

*The  
Competition Co*



# **IGNITE** dance company

At Balance Dance Studios

## **2024-2025 INFORMATION**



## 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.



### MANDY ANSTEY, DIRECTOR

Mandy is a passionate dance educator, choreographer and performer with a strong commitment to promoting self-love, thought-provoking experiences, and character development, through the art form of dance. She is an educator of all ages, choreographer for various styles, and an animated performer. Mandy graduated with a BFA in Dance from the University of South Florida. As an educator, she has produced, choreographed and directed many dance concerts and musical theater productions, over the past 17 years. Her career in dance education values movers of all levels and promotes character building through the vehicle of dance.



### 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 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!



### CLAY MOORE, ASSISTANT 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 with non-profit groups and schools in the AISD and LISD and non-profit groups. He is excited to be back with the CTDC family where he'll be working the admin desk and hopping in to sub classes from time to time.



# What Is Ignite Competition Company?

"NO PRESSURE, JUST PASSION"

## Our Mission

IGNITE Dance Competition Company offers a variety of genres, commitment and levels based on the needs of it's dancers. Our competitive team will attend 3 spring competitions as well as perform in the 3 shows per year which include the Nutcracker, Illuminate Spring Show, and Balance Spring Recital. Ignite Dance Company 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. We are serious about our training and require our students to "bring the passion, and leave the pressure behind."



## Opportunities

Time Management Skills  
Local Performances  
Competitive Growth  
Flexibility with Other Commitments  
Professional Relationships and Support  
Team Building Skills  
Leadership Building  
Professional Level Training  
& More!

# Audition Details

MAY 22ND | AGES 5-6 | 4PM-5PM

MAY 22ND | AGES 6-7 | 5:30PM-6:30PM

## Company Evaluation

This process will feel more like a fun dance class. We do not treat this as a serious audition for these young ones. We will create a standard jazz class where we warm up and then use some across the floor and combos to evaluate the attendees for summer and fall class placement. If we feel they are ready to join the company, we will offer them a position on our team. If they aren't quite ready, we will let them know the best class options for summer and fall enrollment to prepare them for the next season. We are looking for students who have a combination of basic body awareness, some flexibility, classroom maturity, passion, motivation, and the ability to remember a pattern of steps/movement. Some parents prefer not to even use the word "audition" with their students, and we fully support that as well. Come join us for a fun class evaluation!

MAY 20TH | AGES 8-12 | 4PM-8PM

An intermediate jazz routine will be taught the week of May 13th-15th. Dancers ages 8-12: choreo will be taught and rehearsed (\$20 drop in rate per class) on Monday, May 13th, at 5pm and 6pm, as well as Wednesday, May 15th, at 6pm. Some advanced students in the upper age range of this audition may be asked to attend the older audition as well.

Students can attend as many audition practice classes as they'd like to register for. This routine will also be sent out via email to anyone registered for auditions.

MAY 21ST | AGES 13+ | 5PM-9PM

An advanced jazz routine will be taught the week of May 13th-15th. Dancers ages 13+: choreo will be taught and rehearsed (\$20 drop in rate per class) on Monday, May 13th, at 7pm and 8pm, as well as Wednesday, May 15th, at 7pm and 8pm. Based on dancer's comfort level, students in this age group may choose to learn the routines for, and attend both, the intermediate and the advanced auditions in order to best demonstrate their strengths and artistry.

Students can attend as many audition prep classes as they'd like to register for. This routine will also be sent out via email to anyone registered for auditions.

AGES 5-7

AGES 8-12

AGES 13+



# Audition Details

## DAY OF AUDITION

EVALUATION

**Evaluation (5-7):** Dancers will follow a simple jazz class format including a high energy warm up and stretching. Following this will be some 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 (8+):** Dancers will sign in, receive their audition numbers and head to the warm up room to prepare. Dancers will go through a very simple ballet warm up to prepare their bodies and demonstrate basic ballet technique. No previous ballet experience is required for this. Then, there 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. The final section of the audition will be across the floor skills and the jazz routine that was previously taught.

We ask that parents do not stay during evaluations; the screens in the lobbies will be off, as we want to create a calm, stress-free environment.

CLOTHING

Dancers are expected to come to auditions wearing studio dress code, all black attire, that is clean and professional looking. Please no baggy clothing or busy patterns/styles. We prefer clean, simple lines. Hair can be worn in any style that is pulled up, but should look slicked back, professional and completely out of the face at all times. For example, slicked back ponytails or a variety of braids/buns are a great choice. Please no loose hair, unless very short, as this creates a distraction, as well as the occasional safety hazard. Dancers should have ballet shoes for the ballet portion and either jazz shoes, socks or bare feet for the other genres. 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. Please leave those in your bags or at home. No photography or videos will be allowed in the audition room once auditions have started. During check in and warmups however, please feel free to use these items as desired and, if you post on social media, feel free to tag us: @balancedancestudios and @ignite.dance.co.

RESULTS

Dancers will be notified of their audition results, via email, on or by Thursday, May 22nd. At this time, you will be asked to review all company paperwork and complete necessary steps to prepare for an individual planning meeting on Saturday, May 25th, from 2:00-3:30pm, with your team director, to sign up for summer classes and intensives, as well as reviewing fall classes.

**REGISTRATION IS OPEN!**

VISIT: [HTTPS://WWW.BALANCEDANCESTUDIOS.COM/IGNITE-AUDITION-INFO/](https://www.balancedancestudios.com/ignite-audition-info/)

OR

EMAIL: [IGNITE@BALANCEDANCESTUDIOS.COM](mailto:IGNITE@BALANCEDANCESTUDIOS.COM)

# The Competition Co



## **Fall Weekly Schedule: 3-3.5 hours total weekly requirement**

Monday 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:**

1-2, depending on team placement

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

## **Required Competitions:**

3 required competitions in the spring

## **Additional Commitment:**

Choreography Week

Team Retreat

Photoshoot (includes headshot, action shot and team photo)

Holiday Party, Nutcracker, Spring Showcase, Spring Recital, Spring Banquet

## **Extras:**

Dancers may request approval to add a solo, duet, or trio to take to required competitions, and may potentially compete at additional competitions and/or conventions.

Dancers may attend additional classes at conventions, with director approval.

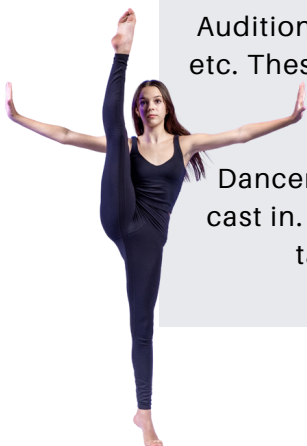
## **Summer Requirements:**

1 hour/week of an assigned Jazz class plus 1.5 hours of weekly ballet, and the Axis Intensive. Please note that Axis week may have choreography set around it, so students may need to be available, if wanting to be cast in those pieces with guest choreographers. Ballet Intensive is also strongly recommended.

## **PLUS:**

Audition for additional competition pieces, such as Production, Tap, Lyrical, Hip Hop, Acro, etc. These pieces will rehearse on weekends (twice 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. These pieces will be required to take to the required competitions.



# Important Dates

## REQUIREMENTS

- Summer Intensives: Ballet, Axis, and/or Balance Intensive, based on team placement
- Photoshoot - Summer TBD
- Choreo week - August 5-9 (All Co)
- All Company Retreat Sept TBD
- Solo/Duo/Trio Check Ins - Fall TBD (All choreo must be completed/mastered by this date to compete the routine for the 24/25 season)
- Holiday Party- Dec TBD
- Nutcracker Ballet - Dec TBD
- 3 Competitions- Jan-May TBD (based on team placement)
- Solo/Duo/Trio Showcase- TBD Jan or Feb
- Spring Recital - TBD May
- Illuminate Spring Show Reh/Show- TBD April or May
- Banquet- TBD April or May
- Balance Spring Recital - May TBD



# 2024-25 Summer Intensive Opportunities

**Ballet Intensive 6/10-6/14:** 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 7/8-7/11:** 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 7/29-8/2:** 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.

To register for a Summer Intensive, [CLICK HERE.](#)





# 2024-25 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, so that dancers can progress together and prepare for choreography week) PLUS 1-1.5 hour ballet class at their appropriate level. We understand that with summer travel, some dancers may have to load up classes at the beginning or end of the summer in the form of make ups. Optional weekly workshops are offered to allow dancers to submerge themselves in additional specialties as well. Full descriptions of each are available. Students are encouraged to take as many additional classes as they wish, especially in ballet, to maintain their current level.

## **Competition Prep (applicable to all Ignite teams):**

- Choreography Week (\$150+ per routine cast), depending on team casting: 8/5-8/9. We will set the bulk of Ignite competition choreography during this week. If you cannot be here for Choreography Camp, it is possible that you may not be able to participate in the 2024-2025 Ignite season. If a dancer is allowed to miss choreography week, he/she will need to pay the choreographer or an assistant for privates to catch up. This is determined on an individual basis.

## **Team Building (applicable to all Ignite teams):**

- Company Retreat: This will be a fun-filled time as we get to know each other a bit more through various activities. Date/Time TBD.

