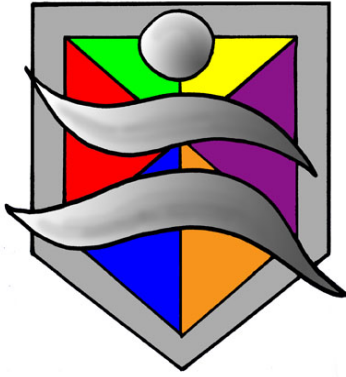


OLD DONATION
CENTER

Dance



DANCE MATTERS

Old Donation Dance Education Program

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boys don't dance ----- OH YES THEY DO!

There's a scene in the movie, "Shall We Dance?", in which a motley crew of men finds itself in a ballroom dance class. It's the first session, and each student feels compelled to explain the reason he's taking the class — one guy's fiancée wants him to lose weight, another wants to impress the ladies, and the third just wants to get to know the dance instructor. Though it turns out to be the case, none of the men are brave enough to say, "I like to dance." Despite the undeniably cool moves of Gene Kelly, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Savion Glover and countless MTV b-boys, our culture still harbors a weird taboo about men dancing. With television shows like, "Dancing With the Stars" and "So You Think You Can Dance", dance is becoming more accessible to the general population. This accessibility brings an awareness of the potential power and strength of male dancers. However, still for many, the idea of men dancing is a hard concept to accept. There is, to some degree, a prejudice our country has towards boys and men who dance. Our country is one of the last to recognize and accept the fact that men can dance as a way of expression or dance for the sheer physicality of the art form.



Football players know of the physical demands of dance, specifically ballet, all too well. American football is a sport hardly known for its grace and poise, but many players have swapped their pads for points, to do ballet. Ballet has in fact been used within American football since the 1970s. Ballet dancers are renowned for their agility; they are able to leap, land and turn with, well... balletic grace. This has led researchers, sports team players and coaches to experiment with ballet and other dance forms as a conditioning method. Super Bowl winner and former top high-hurdler Willie Gault was one such player who believed his on-field performance and resistance to injury was enhanced by ballet.

At ODC, there are 25 boys enrolled in the dance program. They all come on Thursday, dressed out in dance attire and take on an intense study of dance from an artistic, technical, creative, scientific and historic perspective. It takes a degree of courage for a young male, especially a middle school student, to come week after week to dance. Two of our middle school boys share their thoughts, reflections and reasons why they keep coming to dance. Just never tell these young men, "boys don't dance." They have NO problem telling you "I like to dance and yes, I AM a dancer!"

Marquis Hitchcock-Jones (left in both pictures) and Dalton Henderson (right in both pictures) are middle school dancers at ODC. Their stories are on page two.

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Dance Word of the Week:

Inspiration: the excitement of the mind, emotions or imagination.

Dance History Fact:

Pas de Quatre is a ballet divertissement choreographed by Jules Perrot in 1845. On the night it premiered in London, it caused a sensation from the critics and the public alike. The reason for this was that it brought together on one stage the four greatest ballerinas of the time. The ballerinas were, in order of appearance, Lucile Grahn, Carlotta Grisi, Fanny Cerrito, and Marie Taglioni. The order of appearance was done by age, from youngest to oldest, to stop further confrontations between them.

A Thought :

Acceptance notices what exists and describes it. Acceptance is the cornerstone of unconditional love.

Dr. Becky Bailey
Conscious Discipline



PARENT INFORMATION

NEW SCHEDULE FOR UNIT 2

This week marks the beginning of the second grading period. ODC Dance evaluations will come home next week. There will be an explanation about them in next week's newsletter.

The schedules of teachers have changed so that all of the teachers have the opportunity to work with each student. We will move forward in technique and creative dance classes to cover new skills, new concepts and new vocabulary words.

In Dance Perspectives class, we will continue our study of the Romantic Ballet period. The students will complete this unit of study with a summative project which will be presented in class. This unit will end with a festive celebration during the week of Dec. 17-21. All parents are welcomed to come.

I am a Dancer—by Dalton Henderson

I have attended ODC for 5 years, so far. I look forward to attending through my 8th grade year. I was in 3rd grade when I started attending ODC for dance.

I am grateful that I am in the ODC Dance program because it gives me a chance to discover the language of dance. Also, I get to learn different dance styles, techniques and dance vocabulary. Coming to ODC has taught me how to manage my time wisely.

I keep coming back each year because I am always learning something new. I always see new details in dances that I haven't seen before. I always learn new things from and about my teachers.

I juggle my work at both my schools by always going to see my teachers for the work that I have missed. Also, if I have missed taking a test, I always study the night before again and take the test the next day I am at my home school. I discuss any problems that I might be having with my teachers at both ODC and my home school.

I also do my homework on the day it is given to me; I find that this helps me stay caught up.

I am most proud of being here at ODC for dance because of how much I have learned and grown over the past 5 years. I look at the videos of the performances of my first couple of years and see how much I have grown in technique and ability.

My toughest time at ODC was my first year. At first, I didn't know anything about dance technique or its different styles. I have danced hip hop all of my life and knew very little about ballet and modern. I knew nothing about how dance affects everyday life and your body. Being in the 3rd grade and juggling my work between schools seemed hard at first. But after a few weeks of dance and working with my teachers at both schools, I finally learned to manage all of it.

The difference in when I first arrived at ODC and now is pretty big. When I first starting coming to ODC, I was nervous and I didn't know what to expect. I also thought all we were going to do was dance. Boy was I wrong!!!! WRONG, WRONG, WRONG!!! Now, every week when I come to dance, I always come to learn new things and improve on my dance techniques. I have learned that every dance style has its own vocabulary (there are a lot of words).



As a boy in dance, I usually combine technique, power and expressions in every part of the body. I have found that my dance has helped me in all parts of my life. My dancing has helped me so much with my wrestling and football. It has helped me find my balance, strength and agility.

My best memories would be just coming to ODC having some of the best teachers in the dance industry, learning from them, having fun and learning how to express myself through dance.

(At left, two of the younger boys in ballet class striving to perform a correct battement tendu.)

Dance Calendar: *Dates to remember*

November 7th - 2nd unit starts

November 14-20 - Dance Evaluations are given out

December 6 -City-wide information night A city-wide information meeting will be held with the Dance Education and the Visual Arts faculty members. The faculty will describe, explain and answer any questions about these two programs. This meeting is for parents and students interested in applying to either of these programs for next year. Deadline for dance and art applications is Friday, February 1. Current students do not need to re-apply.

December 17 – 21 Winter Celebration - This is the culmination of our dance history unit. Parents are invited to join us for this celebration. More details about this event will be in next week's "Dance Matters."

I Am a Dancer

by Marquis Hitchcock-Jones

Being a boy dancer hasn't been easy. Sometimes you are called names and teased, but doing something I love is worth it. All of the negative criticism didn't break me down, it only made me stronger. As a dancer, I have made new friends, expanded my dance technique and followed my dream. My true friends have always been here for me. I have been put through many challenges. I have had to wear tights and ballet shoes. It wasn't as bad as I realized. At first I thought my teachers were out to get me, but I realized that it is only standard dance wear. This is my 5th year in the ODC Dance program and if I can do it I know you can! Just believe in yourself!

Dance Legends

Mikhail Baryshnikov (b January 27, 1948) is a Soviet-born American dancer, choreographer, and actor. He is often called the world's greatest living male ballet dancer. When he was twelve, his mother enrolled him in School of the Theatre Opera Ballet in Riga. His dancing is renowned for its textbook form, technical brilliance, and emotional detachment, as well as its use of "bravada," meaning masculine, daring dancing.



Parents - Thank you so much for making our Parent Visitation Week SO successfull It was wonderful meeting you all. You don't need to wait for a "special week "to visit us. Please visit us any time. Just call and let us know you are coming.