

The mission of the Crested Butte School of Dance is to deepen the connection to ourselves, to each other, and to the world around us through dance. We are a community-based, educational organization dedicated to fostering creativity, self-expression, and personal growth to people of all ages through professional dance instruction and performance opportunities.

At Crested Butte School of Dance, we want our dancers to be successful and to improve. Our ultimate goal is to have dancers with superb technique, excellent musicality, proper alignment, flexibility, ability to absorb and apply choreography quickly, and high performance qualities. These “goals” take time...TONS of TIME! Years and years of good quality dance education.

Each level at SOD is designed to review movement from the prior level and then to begin to slowly introduce new material. The introduction of new “steps” is gradual and progressive. We will not teach an advanced step if the dancers have not learned and perfected the proper progressive steps leading up to the new, more advanced step. Dancers not only need to know how to DO the step, they must be able to execute it properly, it must look aesthetically pleasing to the eye, and they must be able to finish the step properly. This must all happen before moving on to new material. Building a strong foundation and strong technique can only be done through much repetition.

At this point, you may be thinking, “How will my dancer move up or advance if they are never learning anything new?” Please trust me when I say, your dancer will advance, they will improve, and they will learn new material; that is where the hard work and perseverance comes to play. Your dancer must work very hard in class. Your dancer must be disciplined. Your dancer should take corrections and apply them and then continue to practice them! That is how they will get better. We as instructors, can give the corrections, choreograph material to try to help them progress, and design well-thought classes meant to progress to new levels, but if the dancers never apply the corrections, do not pay attention, or do not practice at home, they will not improve enough to get to the next level.

We must also keep in mind that everyone learns and progresses at different times and at a different pace. We encourage dancers to work at their own pace and really appreciate dancers who ask questions to help better understand what they are learning.

Class placement is based on the dancer’s level of proper technique, maturity, and ability to apply corrections. Before moving on to the next level, the dancers must be able to properly execute all that they were taught in their current level. They must not only know how to do particular steps but they must also execute them correctly and it must look correct (ie; no sickled feet, stretched legs, proper alignment, etc).

If a dancer skips a level, they must know and be able to execute all the material for the level skipped. The skipping of a level can happen, but not often. In fact this should be rare. When dancers skip a level, they are opening themselves up to injury, the possibility of developing poor habits, and frustration.

Please know that we care very deeply for our dancers. We want to see them improve and be the best dancers and people that they can be. We teach them how to dance but we also teach them the value of discipline and integrity. This will help them to grow as dancers and hopefully will be carried into their adult lives. Trust us in their class placement. Help us to remind them that advancement must be earned through hard work and happens at different times for different people. We as adults know that these are important life lessons.