



## **Bartlesville Civic Ballet Policy on Bullying**

Bullying, hazing, and harassment are prohibited. Dancers may not participate in any of these actions. Dancers may not solicit others to participate in/or aid and abet any of these actions. It is not a defense by the perpetrator(s) that the bullying, hazing, or harassment victim consented or acquiesced in the activity. All dancers and staff are responsible for taking reasonable measures to prevent bullying, hazing, and harassment. "Reasonable measures" do not allow or justify the victim to return in-kind. Such in-kind actions on the part of the victim will be considered a violation of BCB policy. If a dancer is a victim of bullying, hazing, or harassment, the dancer should ask the accused to stop. If the actions do not stop, the dancer should inform a teacher or an administrator. If the dancer does not feel comfortable informing an instructor or BCB board member, they must inform a parent or guardian who will in turn relay the information directly to the BCB Board. The victim must report the bullying, hazing or harassment in order for BCB to implement an action plan to resolve the situation. Retaliation by the accused in the form of further actions, including organized shunning of the victim, will result in further disciplinary action against the accused up to and including expulsion.

### **Definition of Terms**

#### **A. Statutory definition of terms:**

"Bully" means any pattern of harassment, intimidation, threatening behavior, physical acts, verbal or electronic communication directed toward a student or group of students that results in or is reasonably perceived as being done with the intent to cause negative emotional or physical results for the targeted individual or group and is communicated in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the environment of instruction within the BCB or the personal needs of any student.

“Threatening behavior” means any pattern of behavior or isolated action, whether or not it is directed at another person, that a reasonable person would believe indicates potential for future harm to dancers, instructors, or studio property.

“Electronic communication” means the communication of any written, verbal, pictorial information or video content by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, a mobile or cellular telephone or other wireless telecommunication device, or a computer. Note: Bullying by electronic communication is prohibited whether or not such communication originated at the studio, if the communication is specifically directed at dancers, instructors, or board members, and concerns bullying happening within the community of the BCB.

“At studio” means on studio grounds, before during and after rehearsals and or classes, any sanctioned events for the BCB and during the duration of production weeks occurring at any point on the premises of The Center or another performing facility.

#### B. The “Reasonable Person” Standard

In determining what a “reasonable person” should recognize as bullying, a minimum of two board members will consider the point of view of the intended target, including any characteristics unique to the intended target. Designated board members may also consider the discipline history and physical characteristics of the alleged bully.

#### C. Types of Bullying

“Physical Bullying” includes harm or threatened harm to another’s body or property, including but not limited to threats, tripping, hitting, pushing, pinching, pulling hair, kicking, biting, starting fights, daring others to fight, stealing or destroying property, extortion, assaults with a weapon, other violent acts, and homicide.

“Emotional Bullying” includes the intentional infliction of harm to another’s self-esteem, including but not limited to insulting or profane remarks or gestures, or harassing and frightening statements.

“Social Bullying” includes harm to another’s group acceptance, including but not limited to gossiping; spreading negative rumors to cause a targeted person to be socially excluded, ridiculed, or otherwise lose status; acts designed to publicly embarrass a targeted person, damage the target’s current relationships, or deprive the target of self-confidence or the respect of peers.

“Sexual Bullying” includes harm of a sexual nature, including but not limited to making unwelcome sexual comments or gestures to or about the targeted person; creating or distributing vulgar, profane or lewd words or images about the target; committing a sexual act during studio hours, including touching private parts of the target’s body; making threatening sexual statements directed at or about the target; or gossiping about the target’s sexuality or sex life. Such conduct may also constitute sexual harassment which is prohibited.

## **Understanding and Preventing Bullying**

### **A. Student and Staff Education and Training**

A full copy of our policy against bullying will be available within our BCB Student Handbook, and parents, guardians, board members, the artistic director, instructors, and dancers will be notified of the availability of this policy. Dancers and instructors will be reminded at the beginning of the Academy year of the availability of this policy, the BCB’s commitment to preventing bullying, and ways to encourage proper communication techniques and behaviors. All dancers enrolled and participating within the BCB, whether in classes and or productions are expected to sign and adhere to the standards set forth within our BCB Handbook in all regards as agreed upon in the contract signed upon enrollment and registration. Dancers will receive annual education regarding behavioral expectations, understanding bullying and its negative effects, disciplinary consequences for infractions, reporting methods, and consequences for those who knowingly make false reports. Parents and guardians are asked to support the BCB as a whole in the desire to create a quality environment for all our dancers to learn and thrive.

### **B. Safe Reporting**

**Student Reporting** - Dancers are encouraged to inform an instructor or board member if they are the target of or a witness to bullying. In making a report from a dancer, the instructor will direct to a board member who will give the dancer an official report form, and will help the student complete the form, if needed. Dancers may make an anonymous report of bullying, and such report will be investigated as thoroughly as possible. However, it is often difficult to fully investigate claims which are made anonymously and disciplinary action cannot be taken against a bully solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

**Staff Reporting** - Instructors will encourage students to report bullying. All instructors are required to report acts of bullying to the BCB board on an official report form. Any instructor who witnesses, hears about, or suspects bullying is required to submit a report.

Investigating Board Members - For any alleged incidents of bullying reported to the instructors and/or BCB Board, two designated board members will investigate the alleged incident(s) and determine (i) whether bullying occurred, (ii) the severity of the incident(s), and (iii) the potential for future violence.

In conducting an investigation, the designated board members shall interview relevant students, parents, and instructors accordingly, and review any potential documentation of the alleged incident(s). BCB board members may also work with outside professionals, such as local law enforcement, as deemed appropriate by the circumstances. In the event the designated board members believe a criminal act may have been committed or there is a likelihood of violence, the board members will immediately call local law enforcement. At the conclusion of the investigation, the designated board members will document the steps taken to review the matter, the conclusions reached and any additional action taken, if applicable. Further, the board members will notify the instructor(s) and artistic director (if not already done) that an investigation has occurred and the results of the investigation. In the event the investigation reveals that bullying occurred, the board member will work in accordance with the support of the BCB Board, the artistic director, and the instructors to refer the student who committed the act of bullying to a corrected course of action.

BCB reserves the right to take immediate action without warning in the case of serious violations. In the event of any of the above, tuition and/or production fees will not be reimbursed.

BCB is committed to fostering an inclusive environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, free from harassment or discrimination. We hope that all our students and families feel safe and have a rewarding, memorable, and positive training experience.

### **Disciplinary Action for Bullying**

When it has been communicated to the board that an act of bullying has taken place, the following steps may be taken. The Board reserves the right to adjust the disciplinary action as needed in regards to the severity of the situation. The following action plan is given as a projected model for approach in response to any instance of found bullying or harassing as negates the policy above.

A. Warning

A private meeting will be set with at least two designated board members, the parents or guardians, and the dancer to discuss the actions in which it will be made clear this behavior goes in violation with the BCB Handbook and will not be tolerated.

B. Probation

If the bullying is found to continue following the initial warning, the designated board members will investigate the allegations, as stated above, and the dancer will be placed on a probationary notice for a period of 6 months. This notice will be delivered in writing and signed by the Board President, the dancer, and the parents guardians.

C. Dismissal

If the behavior is still found to continue by further reporting and the investigating of the designated board members into the details of the situation, the dancer will be dismissed from the Company for the remainder of the season, including, but not limited to dismissal from current and future productions occurring through the season, removal from classes without the option of reimbursement, and the dancer will not be welcome on studio premises.