

## Hirschl School Lesson Disclaimer Notice: BALLET & the Suggested Amount of Lessons

This information is for parents of students taking less than the suggested amount of lessons per week. HSDA curriculum and training methods are based on taking the suggested amount of lessons (below). Our goal is to assure every student receives the maximum amount of educational value for their time, effort and money. If less, the full benefits of will not be realized at a nominal rate.

Each level in ballet is based upon taking the appropriate amount of lessons per week on a regular and uninterrupted basis. Taking less will slow the mastery of each level, and in turn slow the progression to the more advanced levels. Each level has it's own curriculum syllabus, and will take 12-24 months for completion. This time frame is subject to change, depending on age, maturity, inherent ability, dedication, adherence, aptitude, home practice and taking the recommended amount of lessons.

It is not mandatory at the HSDA to take a certain amount of lessons for any level. There are, however, drawbacks if the required lesson load is not adhered to, or if lessons are taken sporadically. Progress will be slower, compared to what would be considered par for the level. Students might not be moved up to the next levels as quickly, and pointe work may be delayed for the ladies. The enjoyment of the art may be hindered with the slowing of the process of learning & mastering level-appropriate curriculum.

If ballet lessons are taken elsewhere, they might not fit HSDA curriculum standards. We cannot vouch for or verify the standards, quality of training or methodology of any outside studio or teacher. There is no guarantee that any outside training will be equal to (or fit in with) HSDA methods and levels of progress & expectation.

### **Suggested lesson load for ballet levels:**

**Ballet level One: *Minimum attendance of 2 lessons per week.*** (6 to 9 years old) introduces the elementary exercises for mastering the placement of the body, legs, arms & head, and developing elementary skills in the coordination of the steps. Basic musicality & rhythm, and "safe & healthy" rotation (turnout), cardiovascular & neuromuscular endurance, coordination, strength and flexibility mechanisms are introduced.

**Ballet level Two: *Minimum attendance is 2 lessons per week, 3 is recommended.*** (8 to 11 years old) During this period of study, one repeats the ballet level one exercises in an increased number, stressing the development of the legs and feet through exercises on demi-pointe, and the furthering of the coordination between the movements.

**Ballet level Three: *Minimum 3 lessons per week, 4 is recommended.*** (9 to 13 years) In this period the study of center exercises on 1/2 pointe begins. Exercises on pirouettes and foundation work for "en pointe" are started.

**Ballet level Four: *Minimum 4 ballet lessons per week, including one pointe preparatory lesson per week.*** (10 to 14 years old) involves strengthening the ability in various turns and developing the smooth connection of arms and body. This is also the level when basic pointe work is begun (see the HSDA pointe prerequisites sheets for information).

**Ballet level Five: *Minimum 4 lessons per week,*** (12+ years old) stresses the technical mastery of beating steps, more complex turns, developing the smoothness of graceful movements & suppleness, harmonious movement transitions, more complex adagio and allegro & developing elevation in the big jumps.

**Ballet level Six: *Minimum attendance is 4 lessons per week, 1 or 2 more would be highly suggested.***

In this level, the study of jumps in the various ways and the development of the "balon" quality (the bounce, springiness & elasticity of the feet) is stressed. Complicated combinations with beating steps performed in a quick tempo are also given. The execution of all fundamental movements is carried through with finishing touches.

**"Growth" versus "Maintenance" lessons:** In the beginning levels, students learn something new in nearly every lesson, so all lessons in those levels are "growth" lessons. Two lessons per week minimum will provide growth. The ratio of growth-to-maintenance classes is low. As the student becomes more advanced, the growth-to-maintenance ratio becomes inverted. By the time a dancer is at corps de ballets level, four lessons per week are needed simply to maintain par, plus one or two more for growth and progress.

**We understand students have other commitments:** homework, family, church & social life, etc. Once a student makes it into the advanced levels of ballet, there should also be a corresponding level of importance placed on the art as part of the dancers commitments, partially to do justice to the art, partially for safety factors. There is also the commitment to the rest of the group (for some this would be the Sunrise Ballet corps de ballets) to be considered. A certain level of proficiency must be maintained as being a member of the group.

The Hirschl School prides itself on the fact that we can provide a full-spectrum proper education in dance without giving up "an outside life". Curriculum progression is based upon taking a realistic amount of lessons per week so the student will progress as a dancer, and still have time to enjoy a personal life and do justice to academics. The cost of this modified investment will not affect the students long-term progress. If the student later chooses to pursue this art form as a career, the time will have been well invested. Either way, a correct education in the arts will be a valuable & permanent asset to any students' life, academically, physically, spiritually, and for a positive self-image.

To assist this, we need good communication on a regular basis concerning the specific desires of the student. If we clearly understand your goals, we will be better able to serve you. The best investment of your time, effort and money will be made by letting us know of your intentions! Reading the "HSDA Task Management" sheet would also be helpful.