

# STUDENT and PARENT HANDBOOK



CAAM  
Chinese Dance  
Theater

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## 1 Introduction

CAAM Chinese Dance Theater (CDT) is a community-based organization that is a division of Chinese American Association of Minnesota (CAAM), an organization serving Chinese and Americans in Minnesota. CAAM Chinese Dance Theater began its activities in 1981 and was formally created in 1992. Since then CDT has provided outstanding cultural programming in the Twin Cities. CDT's activities include a dance school, annual recitals and professional dance productions, and educational outreach programs. Our professional productions featuring established and new choreographers have earned accolades across the state and garnered recognition within the Midwest region. CDT consists of school staff and is governed by a volunteer Management Committee, which meets on a regular basis for official business.

CAAM Chinese Dance Theater is the recipient of numerous grants from foundations such as the McKnight Foundation, the State Arts Board, Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, St. Paul Star, and others. Through our work in running a dance school, presenting annual shows, organizing festivals, and performing community outreach programs in a five-state area, we have become one of the largest and finest Chinese dance organizations in the Midwest. In May 1998, we received a leadership and service award from the State Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans.

## 2 Mission

CAAM Chinese Dance Theater is dedicated to preserving and celebrating our Chinese cultural heritage and enriching a diverse community through the universal language of dance.

## 3 Studio Location and Contact Information

Studio location: 800 Transfer Road, Suite 8, St. Paul, MN 55114

Mailing address: CAAM Chinese Dance Theater, 800 Transfer Road, Suite 8, St. Paul, MN 55114

Email address: caamcdt@gmail.com      Web site: <http://www.caamcdt.org>

Dancers and their families should subscribe to the CAAM CDT Yahoo! Group by contacting CAAMDanceTheater-subscribe@yahoo.com through e-mail. Official school notices are sent through the group, and documents are posted to the group site.

## 4 Registration

All registration and enrollment will be completed online. You will need to register your student every semester. A PDF copy of the schedule can be found on our website [www.caamcdt.org](http://www.caamcdt.org).

Online registration is available at <http://caamchinesedancetheater.studioware-online.com>.

Registration can also be accessed by following the link "Sign up for a class" on our website [www.caamcdt.org](http://www.caamcdt.org) or can be done by emailing [caamcdtpayments@gmail.com](mailto:caamcdtpayments@gmail.com).

The Parent Portal allows you to:

- View and Enroll in Classes
- View account balances and make payments on invoices.
- Add new students to your family account.
- Add/Update mailing addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses

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- View your class schedule.

Be sure to check contact information to insure that staff has the parent's most current contact information in case of emergency. In order to complete the registration process, you are agreeing to CDT's policies regarding release of liability, assumption of risk, and medical emergencies.

Questions regarding online registration should be directed to [caamcdtpayments@gmail.com](mailto:caamcdtpayments@gmail.com). Questions regarding class placement or other studio concerns should be directed to the school assistant principal at [caamcdt@gmail.com](mailto:caamcdt@gmail.com).

## 5 Emergency Contact Procedure

In the event of a medical emergency or injury during a class, the instructor will immediately contact the parents using the phone number(s) provided by parents on the student's registration record. In the event of a life-threatening emergency, 911 will be called immediately, and then the parent/guardian will be notified.

## 6 Code of Conduct and Studio Rules

CAAM CDT classes are lively and rigorous. In order to maintain a high quality and safe learning environment, students must adhere to the following rules:

### 6.1 Attendance

- Students are expected to attend all classes during the semester.
- If students have a preplanned absence (vacation, etc.), they should notify the instructor of the date(s) of the absence.
- If students must miss class due to illness, injury or other unplanned absence, they should contact the instructor and/or class coordinator to notify them that they will not be attending class that day.
- Each student is allowed a total of three absences per semester. If a student misses more than three classes during the semester, the instructor may remove her from scheduled outreach or production performances.
- No refunds will be given for missed classes, planned or unplanned.

### 6.2 Behavior

- Students must demonstrate respectful behavior toward teachers, peers, equipment and the facility at all times. Damage to the equipment and props due to inappropriate use or care may result in a fine.
- Students should arrive at class on time and prepared, with all personal needs, including trips to the restroom, taken care of before class time. Please do not come to class with a full stomach.
- Students should attend class regularly. When students miss classes, it makes it difficult for the whole class to learn the dance and ensemble routines.
- Students are expected to listen carefully, to follow the instructor's directions, and to refrain from talking to each other during class, except for assisting in the process of communication.
- Students should not engage in dangerous behavior or horseplay in the studio, or use words or actions that could harm others.
- Students should remain in class for the whole session, except for breaks at the discretion of the instructor. Breaks will take place in the dance studio.
- Parents should remain in the waiting areas unless specifically invited into the studio by the instructor or individually permitted by the instructor.

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- CAAM CDT reserves the right to dismiss a student from classes if, in the judgment of the instructor, a student's behavior or attitude is posing a disruption to the class environment or impeding the instruction of other students.

### **6.3 Attire and Personal Belongings**

- Street shoes must be left in the entryway of the CDT Studio Suite. Only dance shoes may be worn in the dance studios.
- Coats, bags, and personal belongings should be hung on hooks in the entryway.
- There is no changing area in the CDT Studio Suite. Dancers should arrive to class dressed to dance in a leotard or tight-fitting shorts that reveal the knees and a tight fitting camisole or shirt. No baggy clothing, including running shorts or loose t-shirts may be worn.
- Hair should be pulled back securely and neatly in a ponytail or bun.
- Students should not wear jewelry or hard, protruding hair clips in class.
- All costumes, hair pieces, and props must be returned after each performance.

### **6.4 Additional Studio Rules**

- Absolutely no food is permitted in the studio, conference room or public areas (e.g. hallways) of the building. Food may be consumed in the lunch room, located to the South of the CDT Studio suite. Water bottles may be brought into the studio.
- No animals, except for service animals, are permitted in the building.
- No fundraising for individuals or organizations other than CAAM CDT may take place at the studio.

## **7 Tuition, Fees, and Scholarships**

### **7.1 Tuition**

Tuition for each class is based on the CDT School's operation costs.

Tuition can be paid online on your personal account at <http://caamchinesedancetheater.studioware-online.com/> or by cash/check. There is no additional cost if paying online. The payments are processed through PayPal.

Tuition payments may also be made in cash or by check to "CAAM CDT". All checks/cash must be deposited in the lockbox at the studio. Please write the invoice number on the check to insure proper credit. Do not give money to teacher or class coordinators.

Full tuition is due on or before the first day of class. Payment plans are available with a \$5.00 service fee. Email [caamcdtpayments@gmail.com](mailto:caamcdtpayments@gmail.com) if you wish to arrange a payment plan.

A \$10 late charge will be added if tuition received after the due date (full or partial payments). Students are expected to pay the full tuition cost of a class regardless of whether they will miss class due to planned or unplanned absences. A part of each class may be devoted to outreach practice and as students are expected to participate in the outreach program, no reduction in tuition will result for those not involved in a particular outreach.

Please note that students will need to pay an Annual Costume Usage and Maintenance Fee once a year. This is typically collected at Fall Semester. For details on the topic refer to Costume Usage and Maintenance Fee, section 7.4 of this Handbook.

A \$10.00 Registration Fee per family will be collected on an annual basis or a new registration. This is typically collected at the beginning of the Spring Semester.

## 7.2 Cancellation, Withdrawal, and Refunds

Minimal enrollment in a class at or below Beginner's levels is eight (8) students. If a class has fewer than eight students, the class may be canceled or special tuition rates may apply at the discretion of the School.

If the School cancels a class, tuition refunds will be provided according to the following schedule:

School cancels class within two weeks	100% tuition refund
School cancels class after two weeks	Prorated tuition refund

If a student withdraws from a class, tuition refunds will be provided according to the following schedule:

Withdraw within two weeks of start of classes	100% tuition refund
Withdraw after first two weeks of classes	No refund

No refund will be given to a student for any class missed by her/him for any reason other than withdrawing from the school within two weeks of the start of classes.

If a student must withdraw from class due to injury or other medical reasons, a written doctor's statement is required before granting any refunds. Refunds will be pro-rated based on the number of classes attended prior to withdrawal.

All refunds will be in the form of a check, mailed to student's address within 30 days of cancellation.

## 7.3 Tuition Discounts

Siblings: If two students from the same family attend CDT, a 10% discount will be applied to the second child's class tuition. If three students from the same family attend CDT, a 20% discount will be applied to the third child's tuition, in addition to the 10% discount for the second child.

Multiple Classes: If a student attends more than one class, a 10% discount will be applied to the second class tuition, in the order of the regular class first and advanced second. If a student attends three classes, a 20% discount will be applied to the third class tuition, in the same fashion.

Outreach Performance Participants: Students are expected to volunteer in up to six (6) community outreach performances each year. Students who volunteer in more than six (6) performances in a single year (September – August) qualify for tuition discount according to the following schedule:

Participate in up to 6 Outreach Performances	No tuition discount.
More than 6 Outreach Performances	\$10 tuition credit per additional outreach performance.

Outreach performance participation is tracked by the CDT Outreach Performance Director. Discount information will be made available by the Outreach Performance Director before the start of the fall semester.

#### **7.4 Costume Usage and Maintenance Fee**

CAAM CDT buys and makes many beautiful dance costumes each year while working hard to steward our resources carefully. Many costumes originally created for production shows are used and reused in our annual recitals, thereby substantially reducing costume related expenses for our participants. Each student is expected to pay a fee annually to help support the making and maintenance of costumes. This fee is typically added to the Fall Semester tuition and is non-refundable even if the student completes only one semester. Students who only register in the Spring Semester should add a costume fee to the tuition payment. Students may be asked to purchase some costume items – for example matching leotards, tights, or skirts -- for themselves for the May recital.

#### **7.5 Late Fees**

Tuition, and costume usage fees are due to the school on or before the first day of class. A late fee of \$10 is applied for payment after the second class.

#### **7.6 Makeup and Private Lessons**

Students enrolled in regularly scheduled classes may elect to take supplemental, private dance lessons through arrangement with CAAM CDT instructors. Private lessons include lessons for individual enrichment and makeup lessons requested by a student due to absences or for improvement. Private lessons must be arranged so as to avoid conflicts with regularly scheduled classes. Tuition rate for a makeup lesson requested by the student may be different from the regular class and will be determined by the school based on individual cases. Tuition rates for the individual enrichment lessons are shown in the following schedule.

Solo	\$35 per hour
Duet	\$30 per hour, per dancer
Trio	\$25 per hour, per dancer
Quartet	\$20 per hour per dancer

Makeup lessons requested by a teacher will not be charged.

#### **7.7 Scholarships**

The Stanley Chung Foundation has generously donated funds for Chinese Dance Theater scholarships. This money is used to award students who participate in the outreach program and provide opportunities for students who need financial assistance. The scholarship is to be used towards students' tuition for taking classes with CAAM Chinese Dance Theater in the coming semester or school year. The members of the Scholarship Committee, made up of teachers and Management Committee members, will announce the acceptance of scholarship applications at their discretion.

### **7.8 Male Dancer Policy**

Amateur male dancers who are taking a class at CAAM CDT in preparation for a production will be charged tuition at a 50% reduced rate, based upon the tuition rates contained in the Parent/Student Handbook for Private, Supplemental or Enrichment lessons according to the size of the class in which they enroll and an estimation by the instructor of the number of hours that will be required to prepare the dance. Male students will also be expected to pay the annual costume fee.

## **8 Programs**

The Dance Theater Production, School Show, Recital, Summer Camp and Classes, and Outreach Performances are major programs run by CDT. These programs support CDT by providing:

- Opportunities to truly fulfill our mission of preserving and celebrating the Chinese cultural heritage through the universal language of dance
- Revenue for the Dance Theater
- Opportunities for grant resources
- Opportunities for students to practice Chinese dance techniques and performance skills
- Opportunities to promote CDT in the community

### **8.1 Dance Theater Production**

CAAM CDT strives to present high quality dance productions every year. Throughout our history, we have presented numerous critically acclaimed productions. Students are selected to participate in the production based on the needs of the program as well as their skills and availability. Participation in these productions is an honor and a development growth opportunity for our students. However, those who choose to participate must commit to the rigorous rehearsal and performance schedules.

### **8.2 School Show**

A school show is typically performed for Elementary through High School students after the annual public dance production. The school show enables students throughout the greater Twin Cities area to experience the beauty of Chinese dance and learn about Chinese culture. CDT offers subsidized tickets for students who participate in the reduced/free-lunch program at their school.

### **8.3 Dance Theater School Recital**

An annual year-end School Recital is usually held in May to allow students to showcase the skills they have developed in the preceding year, and to recognize dancers who have studied at CAAM CDT for 5 and 10 years. Details regarding the year-end recital are usually communicated early in each spring term.

### **8.4 Summer Camp and Classes**

Each year a series of dance camp experiences for younger students between the ages of five and twelve and summer classes for older students are offered by CAAM CDT. These experiences allow for the intense opportunity to develop dance skills, and to learn about tumbling, Gong Fu, Tai Ji, Chinese language, painting/drawing, paper folding, calligraphy and other aspects of Chinese culture. Information about summer programming is distributed during the spring term. Tuition for Summer Camp is set when the schedule is distributed and is discounted according to the following policy:

#### **Multiple Students from the Same Family**

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If two students from the same family attend Summer Camp, the second child will receive a 10% tuition discount. If three students from the same family attend Summer Camp, the third child will receive a 20% tuition discount.

### **Multi-Session Participant**

If a student participates in two sessions of Summer Camp, a 10% discount will be applied to the second session tuition. If a student participates in three sessions of Summer Camp, a 20% discount will be applied to the third session tuition.

## **8.5 Community Outreach Performances**

CAAM CDT conducts many community outreach performances throughout the year. Students beyond the Elementary level are expected to participate in up to 6 outreach performances each year. Students may earn credits toward tuition discount through participating in outreach performances in excess of the 6 required performances. For information on potential tuition discount for extraordinary participation, refer to Tuition Discounts section in this Handbook.

# **9 Organizational Leadership**

The Dance School of the Chinese Dance Theater is overseen by a Management Committee and operated by a team of staff and volunteers. Overall artistic and curriculum direction is provided by the Dance School's Principal and Artistic Director in conjunction with the teachers. Overall administration is managed by volunteers.

## **9.1 Professional Artists**

CAAM CDT is very fortunate to employ two outstanding dance artists from China.

*Teacher Teng Li Li*<sup>1</sup> (Teng Laoshi)<sup>2</sup> serves as School Principal and Artistic Director for the Dance Theater. Prior to joining CAAM CDT in 1999, she was the principal of her own private dance school in China with over 300 students. In a career spanning more than 40 years and two continents, Teng has distinguished herself in dancing, teaching and choreography, winning national awards in China. She was trained in Chinese folk dance from Anhui Arts School and the Shanghai Dance Academy. Beginning as a lead dancer, she became a choreographer and instructor for national and provincial Chinese television dance shows. Currently, she teaches at CDT, XinXing Academy, and Yinghua Academy.

*Teacher Li Ying* (Li Laoshi) holds the Bachelor of Arts degree in traditional Chinese Dance Education. Between 1997 and 2003, she worked for the Dalian Children's Palace, in charge of all the teaching, training and production work for Children's Dance Program for the Dalian TV Station and participated in many live performances on television. She also taught basic ballet, body line, and modern dance at Dalian Model School. Li Laoshi joined CAAM CDT in 2009 and currently teaches at CDT, Minghua Central Chinese School, and XinXing Academy.

## **9.2 Administrative Staff**

School Principal: A member of the Management Committee, responsible for:

- developing the school's curriculum with input from the Artistic Director, setting schedules
- teaching classes

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<sup>1</sup> In this document the Chinese convention of listing a person's family name first is followed.

<sup>2</sup> Laoshi is the Chinese word for teacher. It is pronounced "Lou" (like the "ou" in "ouch") "sher."

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Artistic Director : A member of Management Committee, responsible for:

- developing the overall artistic vision of the Dance Theater and the curriculum direction of the School
- teaching classes

Assistant Principal: A volunteer, responsible for:

- leading the administrative activities of the Dance School, such as, scheduling, registration, student record keeping, policies, CDT rule enforcement, tuition, and fees
- communicating with instructors, class coordinators, students, parents, and community, etc.

Class Coordinator: A volunteer parent (or adult dancer) from each class, responsible for:

- distributing performance and rehearsal notices to class members
- facilitating communication between parents and the teacher or School staff
- distributing and collecting costumes at performances
- notifying dancers of schedule changes

### **9.3 Management Committee**

CAAM CDT is overseen by a Management Committee that coordinates planning, budgeting and administration for the organization. A current membership list can be found at:  
<http://www.caamcdt.org/about/index.html>

## **10 Miscellaneous**

### **10.1 Copyright and Intellectual Property**

CAAM Chinese Dance Theater maintains copyright of all its choreographed dances, music selections, costume designs, graphic designs, programs, photos, videos, marketing materials, policies, handbooks, and any other relevant materials defined by CAAM CDT. No usage of its materials and dances is allowed without explicit written permission of CAAM CDT. Students may not perform or teach the dances they learned to non-CDT members without permission from CAAM CDT.

### **10.2 Publicity**

Pictures and videos of students in classes, rehearsals, and performances are routinely taken for publicity purposes for the school. If parents explicitly object to such use of pictures and videos of their child, please inform CAAM CDT in writing.

### **10.3 Studio Usage**

Our studio is used only for the purposes of the CAAM CDT, such as classes, rehearsals, and meetings. Only with special permission may the studio be rented for other purposes.

### **10.4 Dance Theater Equipment**

CAAM CDT maintains many costumes, equipment, props and other materials. These materials are to be used only for Dance Theater purposes. If by special permission a student borrows CDT equipment for other purposes, a deposit must be made to CAAM CDT, and the student must take responsibility and compensate CAAM CDT if damage occurs.

## **10.5 Drop-off and Pick-up of Students and Waiting Areas**

Parents/guardians of children 12 years of age and under must sign their children in and out of classes. All students should arrive promptly to class, and should be picked up immediately after the end of class. Students 12 years of age and under will not be permitted to leave the studio suite without a teacher or parent/guardian.

Parents/guardians who wish to wait for their students are invited to wait in one of two building areas:

- Conference Room: To the South (right when facing the Studio) of the CDT Studio Suite is a conference room with a large conference table. No food is permitted in this conference room; beverages with a lid are permitted.
- Lunch Room: Beyond the Conference Room on the right hand side of the hallway is a lunch room with vending machines. Food may be consumed in this room.

## **10.6 Snow Emergency**

In case of snow emergency, teachers or CDT Administration will inform each Class Coordinator who will in turn contact the parents. When possible, school cancellation announcements will be delivered through CAAM CDT listserv group e-mail and made on the school's answering machine message. Call (651)774-0806 for any such announcements.

## **10.7 Volunteer Opportunities**

CAAM CDT depends heavily on volunteer efforts. We trust that you will consider the areas listed below in order to determine where you will be able to make a contribution. You will be asked to indicate your areas of interest on your child's registration form, and in doing so, agree to be put on a list of volunteers to help in this area.

- Grant Writing
- Class Coordination
- Production
- Publicity
- Costumes
- Props
- General Administration
- Community Outreach
- Management Committee
- Website Development and Management

## **10.8 Logo Wear**

Official CAAM CDT Logo Wear is available at <https://identitystores.com/Stores/StoreFront.aspx?StoreId=2558>.

## **10.9 Contacts for Feedback, Inquiries, and Suggestions**

### **10.9.1 General Information**

Feedback, inquiries, and suggestions regarding CAAM CDT in general may be directed to:

CAAM Chinese Dance Theater  
800 Transfer Road, Suite 8  
Saint Paul, MN 55114  
(651) 774-0806

caamcdt@gmail.com  
<http://www.caamcdt.org>

### **10.9.2 School Operations**

Feedback, inquiries, and suggestions regarding the operation of the school in particular may be directed to the instructors, the Assistant Principal at [www.caamcdt@gmail.com](mailto:www.caamcdt@gmail.com) or the Class Coordinators.