



IGNITE DANCE COMPANY

AT BALANCE DANCE STUDIOS

2026-2027

Company Information Packet

DIRECTOR TEAM



SHAWNA HESKETH, DIRECTOR



Shawna started dancing at an early age, at her one-room studio, in her small central Texas hometown. Her love of dance continued to grow, and she went on to join her high school's drill/dance team, and then began teaching dance at the age of 16. She attended Sam Houston State University, and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree, in Photography and Dance. While at SHSU, she was in several performances, including a graduate thesis, and also worked in the costume department for their Nutcracker production. After moving to Austin, she got back into dance full-time, diving into ballroom dancing. Shawna then joined Balance Dance Studios, in the fall of 2012, in its inaugural year. Since then, she has created a home and family with Balance, and now gets to share this journey with her two children, as she watches them dance and grow.

CLAY MOORE, CO-DIRECTOR

Originally from Houston, Clay Moore grew up as a competitive dancer. After graduating, he trained in Los Angeles and New York City where he has trained and worked with the Edge Performing Arts, Mark Morris Dance, Terrill Mitchel, and Dorrell Martin before relocating to Austin Tx. Now an Austin based choreographer and performer, he is a current company member with Blue Lapis Light where he trains and performs in aerial apparatus. He has been featured in works with ARCOS Dance, BLIPSWITCH, Jennifer Sherburn, Kathy Dunn Hamrick Dance Company, and many more. Clay has been featured in local ATX musicians music videos including Tomar & the FCs. Clay shares his passion for movement by teaching and choreography, for non-profit groups and schools in the AISD and LISD, as well as non-profit groups. He enjoys working in the CTDC family, teaching and providing support at the front desk.



KATE MCCANN, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR



Kate fell in love with dance at an early age. The way that movement and music creates its own unique form of artistry has had an unparalleled impact on her life, both in and outside of the studio. She has been working with children since the age of 14, and has found that one of her greatest joys is being able to share her passions with a younger generation. Because Kate didn't start her formal dance training until high school she is a huge proponent of self discipline, and regards dance as the medium which taught her that all things are achievable through hard work and diligence. It was at Balance Dance Studios that she cultivated this understanding, as she is one of our very own Push Dance Company alumni. Kate looks forward to teaching, training, and exploring movement with you!

OUR COMPANY

IGNITE DANCE COMPANY IS DESIGNED FOR DANCERS WHO LOVE TO PERFORM! WE STRIVE FOR MOMENTUM IN GROWTH, CREATIVITY AND OPPORTUNITY. WHETHER YOU ARE JUST GETTING STARTED OR HAVE BEEN COMPETING FOR YEARS, IGNITE WILL HELP YOUR DANCER FLOURISH AND CREATE ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOTH DANCERS AND PARENTS! WE HAVE CREATED A POSITIVE ATMOSPHERE WITH PROFESSIONAL MENTORS FOR EVERY STUDENT. AS A GROUP, WE ARE A TEAM. WE ARE IGNITE DANCE COMPANY!



OUR MISSION

Passion, not pressure! Our job is to instill a great love for dance, while inspiring self-confidence, promoting teamwork and discipline and overall well-rounded dancers. Ignite offers all studio dancers a second family and a way to dip their toes into the performing and competitive dance world, as well as an opportunity for advanced dancers who want to take their artistry and technique to the next level.

OUR PROGRAM

Company dancers have a requirement of 3.5+ hours of weekly training. Competition teams will compete at 3 local competitions. Drill cast will compete at 2 conventions and 1 competition. All companies will perform in the annual BDS Nutcracker, BDS Recital, and the Ignite Dance Company Spring show, Illuminate.



OPPORTUNITIES

- Local Performances
- Competitive Growth
- Flexibility with Other Commitments
- Professional Level Training
- Guest Choreography
- Professional mentorship and Support
- Team Building Skills
- Leadership Building
- Time Management Skills

AUDITION DATES

MAY 30TH | AGES 5-6 | \$30 | 10:30AM-11:30PM
BALANCE BUILDING, STUDIOS 2/3

MAY 30TH | AGES 7-8 | \$30 | 11:30AM-12:30PM
BALANCE BUILDING, STUDIOS 2/3

JUNE 1ST | AGES 9-11 | \$30 | 5:00PM-8:00PM
BRAVO BUILDING, STUDIO 7
WARM UP AREA, STUDIO 8

JUNE 2ND | AGES 12+ | \$30 | 5:00PM-8:00PM
BRAVO BUILDING, STUDIO 7
WARM UP AREA, STUDIO 8

AUDITION PREP CLASSES

MAY 18TH 4PM-5PM TECHNIQUE L2 9+ (DROP-INS \$25)

MAY 30TH 1PM-2:30PM CLINIC \$35 | AGES 9-11

There are two opportunities to learn the audition combo: Monday 4pm Technique L2 class and a Saturday clinic, which will start with a warm up, center technique and across the floor, before learning the jazz audition combo. Dancers will learn approximately four 8-counts, reviewing and sectioning into groups to have more space to dance full out.

If your dancer is new to Balance or Ignite Dance Company, we encourage you to drop into one of these audition prep classes, to meet some of the directors, prior to auditions!

MAY 18TH 8PM-9PM TECHNIQUE L2/L3 12+ (DROP-INS \$25)

MAY 30TH 2:30PM-4PM CLINIC \$35 | AGES 12+

There are two opportunities to learn the audition combo: Monday 8pm Technique L2/L3 class and a Saturday clinic, which will start with a warm up, center technique and across the floor, before learning the Jazz audition combo. Dancers will learn approximately four 8-counts, reviewing and sectioning into groups to have more space to dance full out.

If your dancer is new to Balance or Ignite Dance Company, we encourage you to drop into one of these Audition prep classes, to meet some of the directors, prior to auditions!

AUDITION DAY/ RESULTS

EVALUATION

Evaluation (5-8): Dancers will follow a simple jazz class format, including a high energy warm up and stretching. Following this will be basic skills demonstrations across the floor, and a simple character style dance, with the option to show off any of their favorite moves or special skills.

Evaluation (9+): Dancers will sign in, receive their audition numbers, and head to the warm up room to prepare. Dancers will go through a ballet warm up, across the floor technique, and review the jazz routine material prior to splitting into small groups. The final section of the audition will be a quick contemporary phrase, taught on the spot, to see how dancers learn new choreography and interpret movement. Dancers are not expected to have this combination perfected. We are looking for movement and style, as well as how quickly dancers can memorize choreography.

Auditions are a drop off / pick up process. All lobbies will be closed, as we want to create a calm, stress-free environment.

No previous experience is required for auditions.

CLOTHING

Dancers are expected to come to auditions wearing all black attire. No belly buttons shown, as stated in studio policy. Please avoid wearing baggy clothing or busy patterns/styles. Hair should be pulled up and completely out of the face at all times. For example, a slicked back ponytail or a bun is a great choice. Dancers will need to bring ballet and jazz shoes. Students are welcome to change shoes as we change styles. No jewelry or watches should be worn, other than stud earrings. The use of watches and phones will be prohibited once auditions begin. No photography or videos will be allowed in the audition room, once auditions have started.

RESULTS

Dancers will be notified of their audition results, via email, on or by Thursday June, 4th. At this time, you will be asked to review all company paperwork and complete necessary steps to prepare for an all company planning meeting on Friday, June 5th, from 4:30-6:30pm, with your team directors, to discuss summer and all things company-related for the new 26-27 season!

Performance Co is a performance based team for dancers who are wanting to gain more confidence in their performance quality. This team is a pre-company team to prepare dancers who are interested in competitive team.

Fall Weekly Schedule: 2+ hours required*

Monday or Wednesday (based on team placement) Ballet and Jazz
Additional classes may be taken, depending on individual goals.

Required Routines:

1 routine in the genre of choreographer's choice, based on strengths of the team

Required Performances:

Trunk or Treat, Nutcracker, Spring Showcase, Spring Recital

Additional Commitment:

Choreography Week
Team Retreat
Photoshoot (includes headshot, action shot and team photo)
Dress Rehearsal Run
Trunk or Treat Event
Holiday Party
Spring Celebration
Saturday Rehearsals (as needed)

Summer Requirements

1 hour/week assigned Jazz class and an intensive of dancer's choice. Balance Intensive is strongly encouraged.

THE COMPETITION CO.

IGNITE
Dance Company

Competition Co is for dancers who are looking to train and compete at a competitive level. This is designed for dancers who are wanting to take their training to a higher level with Saturday rehearsals and working with guest choreographers, extra training opportunities.

Fall Weekly Schedule: 3-3.5 hours total weekly requirement

Monday and/or Wednesday, depending on team placement

1-1.5 hours ballet | 1 hour jazz | 1 hour rehearsal+

**Additional classes may be required based on ballet levels and/or genres of competition routine casting*

Required Routines:

8 & under: 1

9+: 2+ depending on routine placement

**Additional casting in routines of different genres will require additional rehearsals*

Required Competitions:

3-4 required competitions in the spring, depending on team placement

Additional Commitment:

Choreography Week, Team Retreat

Photoshoot (includes headshot, action shot and team photo)

Dress Rehearsal Run/Parent meeting, Saturday Rehearsals, Trunk or Treat Event, Holiday Party, Nutcracker, Spring Showcase, Spring Recital, Spring Celebration

Extras:

Dancers must request approval to add a solo, duet, or trio to compete.

Convention class training

Summer Requirements:

1 hour/week of Jazz class, 1-1.5 hours/week of ballet, and Axis Intensive. Please note that Axis week may have guest choreography set around it. Ballet Intensive is also strongly recommended.

PLUS:

Additional casting, such as Production, Tap, Lyrical, Hip Hop, Acro, etc. These pieces will rehearse on weekends (1-2 monthly, schedule to go out in advance, but could vary and require additional rehearsals closer to competitions).

Dancers **MUST** be enrolled in a weekly class matching the genre, for any pieces they are cast in. For example, if a dancer is cast in a tap piece, he/she must be enrolled in a weekly tap class.

DRILL CAST CO.

IGNITE

Dance Company

Drill Cast Co is designed for dancers who are primarily on their HS Drill team company who are looking extra for studio/convention training as well as competitive/performance opportunities outside of the drill team. Drill Cast dancers will be required 1 day a week for training/rehearsals. Other opportunities will be solely based on your availability

Fall/Spring Weekly Schedule: 3-3.5 hours total weekly requirement

Wednesday, depending on team placement

1-1.5 hours ballet+ | 1 hour jazz | 1.5 hour rehearsal

**Additional classes may be required based on ballet levels*

Required Routines:

2-3, depending team commitment

Required Competitions:

1 required competition in the spring

2 Conventions: 1 in Fall, 1 In Spring (local+travel)

Additional Commitment:

Guest Choreography Week, Team Retreat

Photoshoot (includes headshot, action shot and team photo)

Saturday Rehearsals, as needed

Holiday Party, Nutcracker, Spring Showcase, Spring Recital, Spring Celebration

Extras:

Dancers must request approval to add a solo, duet, or trio to compete.

Summer Requirements:

1-2 hour/week Jazz class, 1-1.5-3 hours of weekly ballet, and the Axis Intensive. Please note that Axis week may have choreography set pieces for Drill cast. Dancers will need to be available. Ballet Intensive is also strongly recommended for technique training.

PLUS:

Drill cast dancers may be cast in additional competition pieces as part of the competition co pieces. Dancers wanting to be cast in these pieces will need to be available for 1-2 times a month for Saturday rehearsal and must be available for all 3 required Ignite Dance Co competitions.

2026-27 SUMMER INTENSIVE OPPORTUNITIES

Ballet Intensive 6/15-6/18 (Mon to Thur): The ballet intensive curriculum focuses on strong technique rooted in the traditions of classical ballet with elements of contemporary movement. It is designed to help advanced dancers in the development of solid technique and artistic style through the challenging combinations and variations presented in each class. In each class, dancers will have the opportunity to gain a greater appreciation for dance and movement, while growing in athleticism, artistry, clarity, grace, speed, and musicality.

Balance Intensive 7/7-7/10 (Tues to Fri): Our Balance Intensive is designed to inspire dancers and further their technical and artistic training in a welcoming, all-inclusive environment. This program is ideal for the dancer who would like to broaden his/her understanding of various dance styles and may be interested in getting into the convention or competitive dance team world. Classes will be taught by our passionate, engaging, in-house instructors and is a great opportunity for students to get exposure to more of our BDS faculty. In order to allow for more class time and lower the pressure of performing, there won't be an end of week performance.

Axis Intensive 7/27-7/29 (Mon to Wed): AXIS Intensive is designed for motivated dancers who come to be trained, inspired and often transformed by these incredible dance experiences. Students will have an opportunity to refine their skills and broaden their dance vocabulary while being exposed to guest master teachers from coast to coast who will push them to unexplored limits. AXIS Intensive is dedicated to the growth of each dancer as a physical technician, as well as an expressive and articulate artist. Taking part in these intensives will help bring students' performance quality to a new level. Designed for the serious multi-level artist, these intensives are geared for those with an eye toward pre-professional quality performance.



2026-27 SUMMER REQUIREMENTS

Classes/Workshops: Minimum class enrollment is 1 hour of jazz per week, for all Ignite members, in a class placed by the directors. Competition teams will also be required to take a weekly 1-1.5 hour ballet class at their appropriate level. Optional weekly workshops are offered to allow dancers to submerge themselves in additional specialties as well. Students are encouraged to take as many additional classes as they are able, especially in ballet, to maintain their current level.

Choreography (applicable to all Ignite teams):

- The week of 8/3-8/7, we will set the bulk of Ignite choreography for Performance and Competition teams. If you cannot be here for this Choreography Week, it is possible that you may not be able to participate in the 2026-2027 Ignite season.
- AXIS week 7/27-7/29 - Competition dancers, we ask that you keep the evenings available for guest choreography opportunities.
- Guest Choreography 7/27- 8/3 - Competition dancers, we ask that you keep these days available for guest choreography opportunities.

Team Building (applicable to all Ignite teams):

- Company Retreat: this will be a fun-filled day as we get to know each other a bit more through various activities and build goals as a team for our following year.

*If students are gone for part of the summer, they can double up where necessary. Intensives do not count toward class requirements. *All pricing available on the BDS website.