

OVERVIEW

We believe that a student finds her unique voice when given opportunities for self-expression. At the core of each experience in dance and drama is a commitment to collaboration, creativity, and risk-taking. Every creative process represents a journey. Every aspect of a student’s Holton education informs that process. Similarly, a student’s experience in the performing arts will inform her work in every other academic discipline. Courses in dance and drama promote the acquisition of knowledge and technical skills while encouraging the development of the imagination and aesthetic sensitivity.

Opportunities in dance, drama, and performance production are offered during the curricular day. Curricular study in dance and drama also extends beyond the school day. Opportunities include: dramatic productions and workshops (some require an audition), design and hands-on experience in technical theater, Orchesis Dance Ensemble (which requires an audition) and Dance Technique Classes (some require teacher permission). Three spacious dance studios and three theaters (proscenium, black box, and amphitheater) support the performing arts experience.

UPPER SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS

Acting: Improv and Devising

Open to all US students

Acting: Scene Study and Monologues

Open to all US Students

Production Technology and Design

Open to all US students

Theatrical Design

Prerequisite: Production Technology and Design

US Fall Play or Musical (After School)

Audition and/or department permission

US Winter Play (After School)

Audition and/or department permission

Dance Composition & Choreography*

Open to all US students

Dance Technique*

Department permission required

Intermediate/Advanced Pointe Repertoire Class*

Department permission required

Dance Technique (After School)*

Department permission required

Intermediate/Advanced Dance Technique (After School)*

Department permission required

Dance Technique and Orchesis Ensemble (After School)*

Selected by Audition, offered fall and winter sports seasons (both seasons are required)

Co-requisite: Dance Composition & Choreography

Portfolio Collaboration Lab

Open to grades 10-12

Prerequisite: Participation in a performing arts class, ensemble, or theater production

*All dance classes may be taken for Performing Arts or Physical Education credit.

Upper School Dance and Drama FAQs

How many plays are there in a year?

There are three major Upper School productions per year: the fall and winter plays are produced at Holton and the spring play is produced at Landon. Director's Workshop is a smaller production that offers opportunities for students wanting to try acting or tech on a smaller scale and for seniors who receive approval to direct a scene or one-act play.

When do the plays rehearse?

Rehearsals are either in the afternoon or evening, with occasional weekend rehearsals. For the three major productions, students can expect to rehearse 1-4 times/week, 2 weekends, and each night the week of the show. There are fewer rehearsals for Director's Workshop.

How can I get involved if I am not a performer?

Holton has a thriving technical theater program. The production technology courses offer hands-on opportunities for students to learn how to build sets, hang and focus lights, run the sound and light boards, and more. Students also help produce the technical aspects for every show (set, lights, sound, props, costumes, hair and makeup, and stage management). Students submit applications for technical roles for each production.

Do I have to enroll in a class to participate in the plays?

No. The classes are designed to provide a curricular foundation and a broader study of the craft, and prepare students for successful involvement in the productions.

Can I get academic credit for participating in the plays?

Students receive academic credit (pass/fail) for participation in the Upper School Fall Play/Musical and for the Upper School Winter Play. This credit counts toward the graduation requirement in the Fine and Performing Arts.

Are all dance and drama performance opportunities by audition only?

No. Dance and acting classes during the school day do not require an audition and sometimes culminate in informal showings of work in progress. Orchesis and the plays/musicals are by audition.

What is Orchesis?

Orchesis is Holton's dance ensemble and members are selected by audition. Orchesis meets from 3:40-5:30 pm four days a week for technique classes predominantly in modern, ballet, contemporary and jazz, and to rehearse original student and teacher choreography to be featured in an annual concert in February. Orchesis meets from September through February. There are two tiers of membership: Full members attend all classes/rehearsals; Associate members are students who dance extensively outside of Holton and attend 2-3 days of classes/rehearsals with Orchesis.

When are the auditions for Orchesis?

Auditions for Orchesis are held in the spring for the following fall, and again during pre-season in August.

Can I be in Orchesis and a play at the same time?

Yes, but dancers are encouraged to seek a limited role in a play during their dance seasons. Students performing at the highest dance level may find it difficult to participate in a play because of their many academic, dance, and rehearsal responsibilities.

Can I be in a music ensemble and participate in the plays or Orchesis?

Yes. Music ensembles rehearse during the school day and do not conflict with drama rehearsals or Orchesis.

Can I be in a play and participate in sports?

It is very difficult for students to participate in a large-scale production and a sport the same season. Occasionally it is possible for students to take on a limited role (technical or acting) in a play during their sport season(s). Students performing at the highest athletic level may find it difficult to participate in a play because of their many academic and athletic responsibilities.

Can I be in Orchesis and participate in sports?

Yes, but only in the spring when Orchesis is not in session.

DANCE/DRAMA FACULTY

[Mark Robinson](#)

Performing Arts Department Chair
Technical Director & Theater Manager

[Sarah Roney](#)

Director of Dance, Wellness Coordinator

[Elizabeth Zitelli](#)

Director of Drama

[Joseph Staub](#)

Assistant Technical Director

ARTS ADMINISTRATOR

[Mark Schuppener](#)

Director of Fine and Performing Arts
301-365-6036

US DANCE/DRAMA PRODUCTION CALENDAR 2021-2022 (Subject to Change)

- US FALL PLAY - November 11, 12, 13 - Lewis Theater
- MS/US ORCHESIS DANCE CONCERT - February 4 - Lewis Theater
- US WINTER PLAY - February 24, 25, 26 - Beebe Black Box Theater
- US DIRECTOR'S WORKSHOP - February 26 - Landon PAC
- US WAISDEA DANCE FESTIVAL CONCERT - March 4 - Lewis Theater
- COFFEEHOUSE - March 12 - Beebe Black Box Theater
- US SPRING MUSICAL - May 6 & 7 - Landon PAC