

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Music Theatre of Connecticut
School of Performing Arts

Updated 6/2012

MUSIC THEATRE OF CONNECTICUT

MISSION STATEMENT

Music Theatre of Connecticut is the premier provider of musical theatre performance and training. Founded in 1987, we produce an annual series of Equity productions featuring New York professionals (MainStage), five annual student productions (MainStage Kids), and a conservatory-style school of performing arts with curriculum-based training for students ages 4 through high school, including a nationally-recognized College Prep program for performance career-focused high school students.

The unique synergy between our professionals and students not only fosters an atmosphere where both can achieve their full artistic and creative potential in a nurturing, non-competitive environment; but also endows students with the vital life skills of mutual respect, self-confidence, problem solving, socialization, and collaboration which provide fundamentals of success in all professional and personal life paths. Our educational focus is on each student's individual growth and development through sequential training, multiple performance opportunities, and mentoring by our full-time professional faculty and MainStage Artists-in-residence; so that continuity of a vibrant legacy of the art and craft of musical performance is ensured for ensuing generations.

Teaching Philosophy

MTC provides a creative, safe, nurturing environment where children discover increased self-esteem, a sense of achievement, and a sense of community. Our teaching philosophy is based on support and respect for others and self-discipline in a non-competitive setting. MTC fills a void in the community by providing performing arts education that goes beyond what our public and private schools are able to provide.

MTC provides many performance opportunities to *support* the curriculum. We believe the craft comes first and the performance opportunities grow from that training.

Student Policies

MTC students are expected to:

- ***ARRIVE PROMPTLY***
- ***BE PREPARED***
- ***PARTICIPATE ATTENTIVELY***
- ***RESPECT FELLOW STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND THE MTC FACILITY***

MTC encourages performing arts students to develop their potential in a class environment of creativity, demonstrating respect for others and self-discipline. In addition, MTC strives to establish close and productive relationships with the parents of our students. Parents are encouraged to contact an MTC Director or teacher at any time to discuss a student's progress, participation or behavior.

If a teacher feels that a student's class behavior is inconsistent with these guidelines, the teacher will first discuss the situation with the student. Working with an MTC Director if necessary, the teacher will help the student meet behavior expectations. If, after two class sessions the student's behavior is still inconsistent with MTC policy, the teacher will contact the parent/guardian. After two parent contacts, if there still is no improvement, the student may be asked to leave MTC, with no tuition refund, until the following school year or summer program.

Class Preparation and Attendance

Many of MTC's classes involve scene study or musical work with two or more partners. IT IS DIFFICULT TO DEVELOP THESE SCENES WITH ONE OR MORE PARTNERS MISSING – SCENE MEMBERS ARE RELYING ON EACH OTHER TO REHEARSE CLASSROOM PROJECTS. We expect students to attend class regularly and be absent only due to illness, emergencies, or other circumstances which would warrant missing normal school classes.

IMPORTANT: We ask that parents please phone or email MTC if a student is ill or will be missing class for any reason. If you are going away or have another conflict, we appreciate as much advance notice as possible.

Class Preparation is a crucial aspect in the growth of any performing artist. Your child will almost always have preparation or assignments to be done outside of class. PLEASE ASK YOUR CHILD WHAT HIS/HER HOMEWORK IS AND, IF NECESSARY, HELP THEM. Whether it's running lines to help memorize scene work or taking them to the library to research a character, your child will get out the process what he/she puts in, and, much of the time, your help and encouragement will make a big difference!

Personal Responsibility

Each student and parent is expected to exercise a reasonable level of personal responsibility while at MTC. This includes, but is not limited to basic concepts such as destruction of personal property or the facility itself, making physical or personal threats to staff members, students or other adults; or students leaving the facility unattended for any reason. Personal responsibility violations will not be tolerated and may result in immediate expulsion from MTC.

Dismissal

MTC reserves the right to dismiss a student because of a student's lack of interest, frequent absences, frequent tardiness, behavioral problems, and/or delinquency in payment of fees. The Director with the input of the teacher will determine if a warning notice should be issued prior to the dismissal. The family will also be contacted to investigate the problems and suggest solutions. In some instances, a parent/teacher conference may be necessary.

General Information

Registration & Payment

Only students who have registered and paid the appropriate fees, made payment arrangements or are on financial aid/scholarship may participate in MTC classes or performances. All class and private lesson tuition is due at the time of registration. In addition to tuition and production fees, there is an annual registration fee of \$25 (September 2013-August 2014). Full tuition payment plus registration fee is due at the time of registration unless prior arrangement with MTC has been made for payment plan. MTC accepts cash payments, checks, Visa/MC and Amex/Discover (online registration only). A \$30 fee will be assessed on all returned checks. No class slot will be held for a student without completed/signed registration form and up-to-date tuition. Payment plans are available, call the office for details.

Payment Plans and Scholarships

Payment plans are available for tuition. Fees apply. Contact the MTC Office for more information. MTC has scholarships available to qualified students through its Eileen J. Schilling Scholarship fund. Applications are available in the MTC office or on the MTC website. <http://www.musictheatreofct.com/schoolscholarship.html>

Refunds

Classes and Private Lessons:

Classes and private lessons are considered to be on a full term basis. If a student withdraws from a class or private lesson slot **PRIOR TO TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF THE TERM**, a full refund will be given (less the \$25 registration fee). If a student withdraws **LESS THAN TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF THE TERM**, there will be **NO REFUND OR CREDIT** for tuition paid. Students delinquent in tuition will not be allowed into class. Any refund(s) from payments processed online via PayPal will be less the PayPal service charge.

Summer Theatre:

For summer productions, no refunds will be made after March 1.

Makeup Classes and Private Lessons

Private Voice:

There is **ONE PRIVATE LESSON** make-up provided/term. Make-up lessons canceled or missed by a student will be considered made-up. If make-up lessons are offered twice and refused, the lesson will be considered made-up. Lessons canceled due to inclement weather or teacher unavailability will be made up during the semester at a mutually-agreed upon time, or at the end of the term.

Classes:

There will be one make-up class session per class level at the end of each term. For example, all level 1 classes will be made-up together. Consult your instructor for the

make-up schedule. Students may NOT make up in other sections of their class (e.g. Tuesday Music Theatre II students may not attend a Thursday Music Theatre class to make up).

Pick-Up and Drop-Off

PLEASE READ THE ENCLOSED REVISED PARKING PROCEDURES FOR MTC. THESE NEW GUIDELINES MUST BE FOLLOWED!!

Please be on time to pick-up your child. MTC is not a babysitting service and does not provide staff members to watch your child while other classes are in session. If you are consistently more than ten minutes late for pick-up, you may be billed at the rate of \$15.00 per each fifteen minutes.

School Closures and Holidays

MTC does not follow ALL holiday closures, particularly the “Monday off” holidays. Consult the brochure or Newsletter for details. MTC does, however, follow the Westport Public Schools’ inclement weather policy – if they’re closed, we’re closed.

Snow Days

The MTC policy on snow days is as follows – if the Westport Public Schools are closed, we’re closed. Even if it is 10 degrees at 10am and rises to 50 degrees by 2pm, if the Westport School System has closed in the morning and remains closed (which it will), we will be closed!

Student Evaluations/Parents Observations

All teachers provide Student Evaluations to parents at the end of each term for each student.

At the end of each term, there will be a Parent Observation Week for each class. Parents are encouraged to have one-on-one contact with their child’s instructor at the end of the term regarding student progress and feedback.