

WINTER MINI-MESTER FAQ

Question #1: *What is available for my child during Winter Mini-Mester?*

Answer #1: 2 mixed level Ballet classes - Ballet 2 and up

- Advanced – Monday thru Thursday from 4:00-5:30
- Intermediate – Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 5:35-7:00

Question #2: *Should my child attend these classes?* **Answer #2 (sorry it's the LONG answer):** Remember when you first started taking class at Opus? (Seems like a long time ago already) A common question at that time was "why can't my child take more classes?" My answer was "to be patient and enjoy the slow gentle beginning. The time will soon come when you will not be able to take so much time off if you want to be a good dancer." **That time may now have come for some of you.**

As a dancer grows in their training it is essential that they work consistently. Your child may be at the place (or close to the place) where he/she should not take a long break **IF there is a desire for more than a casual recreational participation in dance.**

Note: **Ballet Preps & Ballet 1:** This session is not for you. You are encouraged to enjoy your down-time. We hope that these students will be eager to return to dance in February, and will be excited to begin preparations for the Spring Semester at the end of the school year.

So ... who should come to Winter Mini-Mester?:

1. **Minimum class level is Ballet 2** though some of the younger Ballet 2's may not be emotionally ready. (see below)*
2. **Low & High Intermediate Ballet students SHOULD attend.** Again I stress the point - **IF they wish to dance to their best ability.** Casual students may not wish to do the extra work. Everyone has to decide for themselves what they wish to get out of their dance training, and pursue the proper avenue to fulfill that desire.
3. **Company Members are required.** If you wish to dance in the company someday you should not waste time. Learn to work hard now. Most likely you will enjoy the hard work. Most dancers enjoy being involved a regular class schedule.

What to expect if your dancer is an Intermediate student: This is the "magic" time. These in-between intensive semesters are when the dancers learn the most about their technique and how it applies to them. The beauty of this time is:

1. After a vacation from dance the muscles are softer. They are "out of shape" and **THAT is the perfect time to acquire new knowledge.** These dancers are more adaptable to re-educating their movement patterns. Bad habits that may have crept into their dancing while working on choreography may now be **addressed and corrected.**
2. When we come back for the next full semester **these dancers are already back in shape** and ready to apply their newly-found knowledge as we begin working for the next big show.
3. **This is a great time for High Intermediates** - the steps are easy for them so they are able to reinforce their classical technique and good movement habits. It is a time of little pressure and lots of fine tuning. A great time to build confidence and strength.
4. **Low Intermediates are looking up to the High Intermediates and learning through association.** This can be motivating for them. They can see where they will be in their future if they continue to work.

***What to expect if your dancer is Ballet 2 level:** Caution is advised. Ballet 2 dancers may be intimidated by the older dancers.

1. **I would suggest only those who have a confident nature attend.** They must be courageous enough to jump in and try things that are beyond their current capabilities. They may be asked to observe certain portions of the class (in order to avoid injury). The wonderful thing for these dancers is that when those difficult techniques are taught in their actual level in the regular course of their study, they will remember when they watched the older dancers do the same thing and will already have a mental picture of what the step should look like. This type of student generally enjoys pushing themselves and they don't mind if they don't get it "right" as long as they get to try. For this dancer the extra classes provide motivation and an understanding of what is to come in their near future.
2. **If your dancer is on the shy side, or gets frustrated easily,** waiting until they are a little further along in their training is recommended. We don't want them to mistakenly think they are not good dancers merely because they have not been taught some of the techniques the older dancers are doing.

Dancers don't progress at the same rate. Some will get there in one way and some in another. If your dancer needs to take it a little slower that is just fine. Don't push them. They will push themselves when the time is right for them.