

Ms. Lynn Welters and
The Board of Directors
New School for Dance Arts
Washington, DC

Dear Ms. Welters and Members of the Board of Directors:

This letter has been long in the writing process as I can't seem to find many minutes during the day to sit down and gather my thoughts together. Here is my best attempt.

Last year was my daughter Tatianna's first year with NSDA. She joined the Limettes with much excitement in September. I was immediately pleased with the program at NSDA under the direction of Ms. Welters. Tatianna has flourished as a dancer and will, of course, be returning this season.

In my role as a foster parent, I took two children into my home in February of this year – Brandon (5 years old) and Brianna (4 years old). The very next day, I brought the children with me to Tatianna's dance class. Ms. Welters, in her kind and loud, loving way, asked me about the new additions. Without hesitation she offered to support the children taking dance class for the rest of the term. I was surprised and blown away by her generosity, especially considering she knew very little about Brandon and Brianna. I do believe Ms. Welters was prompted solely by her love for children and her knowledge of the benefits of such an opportunity. Ms. Welters looked at Brianna and Brandon and loved them.

It is really difficult for me to put into words what an incredible blessing it was for Brandon and Brianna. These two priceless gems come from absolutely nothing. Since they have been in my home, I've had to teach them to play, to be kind and friendly, and to talk to people. I've had to purchase every piece of clothing and shoes on their bodies. They have seen very little of the world, didn't have friends to speak, had never been on a play date, and had not received the basic nurturing and care that we so easily take for granted. For Brandon and Brianna, taking dance at NSDA was like winning the lottery.

Word of Ms. Welters' gift reached the Juvenile Court in Maryland, where we live. During open court testimony in May, the attorneys and judge asked me how I was able to secure the scholarship for the children. The court was impressed and excited for the children. I could take no praise or responsibility.

The structure and routine was a bit much for Brandon in the beginning. He's never had that much structure and he can be a rebel. However, as the only male dancer in the class, he mustered some confidence with Ms. Welters' encouragement and he learned something every week. In fact, for a while, I believe Brandon listened to her better than he listened to me. We had to wrestle and cajole him to get into the costumes, but he made his debut in June with the rest of the class.



Brianna had to learn which shoe went on which foot. She had to figure out how to put on a leotard and often didn't know which direction to go in. As the months wore on, she had made some adjustments and began to smile. A princess at heart, Brianna absolutely loved dance class. It made her feel special. It gave her confidence and the shiny glitter and sequins pushed her right over the edge.

The end of the year recital brought about much stress for this single mother of three, but it was well worth it. The children beamed with excitement before the show and were so very proud of their accomplishment when it was all said and done.

Thank you so much for the kindness and love you have shown all three of my children. You gave Brandon and Brianna a gift I could never afford, and I am so grateful. I feel so blessed in my heart to have stumbled upon such a wonderful place for children to dance and to learn and to grow as people. If there is anything I can do to continue to support the wonderful work of NSDA, I'd be happy to.



Sincerely,

Renee S Patrick
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