

II. MISSION STATEMENT

Canton Ballet is a non-profit organization committed to fostering an appreciation of the art of dance within the local community and dedicated to providing the highest artistic quality of instruction by operating a school for all age and skill levels, and a pre-professional company with performance opportunities for the serious or career oriented student at the advanced level.

Goals of the School of Canton Ballet

For more than forty years, School of Canton Ballet has been teaching children to understand and enjoy movement. The outstanding reputation of our instructors coupled with our teaching philosophy has contributed to the School's significant growth in recent years. Dance instills confidence and self-awareness that will help anyone achieves his/her goals. The comprehensive curriculum provides students with a strong classical technique and instills a life-long love of dance and movement.

To implement its goals, the School of Canton Ballet:

- offers a rigorous curriculum that combines sound movement technique with musicality and artistic appreciation, to students ages toddler through adult
- carefully selects gifted and professional instructors who teach proper ballet technique while remaining highly aware of the special emotional needs and physical limitations of young children,
- provides each student with the individual attention required for maximum artistic growth,
- fosters an environment of positive guidance and mutual respect,
- features live piano accompaniment in all classes,
- conducts year end evaluations to provide helpful feedback and to assess student placement in the program,
- provides performance opportunities,
- provides state-of-the-art studios with sprung floors and mirrors.

Students also receive the special benefit of being able to rehearse with and observe the pre-professional company and learn the ins-and-outs of being a pre professional dancer.

Education is the top priority at Canton Ballet and the school has numerous community outreach programs to promote dance education. Canton Ballet's outreach throughout Stark County has proven to make a difference in the lives of the students, both academically and socially.

Canton Ballet's Ballet Technique

The ballet technique taught at the School is based on the outstanding elements of the Russian, Italian and French schools. All stem from the five absolute positions of the feet which oblige the dancer to turn the legs outward from the hip, greatly increasing the mobility and extension, and from definite positions of the arms, torso and head. Like the alphabet, every movement is learned separately, then woven into combinations of movements and finally into the choreographic poems we call ballets. This system forms the basis for all the courses given at the school.

Pointe Shoe policy

Pointe work is an exciting and essential part of a ballet student's training. Receiving one's pointe shoes is a badge indicating that the training is proceeding appropriately. As always, our primary concern is for the long-term welfare of the child. Our students begin preparing for pointe work during Elementary 3, when they add 15 minutes to their normal class time to take Pre-Pointe. During this time they work in flat shoes to learn pointe technique and combinations, and to develop the strength they will need to dance *en pointe*. (see section on [Pointe](#) in Divisions of the School)