

Our Approach to Policies

Our policies exist to protect the experience, not to police the people. They provide a consistent framework that helps us make fair decisions, preserve the quality of our programs, and foster a community built on trust, respect, and shared responsibility.

While there are a number of updates throughout this document, many policies reflect practices that have been part of Performing Arts Workshop since its inception. Our goal is not to reinvent the experience families have come to know, but to better articulate the philosophy, expectations, and values that have guided our work from the beginning. Where changes have been made, they are intended to expand access, remove barriers, and strengthen the experience for every student.

Our Commitment

We believe the strongest programs are built around what is best for the students. Every policy, expectation, and educational decision is made with the goal of protecting a positive, respectful, and meaningful experience for every student, not just any one individual.

Growth Over Perfection

We encourage students to work hard, focus on their own progress, and celebrate personal growth rather than compare themselves to others. Every child develops at a different pace, and we believe self-confidence grows through consistent effort, curiosity, and perseverance.

Student-Teacher Connection

We believe students learn best when they feel known. Our faculty strives to know each student as an individual, understand their unique strengths and challenges, and provide the guidance, encouragement, and support they need to feel capable and proud of their own progress.

Meaningful Student Experiences

Learning happens in many ways. Some of the most important lessons happen beyond direct instruction. Students also learn through collaboration, creative problem-solving, observation, experimentation, reflection, and the process of bringing ideas to life. Every class, rehearsal, workshop, and performance is designed to contribute to that process.

A Community Where Every Child Belongs

PAW's core belief is that a strong program reflects the people it serves. Our students learn alongside peers with different backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and abilities. Every student has something valuable to contribute. We encourage students to celebrate what makes each person unique and to be part of a community built on mutual respect. Our rule of thumb is simple: there is never a reason not to be kind.

Educational Philosophy & Core Values

We believe every student is capable of learning and has individual strengths worth developing. Our role as educators is not to identify a select group of naturally talented students and propel them forward, but to help every student reach their own potential.

Our curriculum emphasizes the development of strong, flexible minds and bodies through thoughtful instruction, proper technique, and respect for each student's physical capacity. Students build an understanding of how the body and mind work together to support movement while developing posture, alignment, coordination, control, strength, flexibility, and technical skill at an appropriate pace.

Instruction is planned with clear educational goals while remaining responsive to the students in the room. Teachers adapt their language, methods, pacing, and material according to students' ages, experience, abilities, and individual ways of learning. Progressions and modifications allow students within the same class to be appropriately supported and challenged.

We highly value technical development, but dance education at PAW extends beyond technique. We seek to cultivate curiosity, creativity, discipline, patience, confidence, self-expression, and a strong work ethic while preserving the simple joy of movement. Achievement is meaningful when it grows from effort, learning, and genuine progress leading to greater self-confidence.

We foster collaboration over competition and encourage students to focus on their own growth rather than compare themselves to others. Students learn to support and encourage their peers, celebrate one another's progress, and recognize that another student's success does not diminish their own. We believe these practices help students develop healthy attitudes toward achievement, build confidence in their own abilities, and understand that individual growth and collective success can exist side by side.

Financial Accessibility

At PAW, we believe every child has a right to experience arts education for their own personal development. We are committed to reducing financial barriers while maintaining the quality, individualized instruction, and long-term sustainability of our programs.

Transparent Pricing and Payment Plans

Annual tuition covers the educational program, while performance-specific costs are billed separately.

Tuition, fees, and payment schedules are published in advance of enrollment so families know what to expect throughout the season. Annual tuition is divided into manageable monthly installments, allowing families to budget for participation over the course of the season rather than paying tuition in a single lump sum. Detailed tuition, payment, late payment, withdrawal, and refund policies are provided in the separate [2026-27 Tuition, Payment & Withdrawal Policies](#).

Reduced Costume Costs (2026–27 Policy Update)

PAW continually evaluates program expenses to identify meaningful savings for families.

Our 2026–27 costume structure is designed to reduce overall costume costs across age groups while maintaining the quality, age-appropriateness, and presentation standards of our performances.

Optional Fundraising Opportunities (2026-27 Policy Update)

Beginning in 2026–27, PAW will offer optional fundraising opportunities to help families offset eligible program expenses. Participation is entirely voluntary and is never required for enrollment or continued participation. Funds earned through approved PAW fundraising opportunities will be

applied as account credits toward eligible program expenses. Fundraising proceeds are not available as cash payments to families. Available opportunities, participation instructions, eligible expenses, account credit procedures, and complete Fundraising Policies will be provided when fundraising information is published for the 2026–27 season.

Programs & Opportunities

Every child engages with dance differently. PAW offers multiple pathways for participation, allowing families to choose the experience that best reflects their child's interests, goals, experience, and level of commitment.

Youth Performance Program

Our core program provides comprehensive dance and acrobatics education for students ages 3 to 17 and culminates in an annual Spring Showcase.

Company Program

Students who meet Youth Performance Program eligibility requirements may join PAW Company, our student ensemble. Auditions are not required. Company provides additional training, performances, workshops, field trips, community events, and pre-professional experiences.

Assistant Leadership Program

Eligible students may have the opportunity to participate in PAW's Assistant Leadership Program, which combines leadership development, mentorship, community service, studio responsibility, and other pre-professional learning experiences. Participation is by application or invitation and is based on program needs, student readiness, and available positions.

Skills Workshops

Short-term learning opportunities that provide focused instruction in specialized skills, techniques, and creative disciplines. Workshops may be open to enrolled students and the broader community.

Performance Workshops (2026-27 Update)

Short-term programs focused on learning and rehearsing choreography, providing students with an opportunity to participate in PAW's Spring Showcase through a shorter-term commitment.

Community Classes (2026-27 Update)

Welcoming dance experiences for parents, caregivers, and community members seeking a relaxed and accessible way to move, learn, and connect.

Family Classes (2026-27 Update)

Shared experiences that invite students and caregivers to learn, move, and create together. Spring Showcase performance participation may be offered but is never required.

Private Lessons for Individuals & Groups

Customized instruction for individual students or established groups seeking focused learning tailored to their interests, goals, and experience.

In-School Enrichment

Dance and movement programs designed in partnership with schools to complement the school day through creative, developmentally appropriate arts learning.

Instructional Policies

Enrollment and Class Placement

PAW welcomes students with a wide range of experience, interests, and goals. Classes are organized by age and developmental readiness, with placement decisions made to support each student's individual growth and the overall class experience. All class placement decisions are made by the Director.

Families should never consult instructors regarding class placement. Questions or concerns regarding placement should be sent to the Director at info@performingartsworkshop-nj.com. When a student would benefit from a different class or level, the Program Director may recommend a placement adjustment in consultation with the family.

Class Size

Classes are intentionally structured to foster meaningful teacher-student connections, individualized instruction, and sufficient space for students to move safely and comfortably. Early Childhood classes are limited to 16 students with a student-to-teacher ratio of 8:1, with additional instructional support added as enrollment grows. Enrollment in all other classes is determined by age, level, class format, studio size, and available instructional support.

Attendance and Participation

Consistent attendance is important to student progress and the overall class experience. Students are expected to attend regularly, arrive on time, and participate fully to the best of their ability. We understand that illness, family circumstances, school obligations, and other legitimate conflicts arise. Families should communicate known absences in advance whenever possible and notify PAW of unexpected absences as soon as reasonably possible.

Students who miss class are encouraged to make up instructional time in another age- and level-appropriate class when space is available (does not have to be the same technique). Makeup opportunities are intended to support continuity of instruction and are not guaranteed in every class or discipline. Frequent lateness or absence may affect a student's ability to keep pace with class material or performance choreography.

Attire and Preparation (2026-27 Update)

Class uniforms are established to support safe movement, effective instruction, and a focused learning environment. Students are required to arrive in the complete uniform designated for their class, including the required attire and footwear, with hair secured as specified. All required classwear must be purchased through the PAW Uniform Store on Nimble, which offers PAW's approved uniform selections from Revolution Dancewear, a *high-quality and affordable* dancewear brand. The direct store link and specific uniform requirements are provided for each class in the Parent Portal.

Complete dress code requirements, including class-specific uniform details, footwear, hair, and other preparation standards, will be published when the PAW Studio Store on Nimble opens for the season on September 1, 2026.

Arrival, Dismissal, and Student Safety

- Students should arrive with enough time to be ready when class begins and must be picked up promptly when class ends.
- Children remain the responsibility of their parent or caregiver before entering class and immediately following dismissal.
- Families are responsible for maintaining current emergency contact information and notifying PAW of any injury, physical limitation, medical concern, or circumstance that may affect a student's safe participation.
- Students enrolled in classes without caregiver participation should be independently restroom-capable.
- PAW staff may modify or limit a student's participation when necessary to protect the student's safety or the safety of others.

Performances & Costuming

Spring Showcase

The Spring Showcase is the culminating performance experience of the Youth Performance Program, Spring Performance Workshops and Family Performance Workshops to take place between May 20-23, 2027. Students enrolled in performance-based classes will participate unless their family declines at the time of registration. Show date(s), location(s), rehearsal requirements, ticket information, and all other production details will be communicated after the Winter holidays.

Rehearsal and Performance Expectations

Students participating in the Spring Showcase are expected to attend required rehearsals and arrive on time, prepared, and in the appropriate costume, shoes, tights, undergarments, hair, and other required performance materials. Attendance becomes increasingly important as performances approach because choreography, spacing, formations, partnering, and staging depend on consistent group participation.

PAW may modify choreography, formations, or performance participation when necessary to ensure that students are adequately prepared and that the overall group can perform safely and confidently.

Costumes (2026-27 Policy Update)

PAW selects costumes based on choreography, age appropriateness, presentation, movement requirements, and production needs. Students are measured for costumes during class throughout the month of January. After Spring Break, costumes are distributed as they arrive and are tried on under the supervision of instructors and/or the Program Director to ensure an appropriate fit. PAW will complete alterations deemed necessary by staff at no additional cost to families.

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Combination Classes: Costumes will be coordinated and styled for multiple routines to reduce overall costume costs while maintaining a polished stage presentation.

Intensive Classes: Students performing technically or artistically distinct choreography will wear separate costumes for different routines.

Required tights, shoes, undergarments, and other personal dancewear are not included unless specifically stated. Updated costuming pricing structure, deposits, payment schedules, exchange policies, and related financial terms are governed by the separate [2026-27 Tuition, Payment & Withdrawal Policies](#).

Communication & Community Standards

Family Communication

Families are responsible for reviewing PAW emails, calendars, portal notifications, and other official program communications for their child(ren)'s successful program experience. Please ensure that current email addresses, phone numbers, emergency contacts, and other relevant information remain updated on the Parent Portal. Please refrain from using social media comments or engaging informal conversation with instructors (especially without Administration present) to address classroom/policy questions and concerns.

Questions and Concerns

Questions or concerns regarding program policies, class placement, teacher concerns, student experience, or other administrative matters should be directed to Administration at info@performingartsworkshop-nj.com and/or (201) 424-3075.

PAW will not discuss a student's placement, behavior, performance, progress, or personal circumstances with a family that is not their own. Concerns involving group dynamics will be addressed carefully while protecting individual privacy and dignity.

Community Conduct

We expect students, families, faculty, and staff to treat one another with courtesy, consideration, and respect. Negative comparisons, gossip, demeaning commentary, bullying, harassment, or behavior that interferes with another student's ability to learn or feel safe within the PAW community are inconsistent with our values.

When concerns arise, our first priority is to address them carefully, restore trust and mutual respect, and resolve the issue when possible. We also have a responsibility to protect the well-being and experience of the broader community. Depending on the nature, seriousness, or frequency of a concern, our response may include a conversation with the student or family, adjustments to participation, or, when necessary, dismissal from a program.

Calendar, Closures & Schedule Changes

Season Calendar

PAW publishes a program calendar at the start of the instructional season, outlining scheduled instructional weeks, holidays, closures, rehearsals, performances, and other major dates. Families are

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responsible for reviewing the calendar and noting important dates relevant to their student's participation. PAW reserves the right to adjust schedules, instructors, rooms, or programming when reasonably necessary.

Weather and Emergency Closures

PAW may close or modify programming due to severe weather, unsafe travel conditions, building issues, government directives, emergencies, or other circumstances beyond the organization's control.

Instructor Cancellations and Substitutions

A teacher absence does not automatically result in class cancellation. When an instructor is unavailable, PAW may provide a qualified substitute, combine classes where appropriate, reschedule instruction, or provide another reasonable educational alternative. When PAW cancels a class and no substitute or reasonable alternative can be provided, PAW will schedule a make-up opportunity.

Class Observation. Visitors & Facility Expectations

Classroom Observation (2026-27 Policy Update)

- Parents and caregivers are welcome to observe classes through the lobby monitors. We value giving families a window into their student's learning and progress.
- At times, teachers may choose to turn off viewing when students would benefit from working without an audience. Knowing that others are watching can affect a student's willingness to take risks, make mistakes, ask questions, experiment, or work through challenges openly. Providing occasional opportunities to work privately allows students to focus on the learning process rather than how they may appear to an observer.

Visitors

- PAW operates within CENTERED, where available space has been prioritized for instruction. Parents, caregivers, siblings and other visitors are welcome to use available common-area seating while waiting, but should plan accordingly when the area is full.
- Children who are not participating in class must remain under the direct supervision of an accompanying adult at all times.
- Parents, caregivers, siblings and other visitors may not enter studios during classes without an invitation from the PAW's Director.

Food and Beverage

- Water is permitted and encouraged, and may only be brought into a studio in a spill-proof container with a secure closure. Twist-top bottles are not permitted (spills = slips/injuries).
- Food is not permitted inside the studios during any instructional time, except when expressly permitted as part of a carefully planned PAW program or event.
- Students and families are expected to completely clean up after themselves and properly dispose of all food, packaging, and related waste they create in common areas before leaving the facility.

Facility Use

- Students, families, and visitors are expected to treat PAW/CENTERED facilities, equipment, furnishings, and neighboring spaces with care and respect.
- Strollers, bicycles, scooters, skates, skateboards, and similar wheeled equipment are not permitted inside the facility. Entrances/exits, stairwells, hallways and other pathways must remain clear at all times. Please plan accordingly.
- Street shoes are not permitted on dance floors during class time.
- Weapons of any kind are not permitted anywhere within the facility.
- Smoking, vaping, drugs, alcohol, open flames, and incense are not permitted within the facility.
- Animals are not permitted onsite, with the exception of service animals as required by law.
- Studio equipment, props, furnishings, and other materials may not be used without permission from the Director.
- Students and visitors must remain in appropriate areas and follow staff instructions related to facility use and safety.

Personal Belongings

- Students should bring only belongings necessary for class participation.
- PAW is not responsible for loss, theft, disposal, or damage to unsecured personal property unless directly caused by PAW personnel.

Tuition, Payment & Withdrawal

Tuition, payment schedules, costume fees, Showcase Participation Fees, payment methods, late payment policies, withdrawal procedures, refunds, account balances, and other financial obligations are governed by the separate [2026-27 Tuition, Payment & Withdrawal Policies](#). Families should review that document in full prior to enrollment.

Policy Acknowledgement

Prior to enrollment and first payment, families are provided with a Release & Acknowledgment Form confirming that they have reviewed and agree to the policies and expectations applicable to their student's participation in Performing Arts Workshop programming. Completion of this form is required before enrollment and payment are accepted.

PAW reserves the right to interpret and apply its policies in a manner consistent with student safety, fairness, educational quality, organizational sustainability, and the best interests of the PAW community.

[SEE PROGRAM POLICY FAQ](#)
[SEE COMPANY TRAINING PROGRAM FAQ](#)

Questions not answered in our published policies nor FAQs?

Please contact info@performingartsworkshop-nj.com at your convenience.