

## NEW AT THE ARTS CENTER FOR 2020-2021

Dear FOA Arts Center Families,

With so much changing in our world, we think it's time to refocus on our students, our community, and the excellence we can achieve together. We are implementing five big changes, and we all are so excited to share it with our FOA Families.

First, we are going to year-long classes. We will be taking week-long breaks fairly often (see the brochure for exact dates), but we believe that our students should come first, and teaching them the skills to become beautiful dancers and artists requires fewer long breaks in instruction. Pricing per class will not change significantly. We will talk more about pricing as we get you scheduled. Summer time will bring challenges to our year-long commitment, but we will address those in a way that helps the student continue to work toward their continued growth and development.

Second, we are re-naming our levels. Stepping Stones will remain the same, but our current Beginner Classes (ages 5-6) will now be called Pre-Dance and Pre-Theatre. The curriculum will be quite focused on age-appropriate skills, vocabulary, and improvement goals. Levels 1 and 2 will be the new Beginner Level. Levels 3 and 3.5 will be Intermediate Level. Levels 4-6 will be Advanced. This will enable our students and teachers to more appropriately identify student abilities and needs to focus on growth without distractions.

Third, the new Beginner levels will be taking 2 classes per week. You are welcome and encouraged to cross genres. Once again, we are expecting a level of commitment that will enable our faculty to teach students in circumstances where they can best learn skills and attitudes that will stick. We all tend to backslide when we take extra long breaks in our learning.

Fourth, we are creating a Character/Leadership level that students will progress toward that encourages our students in Leadership development as well as arts training. Students who aspire to that level will find themselves with opportunities to lead classes and represent themselves and others in leadership roles in the community.

Fifth, we are implementing a dance competition program. Students who enroll must be in at least one technique class and be at least 7 years old. Cori Keller, former competition dancer and Redwolf Dancer will be captaining this new program for us.

I am thankful for your support and encouragement during this time. It seems that our culture continues to throw challenges toward us, but our FOA Family and Community will meet those challenges with strength and humility. Your well-wishes provide a strength like no other.

I believe in what the organization provides our students and our community. We teach and engage in the arts – using the skills we learn to become better people. That's what we want for our students – excellence in their art and high character in their person.

To that end, we've chosen to see these challenges as an opportunity to excel higher and reach deeper within ourselves for better than we've ever been.

With a Heart for the Arts,

