

St. Paul Institute Handbook

The Saint Paul Institute Co-op exists as an aid to excellent Catholic education of homeschooled students in the DFW area. One day per week we offer a selection of fine arts classes in the form of drama and choir, meant to be enrichment for the students. All teachers are Catholic and loyal to the magisterium of the Church. Participants must also be Catholic and either from a currently or previously homeschooling family, or from a St. Francis Montessori or Faustina academy family (exceptions can be made at the discretion of SPI board/directress).

Participation in the St Paul Institute is a privilege which carries with it responsibilities that must be fulfilled by students and parents to the best of their abilities. Theater is a collaborative performing art, and the process of preparing the productions is an opportunity not only to learn skills related to theater and production, but also to cultivate virtue. The commitment of each and every participant has a direct impact on the excellence of the final product. Additionally, students have the opportunity to grapple intellectually with and gain understanding of high quality source material including the plays (especially the comedies) of William Shakespeare, coming to understand the material with the thoroughness required to perform for an audience. The work involved in this endeavor forms the students, leading them to become familiar with the rewards of pursuit of the arduous good, such that they know from direct personal experience that those achievements with the greatest benefits come only through the greatest effort. *Per Artes ad Virtutem!*

Not only do the students benefit from the fruits of their hard work. The audience and therefore the wider community are intended beneficiaries of the students' collaborative efforts and close work with the plays. We attempt to be characterized by the timeless and donative quality of hospitality. Our goal for the members of the audience is to extend welcome to them with the gift of our productions, intended to be delightful and enriching. To that end, clarity should inform all facets of the work of SPI, from communications, to the teaching and development of stagecraft and the technical work of the students.

The St Paul Institute has purposefully chosen a model that supports the life of the family. St Paul chooses to be served not by career professionals but rather by full time mothers volunteering their time and balancing their primary work in the home with their service to SPI. The institute prioritizes the life of the home in the way it conducts its business operations, striving for excellence but also always practicing the virtue of patience, achieving its goals slowly but surely without undermining responsibilities determined by the order of charity.

We place ourselves under the Patronage of St. Paul, under the protection of St. Michael the Archangel and under the guidance of Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom. All members and participants are asked to pray daily for the unity and protection of the St. Paul Institute Co-op and its members.

Emergency Contact Numbers:

You may call Lisa Irlbeck: 214-783-8480

Other contacts:

St. Paul Institute Director: Lisa Irlbeck, randylisairlbeck@gmail.com

Treasurer: Andrea Frank, andrea.bascom@gmail.com

Secretary: Tamara Kuykendall, tamarapsalm92@zohomail.com

Business manager: Lynn Schofield, lynn.schofield@sbcglobal.net

Registrar and communications director: Rachel Humphries mrs.rachel.humphries@gmail.com

Volunteer Coordinator: Mary Dhooghe irlbeckmary@gmail.com

Website: www.homeschool-life.com/TX/stpaulinstitute

Fine Arts Day Dress Code:

Drama requires lots of movement: laying down, bending over, falling, lifting, etc. In order to maintain a sense of modesty, please wear long shorts or pants (shorts should be no shorter than one inch above the knee, and jeans should fit well – not too tight). Jeans should be loose fitting. Leggings may only be worn with shirts that go past the hips to the upper-mid thighs. All pants and shorts should not be form-fitting, nor should skirts. If you choose to wear a skirt it must come at least to the knee, and please wear modesty shorts beneath. Cleavage should be covered. All shirts should fit so that when bending over nothing is revealed either down the front or above the pants in the back. The shirt should be long enough to keep the midriff covered when your arms are raised over your head. Shirts should not be form fitting. Tank tops or shirts with the sleeves cut off are not appropriate for boys or girls.

Fine Arts Rehearsal

Bring water every time, and remember to bring your water home with you.

Drama and music are rambunctious endeavors and we expect some rowdiness. However, at all times students must be respectful of the teachers, their directions during the class and the other students in the class. They must also listen to the correction or instruction of other St. Paul Institute affiliated adults at the Bartke & Irlbeck houses or in any performance venues during that time.

Behavioral Policy

All of the following rules are applicable in all St. Paul Institute sponsored activities, in every location in which they take place:

- Students may not use a cell phone or Internet-enabled device while attending a St. Paul Institute class, rehearsal, or event, with the exception of making calls or texts before or after to arrange rides or communicate with parents. Any other use of a cell phone or Internet-enabled device is prohibited. If a student violates this policy, an adult will collect the device and notify the parents. Other children accompanying volunteer adults must also adhere to this policy. (We encourage parents to bring only nursing babies to supervise rehearsals or tech week/production nights so they can give their full attention to their responsibilities on site.)
- Politely acknowledge Mrs Morrel, Mr Spurgin, Mr Sargeant, Miss Gracie, Mr Bartke, Miss Elizabeth, Mrs Irlbeck, and the adults who volunteer when you arrive and when you leave, or whenever you first pass by them. Instructors and staff should be addressed with Mr., Mrs., or Miss along with the last name and treated with respect including behind their back.
- Inappropriate language, conversations, and boy-girl situations are not acceptable.
- Drama is not a time for exclusive (meaning excluding others) conversation. Common courtesy and good manners dictate that you notice and make an effort to include others in your conversations.
- Do not talk about plans you have with your friends in front of others who are not included in your plans.
- Do not talk about private matters. Save those conversations for your parents or other trusted authorities. Certain topics should not be discussed with peers even outside of drama. We want to cultivate the quality of discretion.
- Do not talk about concepts and ideas that young children should not be hearing.
- Take everything you brought to drama home with you.
- Pick up your garbage (and any other garbage you see - it's good for us to leave the Bartke and Irlbeck houses in very good condition).
- No dangerous or distracting items are allowed at the co-op. These items will be collected and returned after class.
- Gum is not allowed in the classrooms or anywhere in the house or at any performance venue at any time.
- Do Not ask for or eat the food at your hosts' homes.
- Follow the SPI dress code at all times.
- Do not touch another students' musical instruments without their permission.
- Pushing, pulling, shoving, wrestling, throwing things, hitting with balls or other

- objects or otherwise aggressively touching another student is not permitted.
- During practice and rehearsal, your attention should be on the director or the person who “has the stage.” No whispering or side conversations allowed - they distract others and waste the time of everyone.
 - Misbehavior during Musical Theater and Shakespeare will result in the child being moved into the adjoining room/foyer to sit with the Parent Volunteer and an email being sent to Mrs Irlbeck describing the infraction. Mrs Irlbeck will communicate with the parents and/or the student about the misbehavior. If behavior is egregious enough, the child will need to be picked up early.

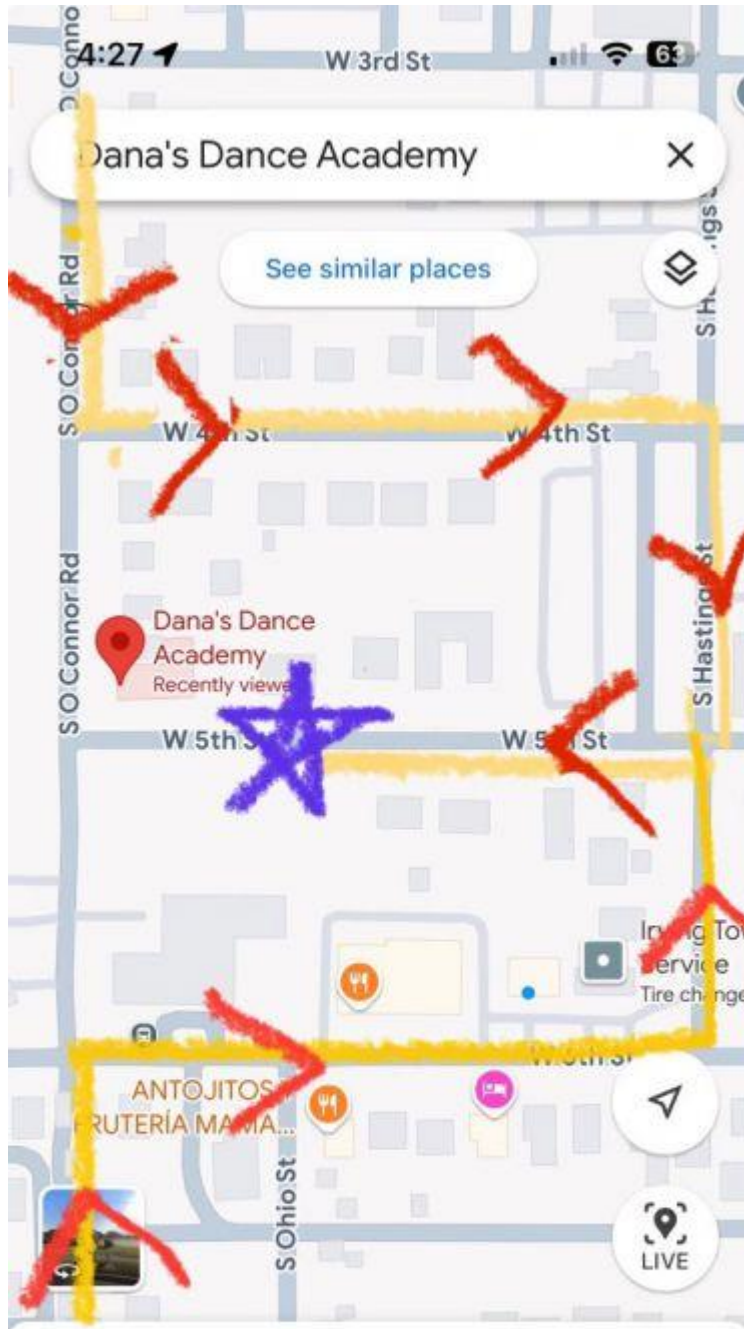
Remember in all conversations, teasing and insulting others is not allowed. Any manner of communication that excludes or belittles another is never appropriate. Joking as a way of including others is acceptable. All conversations during your time in the St. Paul Institute sponsored activities should have as a goal the edification of yourself and the people with whom you are conversing. Your conversations should always aim to include the others participating in drama, music, etc, and should not be exclusive. There is a time and place for best friend/private conversations, but that is not during group activities.

Students who commit to a class but then drop out of the class before production/performance time will be placed on probation and will not be allowed to audition for the next semester’s offerings. Family and health situations will be taken into account if there are extenuating circumstances that lead to withdrawal from the class.


Each director will have additional rules and expectations. These will be clearly communicated to students on site.

Drop off and Pick Up

- When dropping off and picking up, please come west on 5th street (see picture).



Dana's Dance Academy

 Directions

 Start

 Call



- Do not drop children off early (unless you are picking up another child from an earlier rehearsal). Always verify that there is an adult there to supervise before your drop children off.
- Please pick up on time--it's not fair to the parent volunteers to wait!
- Remind your children of appropriate rehearsal behavior and attire.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents agree to keep their children accountable regarding their own efforts to memorize their lines, do the stagecraft exercises, and prepare their technical/crew work in a timely manner. Your children are responsible for putting the effort into learning their lines but your help may at times be needed. We do not expect you to be running lines with them every day, but we do expect them to do so on their own.

Student Responsibilities

All Students must weekly follow and accomplish (at the very least) the works of memorization, articulation, projection, and acting exercises. Furthermore, any script work or other assignments given by the directors and/or stage managers should be completed during the week between rehearsals. The expectation is that every participant spend at the very minimum 15 minutes per day with the script and with their particular work. We are striving for

accountability, good work ethic, discipline when motivation wanes, and orderliness in fulfilling commitment. Working daily eases the stress that develops when hard deadlines approach and a student feels the fact that they have not been keeping up with line work.

All students will be given responsibilities specific to their assigned job or part in the productions. Everyone is expected to do the following:

Communicate to the director at the beginning of the semester any conflicts for rehearsals.

Communicate to the director and stage manager before any absence due to illness or legitimate school conflicts. No excuses will be granted to students for social activities. Directors go to a great deal of trouble to lay out a practice schedule at the beginning of the semester. Missing a rehearsal leaves all fellow actors from that scene in a lurch and requires redesigning all the practices.

Listen to the director to understand their job.

Learn the play and its meaning overall.

Learn lines and blocking (as it is decided) by the off-book date for an “Italian Run” in front of Mrs Irlbeck. Failure to have lines down by that date restricts you from auditioning for a main role in the next production.

Learn and practice during the week between rehearsals the exercises intended to improve stagecraft such as articulation, projection, movement, stretches, voice warm-ups, anything else as taught by the directors and choreographer.

Understand the director’s ideas for technical aspects of the show and produce suggestions for the director in a timely manner.

All students, including cast and crew, should be learning lines from the play throughout the semester. They can even memorize the entire play if they want to do so!

St Paul Institute Directors’ and Administrator Responsibilities

We resolve as directors and teachers of your children to

1) Provide an example of the various virtues we expect the children to learn

Including:

Self Control - joyful mastery over one's passions and desires

Honesty - Sincerity, openness, truthfulness in one's words and actions,

Humility - acknowledging all our personal gifts come from God and are
Meant to point others to God, not self.

Meekness - serenity of spirit while focusing on the needs of others/

Having all of one's strengths and powers under control to
accomplish the ends of service - in this case, directors will marshal their
skills, knowledge, example, good manners, etc to place them at the
service of creating a healthy and productive space for the collaborative
work of theater

Modesty - Purity of heart in action, especially in regards to speech/dress

Orderliness - timeliness in communication, and in preparations, practices

Courtesy - Treating others with respect bc all are made in God's image

Generosity - giving of oneself in a cheerful and willing manner for the
Good of others

Gratitude - thankful disposition of mind and heart

Kindness - expressing genuine concern for the well being of others
and anticipating their needs

Respect - speaking and acting according to one's own and other's rights
Status, and circumstances. As teachers, directors will remember
the imbalance between themselves and their students, and will
Communicate with gentleness and meekness

Responsibility - Fulfilling one's just duties

Trustworthiness - acting in a way that inspires confidence and trust, being
reliable

2) Act with Prudence, determining what is necessary for a sound decision in any
circumstance and acting upon it with Industriousness, Magnanimity, Patience, and
Perseverance in instructing and teaching.

3) Communicate with your children and with you as parents

a) With Courtesy

b) With Patience

c) With Respect

d) With clarity - teaching skills they do not know, making them feel prepared for
and confident in their abilities to put on their shows

e) In a timely manner

It is our intent for directors to cultivate wonder at the talents and goodness of the human person through the close reading of Shakespeare and other edifying scripts, to encourage the reticent student, to encourage positively the growth of the students, to create the safe space for the vulnerability necessary to grow as actors, to instruct in all aspects of the collaborative work of theater, and to clearly explain and cultivate the understanding that the St Paul Theater Experience is at its roots intended to be a hospitable experience of theater.

Illness Policy

Please do not bring your child to co-op if they exhibit any of these symptoms. If you bring your child with these symptoms, you will be called to pick them up.

Please remember these policies are set in place to protect the overall health of all of the children and families in our co-op. If you bring your child to class sick you risk infecting not only the teachers that provide classes for your child, but also the other children in our program, as well as their families, possibly making them miss work or school, birthdays and other important social occasions. The 'Golden Rule' applies here as much as anywhere else -- if you would not want your child exposed to any of the symptoms that they have, others would not want their child exposed, either. Thank you for keeping your sick child home and keeping our co-op as healthy as is possible.

Please be very conservative in your judgment about illness in your children - when in doubt, keep them home. Some families are hit harder by illness than others, and it is an act of charity to try to prevent the spread of contagious illness where feasible.

The following are signs and symptoms that should alert you to the possibility of a contagious disease. Please consult your child's physician as appropriate and do not bring your child to co-op until an infectious cause has been ruled out.

- 1) A fever over 100 F on the ear thermometer, under the arm, oral, or rectal.
- 2) Any type of rash or questionable bumps, and/or red spots (Contagious infections frequently first manifest themselves as rashes in children. Many of these infections are viral and a physician can estimate an appropriate quarantine time. In addition, rashes due to bacterial infection should be treated with appropriate antibiotics to lessen disease severity, prevent spread, and prevent further complications)
- 3) Green/Yellow/Brown Mucus coming out of the nose, mouth, or eyes (As with rashes, allergies, viruses, or bacteria can cause nasal and conjunctival discharge. The viral contagions are easily spread by children and therefore should be quarantined quickly. For conjunctivitis and bacterial causes of discharge, at least 24 hours of antibiotics should be given prior to return

to school. For viral infections, resolution of symptoms is generally when the child is no longer contagious.)

4) Uncontrollable Coughing with or without Congestion (Coughing is often the sign of infection, asthma, or allergies. If coughing is persistent, appropriate medication should be prescribed/recommended to alleviate the symptoms.)

5) Loose stool or diarrhea more than once in a day (The child will not be allowed back to class until they have gone 48 hours without diarrhea. As long as the child has diarrhea they should be considered contagious).

6) Vomiting or stomach flu of any kind (The child will not be allowed back to class until they have gone 48 hours without vomiting. As long as the child has vomiting, they should be considered contagious).

7) If your family has a contagious illness such as influenza or whooping cough (pertussis), please don't send any of your children to co-op.

8) If you have any questions regarding whether or not you should send a child, please call Mrs. Irlbeck at 214-783-8480.

Communications

Until St Paul Institute establishes a communications platform that makes all emails subject to administrative oversight, all emails between directors (or other SPI adults) and students/actors/tech and crew must include a parent of the student and Mrs. Irlbeck unless the parent formally declines to receive them. Nevertheless, Mrs. Irlbeck must always be included, whether the communication originates with the director, the parent to the director and vice versa, or with the student.

Should you have a concern regarding something during rehearsal time or tech week practices, we encourage you to directly communicate with a member of the board of directors, to facilitate a quick resolution and also to accommodate the work of the show director whose attention should be on the rehearsal. Contact information is listed in the handbook.

Safety

No student will be left with only one adult in any circumstances. This is for the protection of both the adult and the student.

Our productions do have action scenes, but all reasonable precautions are taken to ensure that your children are safe. Accidents do happen, but responsible behavior on the part of the students with props and with blocking makes a difference as does good judgment on the part of the shows' directors.

No student should exit the dance studio or MainStage theater without first communicating with a supervising adult that he or she is doing so. Neither building is in a very safe location.

Forms, Fees, and Tuition

Every family must register with St. Paul Institute and pay the registration fee to be able to participate in productions. After the family's registration is approved, the family may sign up their children for productions. New families must have a meeting with the director to register with St. Paul Institute.

Fees:

There is a once per year family registration fee to cover insurance and administrative sundries, paid through the website at registration via credit card to St. Paul Institute. The fall fee covers the entire year; spring/summer only has a lower fee.

There is a production fee for each production to cover the cost of rental of the auditorium, lighting, sound equipment, musical scores and script rights, programs, and so on. This fee is also paid to St. Paul Institute through the website after families finish entering their children in the invoicing step.

Tuition for productions/classes is determined by the tutors/show directors and may differ by production. Tuition is paid directly to the tutors though Venmo or by check after families finish entering their children in the invoicing step.

Late fees will accrue beginning a week prior to the first rehearsal. They are \$25 per child per week late on paying tuition and fees. These late fees are necessary as without timely registration information, insurance cannot be purchased. In addition, tracking untimely registrations place an undue burden on the time of the busy moms who operate the St. Paul

Institute as volunteers.

Volunteer Hours

In order to make our fine arts days function as smoothly as possible, we need your help! Each family is responsible for approximately 7-10 volunteer hours (determined after our final enrollment is calculated).

Volunteer options include, but aren't limited to the following:

Website creation and maintenance

Volunteer Management (includes creating sign ups, ensuring slots are filled, and tracking hours) Watching kids for younger kids' productions while at the dance studio and at tech week/production locations

Clean up, set up, take down at performances

Designing and producing souvenirs (can be done from home, ideas approved by board of directors)

Vending

Building shed

Transporting materials to and from production sites

Inventory and organization of inventory

Cleaning rehearsal venue productions sites

Ticket sales

Concessions purchases and sales and inventory

Costuming (especially for younger kids' productions)

Preparing the Star Board for each production, getting posters signed by cast for sale Helping with fundraising events, such as sales of refreshments at the plays themselves, bake sales at your church, lemonade stands, souvenir sales at the plays, seeking donations, holding a swing dance and so on.

The junior productions require more adult supervision and assistance, so those productions will have a greater need of your presence at practices and tech week/production nights, supervising costuming, etc.

The senior productions have a lesser need of weekly supervision, freeing parents up to utilize their volunteer hours in other ways such as helping with our inventory, fundraising, vending, etc.

Depending on circumstances, capacities, and maturity, teens can volunteer for their family obligation.

At sign up, in the invoicing step, parents will choose the volunteering option. Alternatively, if parents cannot volunteer their time, they can “opt out” and pay a fee of \$100 per production.

STUDENT CONTRACT

I am responsible for reading or having the St. Paul Institute Co-op Handbook read to me. I have discussed the guidelines with my parents and I understand what is required of me. I recognize that a team of adults and parents has established these policies and conduct rules for the benefit of all participants. I understand that I am responsible for making all possible effort to honor and obey the standards set forth by the Co-op. I understand that I am accountable for my conduct at the Co-op and for being prepared for class by doing my assignments at home.

Because I understand that the productions I am in are gifts given by members of the St Paul Institute to our audiences, and that clarity as an actor or crew member enhances the excellence of the gift we are creating by making the show both understandable and delightful, I resolve to prepare myself to have my lines fully memorized and clearly enunciated by the off-book date and Italian Run for each show I participate in. I understand that failing to do so means I cannot audition for a main role in the following semester’s productions. To that end, I commit to (at the bare minimum) practicing my lines and doing my articulation and projection exercises every day. I understand that practice beyond the bare minimum will improve my acting, my understanding of the play, and my memory. I understand that these things apply also to technical and crew positions.

I understand that the St. Paul Institute Co-op is a place for well-behaved students who are reasonably capable of governing themselves. I recognize that the teachers have come here to

give me and all the other students in the classrooms the opportunity to enjoy learning concepts and skills and enhancing and refining those I already have. I understand that I am expected to make it easy for the teachers to teach me and all the other students in the room with me. I intend to respect all adults involved with SPI, all my fellow cast and crew members, and the property where we work. I also intend to create a rehearsal space in which the vulnerability of my fellow actors is respected and where encouragement is offered as we undertake our work together. I understand that consequences exist for the manner in which I behave at the Co-op. When I conduct myself in a way that is pleasant, mannerly, and shows love to God and others, I have given myself the opportunity to learn new concepts and skills, make new friends, and build a good reputation for myself. I have honored my word, my family, and my commitment to Christ. When I conduct myself in a way that is unpleasant, ill-mannered, or unloving, I tear down those same opportunities, and will potentially lose the privilege of participating in the St. Paul Institute activities.

Signatures of students:
