

South Shore Ballet Theatre

Student and Parent Handbook

2016 – 2017

South Shore Ballet Theatre

School

Welcome to South Shore Ballet Theatre. Our mission is to provide students and their families on the South Shore with the opportunity to develop an appreciation for ballet, both the classical ballets that have been enjoyed for generations and the works of more contemporary choreographers. We teach ballet and related dance forms to ensure a broad understanding of the discipline. We encourage students to perform on a regular basis in order to develop appropriate skills, while sharing their work with the local community. We maintain an open door policy to all those in the community who enjoy ballet and who wish to come dance with us.

Community

South Shore Ballet Theatre endeavors to partner with the community in which we are based. This includes working with local schools and arts-related organizations to give children of all backgrounds the chance to enjoy ballet through one day presentations and performances. We demonstrate our strong commitment to the community by including all that are associated with our organization – artists, staff, parents, and students – in the outreach process.

American Ballet Theatre

South Shore Ballet Theatre is proud to include the AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE® National Training Curriculum, a breakthrough 8 level program that combines high quality artistic training with the basics of dancer health and child development. The ABT® National Training Curriculum consists of a comprehensive set of age-appropriate, outcome-based guidelines to provide the highest quality training to dance students of all ages and skill levels.



South Shore Ballet Theatre is proud to include ABT® Affiliate Teacher, Marthavan McKeon, Artistic Director, who is certified in the American Ballet Theatre National Training Curriculum. An ABT® Affiliate Teacher is a level of distinction for ABT® Certified Teachers that have successfully presented their students for examinations. Primary through Level 5 is taught by ABT® Affiliate Teacher, Marthavan McKeon, who has successfully completed the ABT Teacher Training Intensive in Primary through Level 5 of the ABT® National Training Curriculum.

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Programs

Young Dancers Program, ages 3 – 7

The Young Dancers Program, ages 3 - 7, is designed to develop coordination, musical and spatial awareness, and listening skills. Musical instruments help engage the students and enhance natural creativity. YDP classes are offered during the week and on Saturdays. YDP helps students develop a love of ballet that will stay with them throughout their life.

- Creative Movement: Age 3
- Pre Ballet A: Age 4
- Pre-Ballet B: Age 5
- Primary: Age 6

Classical Ballet Program, Levels 1 - 5

The Classical Ballet Program, for ages 7 - 18, consists of Levels 1 through 5 and is composed of a comprehensive curriculum designed to provide strong classical ballet technique. Students are also able to take enrichments classes and will also have the opportunity to participate in our Performing Group.

Intensive Ballet Division, Level 1i – 5i

The Intensive Ballet Division, for ages 8 – 18, is by invitation only and is specifically designed for those students with the drive natural ability to progress quickly. The much anticipated pointe work is introduced at Level 4i and continues through Level 7i.

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Pre Professional Ballet Division, I and II

South Shore Ballet Theatre's invitation-only Pre-Professional Program is a rigorous training program designed to meet the needs of those dedicated students, 12 – 19 years of age, who seek the highest standard of classical ballet education to prepare for a potential professional career in the industry. Under our faculty's careful guidance, students develop the skills to fully explore and realize their individual potential. Our ABT National Training Curriculum classes are at the core of SSBT's pre professional program, supplemented by coaching and mentoring from highly skilled faculty, along with performance opportunities. This includes participation in the prestigious Youth America Grand Prix (YAGP) competition.

Adult Program

At South Shore Ballet Theatre, we believe that you should never stop dancing! We are very happy to provide the south shore community with our **Adult Ballet Program** - on-going classes

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for adults at beginning and intermediate levels. Classes are available on Saturdays on a drop in basis.

Enrollment of New Students

Enrollment at South Shore Ballet Theatre is on-going, provided that space is available.

Students ages eight and older with previous ballet training are required to take a placement class to determine the level of study best suited to their abilities. Group placement classes are typically held at the beginning of each school year for fall placement. Once a recommendation is made, the registration process is completed by filling out a student registration form online and making the required tuition payment.

Enrollment of Returning Students

Returning South Shore Ballet Theatre students receive their registration packet, along with their year-end evaluation which includes their class placement in late June. Returning students will receive priority placement if their Registration Form is returned to the school by the deadline noted in the registration packet and their SSBT tuition account is in good standing. Returning SSBT students who do not meet the priority deadline will be processed with new students on a first-come, first- served basis. Enrollment of any student is subject to the artistic and administration discretion of the faculty and staff.

Placement and Promotion

Advancement through SSBT is based on a variety of factors including a student's strength, commitment, mastery of material, maturity, attendance record and artistic development as assessed by her or his teacher(s) and Artistic Director. In all cases, a student's ability to safely execute the required class material is considered above all other factors, including age.

Students in the Intensive Division receive a mid-year and end of year evaluation. Students in the Classical Ballet Program receive an end-of-year evaluation. These evaluations address overall progress, effort, attitude, and recommend improvements in relevant areas. Student placement is noted on the written year-end evaluation, mailed home at the end of June.

Conferences between the parent and teacher or Artistic Director are encouraged whenever there is a question or concern about a student's progress. Please contact the Artistic Director (via email preferably) to schedule a conference.

Repeating Levels of Study

Please do not be concerned if your child stays in his or her current level for **two** or more years. Unlike academic schools, SSBT has a 7 level system based on the ABT's National Training Curriculum, with each level designed to take 2 years to complete. Our primary concern is that a student be placed in a level and program that is appropriate to his or her skill level and physical strength. Because students grow and develop at different rates, advancement to the next level will be different for each child. Please therefore do not assume that "something is wrong" if your child remains in his or her current level for more than one year.

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Going on Pointe

Girls typically begin pointe work in Level 4i. Pointe work is not offered in the Classical Ballet Program. Regardless of level, however, students will only be able to go on pointe if they are able to do so safely, without risking injury to their growing bones and joints. To ensure this safety, SSBT faculty assess a number of factors including adequate flexibility of the foot to allow the student to align the bones of the foot with the tibia, adequate strength of the foot, ankle, leg and torso to sustain the required pull-up, adequate turnout and strength of the turnout muscles to sustain proper alignment, and general physical maturity that suggests the development of the bones and joints are stable.

These factors are normally attained with a minimum of three years of disciplined ballet training and not before the age of 10. A young dancer who successfully meets all of these requirements will minimize the likelihood of injury, will progress more rapidly, and will find the work less difficult. Recommendations for pointe work are made conservatively because a student's long-term health and well being are always our top priority..

Registration Details:

Online Registration begins June 1st. There is a **non-refundable \$300 deposit for Levels 1- Pre Pro (100% applied to annual tuition)** to ensure your child's enrollment for next year. All tuition may be paid by cash, check or charge (MasterCard, Visa or Discover only).

Tuition Payment Policy and Schedule:

All families must create an account through our online system and leave a credit card on file at all times. Tuition may be paid in full, or in 2, 4 or 9 installments. Payments are due by the **1st of the month**. There are no fees incurred regardless of the payment option chosen. There is a late payment fee of \$10 and a returned check fee of \$35.

By signing the registration form, you understand and agree to pay your child's tuition for the entire school year (September 2016-June 2017) and understand the policies listed below with regards to payment, early withdrawal and refunds. All families must have a credit card on file at all times. If you do not put a valid credit card on file, tuition must be paid in full PRIOR to the start of the year.

Payment options:

- Option 1:** 9 Monthly Payments (Sept – May)
Due on the 1st of each month (This is the *default payment option*)
- Option 2:** Payment in Full September 6th, 2016
- Option 3:** 2 payments due September 6th, 2016 and February 1st, 2017

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Option 4: 4 Payments due September 1st, November 1st, February 1st and April 1st

Young Dancers Program: Pay in full at the beginning of each session
Fall 9/6/16, Winter 11/28/16, Spring 3/13/17

Late Payments and Returned Checks

A \$10 fee will be charged for all late payments. If tuition payments fall beyond 30 days past due, your child will be temporarily withdrawn from SSBT and it may jeopardize future enrollment. Those with outstanding balances will be prohibited from participation in any SSBT program or production. If financial difficulties arise, please contact the school immediately. **We will work with you to find a payment plan for you and your family.**

A \$35 fee will be charged for all checks returned to our office for insufficient funds. Replacement funds must be a credit card, certified bank check, money order, or cash.

Cancelled Classes

South Shore Ballet Theatre reserves the right to cancel any class during the year due to insufficient enrollment.

Due to the weather conditions normally found in the northeast, snow days will occur and will be announced in accordance with Hanover Public School System's snow day policy. All information on cancelled classes can be found on our website calendar, which is updated daily as well as by recorded message on the school phone.

South Shore Ballet Theatre does not give credit and/or refunds for class(es) missed due to holiday, vacation, illness, weather, etc

Refunds and Early Withdrawal:

All requests for early withdrawal must be submitted to SSBT in writing. You are an "active student" until written withdrawal letter has been received. At South Shore Ballet Theatre, we make a commitment to your child in the same way that you make a commitment to the school. There is therefore a non-negotiable fee of \$500 applicable to any student who chooses to withdraw from South Shore Ballet Theatre after the beginning of the school year for **non-medical reasons**. The fee is due at the time of withdrawal. This fee is waived in the case of a serious illness or injury documented by a doctor's explanation. Tuition refunds take approximately six to eight weeks to be processed.

Referral Policy:

If you refer a student to SSBT **AND** they register for classes (space permitting), you will receive an additional \$25 off tuition (limit 3 per school year). The referral discount does not apply to

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siblings, but we do offer a separate sibling discount. Please contact the Artistic Director for details.

Performance Opportunities

The ultimate goal of many SSBT students is to perform on stage. Each student has an opportunity to join one or both performing groups (additional fee may apply). We provide this opportunity for all students age 7 and higher.

Winter Performing Group: We produce a full version of “The Nutcracker”, performed at a theatre on the south shore. The Performing Group is an elective enrichment program for our Classical Ballet Program students and a required event for our Intensive and Pre Pro students. This program generally holds rehearsals on Saturdays. The students have an opportunity to participate in the production based on their level of dancing.

The Gala: We end the year with a Gala highlighting the work of our students. Sometimes, this is a story ballet such as “Coppelia”, “Cinderella”, and “Alice in Wonderland”, while in other years, we have performed excerpts from major ballet. All students (7 years and older) at SSBT perform in this show.

Attendance and Absences

Students are expected to attend all of their classes. If a student is unable to attend a class, **the parent must notify the school before the scheduled class.**

If a student is absent for over two weeks for medical reasons, the school must be notified by the parent, and a related note from the doctor is required for the student’s file. Absences may put a student at risk for injury, impede his/her progress, and negatively impact rehearsals. For those reasons, absences may jeopardize a student’s participation and role in SSBT productions, as well as his or her promotion to the next level of training.

Make Up Classes

Students are not required to make up missed classes but are strongly encouraged to do so. Classes which fall during school vacation or holidays may not be made up as these occurrences have already been adjusted into the tuition. **Make up classes must be scheduled in advance, either through your online account or through administration personnel.** Make up classes should be scheduled for the same level or one level below. Choosing a level above the students’ current level for a make-up class is not allowed.

Arrival, Tardiness, and Pick Up

Students are expected to check in **ten minutes** prior to class time. Check in is available up to a half hour prior to class and up to 10 minutes after class has begun. Students arriving ten minutes *after* their class has begun will not be permitted to take the class, but should observe. Students taking additional classes during the same day are expected to return to the desk to check in for their 2nd and/or 3rd class before the class begins. Students should be **picked up at the end of their class.** If you will be late for any reason, please call the school to alert the

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administrator of your expected time of arrival. There is a **\$15 fee** for pickups that occur more than 15 minutes past the completion of class.

Dress Code

South Shore Ballet Theatre students must adhere to the dress code. The required items can be purchased at SSBT at the beginning of the school year. Dance clothes alone should not be worn outside the building. Outerwear should be worn when entering and exiting the buildings.

All students are expected to maintain a neat appearance and to abide by their specified dress code. All dancewear should be cleaned frequently, an extra pair of socks or tights should be carried in dance bags, and all outerwear must be removed prior to the beginning of class. Hair must be in a NEAT bun with bangs pulled off the face. For the safety of the students, only simple stud jewelry is permitted. Leg warmers or other warm-up gear are not permitted in class.

Volunteer Association and Parent Involvement

South Shore Ballet Theatre encourages the parents of all students to be involved with special events, outreach programs, lecture series, and performances. We simply could not do all that we do for the students without the help of the parents. Please try to be involved in at least one performance or event. Meetings through the year will detail available volunteer opportunities.

Classroom and Building Etiquette

Students are encouraged to attend to their personal needs prior to class in the dressing room. Please show respect for the teacher by not talking during class and acknowledging correction with a polite response.

Chewing gum, food, and drinks are not allowed in the studio. Minimal food and drinks are permitted in the lounge areas on Saturdays only. Please be courteous and pick up when you have finished eating. **All shoes are to be left at the front door.**

Medical Concerns and Emergencies

Please make sure that the faculty are aware of any medical concerns or conditions your child might have. If changes should arise, we ask that you notify the school in writing so that all records are accurate. Should an emergency arise, all attempts will be made to reach a student's parents first. If a parent/guardian is not reached, the emergency contact provided on the registration form will be called.

Lost and Found

Please mark your child's full name on every piece of ballet attire and any other personal belongings which your child may bring to the studio. Do NOT bring valuables to the studio. South Shore Ballet Theatre cannot be held responsible for any personal items left in any of its facilities. There is a lost and found table located in the back of the school where retrieved items will be placed. At the end of every month, items in the lost and found will be donated to charity.

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Anti-Bullying Policy

Honorable Behavior

Life at South Shore Ballet Theatre is based on honesty, responsibility, and respect for oneself and others. Our rules and policies are designed to support these principles and to provide a safe, friendly place for students to learn, play, and grow as individuals and as members of the community.

Discipline

By joining the South Shore Ballet Theatre community, each student agrees to abide by the rules and principles articulated in this handbook and by such additional rules and regulations as may be established by South Shore Ballet Theatre from time to time. While these rules and principles represent good-faith efforts to clearly state school policies, do note that in all disciplinary matters, South Shore Ballet Theatre reserves the right, at its own discretion and in its best judgment, to vary from these procedures or to impose such penalties as it deems appropriate. Only in matters related to dismissal or expulsion may decisions be appealed to the Artistic Director.

Every student enrolled at South Shore Ballet Theatre represents not only himself or herself and his or her family, but also South Shore Ballet Theatre by his or her conduct, on or off site, and whether South Shore Ballet Theatre is in session or not. South Shore Ballet Theatre has the right at any time to impose disciplinary sanctions, including dismissal or expulsion, on any student if his or her actions, on or off site, violate reasonable expectations of conduct, or in any way damage or impugn the reputation of South Shore Ballet Theatre, its faculty, or its student body. Such actions may include, but are not limited to: harassment or bullying, illegal use of drugs and alcohol, shoplifting, vandalism, disruptive and inappropriate behavior while on site, or while visiting another school or institution. If a student is the subject of criminal proceedings (whether by way of arrest, the application for a criminal complaint, or otherwise), South Shore Ballet Theatre may suspend the student pending the outcome of those proceedings. However, South Shore Ballet Theatre is in no way bound by either the pending nature or the outcome of any criminal proceedings against a student. When warranted, South Shore Ballet Theatre may elect to pursue its own disciplinary proceedings and make its own determinations at any time – before criminal proceedings formally begin, while those proceedings are ongoing, or after those proceedings have concluded.

Harassment & Anti-Bullying Policies

South Shore Ballet Theatre is committed to maintaining an atmosphere in which all members of our community are treated with respect and dignity. Bullying undermines these objectives and will not be tolerated. In addition, in certain circumstances, perpetrators of such behavior could find themselves subjected to criminal proceedings (see below).

Bullying can include, but is not limited to remarks, rumors, threats, gestures, physical contact, the display or transmission of images, written, verbal or electronic statements or other acts that are unwelcome or demeaning with respect to appearance, gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, or other characteristics. Students whose statements or actions, on or off site, constitute disrespect, mockery, intimidation, harassment, or bullying (including cyber-

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bullying) will be subject to disciplinary action. Additional legal definitions and consequences can be found below.

Massachusetts Anti-Bullying Law (signed May 3, 2010) defines bullying as:

“the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim’s property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment[*] at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.”

Cyber-bullying is defined by the same statute as:

“bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.”

*A hostile environment, exists when conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive that it materially interferes with a student’s educational experience.

In addition, the law also prohibits retaliation against any person who reports bullying, who provides information during an investigation of bullying, or who witnesses or has reliable information pertaining to bullying.

Reporting Bullying or Retaliation

Any student who feels he or she or any other student has been the subject of bullying or retaliation should immediately report the matter to the Artistic Director. Student reports of bullying may be made anonymously, although no disciplinary action will be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Any faculty or staff member of our school community who has witnessed or otherwise “become aware of” any bullying or retaliation also must, by law, report it to the Artistic Director.

School Response to Allegations of Bullying or Retaliation

Once any allegation of bullying or retaliation is received, a prompt investigation of the charge will be conducted by the Artistic Director.

If the Artistic Director determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he shall (i) notify the local law enforcement agency if he believes that criminal charges may be pursued against a

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perpetrator; (ii) take appropriate disciplinary action;** (iii) notify the parents or guardians of a perpetrator; (iv) notify the parents or guardians of the victim, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation, and (v) assess the victim's need for protection and take appropriate steps as necessary to restore a sense of safety for the victim.

**The disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator of bullying or retaliation include the full range of disciplinary sanctions for other forms of student misconduct, up to and including dismissal from the school. In taking disciplinary action, South Shore Ballet Theatre will strive to balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. No disciplinary action will be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

If the Artistic Director determines that a student has knowingly made a false accusation of bullying or retaliation, the Artistic Director will take appropriate disciplinary action.

Sexual Harassment

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has published *The Comprehensive School Health Manual* with school guidelines regarding sexual harassment.

Students are protected from sexual harassment under the provisions of Title IX. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that schools are required to protect their students from sexual harassment.

- By law, the victim defines sexual harassment.
- Sexual harassment in schools is any unwanted or unwelcome sexual attention by students, faculty, or staff, including sexual suggestions or threats, sexual jokes, spreading sexual rumors, comments regarding body parts or sexual orientation, staring or pointing at body parts, obscene gestures, display of obscene materials or remarks, grabbing, touching, or intentional physical contact, pulling or touching a person's clothing, impeding a person's movements, and any implicit or explicit pressure for sexual activity.
- Any form of retaliation against any person who has made a complaint relating to sexual harassment is forbidden.
- Those involved with sexual harassment investigations must protect the confidentiality of all information relating to the case.

Any student who feels that he or she has been the subject of harassment by anyone in our school community must immediately report the facts of such harassment to the Artistic Director. In order to facilitate a thorough investigation, this report must be in writing, and should detail specific circumstances related to any harassment (date, place, name, description of what transpired). Once any allegation of harassment is received, a prompt investigation of the charge will be conducted. Any charge determined by the investigation to be valid will result in disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may be taken on the basis of any conduct, on or off site, which poses a threat to persons or property within the school community.

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Hazing

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires schools to advise all students of An Act Prohibiting the Practice of Hazing (1985). Section 17 of Chapter 269 of the Massachusetts General Laws defines hazing as:

“Any conduct or method of initiation into a student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.”

Violators are subject to fines and/or imprisonment. Any student who feels that he or she has been the subject of hazing by anyone in our school community must immediately report the facts of such hazing to the Artistic Director.

MASSACHUSETTS ANTI-HAZING LAW, M.G.L. c. 269, §§ 17-19

Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment. The term “hazing” as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Section 19. Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution’s compliance with this section’s

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requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.