

WASHINGTON STATE DANCE EDUCATION EXPECTATIONS



Developed by the Executive Board of
The Dance Educators Association of Washington
(DEAW)

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When we realise that movement is the essence of life, and that all expression, whether it be speaking, writing, singing, painting, or dancing, uses movement as a vehicle, we cannot help seeing the importance of understanding this outward expression of the living energy within. . . .

—Rudolf Laban

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Introduction

The part of the brain that processes movement is the same part of the brain that's processing learning. . . . Surprisingly, there is no single 'brain center' in our brain. Movement and learning have constant interplay.

—Eric Jensen,
Keeping the Brain in Mind

Every school and school district in the State of Washington has a responsibility to ensure that instruction in arts education is provided to all students. Arts education consists of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. We have prepared this document, *Washington State Dance Education Expectations*, to help schools and districts develop programs in dance that will benefit their students' growth and learning in many ways.

Dance enables a child to take an active role in constructing meaning. It is an essential component of culture, a powerful means of expression, and a strong builder of community. In addition, dance supports academic achievement by nurturing the growth and development of the brain networks that form the foundations of the learning process.

This outline of standards for a dance program has these purposes:

- ★ to assist the *school administrator* in establishing an environment and atmosphere for nurturing academic excellence through a school dance program;
- ★ to support the *dance educator* in providing a well-rounded program of dance education for all students and advanced instruction for students wishing to pursue advanced study in dance;
- ★ to support the development of *dance programs* that meet Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements in the area of dance.

These recommendations outline a model program in dance—a complete, sequential, comprehensive, district-wide curriculum that extends across all grade levels and supports the academic growth of every learner, while offering deeper





Learning to walk set you free. Learning to dance gives you the greatest freedom of all: to express your whole self, the person you are.

—Melissa Hayden

opportunities to students who choose to concentrate in the area of dance.

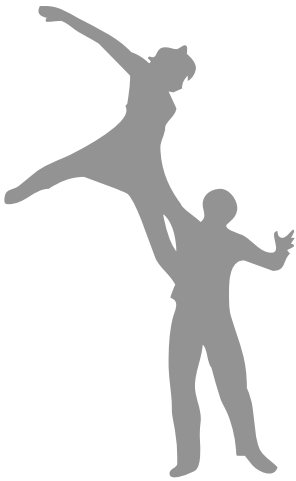
This is the goal—a goal that will be achieved through many beginnings and multiple steps. The inspired administrator, educator, parent, artist, or education activist will need to begin the process of developing a versatile and strong dance program, keeping the goal in mind. Begin with one clear space, one qualified dance educator, one visionary advocate, one group of children, and begin to build . . . toward a program that will serve the learning needs of all children.



Why Dance?

When you learn to move your body on a note of music, it's exciting. You have taken control of your body and, learning to do that, you discover you can take control of your life.

—Jacques d'Amboise,
dancer and founder of the
National Dance Institute



Research indicates that consistent involvement in the arts supports increased academic achievement, as well as improved attitudes and behavior, among students from upper-income as well as lower-income populations. Arts education increases a student's ability to express ideas and feelings openly and thoughtfully; to conceive and imagine various perspectives; to construct and organize ideas into meaningful units; and to sustain focus over a period of time. Further positive outcomes include motivation to achieve, positive self-concept, and positive feelings about school (President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*). The arts teach students to transform ideas and feelings into an art form; to understand and make connections within and across the arts, other disciplines, work, and life; and to see the world in new and different ways.

Dance education offers students a kinesthetic approach to learning; experiences in world dance and culture; practice in communication and social skills; and opportunities to develop physical agility, flexibility, alignment, coordination, and healthy patterns for life. In dance, students learn about using their movement as an expressive tool in performance and in everyday communication. They explore the vocabulary of dance as an art, in order to apply and analyze its effectiveness as a way of communicating ideas and feelings. Using their kinesthetic intelligence, they review and express classroom learning, individually and in groups. They develop collaborative skills, as well as the skills of process that are necessary for developing quality work (preparation, creation, critique and revision, and performance).

Dance offers intellectual, emotional, physical, and social benefits.

Intellectually, students

- acquire a movement vocabulary applicable to all areas of life;
- develop problem-solving skills by solving movement problems;
- strengthen their ability to listen and follow directions;
- increase learning in other content areas by translating knowledge into movement;
- develop neural pathways, through movement patterning, that are essential to language acquisition, reading readiness, and mathematical ability.

Emotionally, students

- develop self awareness by expressing feelings through movement;
- increase self-esteem through positive and non-competitive experiences;
- feel the joy and satisfaction of expressing their thoughts through movement.

Physically, students

- develop strong, healthy bodies through movement and exercise;
- enhance body awareness, control, balance, and coordination;
- release energy through positive physical activity.

Socially, students

- learn to cooperate with others through partner and group work;
- practice self-discipline through sharing space and interacting safely with other dancers;
- discover the value of individual differences and learn to appreciate diverse cultural expression.



Dance is the only art of which we ourselves are the stuff of which it is made.

—Ted Shawn, *Time*, 25 July 1955



The
**Dance Educators Association
of Washington**
(DEAW)



DEAW is a non-profit professional organization dedicated to the advancement of dance education as a basic and integral component at all public and private levels of education in the state of Washington.

The purpose of DEAW is to

- * promote dance as a basic part of the regular and special education curriculum in all elementary and secondary schools;
- * promote the teaching of dance by qualified dance educators;
- * encourage partnerships among art agencies, public and private schools, businesses, professional dancers, artists-in-residence programs, and organizations;
- * advocate and actively develop dance as a component of teacher education programs as part of the preparation of classroom teachers and specialists;
- * encourage and support a dance education component as part of dance major/minor programs in higher education;
- * support PreK–12 dance curriculum that includes the elements of dance, improvisation, and composition; historical and cultural aspects of dance; aesthetics and criticism; technique, performance, production, and careers;
- * provide quality workshops, seminars, and conferences that contribute to personal and professional growth;
- * initiate, continue, and expand research, model programs, and advocacy projects that provide a critical base from which to promote excellence in dance education;
- * promote the values of dance in the schools to the community, school administrators, and government leaders.

The
**National Dance
Education Organization**
(NDEO)

The mission of NDEO is to advance dance education centered in the arts.

The goals of NDEO are to

- ★ promote dance as an artistic process that broadens and deepens human experience;
- ★ strengthen the national voice in articulating and implementing a vision for dance education;
- ★ weave dance into the complete fabric of learning.

NDEO encourages research and practical application to promote quality instruction in dance arts education conducted by qualified teachers of dance.

NDEO holds public discussions; sponsors institutes, conferences, and programs; and forges alliances with other agencies in support of dance arts education.



Building the Foundation for a Dance Program

How does a school district create a dance program that is comprehensive, sequential, and standards-based? First and foremost, a model dance program must be designed with long-range vision toward its educational value, within a philosophical framework that will nurture its establishment and growth.

According to *Gaining the Arts Advantage: Lessons from School Districts that Value Arts Education*, commissioned by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities and Arts Education Partnership, "the single most critical factor in sustaining arts education in their schools is the active involvement of influential segments of the community in shaping and implementing the policies and programs of the district." As outlined in the following summary, thirteen factors are identified as key in creating a successful program.



The full report is available on the Arts Education Partnership website at www.aep-arts.org.

If dancing were any easier, it would be called football.

—Anonymous

Critical Success Factors for Achieving District-Wide Arts Education

- 1 **The Community:** In districts with strong arts education, the community—broadly defined as parents and families, artists, arts organizations, businesses, local civic and cultural leaders and institutions—is actively engaged in the arts politics and instructional programs of the district. More specifically, the community includes: parents active in school arts programs; interdisciplinary teams of arts specialists developing curricula; artists in residence; arts faculty involvement in community arts events; students exhibiting and performing for community audiences.
- 2 **The School Board:** School districts with strong arts education programs generally have boards of education that provide a supportive policy framework and environment for the arts.
- 3 **The Superintendent:** Superintendents who regularly articulate a vision for arts education are

critically important to successful implementation and stability.

- 4 **Continuity:** There is enough continuity in the school and community leadership to implement comprehensive arts education.
- 5 **The District Arts Coordinator:** District arts coordinators facilitate program implementation throughout a school system and maintain an environment of support for arts education.
- 6 **A Cadre of Principals:** School principals who collectively support the policy of arts education for all students often are instrumental in the policy's successful district-wide implementation.
- 7 **The Teacher as Artist:** Effective teachers of the arts are allowed—indeed are encouraged—to continue to develop mastery of their art form(s) as well as in their teaching competence.
- 8 **Parent/Public Relations:** School leaders in districts with strong system-wide arts education seize opportunities to make their programs known throughout the community in order to secure support and funding for them.
- 9 **An Elementary Foundation:** Strong arts programs in the elementary school years are the foundation for strong system-wide programs.
- 10 **Opportunities for Higher Levels of Achievement:** School leaders in these districts provide specialized arts programs as part of their broad strategy for securing and sustaining community support for the district's overall educational goals.
- 11 **National, State, and Other Outside Forces:** Many districts in this study employ state or national policies and programs to advance arts education.
- 12 **Planning:** School leaders in this study advise the adoption of a comprehensive vision and plan for arts education but recommend its incremental implementation.
- 13 **Continuous Improvement:** School districts that succeed in advancing arts education promote reflective practices at all levels of the schools to improve quality.

Dance, even if you have nowhere to do it
but your living room.

—Kurt Vonnegut



Creating a Dance Program

A model dance program is founded upon the underlying philosophy that the Arts, including Dance, Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts, are basic and necessary in education, a philosophy held and enacted by the superintendent, school board, building principals, arts administrators, parent association, and community. The superintendent, school board, and principals work to provide the budget necessary for the arts program. The community is involved in and supports the arts. Parents have a role in the program, and the dance program maintains a connection with local artists in the community.

Offerings within a dance program must extend across all grade levels. A sequential, comprehensive series of offerings will provide substantial background experiences and academic support to all students, while offering opportunities for continuing growth and development for students concentrating in the area of dance. Specific elements must be in place for a healthy dance education program. Following these guidelines will lay the foundation for a quality program. A quality program should be available to all students, at all schools in the State of Washington. This should include special needs students, using a model of inclusion in regular classrooms as much as possible.



Curriculum

Elementary (K–5)

- A sequential, comprehensive dance curriculum is taught. The curriculum provides many opportunities to create, perform, and respond, with frequent integration between the arts and with other academic subjects.
- Each class meets two to five times per week at all grade levels (30 to 60 minutes per class).
- These classes teach to Benchmark 1 of the Washington State Arts EALRs.
- Students have opportunities to view dance videos and live performances
- Authentic assessments, both formal and informal, track individual learning at each level.
- Periodic public performances develop students' presentation skills and share academic growth with parents and the school community (two to three times per year).

Middle (6–8)

- A sequential, comprehensive dance curriculum is taught. The curriculum provides opportunities to create, perform, and respond, with frequent integration between the arts and with other academic subjects.
- Each class meets two to five times per week at all grade levels (45 to 90 minutes per class).
- These classes teach to Benchmark 2 of the Washington State Arts EALRs.
- Students have opportunities to view dance videos and live performances.
- Authentic assessments, both formal and informal, track individual learning at each level. Time is provided for students to establish, evaluate, and revise their goals for growth and performance in dance, through the use of portfolios and videotapes.
- All classes provide appropriate time to incorporate warm-up and cool-down.
- Classes are offered for various skill levels, including entry-level classes for beginners and daily performance-based classes for intermediate and advanced students (these should be offered for at least 45 minutes daily).
- Periodic public performances develop students' presentation skills and share academic growth with parents and the school community (two to three times per year).

Secondary (9–12)

- Entry-level dance curriculum is offered as an elective at all secondary schools. The curriculum provides opportunities to create, perform, and respond, with frequent integration between the arts and with other academic subjects.
- Each class meets at least three times per week (45 to 90 minutes per class).
- These classes teach to Benchmark 3 of the Washington State Arts EALRs.
- Students have opportunities to view dance videos and live performances.
- Authentic assessments, both formal and informal, track individual learning at each level. Time is provided for students to establish, evaluate, and revise their goals for growth and performance in dance, through the use of portfolios and videotapes.
- Introductory and advanced instruction, in various dance styles and specialties (jazz, tap, hip hop, ballet, ethnic, choreography, and so forth, according to student interest), are available to students who are artistically gifted or pursuing dance education in greater depth.
- Course offerings develop knowledge of dance and its history: dance history, cultural and historical contexts of dance, aesthetic appreciation, kinesiology, injury prevention, and other related topics.
- Academic credit is included in the student's GPA at all levels of dance instruction. If applicable, specific dance courses can be used to fulfill PE fitness requirements.
- Periodic public performances develop students' presentation skills and share academic growth with parents and the school community (two to three times per year).

Staffing

- All dance classes are taught by a highly qualified specialist.†
- The average class size for all classes does not exceed the average for classroom teachers. Overload numbers apply to specialists as they would for classroom teachers. At middle and high school level, class sizes should follow classroom teacher limits, not PE limits.
- Although class size limits may be waived for performing ensembles and/or specialty classes, these classes do not exceed a manageable number agreed upon by the instructor and administration.
- If regular classroom teachers are given fewer students, extra help, or other accommodations when they work with students covered by individual educational plans, the dance educator is given the same accommodations.
- Dance educators are compensated for classes taught outside of the regular school day schedule and for performances that fall outside of the contracted teaching day.
- Dance educators receive the same considerations for class preparation time as classroom teachers—for class planning, interdisciplinary work, program development, and implementation of arts integration.
- Dance educators are encouraged to seek professional development opportunities in dance/arts education. Funding from the district for professional development is equal to that of classroom teachers.
- An arts coordinator holds a full-time position offering leadership to ensure consistency, resources, and equal opportunity to students, from school to school and from grade level to grade level.

† *Qualifications as a teacher are achieved through certification, by traditional, alternative, or conditional measures. A highly qualified dance educator also has a dance endorsement, an undergraduate or graduate specialization in dance, or professional training and performance in dance as a fine art.*

Scheduling

- Sufficient time is provided between classes to travel and change for class. Changing time should not be included in the minimum class time.
- At the secondary level, some dance instruction at both introductory and advanced levels is offered during the regular school day, and all students have the opportunity to enroll in these classes. Specialty classes may also be offered outside of the regular school.

Equipment

A comprehensive dance program must be funded with a yearly budget that allows for purchase and maintenance of the following basic supplies and equipment:

- A sound system with current technology for instruction (variable speed equipment; speakers appropriate to the room size; microphone for voice amplification; remote control).

- Access to audio recordings, videos, and DVDs representing a variety of cultures, historical periods, and musical styles.
- Video camera, tripod, VCR, DVD player, TV monitor, and overhead/slide projector for providing examples of dance and for conducting student assessments.
- Audio equipment with the capacity for playing cassettes and CDs, for student use during choreography.
- Supportive dance-related books and materials for student and teacher use in the library and school media center.
- A variety of props such as scarves, ribbon sticks, beanbags, hoops, cones, hand drums, and small percussion instruments.

Facility

All levels (elementary, middle, and secondary)

- A large, open, designated space, clear of furniture, with sprung floor to prevent injury, and at least 64 square feet of space per class participant.
- Appropriate acoustics, in a quiet area, free of distractions and traffic.
- Adequate heat and lighting.
- Access to water and restrooms.
- Sufficient storage for all dance equipment.
- Sufficient storage for students' shoes, coats, books, etc.
- Bulletin board and white-board space for instruction.
- Computers provided for student and teacher use.
- Performance space with adequate seating for community performances; this space also available for rehearsal prior to performance.



Middle and secondary levels

- Mirrors and barres.
- Easy access to changing rooms with use for boys and girls.
- Access to an accompanist for use in dance classes.
- Performance space with wings and backstage space, lighting, and technical support for performances; this space also available for rehearsal and performance use during and after school.

Resources for Further Information and Support

Arts Education Partnership (AEP) is a national coalition of arts, education, business, philanthropic, and government organizations that demonstrate and promote the essential role of the arts in the learning and development of every child and in the improvement of America's schools. www.aep-arts.org

Arts for Learning is a website designed for teachers and teaching artists to use in planning, creating, and conducting classroom activities that enrich student learning in and through the arts. www.arts4learning.org

ArtsEdge, the National Arts and Education Network, a program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Arts, supports the placement of the arts at the center of the curriculum and advocates creative use of technology to enhance the K–12 educational experience. ArtsEdge offers free, standards-based teaching materials for use in and out of the classroom, as well as professional development resources, student materials, and guidelines for arts-based instruction and assessment. artsedge.kennedy-center.org

Artslynx, Artslynx International Arts Resources, is designed as a portal to the best information on the arts available on the web. www.artslynx.org

ArtsTime is sponsored by Washington State's professional organizations for arts education: the Dance Educators Association of Washington (DEAW), VSA Arts of Washington (VSAW), ArtsEdWashington (formerly WAAE), the Washington Alliance for Theatre Education (WATE), the Washington Art Education Association (WAEA) and the Washington Music Educators Association (WMEA). ArtsTime produces a biennial in-service conference for the benefit of teachers of the arts, classroom teachers who teach the arts, administrators, school board members, advocates, teaching artists, parents, and community members. www.artstime.org/index.html

Dance Educators Association of Washington (DEAW), an affiliate of the National Dance Educators Organization, is the professional association for dance educators

in public and private settings in the State of Washington. DEAW, P.O. Box 1338, Vancouver, WA, 98666. www.deawa.com

Marco Polo, Internet Content for the Classroom, provides high-quality, standards-based Internet content and professional development to K–12 teachers and students throughout the United States. www.marcopolo-education.org

National Dance Association provides leadership for teachers of dance within the American Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (AAHPERD). www.aahperd.org/nda/

National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) advances dance education centered in the arts; encourages research and practical application to promote quality instruction in dance arts education conducted by qualified teachers of dance; sponsors institutes, conferences, and programs; and forges alliances with other agencies in support of dance arts education. www.ndeo.org

Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) leads, supports, and oversees K–12 education in Washington State, in collaboration with educators, students, families, local communities, business, labor, and government, ensuring the success of all learners. www.k12.wa.us/curriculumInstruct/arts/

Opportunities-to-Learn Standards for Arts Education, developed by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations (1995).

President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities & Arts Education Partnership, *Champions of Change: The Impact of Arts on Learning* (2000) and *Gaining the Arts Advantage: Lessons from School Districts That Value Arts Education* (1999).

U.S. Department of Education, *Blue Ribbon Schools: Outstanding Practices in the Arts* (1994).