

Akron School for the Arts Department of Dance



The dance program at **Akron School for the Arts** at Firestone High School, now in its 23rd year, is designed for the serious and experienced student in dance. Entrance is by audition for incoming ninth graders, many of whom hail from all areas of Summit County and beyond. Over a four-year period, the students earn credits in dance-area electives, maintain a high grade point average, and fulfill contractual requirements. If successful, students receive a fine arts endorsement on their high school diploma reflecting this concentrated study. The brand new facilities include a built-to-specifications dance studio space complete with technology, equipment, sprung floor, student storage and dressing areas. The Akron School for the Arts is a school within the Firestone High School, which is in the Akron Public Schools district of Ohio, and also houses a comprehensive curriculum including Advanced Placement, Engineering, and International Baccalaureate programs.

Our Mission

The Dance Program of the Akron School for the Arts is a collegiate model course of study designed to develop students' technical abilities simultaneously with creative expression in preparation for all facets of university level dance study. By closely aligning our curriculum to national and state standards for arts education, the program prepares its students to pursue a career in dance by providing a solid base of dance technique in multiple styles, an understanding of choreographic methods, a fundamental knowledge of sound health practices, and to foster advocacy and appreciation for dance as an art form in a historical and cultural context.

Furthermore, the program looks to cultivate a strong and positive reputation for Akron Public Schools through ongoing programming and partnerships with universities throughout the state and with national arts organizations. Similarly, the program looks to create unique professional development opportunities for its dancers – and future ambassadors of the Akron Public Schools – through projects with internationally renowned dance companies and artists.

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Achievements

The **Dance Program** is supported by the Akron Public Schools, the Firestone Choral Dance Organization (FCDO), and the Friends of the Akron School for the Arts (FASA). Through this administrative support and community partnerships, guest artists frequent the dance program for master classes, and have included The Paul Taylor Dance Company, Taylor II, Ohio Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Dance Alloy, The Repertory Project, Hernando Cortez, Groundworks Dance Theatre, Ron Brown/Evidence, The Garth Fagan Dance Company, Urban Bush Women, and the Martha Graham Dance Company, among others. Students have performed repertory work by David Parsons (*The Envelope*, set in a residency by Verb Ballets) and John Giffin (*Manimal House*, 2011) as well as original work by Michael Medcalf (*Lovely*, 2007), Dianne McIntyre (*All You Ever Wanted*, 2009), Bill Wade/Inlet Dance Theater (*Sojourn*, 2013), Alice Gibbs (*High Heeled Sneakers*, 2014), Elyse Morckel (*the time has come*, 2015), Jeff Marras (*Labradorite*, 2016), Erich Yetter (*BOS #3*, 2016), and Brian Murphy (*Waiting*, 2016). Student works have been included on OhioDance young artist showcases and have been adjudicated by university faculty by surrounding dance programs including University of Akron (Kaye Davis, Linda Ferrato, Kelli Sanford), Kent State University (Andrea Shearer, Kim Karpanty), Ohio University (Dr. Zelma Badu-Young), Cleveland State University (Lynn Deering), Lake Erie College (Lisa DeCato), Oberlin College (Carter McAdams), Slippery Rock University (Jennifer Keller), Erik Speth (Ohio State University), Erich Yetter (Case Western Reserve University), Dr. Gill Miller (Dension University), Kora Radella (Kenyon College), and the University of Michigan (Robin Wilson). FHS dancers can be found in many university dance departments; graduates have been accepted to Barnard College, Slippery Rock University, Point Park College, Kent State University, University of Akron, Elon University, Otterbein University, Eastern Michigan University, SUNY Purchase, Ohio University, University of the Arts, The College of Wooster, and the Ohio State University. The department has been featured in a few times Dance Teacher Magazine as a model K-12 dance program (most recently in the September 2017 issue: <http://www.dance-teacher.com/how-one-high-school-dance-teacher-built-a-positive-relationship-with-local-studios-2487124804.html>), and is often visited by dance education students and professors from University of Akron and Kent State University. In the fall of 2007, the department was granted a chapter of the National Honor Society for Dance Arts by the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO).

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Director Biography

Kelly H. Berick has taught dance in numerous public schools in SC, PA, and OH, which includes directing the Akron School for the Arts dance program since 1996. She has served on the faculties of Columbia College, Temple University, The University of Akron, and Cuyahoga Community College teaching dance techniques, dance appreciation/fundamentals, and instructional strategies courses, and has also conducted staff development workshops on dance education in Ohio and South Carolina. She has professional performance experience, appearing with Wrenn Cook and Friends DANCE (SC) for four years, as well as in residency/repertory works by David Dorfman, Dan Wagoner, Liz Lerman, and others. Professional memberships include *National Dance Education Organization*, where she serves on the K-12 Task Force, K-12 Mentoring Committee, and Resources Review Committee and has presented at national conference numerous times; two-term board member of *OhioDance*; and 1-term board member of *Ohio Alliance for Arts Education*. Berick was named “Ohio’s Dance Educator of the Year” by the Ohio Association for Health, PE, Recreation and Dance (2001), and *OhioDance* “Award for Contributions to the Advancement of Dance Education in Ohio” (2014). She was named to the writing team to create and draft Ohio’s original Fine Arts Content Standards by the Ohio Department of Education in 2001-2003, and she facilitated the writing of Ohio’s Model Curriculum for Dance from 2013-2014. A North Carolina native, Berick received a BA in Dance with Honors at Columbia College, M.Ed. in Dance at Temple University, and Ohio K-12 Dance licensure at the University of Akron.

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Technique and the Dancer I *Dance and the Creative Process I*

Technique and the Dancer II *Dance and the Creative Process II*

Each is 1 Year, 1 elective credit per course, 50 minutes daily per course, for Grades 9-10 or first- or second-year students

Prerequisites: Audition during Open Enrollment period, demonstrating previous experience in Dance training, and completion of preceding course in sequence

Technical:

ballet and modern (1 day per week each, plus additional classes at area studio of choice)

- *Alignment of spine, pelvis, and lower extremities*
- *Correct use of turnout*
- *Avoiding hyperextension of knees*
- *Strengthening of center*
- *Making personal assessment of strengths and weaknesses*

jazz and tap supplements (as available by guest artists)

guest artist works (as available pending funding)

Creative/aesthetic:

improvisation/composition;

choreographic projects (2 days per week)

- *Exploration of the elements of dance (body, space, energy, time)*
- *Using elements to generate new movement*
- *How and why to improvise*
- *Individual phrases and movement sentences*
- *Using composition to form choreography (individual and group processes)*
- *Using the elements of emotion and inner "feeling" for composition*
- *Compositional structures and choreographic tools*
- *Small group forms*

Theory: (1 day per week)

Historical/Cultural/Aesthetic

Year 1 or 2

- *Ballet history*
- *Ballet vocabulary*
- *Analysis of periods of Ballet*
- *Analysis of choreographers' styles and innovations*

- *Comparison of Ballet to other genres*
- *Tracing of Ballet from courts of Louis XIV to the evolution of Modern dance*
- *View and critique ballets*
- *Critique two live concerts by professional or university companies*

Year 1 or 2

- *Modern dance history*
- *Modern dance vocabulary*
- *Analysis of periods of Modern dance*
- *Analysis of choreographers' styles and innovations*
- *Comparison of Modern dance to other genres*
- *View and critique modern dances*
- *Critique two live concerts by professional or university companies*

Related studies:

Year 1 or 2

- *Anatomy and fundamental kinesiological concepts*
- *Strengthening techniques for large muscle groups*
- *Injury prevention concepts*
- *Research of training practices for dancers*
- *Use of dance and dance learning techniques in the learning/mastery of other content*
- *Use of techniques used in dance to improve other areas of life/learning*
- *Developing personal philosophy about dance and art*

Year 1 or 2

- *Research of proper warm up*
- *Nutrition and wellness*
- *Theater terminology and technical theatre concepts*
- *Connecting dance to theater, to other art forms, and to other academic disciplines*
- *Research of local, state and national dance/arts organizations*
- *Advocacy for the arts and arts education*
- *Research of Theory of Multiple Intelligences (Howard Gardner)*

Technique and the Dancer III and IV
Dance and the Creative Process III and IV

Course # 9660, 9630, 9670, 9640

1 Year, 1 elective credit per course, 50 minutes daily per course, Grades 11-12

Prerequisites: completion of preceding courses in sequence

Technical:

Ballet, modern, and Pilates matwork (1 day per week plus additional classes at area studio of choice)

- *See "Dance I and II", plus...*
- *Development of movement vocabulary*
- *Focus on individual technical problems in students*
- *Classical ballet variations, master classes in other genres, and more as available*
- *guest artist works (as available pending funding)*

Teaching dance

- *Leading group warm up with confidence*
- *Developing and demonstrating the ability to prepare, facilitate, and conduct quality rehearsal*
- *Practice teaching dance to non-dancers (preparation, execution, reflection)*
- *Practice teaching class in a familiar genre (preparation, execution, reflection)*
- *Practice teaching class in an unfamiliar genre (preparation, execution, reflection)*

Creative/Aesthetic: (4 days per week)

Improvisation/composition/choreographic projects

- *Reviewing elements, phrasing, transitions, compositional tools and choreographic devices*
- *Exploration of weight-sharing, inversion and other challenging movement material*
- *Continued use of improvisation to generate new movement and explore images*
- *Work with props, sound, costumes and other arts disciplines*
- *Communication of themes through movement*
- *Work with ensembles of varying sizes individually and collaboratively*
- *Creating a personal solo and an ensemble dance for personal choreographic portfolio*

Theory:

Historical/Cultural/Critical:

- *Research current choreographers from various genres*

- Critique two live concerts by professional or university companies

Related Studies:

- University dance program search, analysis, and selection processes
- Dance careers
- Comparing philosophies of dance artists and dance educators
- Comparing lives and philosophies of full-time artists to part-time artists
- Use of dance concepts in other arts, academic, and real-life applications
- Employment of theater concepts, safe training practices, and professionalism into dance classes/rehearsals
- Professional issues in dance and dance education
- Membership/involvement in local, state, or national dance organization
- Articulate personal artistic philosophy
- Articulate advocacy for dance and dance education orally and in writing

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Dance Informance

December

7:00 pm, FHS Auditorium

The annual *Dance Informance* is a very informal showing of the work we have done in class and is specifically for parents/families. We will show examples of classwork and projects and give the audience a chance for questions. It should last about one hour at the most.

1. There is no prior after-school rehearsal for this showing.
2. Students are required to be here at 6:00 pm to warm up and prepare the stage for the showing.
3. Students should wear the required hunter green leotard/shirt and black jazz pants that you purchased in September for use at ASA. This is their costume for this event.
4. Please read **Rules for Dance Concert Performance**, and make certain that you and your student are on top of all expectations.
5. Students will be graded for this performance using the **Rubric for Dance Performance**.
6. Conflicts and problems with transportation will indeed harm the grade, so prevent this by planning in advance (carpools if needed!).
7. After the *Dance Informance*, we hope that a family will host a department holiday potluck party at their home (unless it is exam week). Please plan to join us with family in tow...this is a fun time and rare chance to relax with other dance families. The potluck usually ends by 9:30pm.
8. If you would like to volunteer during the *Dance Informance* or to host the holiday potluck, the sign-ups will be during Open House and Interim Pick Ups (and also on "Sign-Up Genius" if needed). As always, thanks so much to our Volunteers for making our work possible.

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Adjudications

December or January

Periods 1-4, 158

The annual *Dance Adjudications* is a formal showing of student work to a panel of adjudicators for consideration for concert inclusion. All students in Dance III/IV submit dances for adjudication. All students in Dance I/II attend adjudications to observe the process.

1. There is no prior after-school rehearsal for this showing.
2. Students are required to be here at 8:00 am to warm up and prepare for the showing.
3. Students should wear the required hunter green leotard/shirt and black jazz pants that you purchased in September for use at ASA. This is their costume for this event.
4. Students participate in a master class conducted by one of the adjudicators in order to warm up for showings (roughly 8:15-9:45 am).
5. Students will be graded for the adjudication process by both daily grade rubrics and by adjudicator scoring forms. Preparatory and reflective writing assignments will take place surrounding the adjudications, and these will be test and/or exam grades, which are 20% of the grading period and semester. The dance itself is a major project and will be worth at least 20% of the grading period.
6. Students will be graded for their finished products. Dance III create their own rubric for their finished product; Dance IV are graded on the adjudicator scoring form.
7. Two adjudicators are invited: one is usually from the university sector, and one is usually from the professional sector (a professional company artistic director/choreographer or dancer, or studio owner).

Past adjudicators have come from universities including University of Akron (Kaye Davis, Linda Ferrato), Kent State University (Andrea Shearer, Kim Karpanty), Ohio University (Dr. Zelma Badu-Younge), Cleveland State University (Lynn Deering), Lake Erie College (Lisa DeCato), Oberlin College (Carter McAdams), Slippery Rock University (Jennifer Keller), Ohio State University (Erik Speth), Case Western Reserve University (Erich Yetter), Denison University (Dr. Gill Miller), Kenyon College (Kora Radella), and the University of Michigan (Robin Wilson). Professional choreographers/companies/studios have included Verb Ballets (Margaret Carlson), Inlet Dance Theater (Bill Wade), Cleveland Contemporary Dance Theater (Michael Medcalf), Real.Edge.Dance. (Kelli Sanford), Studio West (Erin Smith), All About Dance By Kristin (Michele Valdez), Manchester Dance Ensemble (Lesla Brodhead), The Backspace (Jeff Marras), and The Movement Project (Megan Gargano).

Akron School for the Arts Department of Dance



Dance Concert

Usually takes place between early March and early April of each school year

Thursday – AM Assemblies

Friday and Saturday – 7:30 performances

FHS Auditorium

The annual *Dance Concert* is a very formal showing of finished works by student, staff and guest choreographers developed in class during the course of the year. It is open to the public through ticket sales. It tends to last approximately two hours.

1. Rehearsals take place immediately after school for the preceding two weeks, and always conclude between 6:00 and 7:00pm. Snacks are recommended and a Snack Box will be organized.
2. On concert nights, students are required to be here at 6:00 pm to warm up and prepare to perform. Students should have eaten dinner and done their hair and make-up prior to their arrival.
3. Costumes range from department-owned pieces to student-owned garments. We do not purchase expensive, new costumes for every dance, but at times, we can make purchases. We protect the family from expense as much as possible.
4. Please read **Rules for Dance Concert Rehearsal** and **Rules for Dance Concert Performance**, and make certain that you and your student are on top of all expectations.
5. Students will be graded during all after school rehearsals using the **Rubric for Dance Concert Rehearsal**. Students will be graded for these performances using the **Rubric for Dance Performance**.
6. All conflicts (including problems with transportation) will indeed harm the grade, so prevent this by planning in advance (carpools if needed!). There are no absences, early departures, or late arrivals excused or permitted during rehearsals or performances. Likewise, the student must be present at school on the day of an after school rehearsal or performance.
7. If you would like to volunteer during the *Dance Concert*, the sign-ups will be during Open House, Interim Pick Ups, and on “Sign-Up Genius”. As always, our Volunteers make our concerts possible since there is only one dance teacher.

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Dance Banquet

Late April or early May

The annual *Dance Banquet* is a fun evening of celebration for the year's accomplishments. It is open to the immediate families of dance students. It tends to last approximately 90 minutes.

1. We have been lucky to hold our banquet annually at Fairlawn Country Club. They provide a selection of three entries, each priced accordingly. Most include a salad, and dessert is provided.
Fairlawn Country Club (200 N. Wheaton Road, Akron, Ohio 44313)
2. Attire: No denim or flip flops allowed in the club. You will be turned away.
3. All students in the dance program are expected to attend. Families are not required to attend, and no one is required to eat. However, it is important that the full department be present as senior dance students are honored, and immediate family is welcomed.
4. Inductions into National Honor Society for Dance Arts (NHSDA) take place at the banquet. Honor cords, certificates, senior gifts, and parent volunteer gifts will be distributed.
5. Banquet RSVP and further information will be provided in April.