

Program 5: Creating Rich Learning Environments

Dance

SEGMENT 2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Mary Harding

14 years teaching

About the School

Arts High School

Perpich Center for Arts Education
Golden Valley, MN

Type:

Statewide residential program/
Arts-focused public high school

Grades:

11-12

Students:

300
Very mixed socio-economic status

Majors:

Dance, Literary Arts, Media Arts, Music,
Theatre, and Visual Art

About the Dance Program

Faculty:

2 full-time

Students:

20-30 dance majors + 75 non-majors

Facilities:

Above Average in the Area

- 1 large studio
- 2 locker rooms
- 120-seat black box theatre

Focus:

Modern dance-based ensemble program
that welcomes dancers with developed
talent as well as potential.

Required Courses:

Ballet Technique, Composition,
Improvisation, Dance History, Dance
Criticism, Career Explorations, Anatomy
and Somatics, Music for Dance,
Repertory, Guest Artist Residency,
Conditioning, Yoga, and Jazz

Elective courses:

Modern Dance, Arts Improvisation, Arts
and Ideas, Moving Anatomy, Viewpoints
in Dance and Theatre, and Drumming

Audition:

Movement class, interview, and an arts-
oriented assignment. Prior to the
audition, each student is sent a list of 5
words and asked to bring in a new,
original artwork related to those words.
Dancers must present a short solo in any
style.

About the Featured Class

**Modern Dance Technique
Class (for dance majors):**

Students work on developing
alignment and musicality, key
building blocks in their development
as modern dancers.

Student Motivation:

Mixed. Some dancers lose their
motivation when they work on more
abstract dances. Others lose their
motivation as they realize that this is
not the field for them.

Student Level:

Mixed. The background of the
dance majors varies widely with
some having just started, while
others have been dancing for ten
years or more.

In the Teacher's Words***Why is alignment so
important in modern dance
class?***

*There are some basic alignment
difficulties that we all have. Often
in class we'll be moving along
and I can see that certain things
are not working. So I back up
and go back to some basic
alignment concepts.*

What is A.S.I.S.?

*ASIS is the Anterior Superior Iliac
Spine or the top front pelvic rim.*