

Celebrating 42 Years of Dance Education

2024-2025

Ida B. Wells APAC Dance Department

Information Guide



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Jasmine Friday, Dance Faculty
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**The following information is subject to change due to APAC Arts Departmental requirements and will adhere to all JPS policies and procedures outlined in the Student Handbook & Code of Conduct.*

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Ida B. Wells School Vision

Our school vision is for all students to develop leadership skills, creative thinking abilities, and strong character by practicing good citizenship and showing respect for themselves and others as they excel academically and artistically while making their mark on the world.

Dance Department Mission and Vision

The mission of the Wells APAC Dance Department is to provide a safe, equitable, and inclusive environment for students to explore the art of dance. We are committed to studying long-standing traditions, while remaining committed to innovation and new ways of understanding dance as a living artform. We strive to provide students with a comprehensive curriculum that nurtures creativity, self-discipline, empathy, and collaboration.

The vision of the Wells APAC Dance Department is to produce scholars and dance artists that achieve globally, contribute locally, and are fulfilled individually.

Wells APAC Dance Faculty



Bethany Philipp (she/her) is a dance artist and educator, specializing in modern techniques, dance composition, and improvisation. She holds a Master of Fine Arts in Dance from Texas Woman's University and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Southern Mississippi. She is a licensed educator through the Mississippi Department of Education holding certifications in Dance, English Language Arts, and Social Studies. Ms. Philipp has taught dance for Mississippi College, the University of North Texas, Tarrant County College, Ballet Mississippi, and the Janice Wyatt - Summer Arts Institute at Delta State University. Ms. Philipp has performed extensively as a solo artist and with

performance groups including Front Porch Dance (Jackson, MS), Muscle Memory Dance Theatre (Dallas, TX), Mississippi Improv Alliance (Jackson, MS), and the Kinetic Artists Collective (Denton, TX). She is currently a resident choreographer with Kinetic Etchings (Jackson, MS). Ms. Philipp also directs a pick-up improvisation group that performs throughout the country at various dance festivals and events. Before joining the Dance Department, Ms. Philipp served two years on academic faculty at APAC, teaching 5th grade ELA and Social Studies. Contact:

bphilipp@jackson.k12.ms.us | bphilipp@jpsms.org



Cass Simmons (she/they) is a movement artist, dance educator, and arts advocate. After graduating high school from Mississippi School of the Arts, Cass received a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Dance (e. Performance and Choreography) at the University of Southern Miss and acquired her Master of Fine Arts Degree in Dance from Hollins University. During which and since, she studied and performed both nationally and internationally. In 2022, Cass joined the Dance Department at Ida B. Wells APAC. She specializes in teaching modern dance, contemporary floorwork, jazz, ballet and pointe, improvisation and composition, and applied-anatomy and kinesiology for dancers. When teaching and

facilitating movement experiences, Cass values self-motivated empowerment and risk-taking in the dance space, as well as acknowledges the mental fortitude and emotional complexities of such a physical, ephemeral artform. In addition to teaching, Cass is a company member with Kinetic Etchings Dance Project, a 501(c)(3) arts organization and professional contemporary dance company in Jackson, MS and Fini Dance New York, an international, collaborative dance company and teaching institution. Cass is a certified Pure Barre Teacher and working towards certification as a Registered Somatic Movement Therapist in Shin Somatics®.

Contact: casimmons@jackson.k12.ms.us | casimmons@jpsms.org



Jasmine Friday (she/her), a professional dancer and dance educator, was born in Jackson, Mississippi. She began her dance journey at the age of 8 with the Bridget Archer Performing Arts Company, where she graced the stages of the Kennedy Center and Carnegie Hall. Jasmine is trained in various dance genres, including jazz, hip hop, West African, tap, lyrical contemporary, musical theater and ballet. A proud alumna of Murrah High School, she was a member of the Sound of Perfection Band's Ladies of Perfection flag and dance team under the direction of Mr. Jefferson. Jasmine continued her dance education at Hinds Community College, serving two years on the historical precision line dance team, the Hinds Hi-Steppers. In 2021, she traveled to the London Olympics, performing at events with the well-known dance company

Montage Theatre of Dance. She then transferred to the University of North Texas, where she earned a degree in dance. During her time in Texas, Jasmine trained and danced professionally before moving to Atlanta, Georgia, to continue her professional career. Jasmine Friday is a passionate dancer and educator dedicated to inspiring and educating the youth in Jackson, Mississippi, through the art of dance.

Contact:

Welcome Wells APAC Dancers

The Wells APAC Dance faculty would like to welcome students and parents to the 2024-2025 school year. We are looking forward to a productive and exciting year full of performances, fundraisers, and community events. We would like to offer special greetings to our new students joining the program. Let's make this a year to remember and be proud of!

We would also like to welcome Ms. Jasmine Friday to the Dance Department. We are delighted to have Ms. Friday on faculty and we ask for patience and support as our dance family navigates this transition.

The QR code at the bottom of this letter will take you to the Dance Department homepage. The homepage contains this information guide, the student information form, our calendar of events, and the program expectations form. Please review these items and complete and return the Student Information form and Program Expectations document by Wednesday, August 21th, 2024.

Dance supplies may be purchased online through [Dance Fantasy](#) (Hattiesburg, MS). Dance Fantasy will hold a pop up shop at Wells APAC on September 7, 2024 from 11am - 6pm for dancers and families to shop in person. This popup shop is also our yearly pointe fitting opportunity for Pointe Track students. Families are encouraged to pre order their supplies with Dance Fantasy before Friday, August 30, 2024. Pre Ordered supplies may be picked up on the day of the popup shop at Wells APAC. Students must have their dance clothes and supplies by Friday, September 13th, 2024. Another online option for purchasing dance supplies is our online shop through [Revolution Dancewear](#). Please see page 8 for details regarding dress code requirements.

Placement class will begin Friday, August 9th, 2024. Returning students wear proper dress code attire and new students may wear shorts and/or leggings and a t-shirt until dance supplies are purchased. Placement class ensures students will be assigned to the appropriate level based on ability not age. Please note that inappropriate dance wear is viewed as unprofessional and unacceptable.

We encourage all APAC dancers, family members, and friends to participate throughout the year to strengthen our artistic community. Students and parents will be notified via paper handout and/or School Status for all forms due, upcoming field trips, performances, and community events.

All Dance Department communication will be through School Status and messages will be identified as "DANCE."

Sincerely,

Dance Department Homepage

The APAC Dance Faculty

*BETHANY
PHILIPP*

*Cass
Simmons*

*Jasmine
Friday*



Calendar of Events Wells APAC Dance 2023-2024

Dance Orientation	08/5-6/2024
APAC Arts Open House	08/08/2024
Dance Placement & Workshop Class (6th-12th grade)	08/9-16/2024
Placement Interviews (6th - 12th grade)	8/19-23/2024
Letter of Essential Agreements Student Info Forms DUE	08/21/2024
Dance Fantasy Pop-Up Shop	09/07/2024
MSA Field Trip Middle School	09/11/2024
MSA Field Trip High School	09/12/2024
Dance Supplies DUE	09/13/2024
Dance Support Funds (\$50) DUE	09/30/2024
Parent Teacher Conference	10/21/2024
Broadway Review (optional HS performance)	10/22-24/2024
Ballet Dress Rehearsal	11/13/2024
Ballet Concert (2 nights)	11/14-15/2024
Parent Teacher Conference	02/12/2025
Choreoproject	2/17-21/2025
Contemporary Explosion Technical and Dress Rehearsal	05/09/2025
Contemporary Explosion Concert at Forest Hill	05/09/2025
Last Day of School	05/29/2025

A-Cubed

A3 or A-Cubed (Arts, Artist, and Accolades) is an organization of parents who raise money to support the program and the students at Wells APAC.



A3 money has provided direct financial support to students who need help with expenses. The Dance division of A3 was created specifically to support Wells APAC dance education. This includes funding for master classes, scholarships, guest choreographers, costumes, set design and construction, Kentwood water in classrooms, performance venues, classroom supplies, as well as extracurricular educational opportunities.

Each dance scholar is responsible for paying \$50 to the A3 Dance Support Fund. Payments are due by Monday, September 30, 2024. Families and scholars are encouraged to submit payment via CashApp at \$A3Dance. Cash or check payments should be sealed in an envelope, labeled with the scholar's name, and placed in the lockbox in the front office. Please make checks out to A3-Dance. Dr. Dominique McInnis is the A3 Dance President, and can be reached for questions at mcinnisdominique@gmail.com.

Volunteer Information

Families are encouraged to volunteer their time and talents throughout the school year to assist with dance department performances, field trips, and special events. The needs of the department shift from year to year depending upon curriculum and programming but we always welcome family involvement and support. Current volunteer committees include:

- Fundraising
- Field trip chaperones
- Performance support (room moms, muscle dads, box office)

Please indicate your interest in volunteering when filling out the 24-25 Student Information Form. Parents/Guardians who volunteer will be contacted with dates and details for specific projects. We appreciate all you do to support the Wells APAC Dance Department!

DANCE DEPARTMENT STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

As representatives of JPS and the Dance Department, students are expected to reflect a positive image, leadership, character, responsibility, integrity, good sportsmanship, and online citizenship. The Wells APAC Dance Department adheres to the JPS Code of Conduct.

Consistent class attendance and participation is expected. Absences are highly discouraged since a large portion of student grades are based on participation and “in-class” work. During performance season, poor attendance hinders and delays the choreographic and rehearsal process for the entire class. Students or their guardian(s) are expected to communicate any absence with the dance faculty. Excessive unexcused absences (more than 3 in a term) or unexcused tardies (more than 5 in a term) may greatly affect the role(s) students receive in productions. If you cannot participate fully in class due to injury or illness, an alternate assignment will be given. If you are injured, a doctor’s excuse is required for missed work and to rejoin the class.

Dance Department performances are exam assessments. Therefore, attendance of all dance department performances is mandatory. Students will be given a Performance Contract for each performance that details specific expectations, along with required rehearsal and performance dates. Failure to adhere to the performance contract may result in the removal of the student from their role and/or failure of the exam.

Maintaining positive academic standing is also expected of all dance students. An overall average of 80% (B) must be maintained in dance to remain in good academic standing. Students who fall below 80% will receive an Academic Progress Letter that details their current grades and academic standing. Students who repeatedly fail to meet academic expectations will be placed on academic probation and may be exited from the dance department.

In the study of dance, students are not merely learning a technique, they are learning an art form rich in history and established traditions. Students are expected to respect these traditions as they are integral to a professional learning environment. The dance faculty expects all students to exhibit proper behavior in all classes. Each teacher will clearly define their classroom rules, expectations, and consequences as well as visibly post them in their classroom. While each teacher has a different style of classroom management and thus, may have slightly different classroom expectations, the items listed below are non-negotiables for all students in the dance department.

The following rules and guidelines will help students meet dance department expectations:

- Students remove shoes before entering the dance studios.
- Students wait quietly for class to begin and refrain from talking once class begins.
- Use the restroom before class. You will not be permitted to leave during class.
- Do not leave class without the teacher’s permission or a hall pass.
- Adhere to all Wells APAC and JPS policy and procedure.
- Focus and apply all corrections even if they are not directed to you.
- No food or drink is allowed in studios. Bottled water is permitted.
- Chewing gum is not permitted in class.
- Follow dress code requirements as stated for their class level. (see below)
- All dance clothes and class supplies must be brought to class every day.

DANCE DEPARTMENT DRESS CODE

The Dance Department utilizes a dress code to ensure that every dancer, every day is prepared to fully participate in class. The dress code also ensures that students' technique can be properly observed and critiqued. **Bring your child with you to purchase all shoes and dance attire. Proper fitting dance attire will help ensure your student is successful in class.**

Female-Presenting	Dress Code by Class
<u>Bottoms:</u> Flesh toned, convertible tights are required and should be matched so color is closest to natural skin tone: <i>Body Wrappers</i> brand has 3 color options: 1. Suntan 2. Stage Tan 3. Coffee <i>Capezio</i> brand has 3 color options: 1. Maple 2. Light Suntan 3. Suntan Dancers may wear black jazz pants, leggings, or joggers in modern and jazz classes. <u>Leotard:</u> Black 1 inch strap tank leotard Student should have at least two leotards <u>Shoes (Ballet and Jazz shoes are required):</u> Ballet shoes should be canvas, split soles, and match the flesh toned tights. <i>So Danca</i> brand is recommended and has four color options: 1. Sand 2. Caramel 3. Suntan 4. Mocha Jazz shoes should be tan and split sole Hair: Hair is to be styled so that it is pulled back away from the face and off of the neck. A classical bun is preferred. Halo or crown braid, twist, short pony, or puff is acceptable.	Ballet Class - Leotard, flesh tone convertible tights, and ballet shoes. (Ballet skirt optional) Modern Class – Leotard and listed bottoms. No shoes are required for modern dance class. Jazz Class – Leotard, listed bottoms, and tan split sole jazz shoes. *Undergarments should not be visible underneath dance attire.

Male-Presenting	Dress Code by Class
<u>Bottoms:</u> Mens black dance tights are required for ballet class and performance. Black shorts over tights are permitted in technique class. At least one pair of black jazz pants or joggers are required. <u>Tops:</u> Two white, fitted t-shirts are required Fitted tanks permitted for modern and jazz <u>Shoes (Ballet and Jazz shoes are required):</u> Ballet shoes should be black, canvas, and split soles. Jazz shoes should be black and split soles. (black socks may be worn with shoes) Dance belt: One dance belt, a specialized undergarment for male dancers, is required. Hair: Hair is to be styled so that it is pulled back away from the face and off of the neck.	Ballet Class - black tights, white fitted t-shirt tucked in, and ballet shoes. Modern Class – Listed bottoms and white fitted t-shirt or tank tucked in. No shoes are required for modern dance class. Jazz – Listed bottoms, white fitted t-shirt or tank tucked in, and black jazz shoes. *Undergarments should not be visible underneath dance attire.

Gender Neutral	Dress Code by class
<u>Dancewear:</u> Dancers may wear form-fitting, 1 inch strap, black unitard or Form-fitting, 1 inch strap, black biketard (unitard with shorts) AND flesh-toned convertible tights <u>Shoes (Ballet and Jazz shoes are required):</u> Students should have <u>both</u> flesh toned and black ballet shoes. Both should be canvas and split soles. Students should have <u>both</u> tan and black jazz shoes that are split soles. Hair: Hair is to be styled so that it is pulled back away from the face and off of the neck.	Ballet Class - Flesh tone convertible tights, biketard or unitard, and ballet shoes. Modern Class - Flesh tone convertible tights, biketard or unitard. No shoes are required. Jazz Class - Flesh tone convertible tights, biketard, and tan split sole jazz shoes OR black unitard, and black split sole jazz shoes. *Undergarments should not be visible underneath dance attire.

Dance Bag: The Dance Department recommends that students keep their supplies in a specific “dance bag.” Clothes should be washed or rinsed daily to avoid mildewing. Deodorant, wet wipes, hair supplies, a reusable water bottle, and first aid supplies are recommended to be kept in the student’s dance bag. Body spray and/or perfume are not allowed in the dance studios.

DANCE DEPARTMENT GRADING POLICY

The Dance Department is committed to equitable grading practices and each student is accessed and evaluated on an individual level. There is no one path to earning a particular grade in dance. Engagement, effort, rigor, and personal growth are highly valued in the dance department and therefore reflected in the grading policy.

Rubrics take into account elements such as work habits, personal growth, and professionalism while also assessing specific dance standards put forth by the Mississippi Department of Education. A link to the MS Department of Education Dance Education Standards is available on page 12. Daily assessment, Performance exams, units of study, and project assignments provide a rubric. Students will also engage in self and peer evaluations.

[Daily Participation
Rubric \(Sample\)](#)

[Dress Code Rubric
\(Sample\)](#)

[Elements of Dance
Rubric \(Sample\)](#)

[Performance Exam
Rubric \(Sample\)](#)

An overall average of 80% must be maintained in dance to remain in good academic standing. Students who fall below 80% will receive an Academic Progress Letter that details their current grades and academic standing. Students who repeatedly fail to meet academic expectations will be placed on academic probation and may be exited from the dance department.

Weight and Value for Dance Department Grades

* Per JPS policy, the following numerical values shall be used in determining letter grades for all scholars:

A (Excellent) 100-90

B (Above Average) 89-80

C (Average) 79-70

D (Below Average) 69-60

F (Failure) 59 and below

* Per JPS policy, the following scale will be used to weight grades for all scholars:

Daily 40%

Test 50%

Homework 10%

DANCE DEPARTMENT CURRICULUM

The Wells APAC Dance Department curriculum focuses on the fundamental elements and principles of Ballet, Modern, and Jazz dance, including technique, performance, history, vocabulary, composition, improvisation, human anatomy, and technical production.

Movement material is presented through demonstration and explanation. Rehearsal and repetition are the primary means of learning and are supplemented by clarification and corrections. Technique class consists of a full warm up either at the barre or on the floor, transitions into center work and across the floor combinations, and ends with a center work performance combination. All standards are ongoing.

Curriculum Objectives:

1. To gain a working understanding in the skills of dance technique including proper alignment, movement memory, weight sensing, clear spatial orientation, rhythmic accuracy, and perception.
2. To identify basic anatomy of the bones and muscles to develop body awareness.
3. To increase bodily strength, control, stamina, flexibility, and coordination.
4. To apply breath and focus to develop mind-body connection.
5. To examine Ballet, Modern, Jazz dance history in order to gain a deeper appreciation for dance as an art form.
6. To identify dance terminology and the vocabulary of Ballet, Modern and Jazz.
7. To learn from each other through peer observation and asking questions related to the exercise.
8. To perform with technical precision, performance acuity, and a professional disposition.
9. To create an original dance composition.
10. To develop a dance portfolio that includes biographical information, a resume, dance scholarship and research, academic and artistic achievements, extracurricular activities, performance programs, and photographs.

Pre-Pointe

Intermediate ballet students in middle school being considered for future pointe study will be placed in Level 5 Ballet, also known as Pre-Pointe. Pre-Pointe is a preparation level for students demonstrating interest and potential for Pointe Track. In addition to ballet technique, Pointe I focuses on fundamental conditioning exercises to further develop and strengthen the musculoskeletal structures necessary to go en pointe. After a year in Pre-Pointe, students are evaluated to enter Pointe Track upon entry to high school.

Pointe Track

Advanced ballet students in high school are evaluated for participation in the Pointe Track program. To be admitted to the Pointe Track program, students must be in high school, and receive an invitation from the Pointe Track Director, Cass Simmons. The Pointe Track Program

is highly competitive because it is limited to 12 exceptional dance students. Physical development, technical ability, academic standing, and mental readiness are all factors taken into consideration when placing students in Pointe Track. Upon signing the Pointe Track contract, students must demonstrate exceptional maturity and prepare for the extra time, effort, and discipline pointe work requires, such as pointe shoe maintenance, homework, special after school rehearsals, etcetera.

Composition - Choreoproject

All students are required to complete the Choreoproject unit of study. This performance is required for all students. In Choreoproject, students explore dance-making principles and compositional methods culminating in the presentation of an original dance work. Throughout the unit, students are required to complete written assignments related to their creative interests and conceptual research. Choreoproject students will receive a syllabus at the beginning of the unit that outlines all requirements and project expectations.

History

Dance history is integrated into the curriculum to provide historical, socio-political, and cultural context to Ballet, Modern, and Jazz. Interpreting the evolution of dance as an artform, and how that evolution is connected to larger historical movements, provides students with a deeper appreciation and understanding of the artform.

Improvisation

Improvisation is integrated into the dance curriculum to promote creativity and free expression, to develop a personal movement style unique to the dancer, and to generate movement for choreography. Improvisation principles, historical movements, and practitioners are emphasized in this unit of study.

Human Anatomy

Human Anatomy is integrated into the dance curriculum to provide students with working, experiential knowledge of the bones and muscles of the body. Basic knowledge of human anatomy is taught and emphasized through strengthening and conditioning exercises. Somatic study offers more advanced students the opportunity to deeply explore their understanding of human anatomy.

Production

During performance season, production is integrated into the dance curriculum to provide students with hands-on experience in set design and construction, costuming, props, lighting, and sound. Production vocabulary and theatre etiquette are also emphasized.

***Seniors may elect, for full credit, to be a part of the production crew for one mainstage production. A production crew contract will be issued for the student and parent to sign stating all required duties and responsibilities.

PLACEMENT LEVEL

At the beginning of each school year, students will participate in placement classes to determine placement level in Ballet, Modern, and Jazz. Mastery of required skills in each level is a prerequisite for advancement. Therefore, spending one year, in any level, does not guarantee a student will move up to the next level the following year. A student's enthusiasm for and commitment to dance must remain positive and consistent throughout each year of study in order to advance and be successful in the Wells APAC Dance Program.

Level 1 & 2 - The main emphasis of the beginning year of training is on the placement of the torso, legs, arms, and head. This is accomplished by using simple classical training exercises and developing coordination skills during technique class. In addition, the student's musical ear needs to be developed so dancers adapt their dancing to musical style better preparing for choreography and ultimately the stage.

Level 3 - Level three continues to focus on placement as new vocabulary is introduced. The aim of the third year focuses on development of strength in the feet and legs and acquiring the qualities of aplomb (poise), and ballon (bounce). There is an increased use of demi-pointe to develop this needed strength, and proper alignment so distribution of weight is carefully monitored while demonstrating turns and balances. In addition, there is an escalation in tempo of the music and change in rhythmical structures to aid in the development of musicality. Students can accurately demonstrate positions of the feet and arms.

Level 4 & 5 - This level focuses on mastering the already- known vocabulary of classical dance and adding more advanced enchainement (linking) movements and demonstrating classical poses. This further develops the dancer's strength, stability, and balance, as well as fostering artistry. Pointe work may be introduced at this time and builds on previous work by continuing perfection of placement in turnout with proper alignment and foot articulation. Pirouettes both en dedan and en dehor are executed as well as beginning petit battement and adagio exercises.

Level 6 & 7 - This level understands the use of classical poses during barre and center work. Student extension is demonstrated in releve long at ninety degrees or above, both on flat and demi-pointe. Students can demonstrate positions of arabesque and properly execute correct use of the arms. Students maintain tightness of legs and "pull-up" of the pelvis while bending. More intermediate petit battement and adagio exercises are instructed.

Level 8 - Level eight students comprehend and embody classical pose positions of the feet, body, and arms. Student demonstrates mobility, liveliness, and sharpness of the feet during petit battement and the ability to change directions smoothly and quickly in adagio and grande allegro movements such as; adagio turns, emboîté' en tournant, tombe, cabriole, jete entrelace, and saut de basque. Student possess a professional demeanor while performing student and faculty choreography with ratings based on technique, artistry, attitude, backstage behavior, care of costumes, etc. Student will complete assessments of their own choreography as well as faculty and guest artist choreography.

Forms and Resources

[Wells APAC Dance Student Information Form](#)

*Please fill out this form to provide parent/guardian contact information, student emergency medical information, and instructional video/film permission. This form is due on Wednesday, August 21, 2024.

[APAC Dance Amazon Wish List](#)

*Please consider supporting the Dance Department by purchasing items from our wishlist.

[Dance Department Audition Form](#)

*Prospective students are required to audition for the department. Dates and audition requirements are listed on the form.

[Wells APAC Elementary School / Homepage \(jackson.k12.ms.us\)](#)

*Please check the website for a directory of all faculty, administration, and staff as well as news, school calendars, tutoring and testing schedules, etc.

[APAC Dance Youtube Channel Link](#)

*Past performances and video dance projects are viewable on our Wells APAC Dance Department youtube channel.

[JPS 2024-2025 Student Handbook](#)

*The Wells APAC Dance Department adheres to all JPS policy and procedure.

[MS Department of Education, Dance Standards](#)

*The Wells APAC Dance Department's curriculum is aligned with the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Arts Learning Standards for Dance.

[National Standards For Arts Education](#)