



Connick School

Student and Parent Handbook

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1. Introduction

It is our absolute pleasure to welcome you into our family at the Connick School of Irish Dance. Our team is thrilled to see so many familiar faces return to the studio and we are so excited to see some new faces join our community. We have created this one-stop handbook to hopefully shed some light on how things will run throughout the year as well as answer a lot of questions you may have before the year begins. While we would love you to take the time to read this information carefully and keep your handbook in a safe place to refer to as you need, don't forget that our friendly staff are always here to help and will happily answer any questions you may have. Nothing is too big or too small, we promise! 😊

QUICK REFERENCE STUDIO INFORMATION

Phone Number: 704-703-2441

Email: info@connickschool.com

Website: connickschool.com

School Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/connickschool/>

School parents Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/257698491235313/>

App: Connick School

2 . Studio Manifesto

It is important to us at the Connick School that all members of our team share our vision, our purpose and the philosophy that encompasses everything we do both in and outside of our classes. This is a vision that is shared and demonstrated by the directors, teachers and staff members at our studio and it is the driving force behind every interaction with our students and their families.

The Connick School is a place where kids of all ages, shapes, and sizes learn the traditional art form of Irish Dance and performance. This is a studio where the teachers are passionate about uplifting each and every child to their greatest potential inside and outside of our studio walls. Our community of teachers, students, and families help create a positive and happy experience for everyone. We strive to nurture and develop talent, celebrate the achievements of all students and inspire a love and appreciation of Irish Dance. We are committed to providing a safe and positive environment in which all students can feel empowered, comfortable and free to express themselves. We are committed to not only training our dancers to be the best on the stage, but we strive for them to be their best self-off the stage.

Connick Core Values

Community. Continue to grow, nourish, and attract the best team, students, and families helping create a positive experience for everyone.

Open and honest relationships with communication trusting the goal is to help every dancer reach their potential.

Navigate students to learn life skills through dance.

Nourish each child's passion for dance creating an enthusiasm to learn and try new things.

Inspire a drive in both teachers and students to not accept mediocrity.

Celebrate achievements of all our students big and small.

Knowledge of how to train to be the best dancer, a great athlete, and a successful person.

3. Registration

Before lacing up those dance shoes, it is important that all students and/or parents – whether returning or new - fill out and sign your registration paperwork so we can ensure we have the most up-to-date contact details for you. This information includes your registration form, media release form (so we can show off photos and videos of our amazing dancers in and around the studios), and public liability / Insurance contract. **As well as the COVID-19 procedures.**

Our new beginner registration offers not only a free Connick School t-shirt, but it also ensures that in the event of classes reaching capacity before Term/Semester kicks off, you will be guaranteed a place in the class/es of your choice.

Our annual registration fee is \$60 per student/\$180 per family max and must be paid in full prior to the commencement of classes. Make sure you get your payment in via Dance Studio Pro as failure to pay your registration fee in time may result in losing your place in the class.

Parent Release Form for Photography and Videography

You will sign these to enroll your dancer in our 2020/2021 season. Please note that you do NOT need to bring a paper copy of these as you have electronically signed them by enrolling through DSP.

I, the undersigned, give permission for the Connick School to use video footage and / or photographs of my child/ward, _____. This usage may include (but is not exclusive to) displaying publicly, distributing, or publishing, photographs, and/or video of my child for use in materials that include, but may not be limited to:

- printed materials (eg - brochures and newsletters)
- online and offline advertising and promotion
- videos and digital images for use on Social Media.

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I am giving unrestricted permission for my child's image to be used in print, video, and digital media. I agree that these images may be used by the Connick School for a variety of purposes and that these images may be used without further notification. I do understand that any identifying information including surname and location will not be used in conjunction with any video or digital images.

Parent/Guardian signature _____ Date _____

Health Information and Medical Release/Waiver Form

I, _____, the parent/guardian of _____, acknowledge that participation in dance is potentially dangerous and there is an inherent risk of injury involved.

In allowing my child to participate in the Connick School activities, I hereby assume all the risks associated with the performing arts. I understand the importance of myself and my child following the instructions and rules set by their instructor/s, and I agree to release the Connick School and its employees of any and all liability which may arise as a result of my child's participation in activities at the Connick School.

4. Communication

It is our promise to respond to all questions within 2 standard business days and we will never leave a question unanswered. Our friendly staff can be contacted by phone at 704-703-2441 between 11am-3pm.

For convenience, our primary means of communication is via email. You will receive regular newsletters and important information via email so please ensure you have provided the studio with an up-to-date email address that is regularly checked. We are of course happy to include multiple email addresses per family if you would like your correspondence sent to numerous recipients. Don't forget to add our email address info@connickschool.com to your contacts so we don't end up in the dreaded Spam folder!

We are also proud to provide you information round-the-clock via our very own Dance Studio app. You can download the Connick School via Google Play or Apple's App Store. Just follow the prompts to install our app on your mobile device and you'll receive alerts as they happen.

In the infrequent case of urgent information (for example, unexpected class cancellations or performance changes), we will send an SMS and/or telephone to all families. So, for this reason, please make sure the mobile phone number you have provided to the studio is correct and up-to-date.

Facebook is a great way for us to keep in touch with a large number of people at once, so we encourage all families to join our closed Connick School Parent's Facebook group. This group can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/257698491235313/> and will be monitored to ensure all content is appropriate and relevant.

We are always happy to chat in more detail about communications you may receive from the studio, so if you need any clarification please don't hesitate to call us at 704-703-2441 and chat with one of our helpful team members.

5. Important Dates

We understand wholeheartedly how busy the lives and schedules of our dance families can get as the year rolls on, so we have tried to get all of our important dates organized and ready for you so you can plan other commitments. Below we have listed some of our most important "Save the Dates" with more information (including times, costumes, requirements, etc.) to be communicated via email as we get closer to the events. If you know ahead of time that your family will be unable to attend these events due to planned holidays or existing commitments, please email us at info@connickschool.com at your earliest convenience.

Date	Event	Description	Who it involves
07/20/20	Registration Day	Register for your 2020 Fall Classes	All students
08/15/2020	1 st Day of Class	First Class of the 2020 Fall Semester	All students
09/07/2020	Labor Day	No Class	All students
09/19/2020	Drake Feis	Dance competition held in Atlanta	All competitive students
09/26/2020 And 9/27/2020	Walsh Kelley Feis	Dance Competition held in Greensboro	All competitive students
10/17/2020 And 10/18/2020	Connick Feis	Dance Competition held in Charlotte hosted by the Connick School Parents Association	All competitive students
11/21/2020 And 11/22/2020	Drake Feis	Dance Competition held in Atlanta	Open to grade and prelim level dancers. Recommended to Open Champions.
11/25/2020- 11/29/2020	Thanksgiving Break	Studio Closed	All students
12/4/2020- 12/6/2020	Southern Region Oireachtas	Regional Championships	All Oireachtas Participants

12/3/2020- 12/7/2020	No Class	No class due to teachers attending the regional championships	All students
12/19/2020	Christmas Party	Christmas Party and last class of 2020	All students
12/20- 1/3/2021	Winter break	Studio Closed	All students
1/14/2021	Last Day of Fall Semester	Normal Schedule make sure to register for Spring Classes	All students

6. Code of Conduct

To ensure the smooth safe running of the Connick School and an enjoyable experience by all, below you will find our code of conduct. As always we are open to feedback, so if any of the requirements outlined below are unclear or concerning, please give us a call to discuss further. Following a formal meeting, we do reserve the right to dismiss or take disciplinary action on any students or parents who breach our studio's code of conduct.

Families who do not comply with their fee or payment obligations may be charged a late fee, and/or excluded from performances/competitions. External debt collection may occur when fees remain overdue and this will be at the expense of the client.

No classes (including private lessons) or teachers are to be disturbed unless it is an emergency. Parents are not to approach teachers or students during class. All parents must wait in the waiting areas or outside of the studios until classes have been dismissed. ***Please note that during the COVID-19 pandemic all of our waiting areas are closed***

We are unable to take responsibility for our students before or after their scheduled classes and it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure their child is picked up and dropped off on time. In the case of an emergency or unavoidable delay, please contact the studio immediately to inform us of the situation so we can keep your child calm and safe until they can be picked up.

Any questions or complaints must go through our email info@connickschool.com or phone 704-703-2441 – parents and students are not permitted to contact the Connick School teachers via phone, in person, or via email / social networking with studio issues unless it has been broached with the director first. Personal meetings with the studio director can happily be arranged via email.

In the rare case of a parent or student showing disrespect or defamation to any parent, staff member or student, a meeting will be called immediately and dismissal may be considered at the discretion of the director. Physical, mental, emotional or cyber bullying by parents, staff or students will not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the studio.

The Connick School takes no responsibility for any stolen or misplaced property on the studio premises and we encourage our families to avoid bringing valuable items into the studio where possible.

Connick School management reserves the right to change teachers or timetabling when necessary at any time throughout the year.

Choreography, costuming and studio policies remain the intellectual property of Connick School and may not be reproduced or sold by any students, parents or staff without permission of the director.

7. Safety

With the safety of our families a number one priority, the Connick School is very serious about upholding Child Protection laws and policies within the studio as well as at public performances and in the online arena (website and social media).

As part of your registration, you will have read and signed a media waiver allowing us to proudly use images and video footage of your student for advertising and promotional purposes. Should you have any concerns whatsoever with signing this declaration, please contact us and we will happily assist you.

All of our teachers and staff members have undergone official training with SafeSport allowing them to work with children.

The director and staff at the Connick School are educated in the negative impact of inappropriate music and costume selection when it comes to performing dance routines and are wholeheartedly committed to ensuring children in all of our dance routines are not subjected to any inappropriate songs or costuming. We recognise that songs with sexist, explicit, violent, racist, homophobic or criminal content may influence our dancers and/or audience and will strive to avoid using such music.

We enforce a nut-free policy at the studio to ensure the safety of any students or parents with allergies to nuts or nut products and encourage gluten and dairy free foods when involved in fundraisers or studio events.

The Connick School takes no responsibility for any stolen or misplaced property on the studio premises and we encourage our families to avoid bringing valuable items into the studio.

You will find within our enrollment paperwork a public liability / insurance statement. Please read this document carefully and sign it prior to the commencement of classes so you fully understand the rights and responsibilities of your family and our studio. Forms will be signed electronically via Dance Studio Pro.

8. Privacy

When you purchase or hire a product or service with the Connick School, the information we may collect from you includes your name, address, telephone numbers, email addresses, medical information and perhaps credit card or bank details. It may also include details of the products and services we provide to you as well as the status of your enrollment. We only collect information directly from our students or their parent/guardians primarily for the purpose of providing services and products to you and to administer and manage invoicing and debt collection.

We will never sell or pass on any of your information to third parties unless required by government authorities or in the event of debt recovery. Any information passed on will be done so with appropriate privacy and confidentiality protection.

Information is stored securely in paper or electronic form and is accessible only by authorized personnel.

If you would like to know what information we hold about you or wish to update the information, or if you wish to be removed from all further direct marketing communications, please contact our office at 704-703-2441.

9. Fall Schedule

Timetabling our classes is a huge task and we try to ensure that children are given classes at an age-appropriate time without long hours that may lead to fatigue or disrupt home / school life. Please find below our timetable for 2020 Fall and please contact us if you have any questions at all.

Monday	Cornelius Studio	5:00pm – 6:00pm – Grades 6:15pm – 7:30pm – Prelim
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		7:45pm – 9:00pm – Open
	Raleigh Studio	6:45pm – 7:45pm – Grades 8:00pm – 9:30pm - Champs
Tuesday	Cornelius Studio	7:00pm – 8:00pm – Connick Company
	Pineville Studio	6:15pm – 6:45pm – Beginner 1 – Ages 5 & Up 7:00pm – 8:30pm – Grades
	Raleigh Studio	6:30pm – 8:30pm – Champs
Wednesday	Cornelius Studio1	4:30pm – 5:00pm – Beginner 1 5:30pm – 7:00pm – Prelim 7:15pm – 8:45pm – Open
	Cornelius Studio2	5:15pm – 6:45pm – Grades 7:00pm – 8:00pm – Adults
Thursday	Pineville Studio1	4:45pm – 5:45pm – Grades 6 :00pm – 8:00pm – Prelim 6:00pm – 9 :00pm – Open
	Pineville Studio2	7 :00pm – 8 :00pm – Adults
	Raleigh Studio	6:15pm – 8:15pm – Privates with Grace
Saturday	Pineville Studio1	9 :00am – 9 :30am – 7 and Older Beginner 1 9:45am – 11:15am – Open 11:30am – 1:00pm – Grades 1:15pm – 2:45pm - Prelim
	Pineville Studio2	9:00am – 9:30am – Under 7 Beginner 1 11:30am – 12:30pm – Beginner 2
	Raleigh Studio	9:00am – 10:30am – Grades 9:00am – 9:45am – Beginner 2 10:30am – 12:00pm – Champs

11. Uniform

At the Connick School we believe that wearing studio uniforms give students a sense of belonging to our family as well as creating an identity for our studio in the greater community. Our uniforms also:

- Encourage discipline
- Help students resist peer pressure to buy stylish clothes for class
- Help identify non-students in the studio
- Diminish economic and social barriers between students
- Increase a sense of belonging and school pride
- Improve attendance

Uniforms can be purchased when our school store opens. They will be ordered online through a portal which will be open three times throughout the year. More information to come from the Parents Association.

Please ensure all parts of your child’s uniform are clearly labelled - individual shoes, socks, water bottles...you’ll be amazed at the amount of lost property we generate!

Hair should be neat/tidy and pulled off of dancer’s face.

12. Fee Structure

Please find below the fee structure for 2020. Feel free to contact our office staff if you have any fee-related questions.

2020-2021 Tuition Fees

TOTAL HOURS PER WEEK	MONTHLY TUITION COST	COST PER WEEK	COST PER INSTRUCTIONAL HOUR
30 minutes	\$45.00	\$11.25	\$22.50
1 Hour	\$90.00	\$22.50	\$22.50
1 1/2Hour	\$105.00	\$26.25	\$17.50
2 Hours	\$125.00	\$31.25	\$15.63
3 Hours	\$140.00	\$35.00	\$11.67
4 Hours	\$170.00	\$42.50	\$10.63
Unlimited	\$200.00	\$50.00	\$10.00-\$7.14

School Registration Fees

Annual Registration Fee \$60 per dancer (\$180 family max)
Family Max Tuition \$400 per month

We offer the following options for fee payment:

Upfront Payment – There is a 5% discount for paying for the semester and a 10% discount for paying for the year if you pay in full.

Direct Debit – This is our most popular and simple payment method, in which you may choose to pay your fees. Our direct debit system syncs up with our Dance Studio Pro parent portal. You'll be required to input your bank details and your payments will be auto-drafted on the 15th of each month.

Refunds will not be issued for missed classes due to cancellation or public holiday – where possible, we will endeavour to arrange make-up lessons for classes cancelled by the Connick School or will offer an alternative class.

13. Attendance

Your child's attendance in class is very important to their peers and our teaching staff. As a member of the team, it is a commitment for you to ensure your child attends their classes on time each week and attends all lessons planned for them. Not only do absences have an impact on the routines we create/their success at competitions, it also impacts the social and confidence-building principals we work hard to foster in each age group.

If you know ahead of time that your child will be absent due to vacations, commitments or school trips, please let us know ahead of time so the class impact is minimal. If your child is too unwell to attend class, we ask that you inform us as soon as possible so that we can let the teachers know and preparations can be made to catch up on any missed work.

You can schedule a make-up class through info@connickschool.com to see if there is a way we can accommodate a missed class. The Connick School will make every endeavour to schedule a catch-up class in the unlikely event that the school needs to cancel a lesson. Make-up classes must be scheduled during the current semester and will not roll over to future semesters.

15. Progression Through Levels

In order to progress from one level into the next these are the Connick School's minimum requirements. Advancing through the levels is still at the teacher's discretion.

Current Level	Next Level	Requirements
Beginner	Advanced Beginner	Dancing a year. Must know reel, light jig, single jig, and slip jig.
Advanced Beginner	Novice	Has a 1 st or 2 nd in each dance.
Novice	Prizewinner	<p>Has to have won traditional speed treble jig and hornpipe before learning the slow hardshoe dances.</p> <p>In order to move to Prizewinner in soft-shoe you must have won both the reel and slip jig at the Novice category.</p> <p>In order to move to Prizewinner in hardshoe you must have won both the treble jig and hornpipe slow speed in the Novice category.</p>
Prizewinner	Prelim	Dancers need a 1 st in each dance.
Prelim	Open	Two 1sts.

15. Social Media

Connick School's Social Media Policy refers to all social networking sites, video/photo sharing sites, blogs, micro-blogs, wikis, podcasts, forums, instant messaging and geo-spatial tagging (for example, Facebook check-ins). Please see below for our regulations regarding Social Media and feel free to contact our office staff if you have any questions.

- Please remember that your anonymity on Social Media is never guaranteed and to exercise particular caution when posts, images or videos identify children in your care.
- Be mindful that your behavior on Social Media remains in keeping with the Connick School's code of conduct as outlined in chapter 6 of this handbook.
- Any comments or posts perceived to be obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful towards Connick School staff, students or families may subject the owner to disciplinary, dismissal, or legal action.
- Should you wish to engage on Social Media while identifying as a studio volunteer or employee, you may only do so with integrity, respect, and adhere to privacy and confidentiality policy.
- Any content revealing or referring to sensitive studio information is not allowed to be shared online.
- Intellectual property laws (for example, costume design and choreography) must be observed by all studio patrons when posting online.
- While affiliated with our studio, (for example, images of your child in Connick School uniform) we will not tolerate any posts that are racially, sexually, physically or religiously offensive.
- All matters pertaining directly to the studio - whether it be fees, scheduling, placements or performance opportunities - may not be communicated via Social Media. We have an open-door policy and encourage all communication, complaints and feedback to be communicated to the directly.
- We discourage parents / students and teachers from becoming 'friends' or 'followers' on Social Media, unless there is an existing relationship. We consider all studio members to be family and as such feel the obligation to respect and monitor personal boundaries.
- Families found to be engaging in 'hidden' or 'private' groups formed for the specific purpose of discussing studio matters will be encouraged to join our closed Facebook group for public discussion and warned against discussing Studio matters in their private online groups.
- Photos or Videos taken from performances or rehearsals may NOT be posted online unless

approved by the director.

- You may not post photographs / videos that feature Connick School dancers other than your own online without the proven consent of their parent/guardian.

- Identifying information of any featured minors - including names, ages or location - must be removed when posting on Social Media.

16. Our Teachers / Faculty

Finally, it's our pleasure to introduce our faculty for 2020! Our enthusiastic, passionate and dedicated teachers are thrilled to be a part of your family's dance journey this year. We are truly looking forward to growing together to mold this generation of skilled, confident, genuine and unique performers.

Stacie Greiner A.D.C.R.G.- Director



My name is Stacie, and I started Irish dancing at the age of 11. My tap dance teacher had quit, and my mother was trying to find a similar activity for me to connect with. Little did she and I know that the ad in the newspaper (I know I'm dating myself) would change our lives! Since I stepped into my first class I have yet to stop moving my feet and humming the melodies of the traditional tunes.

I started dancing under the Sheahan-Gormley School of Irish Dance where my teacher nourished my love of the art form and sport. At the age of 14, I began my studies at the Quinlan Academy, which later became the O'Grady Quinlan Academy of Irish Dance. From there, I went on to compete regionally, nationally, and internationally. I passed the TCRG (teaching) exam in 2011 and the ADCRG (judging) exam in 2019.

I am a proud Pennsylvania State University alumnus, GO LIONS! It is there that I received my bachelor's degree in Kinesiology. I have also attained my Certification in Applied Functional Science from the Gray Institute and I am certified in Rock Tape FMT Performance Kinesiology Taping and FMT Blades Advanced IASTM. Throughout my own dance career, I saw a need for dancers to cross train and learn how to move properly for optimal results. I love to incorporate this knowledge into our core curriculum.

I am so thankful for everything Irish dance has brought me! I cherish the memories I have made with my mom, friends, teachers, and dancers around the world. I have appreciated all the life lessons the dance world continues to teach me, and I am beyond grateful for the opportunity I have to gift the joy of Irish Dance to others. I can only hope that I make an impact on their lives as much as Irish Dance has made an impact on mine. I would like to say a quick thank you to my amazing Connick Crew, you're simply the BEST!

Sandra Connick A.D.C.R.G.- Founder



My name is Sandra Connick and I grew up in Cork, Ireland. I started dancing with my mother at age 4 and later attended the Hasson School in Cork. I'm delighted to say that throughout the years my students have had success both nationally and internationally in solos as well as teams. It's been a pleasure to teach so many children over the years and watch them grow into adults. I'm thrilled to say that Irish dancing has given me the opportunity to create friendships all across the worlds.

Sandra is a fully accredited Irish dance teacher and adjudicator, registered with An Coimisiun Le Rince

Gaelacha, in Dublin, Ireland, and is currently serving as its Treasurer.

She actively participates in the Southern Region branch of the Irish Dancing Teachers Association of North America (IDTANA). Previously, Sandra served as Vice-President and Treasurer for the national body of the IDTANA as well as the Southern Region. Outside of the dance studio, Sandra's skills and talents as a teacher have been utilized by the Mecklenburg County School District in programs designed to incorporate cultural enrichment into middle school curriculum. She has also worked extensively with the Diocese of Charlotte Catholic Schools and as a lecturer on Irish Dance at University of North Carolina Charlotte.

Michele Dawe



Michele Dawe started dancing at age five, alongside her two older sisters, in Boston, Massachusetts. Many family weekends were spent traveling to outdoor feiseanna and on road trips throughout New England, of which she has many fond memories. She was also a great supporter of her niece years later when she started Irish dancing. Michele, with her husband and two daughters, moved to North Carolina and joined Rince na h'Eireann in February, 1999.

As a family, they traveled, and the girls competed and medaled regionally, nationally and internationally, until they went off to college. Early on, Michele became involved in Rince na h'Eireann, assisting Sandra Connick with shows, classes, camps, and feis registration. She is very excited to be a member of the Connick team!

Pamela Pierce



My name is Pamela Pierce McGuinness. I grew up in Dun Laoghaire, County Dublin, Ireland. I started dancing, like most Irish children, at the young age of seven, but really found my stride at age 11 after meeting, and subsequently working with, Kevin Massey, who turned Irish dancing into my favorite activity! Kevin was an amazing

teacher and dancer and opened up doors for all his students.

We had dancers like Michal Flatley at our classes every summer for camps, and were involved with Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann, through which we performed in shows in Dublin and overseas.

Whether through performance or competition (I competed regionally and nationally), I continued dancing all through my school days, and even when I started working. I could not imagine my life without it. After many years of being married to a U.S. military man, and traveling and living in many places, my husband retired, and we settled in North Carolina. I met Sandra Connick, started working with her in 1996, and have taught at RNE and the Connick School since then. I consider myself a patient teacher and take great pride in teaching every child to believe in his and herself. Hard shoe rhythm and timing are what I love, and in which I like to give every dancer a great foundation.

Allie Pacini



My name is Allie Pacini and I grew up dancing in Southern California with my two younger sisters.

College brought me to North Carolina, where I was fortunate to find the Connick School and continue to grow as a dancer and teacher these last 9 (ish) years.

Since returning to competition post-college, I've learned so much about the importance of combining the traditional techniques of Irish dance with functional, 3-dimensional

movement. Until recently, this was a missing piece for me as a dancer, and so passing on that knowledge to the next generation is a priority of mine in the studio. Working with the needs of each individual student is a challenge I've enjoyed, and I so look forward to watching current and future dancers grow in their love for Irish dance in a healthy, safe and fun environment. I can't wait to see everyone in the studio and am excited for a great 2020-2021 dance year!

Grace Reif



My name is Grace Reif and I was born and raised in Madison, Wisconsin. Like most young girls with excess energy, I was put in ballet and tap classes at age three. At eight, I saw Irish dancing at a show and fell head over heels in love. The way the music, rhythms, and movements came together captivated me, and throughout my career I've been lucky enough to share that love all around the world through touring and competition. However, the most fulfilling leg of this journey has been teaching new dancers the magic of Irish dance.

In 2017, my family relocated to Raleigh, and I joined them full time after graduating college in 2019.

Since then, I've worked closely with dancers on how to break down their steps and be more cognizant during their time on stage. I also create videos on Instagram and YouTube that provide a fun, entertaining review of difficult dance moves. I'm thrilled to be a part of the Connick crew and am so excited for what's to come!