

**DANCE est Joie, Inc.**  
**Company Handbook**  
**2025-2026**

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## **DANCE est Joie, Inc Membership Expectations**

### **DANCE est Joie, Inc Competition Company**

The competition company is designed for the serious dancer who is highly motivated in the performing arts and dance education in a competitive environment. We are looking for team members who exemplify the following characteristics:

- An accountable dancer who prioritizes their expectations as a DANCE est Joie, Inc. member
- Have respect for the team, staff, and parents
- Demonstrates sportsmanship for teammates and competitors
- A dancer who sets an example to all team members and GDDS students of acceptable behavior and etiquette
- Resilient and adaptable, as circumstances may arise where these characteristics are very valuable
- Be self-motivated and able to self-evaluate
- Commitment to bettering themselves as a dancer through practicing outside of studio and rehearsal hours
- Show support for the studio and fellow dancers
- Have solid technical and performance skills
- Strong desire to grow and develop as a dancer
- Have a sense of humor, bright smile, and positive attitude
- A dancer who comes to rehearsals prepared

## **Auditions for 2025-2026 DANCE est Joie, Inc Membership**

Auditions for 2025-2026 DANCE est Joie, Inc competition company will take place on Friday, May 30th, 2025. All audition events will take place in person at Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio. A required audition preparation class will take place on Tuesday, May 27th, 2025. An open studio opportunity will take place at GDDS on Wednesday, May 28th. Dancers auditioning for DANCE est Joie, Inc. are welcome to utilize the studios at GDDS for their audition preparations. A GDDS staff member will be present to oversee this event, but will not be providing instruction, feedback or assistance to dancers. Dancers are not required to attend our open studio event. Audition routines are property of DANCE est Joie, Inc. and Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio. This choreography may be utilized for competition routines and performances. Choreography is not to be shared with anyone outside of GDDS. Formal auditions are closed to guests and observers. Dancers carrying a company event fee or studio balance from the previous season will not be permitted to audition for DANCE est Joie, Inc. The audition schedule is detailed below:

Audition Preparation Classes: Tuesday, May 27th  
Dancers will learn two combinations for their audition.

- \*4:30-6:30 (dancers ages 8-11)
- \*6:45-8:45 (dancers ages 12-14)
- \*6:45-8:45 (dancers ages 15+)

Open Studio Opportunity: Wednesday, May 28th  
4:00-7:00 Drop in open studio opportunity for dancers auditioning for the 2025-2026 DANCE est Joie, Inc.

Auditions for DANCE est Joie, Inc.: Friday, May 30th

- \*5:00-6:15 (dancers ages 8-11)
- \*6:15-7:30 (dancers ages 12-14)
- \*7:30-8:45 (dancers ages 15+)

\*Audition group is based on the dancer's age as of January 1st, 2026. The audition group does not determine the group they will perform with throughout the season. Dancers will be grouped into competition dances based on their audition performances. Dancers who are currently dance company members (not pre-company) who are younger than 8 years old will still be allowed to audition. Dancers with a balance from the previous season are not permitted to audition.

The cost of the preparation class is \$25.00 per dancer. Acceptable payment methods are listed below:

Venmo: @DANCEestJoie\_Inc\_GDDS

PayPal: danceestjoie.inc@yahoo.com (select friends and family only)

Check payable to Rebecca Bean

Cash is not an acceptable form of payment. Payment is due by Tuesday, May 27th, 2025.

Register for 2025-2026 DANCE est Joie, Inc auditions by completing the following forms:

DANCE est Joie, Inc. Audition Information Form:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScKNIYsIXRVppVZRMf7bu9BogfdTGkePhohGJ-PHYMjWJcF5w/viewform?usp=dialog>

AND

Audition Agreement and Waiver:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdeVj2uA4H754SCQD4JhhXTt5O0Rvlifl99YTIMpIA2uuH31Q/viewform?usp=dialog>

All forms are also due by Tuesday, May 27th.

Following the audition preparation classes on Tuesday, May 27th, each dancer will be emailed a link to instructional videos of the audition combinations and edited music. Please make sure an accurate email address is listed in your dancer's audition information form. We will not send any materials by text or social media message.

Each age group's audition will include a ballet and jazz combination. Each dancer will be assigned an audition number. Judges will not know the names of the auditioning dancers. Dancers are responsible for their own warm up and stretch in Studio A prior to the formal audition. Completed forms are required before the formal audition. Any dancer who shows up to audition without completed paperwork or unpaid audition fees will not be permitted to audition for DANCE est Joie, Inc.

Details about the audition scoring criteria is detailed below:

### **Audition Criteria and Scoring**

Two judges have been selected to score this year's dance company auditions. Each judge has a maximum of 85 points to assign to each auditioning dancer. DEJ staff will be responsible for assigning a teaching recommendation score of 0-10 points, 10 being highly recommended and 0 being not recommended. The teacher recommendation score is based on but not limited to these criteria: a dancer's attendance, previous interactions and observations with faculty and classmates, attitude and respect, participation and engagement in class(es), preparation for class(es), and interpretation and application of techniques and feedback from instructors. A maximum of 180 points can be earned by each auditioning dancer. Auditioning dancers who have not participated in classes at Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio will not be awarded a teacher recommendation score. Therefore, the total points possible for a new student is 170 points. Required percentages for dance company membership and additional dances will still be applied.

Ballet Technique — 10 points possible — all technical elements executed correctly with proper leg, carriage and arm placement, fully extending through limbs

Jazz Technique — 10 points possible — all technical elements executed correctly with proper leg, carriage and arm placement, fully extending through limbs

Ballet Performance — 10 points possible — appropriate energy consistent throughout, strong facials and connection and stage presence, awareness of staging and use of space

Jazz Performance — 10 points possible — appropriate energy consistent throughout, strong facials and connection and stage presence, awareness of staging and use of space

Ballet Musicality — 10 points possible — correct counting, staying on tempo, hitting accents

Jazz Musicality — 10 points possible — correct counting, staying on tempo, hitting accents

The following point categories are meant for a demonstration of select skills that we feel should be developmentally and age appropriate based on the expected ability level of each auditioning group. Skills may include but are not limited to turns, jumps and/or leaps within each style. Each auditioning dancer will individually perform the requested skill(s) one time for the judges.

Demonstration of ballet technical skill(s) — 5 points possible

Demonstration of jazz technical skill(s) — 5 points possible

Impression — 5 points possible — based on each judge's overall impression of the dancer. This includes but is not limited to the dancer's presentation and etiquette during the audition. For female dancers, leotards, bra tops, leggings, dance shorts and tights are all acceptable. For male dancers, athletic tanks, shorts and dance pants are acceptable. Hair should be secured away from the face. Dancers should wear style appropriate shoes. Dancers should be attentive, respectful of DEJ staff, guest judges and other auditioning dancers.

Overall Impact — 10 points possible — how each of the above categories blend; is each category equally represented

Dancers earning at least 75% of the total points possible (135 points out of 180 or 127.5 points out of 170) will be announced as members of the 2025-2026 DANCE est Joie Competition Company. Audition results will be sent by email no later than 5:00pm on Saturday, May 31st.

\*Only dancers scoring at least 83.33% of the total points will be considered for a duet/trio and only dancer's scoring at least 88.89% of the total points will be considered for a solo. The only exception to this criteria is a graduating senior will still have the opportunity to compete and perform a solo if their audition score does not meet the minimum required points.



## **DANCE est Joie, Inc. 2025-2026 Competition Company Required Events**

The dance company director will be responsible for submitting registrations and payments for all required and optional events.

### **Choreography Week**

July 30th - August 6th, 2025

Fort Smith, AR at Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio

A week of learning dance routines and team bonding activities!

### **Industry Xperience — in-house convention**

October 4th - 5th, 2025

Fort Smith, AR at Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio

<https://www.industryxperience.com/thetourschedule>

### **DEJ Family & Member Check-ins**

Friday, November 21st and Saturday, November 22nd, 2025

We will hold a brief meeting with each dancer and their guardian(s) at GDDS. The purpose of this meeting is to give DEJ instructors an opportunity to professionally discuss the current progress and performance of each dancer with their support system. We are optimistic that these meetings will be productive in terms of highlighting positive behaviors we see in each dancer, as well speaking about any issues or concerns that may be present.

### **Hip Hop Holiday Workshop with Barry YoungBlood**

December 13th, 2025 (Late morning/afternoon event)

Fort Smith, AR at Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio

OFFICIAL DETAILS ABOUT THE SCHEDULE WILL BE ANNOUNCED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE; dancers assigned to Barry's competition group dance should also plan to rehearse during his visit, likely in the morning prior to the workshop begins

### **DANCE est Joie Holiday Party**

December 13th, 2025 (Evening event)

(OFFICIAL DETAILS WILL BE ANNOUNCED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE)

### **DANCE est Joie, Inc. Competition Rehearsals and Dress Rehearsal**

January 5th-8th and January 10th, 2026

All solos, duos, trios and group routines will participate in rehearsals and a team dress rehearsal. Group rehearsals will be held in the studio on January 5th - 8th. Rehearsals, if any, for solos, duos and trios during the winter break will be determined by the choreographer. A more detailed schedule will be announced as soon as possible. Dress rehearsal for all dancers will take place on Saturday, January 10th, 2026 from 10:00am-6:00pm at Skokos Performing Arts Center. A detailed schedule for these events will be provided in December.

### **Masquerade — competition only**

January 23rd - 25th 2026

Fort Smith, AR

<https://www.masqueradedance.com/>

### **Stage One — competition only**

February 20th - 22nd, 2026

Rogers, AR

<https://stageonedance.com/>

### **REVEL DANCE CONVENTION — competition and convention**

March 6th - 8th, 2026

Tulsa, OK

<https://www.dancerevel.com>

### **Synergy Performing Arts Competition — competition only**

April 24th - 26th, 2026

Fort Smith, AR ArcBest Performing Arts Center

<https://www.synergypac.com>

## **DANCE est Joie, Inc. 2025-2026 Optional Events**

All DANCE est Joie, Inc. company members may choose to enter and travel, if necessary, to additional conventions. Dancers performing solos, duets and trios may choose to enter and travel, if necessary, to additional competitions. Additional competitions, conventions and master classes not listed are also optional for all DANCE est Joie, Inc. members with the company director's approval. Please understand that the dance company director and/or DANCE est Joie, Inc. choreographers may not be available to travel to any or all optional events. The dance company director will be responsible for submitting registrations and payments for all optional events. **Registration fees for all optional events must be paid in advance of the registration.** Deposits will not be utilized. Early bird fees will not be honored for unpaid fees.

**NUVO** — optional convention for all DANCE est Joie, Inc members and competition for solos/duos/trios with company director approval only  
October 24th – 26th, 2025  
Tulsa, OK at the Renaissance Hotel and Convention Center  
<https://www.gonuvo.com>

**Revive Dance** – optional convention for all DANCE est Joie, Inc members and competition for solos/duos/trios with company director approval only  
February 6th - 8th, 2026  
Rogers, AR  
<https://www.revivedanceconvention.com/>

**Dancemakers, Inc.** – optional convention for all DANCE est Joie, Inc members and competition for solos/duos/trios with company director approval only  
February 13th – 15th, 2026  
Tulsa, OK at TBA  
<https://dancemakersinc.com/>

**Tremaine** — optional convention for all DANCE est Joie, Inc members and competition for solos/duos/trios with company director approval only  
March 21st – 22nd, 2026  
Tulsa, OK  
<https://www.tremainedance.com>

**The Dance Effect** — optional competition for solos/duos/trios with company director approval only  
March 20th - 22nd, 2026  
Fort Smith, AR  
<https://www.thedanceeffect.org>

**Synergy Performing Arts Competition National Finals** – optional national finals for select group dances (based on interest and participation), solos, duos and trios  
June 11th – 14th, 2026  
Dallas/Fort Worth, TX  
<https://www.synergypac.com>

## **Expectations of DANCE est Joie, Inc Members**

### **Rules for a good relationship**

When a dancer is accepted into the dance company, the dancer and the parents must make the choice to accept and follow the rules and guidelines set by DANCE est Joie, Inc. A dancer's commitment to being a dance company member is only as good as their parent's. These rules are as follows:

Commitment to exemplifying the qualities and characteristics of an ideal DANCE est Joie, Inc. company member to the best of my ability

Speaking about our studio, a student or our staff in a negative voice puts your child in a tug of war between us and their teammates. Negative conversations inside our school are unacceptable. For every action, there is a reaction. Let's teach our dancers to accept decisions with dignity and grace. By creating responsible dancers, we are also contributing to their growth as responsible human beings. Dance education may not always be a "feel good" experience. To discuss any situation concerning your dancer, email [danceestjoie.inc@yahoo.com](mailto:danceestjoie.inc@yahoo.com) or call the studio to set an appointment. Do not contact a staff member by text message, phone call, personal email or social media messaging accounts.

All GDDS classes and DANCE est Joie, Inc. rehearsals (solos, duos, trios and groups) are closed. Classes and rehearsals may be viewed from outside the classroom and the viewing windows.

All trophies, videos, audio clips, score sheets and critiques are the property of DANCE est Joie, Inc. Trophies earned for solo performances may be kept by the soloist.

Bullying of a student or a teacher is unacceptable and is grounds for dismissal.

Dancers prepare and rehearse their competition routines with DANCE est Joie, Inc. staff members only, unless an approved guest choreographer is available.

DANCE est Joie, Inc. company members dance exclusively at Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio. Participation in school sponsored teams is acceptable.

A completed DANCE est Joie, Inc. Member Agreement for the 2025-2026 dance school year will be required for all dance company members. The agreement will be available following the DANCE est Joie, Inc. 2025-2026 team auditions and announcement. Please print the agreement and complete with your dancer. The agreement is due by Thursday, June 12th, 2025. Please return agreements in person at Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio or mail to:  
Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio  
3400 Rogers Ave. #128  
Fort Smith, AR 72903

### **Attendance**

Studio Class AND Company Rehearsal Attendance: Attendance is mandatory for all dance classes and rehearsals. We do our best to be flexible and accommodating with conflicts due to school and/or important family activities. However, by becoming a member of a team, you have agreed this is a priority in your schedule. Missed classes for any reason must be made up, whether by attending another similar class or arranging a make up lesson with a staff member.

**Notification of the dancer's absence is acceptable by calling 479-783-7748 during business hours or emailing [danceestjoie.inc@yahoo.com](mailto:danceestjoie.inc@yahoo.com) or [graycedewitt@yahoo.com](mailto:graycedewitt@yahoo.com). Texting a staff member is not an acceptable form of communication.** Dancers who are limited to physical participation due to injury are still required to attend all classes and rehearsals. Please do not ask if it is okay for your student to miss a class or a rehearsal. This decision must be made by the parent and dancer. Student absences will be recorded.

**Event Attendance:** Each dance company member must attend all required conventions, competitions, and additional scheduled performances. Any dance company member who does not attend a scheduled competition, convention or performance will be dismissed from DANCE est Joie, Inc. A doctor's note is required for any illness or injury during a competition or convention that affects a dancer's participation in any or all of the required events. Any dancer with an absence for a scheduled rehearsal two (2) weeks prior to competition will be removed from the dance for that competition. A doctor's note is required for any illness or injury that affects a dancer's physical participation during this timeframe.

Being part of DANCE est Joie, Inc. is a team effort and attendance is very important to all members. Dance teachers do understand that they are instructing busy children and socially active teens with many academic and extracurricular demands; being a well-rounded individual is important, however, when it comes to participation on a team, in order to continually progress, dancers must be present.

All members of DANCE est Joie, Inc. are required to take weekly technical classes including ballet, tap and jazz, as well as at least one additional style of dance, such as lyrical, contemporary, musical theatre, hip hop, pointe/prepointe. Dancers will be leveled into the appropriate ballet, tap and jazz classes. Dancers assigned a lyrical, contemporary or hip hop routine are required to enroll in the weekly class that corresponds with the routine style.

### **2025 Summer Break Commitments**

All members of DANCE est Joie, Inc. will be required to attend technique, conditioning and injury prevention classes throughout the summer. Technique classes will be offered every Monday and Thursday evening from 6:15-7:45 beginning Monday, June 9th through Thursday, July 17th. There will be a class for dancers ages 8-11 and 12+. Mrs. Jayci, Miss Kayli, Miss Emily and Mrs. Rebecca will be alternating days, styles taught and age groups. Dancers will be required to attend a minimum of 540 minutes of technique classes. This is equivalent to six DEJ technique classes. At least three of these classes or 270 minutes of class must be specifically ballet technique training. The cost of attending each class is \$15 per dancer. Dancers may attend Summer Dance Arts classes to count towards their summer requirements, but must still attend a minimum of two DANCE est Joie, Inc. technique classes throughout the summer. Dancers may schedule private lessons with DANCE est Joie, Inc./Grayce Dewitt Dance Studio instructors, but these will not count towards summer break requirements.

Wednesday, July 30th-Wednesday, August 6th, 2025

Official Choreography Work Week for ALL DANCE est Joie, Inc members  
(OFFICIAL DETAILS WILL BE ANNOUNCED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE)

Dancers working with guest choreographers must wear all black dance attire during their scheduled rehearsal during choreography week.

Weekly rehearsals for group dances will continue in August 2025. This rehearsal schedule will differ from the weekly rehearsal schedule for the 2025-2026 dance school year. Rehearsals for solos, duos and trios throughout the summer and during the dance school year will be determined by the choreographer and dance participant(s). Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio's regular school year will begin on Monday, August 18th.

### **Communication**

Communication from parents and students comes through the front desk during class time. Please call the studio (479) 783-7748. All dance company related email communication will be directed to and from [danceestjoie.inc@yahoo.com](mailto:danceestjoie.inc@yahoo.com). Do not utilize social media apps for communicating with dance staff and choreographers.

Staff and choreographers will post information on our DANCE est Joie, Inc. social media pages. The DANCE est Joie, Inc. Family Page on Facebook is for parents and family members (grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc) who play a vital role in your dancer's company involvement and success.

## DANCE est Joie, Inc. Expenses

### Payment methods

Participating in a dance company is a privilege. Consideration must be given to the cost of such a privilege. All fees, of any kind, must be paid on time. The following are forms of payment for DANCE est Joie, Inc. company expenses:

- Check payable to Rebecca Bean
- Venmo account: @DANCEestJoie\_Inc\_GDDS
- PayPal account: [danceestjoie.inc@yahoo.com](mailto:danceestjoie.inc@yahoo.com) (sent as a personal payment; do not send as a payment for goods and services)

I cannot charge competition and convention fees through your dance studio account, which is utilized for payments for regular monthly tuition for classes and rehearsals. For anyone choosing to pay fees by check, my name is listed on the dance company account. These fees are not deposited into my personal checking or savings accounts. If choosing to submit your payment through Venmo or PayPal, please make sure the recipient is accurate. I am happy to send a payment request to ensure your payment is made to the correct party. DANCE est Joie, Inc. will not be responsible for any payments delivered to the incorrect account. Please do not send payments to any instructor's personal Venmo or PayPal accounts. All electronic payments should include "DANCER'S NAME- REIMBURSEMENT-MONTH" in the information section.

### Explanation of fees and payment schedule

Competition, convention and group choreography fees will be determined in August, as I will have to wait for each competition/convention to update (if necessary) their fees for the 2025-2026 season. The combined total of these fees is referred to as "event fees".

For company dancers, a total of three \$300-\$400 deposits will be due this summer. A deposit is due on June 15th, July 15th and August 15th. Deposits will go towards your dancer's total competition, convention and group choreography fees. Dancers performing a solo, duo and/or trio will be required to pay an additional \$50 per dance in their first three deposits. Fees for costumes will be factored at a later date. In August, each dancer will receive a detailed invoice of their event fees and the remaining balance. The remaining balance will be due in three equal payments on the 15th of September, October and November. Unpaid event fees may result in delaying a dancer's registration in an event until the balance is paid. **In addition, payments not made on time will result in a \$25 late fee per every ten days the payment is late.** Dancers carrying a credit from the previous season will have their credit applied to the total event fees. Dancers carrying a company event fee or studio balance from the previous season will not be permitted to audition for DANCE est Joie, Inc.

Competitions that include optional entries will be offered to all soloists for the 2025-2026 season. This includes but is not limited to awards for entertainment, photogenic, costume, etc. Administrative fees will apply to all additional optional entries.

The dance company director or Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio will not be held responsible for personally financing a dancer's participation in an event. **Registration fees for optional events must be paid in full prior to the director completing the dancer's registration.** Dancers pay their own expenses for travel, hotel, and food. An adult must accompany any dancer under the age of 18. All fees are nonrefundable.

Group costumes may include tights, shoes and additional accessories as needed (estimated cost \$85 to \$250 each). Costume fees are nonrefundable. The total cost of a costume is determined by the sales cost, 6.5% tax, shipping costs when applicable and a \$12 administrative fee to cover the process of taking measurements, determining the costume size, placing the order and taking inventory, and returning costumes as needed. A detailed invoice of your dancer's costume fees will be sent in the winter. Costume fees will be due in two equal payments on the 15th of January and February. Custom costumes cannot be returned or exchanged. Costumes are ordered at the beginning of September. Any dancer requesting a costume be purchased before September will be required to pay for the costume upfront.

A yearly company membership fee per dancer is due by June 15th: \$85.00 (not factored into your first \$300 deposit). Total payment made on the 15th is \$385-\$485.

DANCE est Joie, Inc members will be responsible for ordering an official dance company warm up jacket and dance bag. The estimated cost is \$120-\$175 for both items. The total of each item is dependent on the number of items in our order. Items will be ordered during choreography week. An additional DANCE est Joie, Inc. sweatshirt will be ordered for all dance company members. Family members will have an option to order a sweatshirt. Approximate cost is \$35.00-\$50.00 per item.

A \$10.00 administration fee will be due for each competition and convention, including dancers who are on scholarship. An additional \$5.00 administration fee will be added per competition routine, including dancers that have received a scholarship or participation credit. This fee will be factored into your overall fees due. This fee applies to all required and optional events.

A \$25 dance competition dress rehearsal fee will be due for each dancer. This will cover the rental cost of Skokos Performing Arts Center for our annual dress rehearsal that occurs for all routines prior to our first required competition of the season.

An example of total event fees due for a DANCE est Joie, Inc. 2024-2025 dance company member performing in two group routines and attending all required events is listed below. This example does not include any of the fees associated with competition costumes or team uniforms, optional events or fees for solo, duo or trio routines.

Member fee \$85  
IX Convention \$360  
BYB Hip Hop Holiday WS \$25-\$30  
Radix Convention \$345  
Radix Competition Group Routines \$85 x 2  
TOP Competition Group Routines \$59 x 2  
Revel Convention \$305  
Revel Competition Group Routines \$70 x 2  
Synergy Competition Group Routines \$55 x 2  
Choreography Fees minimum \$100  
Administrative Fees \$20 per event

\*Fees are subject to change for the 2025-2026 dance school year

### **DANCE est Joie, Inc. Routines**

#### **DANCE est Joie, Inc instructors, choreographers and guest choreographers**

Franco Baleto  
Rebecca Bean  
Kameron DeWitt-Elkins  
Jayci James  
Brianna Lane  
Robbi Martin  
Kayli Sossamon  
Emily Wright  
Jeremy Duvall (guest) @jeremyduvall  
Emily Shock (guest) @emilyshock  
Barry YoungBlood (guest) @therealbarryyoungblood  
Will Bell (guest) @willbell  
Katie Major (guest) @katieamajor  
Maeli McMahan (guest) @mmaeliii

Choreographers will make all decisions concerning the dance competition piece. This includes, but is not limited to music, dance style, costumes, props and the placement of the dancer in the dance. Choreographers will also choose the “emotional execution ” and facial expression expressed in each dance piece. Parent recommendations will not be considered.

### **Group Dances**

Dancers ages eight and up may participate in small groups, large groups, lines and productions. Dancers will be leveled into competition groups and dance classes according to audition scores, technical evaluations, previous dance experience, work ethic, studio attendance. and age. Decisions are not based on a dancer’s physical appearance. No dancer will be assigned a specific number of dances, nor will a dancer be guaranteed a specific number of competition dances in any specific dance style, compared to past or present competition experiences. Parent recommendations will not be considered, however, we are considerate of your input if there is a maximum number of routines we should be aware of. The rehearsal cost is \$35.00 or \$50.00/per dancer/per competition dance/per month. This rehearsal fee will be added to your monthly tuition expenses due on the 1st of each month beginning August 1st, 2025 and ending May 1st, 2026. Dancers assigned a lyrical, contemporary or hip hop routine are required to enroll in the weekly class that corresponds with the routine style. All groups, duos, and trios will perform in recital between 3 shows. Seniors are permitted to perform twice in recitals. A company celebration will be held in the Skokos Performing Arts Center Green Room between the matinée and evening shows. All company members and families are invited to join!

Rehearsals for group dances will begin with choreography week scheduled to start on Wednesday, July 30th. This rehearsal fee will be added to your monthly tuition expenses due on the 1st of each month beginning August 1st, 2025 and ending May 1st, 2026. Rehearsal fees charged in August will only apply to dances that are rehearsing. Rehearsal fees for August and January are \$50.00 per dancer per competition routine to account for the additional rehearsal times scheduled to occur during these months. Each group competition routine will rehearse for 30 - 45 minutes per week during the 2025-2026 dance school year.

### **Duos/Trios**

Dancers chosen for a duet or trio will primarily be determined by the dancer’s audition score, but if known, a dancer’s work ethic in previous classes and rehearsals and previous studio class attendance will be considered. A minimum score of 150 is required to be considered for a duo/trio. Dancers competing in a duet or trio must be flexible regarding rehearsals scheduled on Fridays, Saturdays and/or Sundays. Dancers may only rehearse and work on their competition duet or trio with the assigned choreographer. In the event a guest choreographer is not regularly available, a DANCE est Joie, Inc. instructor or choreographer will rehearse with the duet or trio dancers. In addition, dancers selected for a duet or trio are encouraged to register for the class that corresponds to the style of routine they will be competing in. For example, dancers performing a musical theatre duet or trio should take a weekly musical theatre class. In addition, dancers performing in a duo or trio will be responsible for paying a rehearsal fee of \$8 per month to the studio for utilizing a classroom for private instruction.

### **Solos**

Solos are suggested, but not limited, to dancers who have had at least 2 years of dance experience as a competitive dance company member. Solos will only be offered to dancer’s scoring a total of 160 points or higher at auditions. Dancer’s will be informed whether they will be offered a solo following the announcement of making the team. Dancers may choose to work with a DANCE est Joie, Inc choreographer or any of the guest choreographers listed. Dancers desiring to work with a choreographer not listed must have approval from the dance company director. Dancers may only rehearse and work on their competition solo with the assigned choreographer. In the event a guest choreographer is not regularly available, a DANCE est Joie, Inc. instructor or choreographer will rehearse with the soloist. Only graduating senior soloists will perform in the annual Spring Recital. Dancers competing a solo must be

flexible regarding rehearsals scheduled on Fridays, Saturdays and/or Sundays. In addition, dancers competing a solo are encouraged to register for the class that corresponds to the style of routine they will be competing. For example, a dancer performing a musical theatre solo should take a weekly musical theatre class. In addition, soloists will be responsible for paying a rehearsal fee of \$12 per month to the studio for utilizing a classroom for private instruction.

### **Choreography fees for solos, duos, trios and group routines**

What is the choreographer fee? Your choreographer will create an original piece of work consisting of dynamic and complex dance steps that is designed specifically to the personality, abilities and technique of the dancer. In addition, it includes choosing and editing the music to competition limits, selecting the costume and working with the dancer to transform the piece into a finished and stage worthy product. Choreography fees for solos, duets and trios are paid directly to the choreographer. DANCE est Joie, Inc. choreographers will bill each dancer by Venmo per rehearsal and choreography fees. Unpaid fees in a timely manner will result in cancellation of future rehearsals by the choreographer/instructor until the fee is paid. Choreography fees and rehearsal fees will differ for guest choreographers, but DEJ choreographers will set their own rehearsal and choreography rates for the 2025-2026 dance company season. Rates will be based on the choreographer's credentials. A minimum expectation of fees for these routines is listed below:

Duo/Trio: Duet and trio rates are determined by the choreographer. This routine is only for a dancer who meets the audition score requirement of 150 or higher and has expressed a desire to compete this type of routine. All payment information will be discussed with the dancer's guardian before starting choreography. An example of a bundled choreography and rehearsal fee is: \$170.00 per dancer (includes \$90 choreography fee and four hours of rehearsal to set choreography)

Example of future rehearsal fee: \$10.00/per dancer/per 30 minute rehearsal (this is for rehearsals past the four hours paid for in your choreography fee)

Solo: Solo rates are determined by the choreographer's individual rates. If a dancer meets the audition score requirement of 160 or higher, and has expressed a desire to compete a solo they will be given the opportunity to request a style and choreographer for their routine. All payment information will be discussed with the dancer's guardian before starting choreography. An example of a bundled choreography and rehearsal fee is: \$310.00 per dancer (includes \$150 choreography fee and four hours of rehearsal to set choreography). Example of future rehearsal fee: \$20.00/30 minute rehearsal (this is for rehearsals past the four hours paid for in your choreography fee)

Group routines: This applies to routines taught by GDDS/ DANCE est Joie Inc. faculty. This choreography fee will be factored into each dancer's overall fees due. Group choreography rates for the 2025-2026:

\$700 per small group (4-9 dancers)

\$1100 per large group (10-17 dancers)

\$1500 per line (18+ dancers)

Fees will be divided equally amongst dancers in each routine so the choreography fee per dancer per routine may vary depending on the number of dancers chosen.

Guest choreographer fees: Approved guest choreographers for the 2025-2026 season are listed above. Dancers chosen to perform in a guest choreographer's group routine will be required to pay the choreographer's fee per dancer (approximately \$150-\$300 each), and cover the full cost of the choreographer's travel, lodging and meal expenses. This choreography fee will be factored into each dancer's overall fees due. Dancers earning the opportunity to perform in a solo, duo and/or trio will have the option to work with a guest choreographer. These dancers will be required to pay the choreographer's fee per dancer, and contribute to their travel expenses and accommodations. Each guest choreographer's solo, duo and trio choreography fees can be explained if requested.

### **Fundraising Opportunities**

A fundraising committee will be organized for any member of DANCE est Joie, Inc. who chooses to participate. Co-directors will be selected to direct this committee and will communicate with the dance company director about fundraising events and opportunities. Funds earned will be applied to the account of the contributing dancer only. Funds will not be divided amongst company members. Anyone participating in a raffle fundraiser will be required to donate an item or gift card. Our first fundraiser is set to occur June 8th – 12th, 2025 with DoubleGood popcorn.

### **Appearance and Image Use**

Each dancer must adhere to Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio's dress code. Please visit [www.idancewithgrayce.com](http://www.idancewithgrayce.com) for details. Dancer must wear hair in a style long enough to conform to a slick bun. Dancer must be capable of changing his/her own costume during performances and competitions.

Each dancer must purchase necessary dance shoes according to the 2025-2026 shoe dress code. Do not purchase new shoes until our shoe dress code has been announced or ask in advance if needed. Shoes may be purchased from The Red Shoe Dancewear Boutique in Bentonville, Arkansas or other dancewear retailers.

A dance company member's image may be used in a professional layout for promotional purposes.

**Use of the DANCE est Joie, Inc. logo or name on any apparel or merchandise must be approved by the studio owner and director before purchase or production. Use of the DANCE est Joie, Inc. logo or name for the purpose of fundraising must be approved by the studio owner and director. DANCE est Joie, Inc is a not for profit organization. Use of the DANCE est Joie, Inc. logo or name may not be used for personal gain outside of dance company expenses.**

Until the competition season is complete, following Synergy Performing Arts Competition in Fort Smith, do not post videos of competition routines to any social media platform, website, etc. Pictures may be posted.

### **What to Expect at Competitions and Conventions**

#### **What is a dance convention?**

Dance conventions are events that consist of many different classes from many different choreographers and master teachers that are usually well known in the dance world. During a dance convention, you can expect to build friendships, adaptability skills, confidence, resilience and strength as a dancer.

#### **What is a dance competition?**

Competitive dance is a widespread sport in which dancers perform dances in any of several permitted dance styles—such as ballet, contemporary, jazz, hip hop, lyrical, modern, musical theatre, tap, and improvisation before a common group of judges. It is important to understand that the “competition” aspect of being a member of a DANCE est Joie, Inc. company member should be considered a “performance” opportunity. Competition results are strictly a subjective opinion, and each dancer's growth should not be completely gauged by their scores or achievements at competitions. It is important to keep competition experiences positive, and most importantly, be proud of the growth and development that takes place within your dancer. Team members are not in competition with each other. Students are encouraged to strive to improve themselves and to work to their full capacity. Each dancer is uniquely different, each with their own strengths and their own weaknesses and each brings their own talent to the team as a whole.

## **Advice from veteran dance company parents and dancers**

Dance competitions and conventions are incredibly fun and a great team and learning experience for your dancer. There is potential to earn awards and scholarships, but the primary focus should be to have fun and grow as an individual and team. Not everyone gets the opportunity to learn from these outstanding teachers!

For out of town events, you are not required to stay at the event's host hotel, however, this tends to be a convenient option for dancers and attending family members. Book lodging as early as possible. If choosing to stay at the host venue, ask about group rates being offered for dancers. Some hotels have refrigerators. Be sure to ask for one when placing your reservation, as it's not standard in every hotel or room. If choosing valet parking, be prepared for the valets to be very busy when the event's closing show ends. While it is a convenient option at times, this can be a hectic and time consuming process.

Don't hesitate to travel or share a room with other company members and families. Splitting costs can be very helpful.

Schedules for competition and convention events are usually available on the company's website 7-10 days prior to the scheduled event. When the schedule is available, print a copy for you and your dancer, or take a photo on your phone. It's possible that dancers will need to miss school or a portion of their school day on the Friday of the competition weekend if it's necessary for events to take place on Friday. Unless a dancer is scheduled to participate in any Friday events, you are not required to be at the event until Saturday morning. If you feel there is a possibility your dancer will perform early on Friday morning (this is common for soloists), consider booking a room for Thursday night as well. Once the event schedule is released, you can update your reservation. Events will end on Sunday afternoon after the company's closing show.

Convention classes will begin in the morning and last into the afternoon, similar to a regular school day. Dancers should bring all of their dance shoes and sneakers safe for dancing. Encourage your dancer to dress in layers. They will be cold, then get hot from dancing, and then cold again. Dancers are required to participate in all classes and auditions. Dancers will receive a convention wristband, which allows them into all convention events, and an audition number, which is worn during all classes. Aside from scholarships from auditions, some scholarships and acknowledgements based on the instructor's observations are awarded as the event's closing show. Don't sweat this part of the convention experience-remember to always have fun!

Dancers will have a scheduled lunch break. It's very unlikely you will have time to leave the event venue for lunch. You're encouraged to plan ahead for meals for your dancer and family members. Snacks and water are a must, especially to keep your dancer fueled for an evening of dance competition after a full day of convention classes! Send your dancer with a lunch box or small ice chest so they can snack in between classes. Choose healthy and nourishing snacks and meals. Most of the dancers like to eat lunch together in the convention rooms. They love to hang out together! I try to look at it as a great team bonding experience and memories to be cherished. Additionally, bring breakfast foods that can be eaten in the room before going to classes and water bottles that can be refilled.

Most conventions will require you to purchase an observation band if you would like to observe your dancer in their convention classes. You are not required to watch your dancer in their convention classes. If you are observing classes, bring a light jacket or a small blanket if you get cold easily. Observation bands are not required for the competition or the closing show. If you feel comfortable with it, send a camera or device with your child to take pictures. They will want pictures with their teammates and their convention teachers.

When considering expenses for weekend events, you may want to factor in extra money for professional pictures and videos. Some events include media packages in their fees. If this is not the case, occasionally, we are able to work our group rates, but the rate can vary from \$80-\$200 per dancer depending on the number of people participating in the deal, the number

of dances your child is in and which company we are working with. Also, companies sell merchandise such as pants, hoodies, sweatshirts, tanks, etc. There's always so much to choose from!

Watch YouTube tutorials for instruction on applying competition makeup and false eyelashes. A list of makeup must-haves is listed below:

Eyes and eye area: neutral colored eyeshadows and liners, mascara, false eyelashes and eyebrow powder/pencil. While some eyeshadows will have a shimmer, do not use any glitter. Do not wear body glitter. Female dancers will wear false eyelashes.

Face: foundation, setting powder, blush, bronzer

Lips: Maybelline SuperStay Matte Ink Liquid Lipstick in "Voyager"

Create an emergency kit for competitions, performances and recitals. This can include double-sided tape, bobby pins, hair nets. Craft boxes are great for storing these items! If you are in multiple dance routines, you may benefit from having a "Dream Duffel" or similar bag to organize, carry and hang costumes. Label everything! This includes but is not limited to your shoes, costumes, accessories, garment bags, duffels, dance bags, etc.

Competitions are fast paced and fun! Wear comfortable shoes! You are allowed to leave your seat between routines. It's understood that your dancer may need your assistance in the dressing room. A detailed costume checklist for each routine will be provided by the dance company director prior to each competition. It never hurts to be prepared! Always bring back up items just in case: tights, hair stuff, undergarments, black dress socks (boys). It's better to have it and not need it. Bobby pins and safety pins are a must because something always needs to be pinned down. A lint roller and portable steamer are great items to have in your competition survival kit!

Competition awards can be very confusing, as each company has their own name for each adjudication award, overall awards, etc. Details about awards and scoring are usually available on the company's website or in the program book (if you purchase one). Awards ceremonies are usually held a few times throughout the competition, and are the MOST FUN time of the weekend! Students are required to wear their team jackets on stage for all award ceremonies they attend. They are required to attend all award ceremonies that apply to their routines, but students often like to go on stage in support of others. Awards are the time to hoot and holler (parents and dancers), take pictures and sit back and relax. The most important thing to remember about awards is that all scores are the opinions of 3 or 4 judges. It's important that we acknowledge and congratulate every dancer and studio. Good sportsmanship is a must! Clap for your teammates and dancers from competing studios. Overall, we are all working towards the same goal-bettering ourselves through dance education and performance! When awards are complete, don't rush off! We always like to take group photos and don't want anyone to be left out.