

# ST. SOPHIA DANCE GROUP

## AGREEMENT AND SIGN-UP DIRECTIONS 2019 - 2020

**\*\*\*Read this agreement with your child/ren. Then complete the Google Form from the St. Sophia website to sign up your children for dance. All sign ups are electronic this year. Also, please be sure to read about the new form of communication the dance group will be using this year.**

Dance students are a vital part of the St. Sophia Community. They bring the face of our Greek culture to the community-at-large during their festival performances. In the past, each of the dance events has proven to be opportunities to learn to work as a team toward a goal while having fun. Dancing instills a love of music, language and traditions in their Greek roots, as well as discipline in a fine art, and friendships that last a lifetime.

This agreement has been signed by the director and agreed to by the dance teachers acknowledging their commitment to follow the established criteria for the St. Sophia Dance Group (SSDG). Your electronic submission of the Google Form shall acknowledge your commitment to also follow the established criteria.

### **MEMBERSHIP:**

Membership in the SSDG is open to all children entering second grade through their senior year of high school. Each family must be a member of St. Sophia Church. Each dancer must be a member of Sunday School, Choir or Altar. See below for attendance criteria. **A fee of \$15 per child will be assessed for dance group expenses throughout the year.** All members joining the St. Sophia Dance Group will be placed in groups based on the criteria stated below.

### **ASSIGNED GROUPS:**

Dancers will be assigned into a specific group based on the following:

- First and foremost, movement into groups will be based on the number of dancers who graduate from the senior group, thus creating the domino effect of openings to the rest of the groups
- Attendance at rehearsals

- Ability to learn the dances
- Experience in dancing
- Number of years in present group (varies between two to four years)
- Maintaining balance for each group

The assignment of partners within each group is not negotiable and is at the sole discretion of the teacher. Dancers will find out their assigned groups in early October.

### **REHEARSAL SCHEDULES:**

Participation in rehearsals is imperative for dancers to learn all the dances and dance with skill and in harmony as a group.

Senior & Junior Groups: Practice for the senior group will take place every Saturday at 11:30 in the Parish Hall or gym. Rehearsals will run between 60-90 minutes. The group's teachers will notify dancers if practice is cancelled.

Sophomore & Freshman Groups: Practice for all other groups will take place every Sunday approximately 5 minutes after the liturgy ends, either in the cultural room or kindergarten classroom. There is not a definite time as to when rehearsals begin on Sundays, as it depends on when the Divine Liturgy ends. If dancers are in attendance in Sunday School, Choir or Altar, they should always be on time for dance rehearsal. Dancers should report to their rehearsal 5 minutes after service ends; teachers cannot delay practice in order to search for students. The groups' teachers or director will notify dancers if practice is cancelled through an app called "Remind" (see below).

Rehearsal will not take place on holidays or holiday weekends (i.e., Thanksgiving, Christmas, Holy Week and Easter). We follow the Sunday School schedule. If Sunday School is in session, dance is also taking place. If a group's practice is cancelled, the teachers or director will notify dancers via the Remind App text message. Directions for this communication tool are listed below and at the end of the Google Form Sign Up.

### **\*\*NEW COMMUNICATION THIS YEAR - VIA THE REMIND APP:**

New this year, we will be using the Remind App to send out weekly dance practice information. Please text the message @stsophiag to the number 81010 to join our dance group's communication this year.

Don't have a mobile phone? Go to: <https://www.remind.com/join/stsophiag> on a desktop computer to sign up for e-mail notifications.

Communication using this app will be used for weekly dance practice reminders, last minute cancellations, and any other information pertaining to the festival.

## **ATTENDANCE:**

All dancers must be in attendance in either Sunday School, Choir or Altar in order to attend rehearsal each week. If a dancer is not in attendance in either Sunday School, Choir or Altar, they will not be allowed to attend rehearsal. Attendance in each Sunday School classroom, Choir and Altar every Sunday will be taken and the names of students who were absent will be given to the respective dance instructor/s. Dancers will not be allowed to skip Sunday School, Choir or Altar and just attend dance rehearsal. If you have any other questions or need further information related to this attendance policy, please see Diane Cohen or Father Pat.

Consistency in a dancer's attendance is also imperative to learn all the dances and dance with skill and in harmony as a group. Poor attendance results in the dancer not knowing a dance which further results in the dancer having to sit out that particular dance during the festival. If a dancer drops out of the dance group for a year or more and decides to return to the group, they will be assigned to the same group from which they left so they can catch up and not take up a spot of someone who is eligible to move up. Extenuating circumstances will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

## **COSTUMES:**

Dance costumes are very expensive to buy and clean. Some costumes cost as much as \$600 each. Dancers will be fitted for a costume for the festival during the year. Fittings will be scheduled by group. If there is damage to a costume during the festival beyond repair, or if pieces are missing, the dancer is responsible for monetary compensation to St. Sophia for purchase of a new costume or pieces as needed. At festival time, some items will need to be purchased by the dancer, i.e., stockings, socks, pants (younger groups only), and shoes. Many dancers donate shoes to the group as feet outgrow shoes. So, if you would like to borrow shoes for festival weekend, please just ask. If we have your child's size, we are happy to loan them to you.

## **EXPECTATIONS:**

Dancers must demonstrate their dance ability, musicality, showmanship, preparedness for rehearsal, personal discipline and motivation, a positive attitude and positive behavior during rehearsals and in the community.

Dancers must also demonstrate respect toward their teacher and group members. If a student demonstrates disrespectful, disruptive or rude behavior toward a teacher or group member, the parent will be asked to remove the student from practice. If the negative behavior persists, a conference with the director, teacher and student will take place.

If a dancer knows that he/she will not be dancing at any time during the festival due to proms, vacations, recitals, field trips, sports events or other commitments, etc., please advise the teacher as soon as possible so she make necessary changes before the weekend of the festival.

The dancers are expected to meet these standards in order to make these dance years memorable for all.

**CONTACT NUMBERS OF DIRECTORS AND TEACHERS:**

Diane Cohen – 518-729-8487

Panorea Miszko – 518-528-3665

Maria Googas Daga – 518-441-4966

Alex McCullough – 518-369-4946

Zoe Bousbouras – 518-542-3227

Maria Ziamandanis – 518-312-0350

Nicole Kordas – 518-935-5236

Eleni Soler – 518-362-8193

Mary Googas – 518-222-3712

Erika Koutelis – 518-334-6650

Marie McCullough – 518-369-2313

Barbara Rustin – 518-339-4693

Elaine Palas – 518-334-1925

Maria Pidgeon – 518-461-9829

This group of volunteers collectively spend hundreds of hours and their talents from October through May to help our children learn this beautiful art so it will not be lost through the generations. Support and respect from all dancers, parents, teachers and directors are paramount in keeping the SSDG harmonious. As with all families there are times when there are disagreements. It is only through discussion and understanding of a situation that problems are resolved. We have to be examples for our children. Rumor, misinformation, insinuation, anger, and even hatred is not what we want to teach our children. We want to be positive role models. We, the directors and teachers, pledge to support this program to the best of our abilities.

Please click on the link for the electronic Google form sign up. Mail in your payment of dues to church (Attention Dance Group) or hand it to a dance group instructor or director.

Thank you and we are all looking forward to another great year!

Sincerely,

Diane Cohen, Eleni Soler and Panorea Miszko (Co-Directors)  
and the St. Sophia Dance Group Teachers