Water Bottle,, Snack bar (in case practice goes long), Notebook and pen (for note taking), Practice Rebozo, Safety Pins, Fan, Practice Skirt, and Paliacate (handkerchief)

Body Art:

Ballet Folklorico Viva Mexico accepts and respects all families' beliefs on the ethics of body art and personal self expression, however, with exception of pierced ears, all tattoos must be covered and body piercings must be removed at all times in the studio and during performances.

This guideline is in keeping with BFVM's other aforementioned uniform dress codes listed on page 7. Furthermore, the covering up of tattoos and removal of body piercings is to keep the dance group's appearance aesthetically pleasing to audiences and to set a level of professionalism.

Attendance/Absences

Dancers are encouraged to attend all classes and rehearsals. If for any reason a dancer is unable to attend a class or rehearsal, the parent or dancer should call the Dance Instructor prior to the scheduled time of the class or rehearsal. **Tuition will not be waived for missed classes.** Excessive absences may prohibit dancers from participating in some performances.

Studio Etiquette

1. Be a **responsible** dancer by coming to class every week with the proper dance clothes and required materials.
2. Change your clothes quickly so that you can **BE ON TIME!**
3. **Prepare yourself** for class by quietly stretching or going over combinations from the pervious class.
4. Make sure to throw gum and candy away! **There will not be any food or drink in the studio. Water is the only allowable drink in the studio.**
5. **Respect** your teachers and fellow dancers.
6. Keep your eyes on the teacher during demonstrations and explanations.

Studio Etiquette contd:

7. Use **self-discipline** in class by always practicing the correct placement of the body, even while “marking” combinations.
8. When corrections are given or questions are asked **listen carefully** to the teacher’s suggestions and check yourself for the same correction. **This eliminates time-consuming and repetitive questions.**
9. Use **perseverance** in class when you feel frustrated by **never giving up.** Dance is hard work and it takes a lot of practice and patience to improve your technique.
10. **Friendship** - Help new dancers feel welcome before and during class. Try to get to know everyone in your class and support each other by giving compliments.
11. Be **compassionate** toward each other. Try to always stay positive and **avoid negative talk.**
12. **Cooperation – Be a team player!** Help a classmate who is having trouble with a combination, listen to others’ ideas when working in a group, and compromise when needed!
13. Dancers should attend to their personal needs prior to class.
14. At the end of a class session students should **express gratitude** toward the instructor/s by always saying **“thank you.”**
15. The use of personal electronics is **prohibited** during instruction time.

Dressing Room Etiquette

The dressing rooms are for the exclusive use of the dancers and they are expected to clean up after themselves and not leave clothing, water bottles, or other personal belongings in the dressing rooms.

- **Your active participation and development of positive classroom/rehearsal skills is an essential element of your**

dance training. The above criteria are evaluated in your advancement to another level and/or retention in the program.

Parent Guidelines

- To ensure dancer focus in class, we ask that parents observations be made from the lobby through the windows.
- To ensure dancer safety, dancers should be collected immediately after class; Ballet Folklorico Viva Mexico is not responsible for him/her after class.

Performance Opportunities

Dancers of Ballet Folklorico Viva Mexico will participate in an annual costumed production. This will be the culmination of the year’s work. The presentation is centered on the Mission Statement of the group as well as providing our dancers the opportunity to become polished individuals. Dancers present a professional standard of performance under the direction of the Dance Instructor.

Ballet Folklorico Viva Mexico accepts engagements upon mutual agreement of the Dance instructor and the board members. Whenever possible at least two weeks notice will be provided to dancers. Dancer participation is **not always mandatory**; however, dancers should inform the dance Instructor as far ahead as possible if they will be unable to perform. As you may appreciate the instructor needs to plan the final choreography so that the performance can be of the quality that our audiences have come to expect.

School Night Performances:

Every effort will be made to avoid scheduling performances on school nights. In the event one is scheduled members should remember that participation is not mandatory; however, the Dance Instructor should be informed if they are unable to perform.

Performance Behavior

When performing, a heightened standard of behavior is expected. Performance locations are shared environments and must be treated with the utmost respect to ensure they remain, safe, usable

and orderly. All areas of the facility (stage, dressing rooms, auditorium, entranceways etc.) must be kept tidy and all rules applicable to the stage and backstage area must be strictly adhered to. **In addition, dancers must ensure that costumes are complete and properly stored to avoid unforeseeable accidents.**

When a dancer's parents or friends are backstage for any reason, they are subject to the same rules and protocol as all others working in the space.

Annual Show Video Recording

Parents are allowed to record their child's performance. If in the event we wish to move to a more professionally recorded performance, the board will seek out a videographer.

Financial Policies

Tuition:

Tuition is collected monthly. The monthly tuition is \$35.00 for each participating member.

An annual registration fee of \$15.00 applies to each family. Registration and the first month's tuition are due upon enrollment. Payments are to be made payable to Ballet Folklórico Viva Mexico.

Subsequent monthly tuition is due the first weekend of each month and paid to the treasurer or his/her substitute. Tuition can also be mailed to BFVM 5021 Royalton Drive, Corpus Christi, Texas 78413, but must be received before the first weekend of the month.

Members whose checks are returned due to insufficient funds will be required to pay all associated fees. All fees must be cleared before a student returns to class. All subsequent payments will need to be paid in cash or with money orders.

There are no tuition adjustments for student absences.

Tuition will be prorated when classes are cancelled by BFVM.

Parents should make appointments to discuss concerns, regarding the organization's policies or tuition payments.

Costuming:

Each dancer is responsible for the purchase of costumes. Ballet Folklórico Viva Mexico will assist parents in securing costuming for their child/ren, by ordering costumes that have been pre-approved by the Dance Instructor and prepaid by the parent.

General Policies

Classes for 2018-2019

Classes begin 2nd Sunday in August of given year.
Classes end the Sunday before the Annual Show
Annual Show: 2nd Saturday in June

***Holidays are honored, please see calendar**

***Group Picture Day**

Dates fluctuate each year

Drugs and Alcohol

The use of drugs and alcohol is strictly prohibited and will result in immediate termination from the program. Tuition will not be refunded.

Personal Concern

Dancers should be collected immediately after class; Ballet Folklórico Viva Mexico is not responsible for him/her after class. Other concerns should be addressed with the instructor or a board member.

Class Cancellation

If cancellation of class is necessary all efforts will be made to notify dancers and parents no later than noon on Sunday.

Traveling Policy

Ballet Folklorico Viva Mexico students may have opportunities to perform or attend local, state, national and international folklorico competitions. Dancers are not required to participate in these opportunities but must notify instructor so that appropriate choreography is planned. Dancers must be 18 years of age unless s/he is traveling with a parent/guardian or authorized chaperone and all necessary expenses must be paid prior to the trip.

Parental Involvement

Parents are as central to the life of Ballet Folklorico Viva Mexico as they are to the lives of their children. An effort has been made to structure the operations of Ballet Folklorico Viva Mexico to maximize the opportunities for parent involvement.

Volunteering

Parents who are interested in volunteering for Ballet Folklorico Viva Mexico will find no shortage of opportunities. Volunteers are needed for fundraising activities to benefit the organization. The chair of the board of directors coordinates the volunteer activities. Anyone interested in volunteering should call 361 994 8274 or by email vanzante@stx.rr.com.

Fundraising

Ballet Folklorico Viva Mexico is a registered 501 (c)3 nonprofit organization in Texas.

Some parents have indirectly raised money by identifying possible donor prospects, including their own employers. Donors may be individuals, corporations, businesses, or foundations that may have an interest in supporting the arts. Parents who prefer that a board member contact potential donors should provide contact information.

We encourage parents/dancers to identify fundraising opportunities that will provide a reasonable return of our investment of time.

Contact Information

Executive Board

Gloria Fernandez-VanZante, Chairperson
5021 Royalton Drive
Corpus Christi, TX 78413
361 994 8274
vanzante@stx.rr.com.

Gracie Lerma Vice Chair
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Corpus Christi, TX 78409
361 289-2500
361 537-8113

Neal R. VanZante Treasurer
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Corpus Christi, Tx. 78413
361 994 1956
anavera@mygrande.net.

Instructor

Maestra Cinthia Arredondo
cindyarredondo85@yahoo.com

Practice Schedule

**Location: Munro Ballet Studios
5610 Everhart Rd**

Classes meet on Sunday afternoon

Dance Season: Classes begin 2nd Sunday in August

Beginner Group	1:00—2:30 p.m.
Intermediate Group	2:30—4:00 p.m.
Advanced Group	4:00—6:00 p.m.