



# High Meadow School

## DANCE CURRICULAR OVERVIEW - SPRING 2023

TEACHER: ANN SULLIVAN

### N3'S

Nursery students came back to dance class this spring and continued to work on their warm up routine, freeze dance improvisations and their individual *Goodbye* dances behind the curtain in the dance studio. Students learned to focus and listen and then dance with energy and creativity when they were improvising. They also worked on creating a *Caterpillar* dance. They snuggled together under a green 'grass' cloth, wiggled their way into a circle and let their 'caterpillar' fingers dance up their arms, over their heads, and down to their toes. Then they curled up into tiny cocoons, grew into beautiful butterflies that danced around their circle and, tired out, went to sleep on their 'flower petal' dots. They performed with courage and energy.

### Pre-Kindergarten

Pre-k students danced creatively in class this year, whether they were making shapes on different levels or improvising around the room. They worked really well creating and remembering their *Railroad Diggers* dance. They invented marvelous digging movements, laid down to form railroad tracks, and each classmate danced their 'train' over the tracks wonderfully. In their Meadow MoCA performance, dancers also showed off some of the warm up and stretching movements that they had worked on throughout the year, grew into 'space bubbles' and floated into their railroad dance. They danced with incredible joy and commitment.

### Kindergarten

Kindergarten dancers grew their skills in class this year while enjoying Freeze Dance and learning to dance safely with their classmates in various spatial configurations. They did an amazing *Space Bubbles* performance during Meadow MoCA in which students grew into: floating, shape-changing space bubbles; landed on the Planet of *Saturn Turn Turn*; switched places on *Jumping Jupiter*; mirrored each other on the planet of 'South Africa'; balanced on one foot; created shapes on high, middle and low levels; and danced *Goodbye Dances* with their partners to finish. They danced with focus, exuberance and creativity!

### 1st Grade

This spring first graders worked on their dance the *Magical Starry Night* for a performance during Meadow MoCA. They performed with joyous energy and focus. At the end of the year they started exploring 1.) How to move while maintaining contact - touching hands or feet or elbows 2.) Dancing in outdoor spaces, around the quad, and in the Gazebo. In their very last class students worked in a giant circle, each student dancing with the person next to them to choreograph a dance. Partners worked with incredible focus to create and show their dances which used: level, speed and quality changes that highlighted each

students' own unique personality. Their focus, creativity and attention to each other's dances was absolutely fantastic and a beautiful way to end the year.

## **2nd Grade**

This spring second graders continued to work well choreographing their dance *Sign Language* for the Dance Performance during Meadow MoCA. They invented movement based on several sign language gestures, learned each other's movements, rehearsed and chose the perfect music for their dance. The culmination was a wonderful, fun dance and exuberant performance.

## **3rd Grade**

This spring third graders worked on their dance *Fallen Kingdom* for the Meadow MoCA performance in May. They created wonderful duets and trios and worked together to arrange them in time and space. Then they came together to dance over and then under each other in a powerful moment of coordinated, unison movement. They chose to costume their dance in capes that flowed around them as they leapt, rolled and flew across the space. They ended in a wonderful formation together, sinking into the ground. It was a real delight to watch the energy and excitement in their performance.

## **4th Grade**

This spring fourth graders worked well choreographing their dance *Black and White* for the Meadow MoCA performance in May. They began by creating duets and trios, eventually weaving them together. But then, inspired by an improvisation of connecting and falling away, they focused on creating movement as a group, connecting and falling away in different configurations as well as using those concepts to dance across the floor in a criss cross pattern. The black and white costumes that they chose were the perfect compliment to their dance, highlighting the different ways they came together and separated. Students led each other from one movement to the next and danced wonderfully in the performance. Later in the spring, dancers continued to explore the idea of connecting in various ways, as well as giving and taking weight, which are basic contact improvisation skills.

## **5th Grade**

Fifth graders enjoyed choreographing their own dances this spring: *Justice*, *RocknRoll* and *Cubby Wubbies* (Businessmen). Each set of dancers decided on an idea for their dance, improvised movement around that idea, taught each other movement, and explored different spatial arrangements for their movements. The dances were wonderfully unique and showcased the personalities of each dancer. It took a lot of courage to create their own work and move out of their comfort zones to perform them in front of adults and peers. The students faced these challenges and had successful performances. In late spring, dancers began to explore basic concepts of contact improvisation. They learned how to move through space while maintaining contact and how to give and take each other's weight. They also worked on finding equilibrium as they leaned away from each other and then found ways to balance and move without losing that equilibrium.

## **6th Grade**

This spring sixth graders worked on choreographing small group dances for the Meadow MoCA performance in May. Their dances, *Frog Demon*, *Life of a Tree*, *Board Meeting*, and *Tinkleberry*, were very different from each other and each one was wonderful. For some groups it took time to find an idea that worked. Others found the idea right away and then worked on the framework and movement of the dance. Still others found that figuring out the spatial arrangement of the dance was the biggest challenge. All in all, students created marvelous, inventive and unique dances, and performed them with energy and courage.

Later in the spring students began to explore elements of contact improvisation with guest teacher, Leah Siepel. Dancers started by sitting back to back. One partner began moving while the other partner

'listened' and then followed the movement. Partners took the movement to standing and moving through the space. Pairs then created shapes with lots of negative space and explored moving into their partner's negative space. Students also worked on giving and taking weight. Instead of falling in a trust fall, they gave weight to their partner and allowed their partner to take that weight and return them to standing. They also worked on finding equilibrium as they leaned away from each other and then found ways to balance and move without losing that equilibrium.