

Dance Stars: Quaker Girls

Junior Dancers Program

A Partnership Between the University of Pennsylvania Quaker Girls Dance Team
and Dance Arts Council & Young Quakers Community Athletics



Lauren Van

Dr. Ira Harkavy and Theresa Simmonds

URBS-1780: Faculty-Student Collaborative Action Seminar in Community-University Relations

Spring 2024

Table of Contents

<i>ABSTRACT</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>PROBLEM STATEMENT</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>INTRODUCTION</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>ROADMAP</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM: LACK OF ARTS ACCESS, SPECIFICALLY DANCE, IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>THE PROBLEM AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>LOCAL SCOPE: WEST PHILADELPHIA SCHOOLS</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>DEMONSTRATED NEED FOR DANCE EDUCATION IN WEST PHILADELPHIA SCHOOLS, SPECIFICALLY COMEGYS AND HAMILTON</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>CASE STUDIES</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>CASE STUDY I: ANNEKA IGNATIUS' PSL: THE COPELAND DANCE PROGRAM FOR PAUL ROBESON HIGH SCHOOL</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>CASE STUDY II: AFTER SCHOOL ARTS AT PENN PROGRAM</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>OVERVIEW OF THE PILOT PROGRAM</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>PREFACE</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>SCHEDULE AND LOGISTICS</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>REFLECTION ON EXPERIENCE IN THE PILOT PROGRAM</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>ISSUES IN THE PILOT PROGRAM</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>SOLUTION: STREAMLINING AND EXPANSION EXISTING PROGRAM</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>STUDENT PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITY</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>THE IMPORTANCE OF DANCE PERFORMANCE</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>EXPANSION OF THE PROGRAM TEACHING TEAM</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>DANCE ARTS COUNCIL PARTNERSHIP</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>DESIRED OVERALL OUTCOME OF PROGRAM</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>DESIRED OUTCOME FOR PROGRAM STUDENTS</i>	<i>30</i>

<i>DESIRED OUTCOME FOR PENN STUDENT MENTORS</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE DANCE STARS PROGRAM</i>	<i>32</i>
<i>KEY AGENTS</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>KEY CATALYSTS</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE FOR THE OVERALL PROGRAM</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>PENN STUDENT MENTOR RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND TRAINING</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>PROGRAM TEACHING SCHEDULE</i>	<i>42</i>
<i>TRANSPORTATION</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>SAMPLE DANCE LESSON PLAN</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>HIGHLIGHTED CHANGES FROM THE PILOT PROGRAM</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE FOR THE DANCE CLINIC AND BASKETBALL PERFORMANCE</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>FINALIZING THE LOGISTICS</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>DAY-OF SCHEDULE AND LOGISTICS</i>	<i>51</i>
<i>EVALUATION OF PROGRAM SUCCESS</i>	<i>57</i>
<i>SURVEY FOR PENN MENTORS</i>	<i>57</i>
<i>SURVEY FOR STUDENT PARTICIPANTS</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY</i>	<i>59</i>
<i>LONG-TERM GOALS</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>CONCLUSION: FROM HERE TO THERE</i>	<i>62</i>
<i>REFLECTION</i>	<i>65</i>
<i>WORKS CITED</i>	<i>68</i>
<i>SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS</i>	<i>70</i>

ABSTRACT

Nationwide, arts education is regarded as a lower priority than core academic subjects. Specifically in the region of West Philadelphia, the majority of schools lack access to arts education, especially dance, in primary schools. Recognizing the profound impact of dance on personal growth and development, this paper proposes a dance program led by Penn students to fulfill this gap in education.

Drawing from personal experience, community service involvement, and extensive research on the national and local scope of the problem, the paper outlines the necessity and benefits of dance education for students in West Philadelphia schools, focusing on Benjamin B. Comegys School and Andrew Hamilton School. These are University of Pennsylvania's University-Assisted Community Schools (UACS) that frequently collaborate with Penn to create opportunities for these students. Many students at UACS schools have expressed interest in cheer and dance programming, and this demonstrated need has initiated the development of a pilot dance program directed by the University of Pennsylvania Quaker Girls Dance Team.

To increase access to dance education within West Philadelphia, I am proposing a mutually-beneficial partnership program between Hamilton and Comegys schools with the Quaker Girls and Penn Dance Arts Council. Named Dance Stars: Quaker Girls Junior Dancers, this program will involve weekly Friday dance classes taught by Penn dancers at Hamilton and Comegys. The teaching team made up of Penn dancers from Quaker Girls and the Dance Arts Council will be called Penn Mentors.

The program will culminate in a Dance Clinic and Basketball Performance event in mid-November. The two-hour Dance Clinic will occur shortly before the Women's Basketball Home Opener Game with the purpose of teaching and preparing the students' dance routine. The

Quaker Girls and Penn Mentors along with the participants will perform during the halftime break of the game.

Implemented starting in the 2024-2025 school year, this program will work towards increasing opportunities for West Philadelphia students, specifically by providing accessible arts education in the field of dance.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Students in under-resourced areas lack access to arts programming, creating a gap in a well-rounded education. To fill this gap, this PSL will propose a dance program that brings Penn students to teach dance at Benjamin B. Comegys School and Andrew Hamilton School to provide increased arts access, specifically dance, to K-8 students.

INTRODUCTION

When deciding on a PSL topic, I knew I wanted to focus on primary education. Through my interactions with my mentee, Keyashia Edwards, in the Junior Jumpstart Program, I realized that my experience in high school was drastically different than hers. I became aware of the many opportunities and privileges I was afforded when growing up in a relatively affluent community that highly values education. As I reflected on what impacted me the most during my middle and high school years, I realized it was not school itself. Rather, my extracurricular activities and involvement outside of school provided me with the most growth and joy. Of my activities, dance stands out the most in how it shaped me.

Dance has always been a part of my life. Starting from three years old, I grew up learning ballet and taking dance classes at my local studio. Throughout my elementary and middle school years, ballet was my primary activity, and I quickly gained an unrelenting passion for the art.

During high school, as a member of my school's dance team, I branched out into different styles of dance including contemporary, lyrical, jazz, and hip-hop. I made lifelong friends who I still am very close with. I credit dance with instilling hard work, dedication, and perseverance as my values.

Community service has also always been a passion of mine. Throughout high school, I was heavily involved in my local community service organization, STEAM for All, where I committed over 500 hours bringing STEM education to elementary students. Engaging in community service instilled major growth over my high school years, developing leadership skills that I will carry with me throughout the rest of my life.

From this reflection, I knew I wanted to utilize my experience in dance and community service to increase access to arts education in West Philadelphia schools. Therefore, it seemed only natural for me to combine two of my greatest passions into an idea for my program: increasing access to dance education to West Philadelphia schools.

ROADMAP

In this paper, I will outline the purpose and proposal for a dance program led by Penn students at West Philadelphia schools Hamilton and Comegys. Firstly, I will discuss the scope of the problem of lack of access to arts education, specifically dance, nationally and within the West Philadelphia school system. Then, I will describe why dance is especially beneficial to students and the clear demonstrated need within the school sites of Hamilton and Comegys. Based on my research, I will summarize two case studies on similar programs that exist at Penn and highlight the advantages and disadvantages of these initiatives.

Because the Quaker Girls dance team has already initiated the pilot program, I will give a detailed overview of the structure and logistics of the current program. Based on my personal

experience and the Quaker Girls' reflections, I will point out key issues with the current program. With these areas for growth in mind, I will then propose solutions that could be implemented to streamline and expand the program. My goal is to expand the teaching team of the program by collaborating with the Penn Dance Arts Council and to create a performance opportunity for the participants.

I will then describe the key agents and catalysts necessary to implement these two initiatives. An outline for the timeline of the implementation process will be provided. Every step that needs to be taken to initiate these plans into action will be detailed. Finally, I will conclude with how the program success will be evaluated and how the program will continue to be sustainable. I will end with a conclusion that will summarize the process of the program development.

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM: LACK OF ARTS ACCESS, SPECIFICALLY DANCE, IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

THE PROBLEM AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

On a national level, the opportunity to engage in arts education remains an elusive luxury. While the benefits of artistic expression are widely acknowledged, the stark reality is that these advantages are often out of reach for low-income communities. The main priority of primary education is the standard subjects of English, math, history, and science. As a result, arts education is often overlooked and disregarded, especially when schools face limited funding and lack of resources. The absence of arts education in areas affected by poverty not only deprives individuals of avenues for personal growth and self-expression but also perpetuates cycles of inequality and stifles the potential for social and cultural enrichment.

Over the last three decades, arts education has declined rapidly (Rabkin & Hedberg). As summarized by the Education Commission of the States, only 31 of 50 states acknowledge arts as a core academic subject and therefore, only 31 state governments will fund local school district arts programs (Zatynski). Even if local public schools do receive funding, there is no guarantee that the school district will allocate this money towards arts programming as many school districts have their own discretion of how to use government funds.

Additionally, lack of access to arts education disproportionately affects low-income communities and minority groups. According to the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, white students are almost twice as likely as African American and Hispanic students to have received arts education in schools and since the 1980s, they have experienced reductions in arts education of 40 to 49 percent (American Academy of Arts & Sciences). Additionally, as shown by a case study conducted in Denver, low-income students were significantly less likely to receive quality arts education than wealthier students (Scribd). Given the documented wide-reaching influence of socioeconomic status on access to arts education, particularly on a national scale, there is an urgent and pressing need to address this disparity for minority and low-income communities.

LOCAL SCOPE: WEST PHILADELPHIA SCHOOLS

Philadelphia is often named as “America’s poorest city”. According to the United States Census, in 2020, 22.7 percent of households in Philadelphia were below the poverty level, defined as an annual income of \$30,000 for a family of four. Additionally, a 2017 study conducted by Pew Trusts, 1 out of 10 Philadelphians live in deep poverty, with an income of \$13,740 for a family of four (The Pew Charitable Trusts). While the poverty rate has decreased

over the last decade, Philadelphia's poverty is deeply rooted in systematic issues of segregation and population shifts.

One factor that significantly perpetuates the cycle of poverty is Philadelphia's lack of well-funded education. The discussion around the Philadelphia school system is both multifaceted and complicated and therefore would overtake a significant section of this paper if discussed in full. In the interest of time, I will give a brief overview of the key points relevant to my paper.

While the Philadelphia public school system faces a number of challenges, the root of these issues is underfunding. According to Mike Herbstman, the district's chief financial officer, Philadelphia students are underfunded by almost \$8,000 per student which totals to \$1.6 billion in lack of necessary funding (The Philadelphia Tribune). This gap in money limits each school's capacity to hire and retain qualified teachers, update curriculum materials, and maintain basic school facilities. Many Philadelphia schools suffer from aging buildings, inadequate resources, and overcrowded classrooms, creating an environment that hampers student learning and well-being. Students do not have access to basic necessities such as safe restrooms and face hazardous conditions such as peeling lead paint. School should be a safe place for students to learn and grow.

Amongst the school system's lack of funding, it is understandable that school officials would prioritize general education classes such as math and English. Since state test scores highly affect a school's standing, many principals and school administrators hyperfocus on test readiness, pushing students towards mastery of the tested material. Therefore, arts education is often the first to leave Philadelphia schools. Already facing a myriad of issues, it is hard to recognize the intrinsic value of arts education.

Following the extreme budget cuts for the 2013-2014 school year, schools themselves were left understaffed (Chalkbeat Philadelphia). As a result, the Philadelphia Art Department was hit the hardest, and schools were lucky to have even one art or music teacher. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, all students in grades K-12 must be provided instruction in all four arts disciplines of dance, music, theater, and visual arts. However, Philadelphia schools currently rarely fulfill this requirement as some already struggle to staff math or science subjects. To curb the mandate, schools often assert teachers who draw or sing with their class as “art educators”. Therefore, there is a clear lack of adequate arts education for Philadelphia students.

Particularly focusing on the Andrew Hamilton School and Benjamin B. Comegys School in West Philadelphia, efforts have been made to increase the presence of arts education. Both Comegys and Hamilton Schools employ an Arts Specialist and a music teacher. However, neither of these schools have any source of dance programming or dance teachers. In the next section, I outline why this dance programming is beneficial for primary students.

DEMONSTRATED NEED FOR DANCE EDUCATION IN WEST PHILADELPHIA SCHOOLS, SPECIFICALLY COMEGYS AND HAMILTON

The goal of primary education is to develop children's minds, cultivating the acquisition of knowledge and skills essential for their success as contributing members of society. In the face of poverty, students become disadvantaged in social and educational development as they are not afforded necessary resources and opportunities. As shown in a 2015 study conducted at Stanford University, high-poverty schools are much less effective than low-poverty schools, leading to wide gaps in later achievement (Stanford Center for Education Policy Analysis). Educational

disparity causes students in poverty to struggle from the beginning of their development.

Education has the potential to break the cycle of poverty. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that students of lower socioeconomic status are afforded high quality education.

While most efforts to improve West Philadelphia schools are focused on core curriculum support, I would like to bring attention to an often overlooked aspect of education, the arts. Over the last decade, arts education has been repeatedly cut or decreased in school programming. If present at all in schools, arts curriculum usually comes in the form of visual arts or music, classes that are easy to teach even without specialized experience in the area. Dance is generally not offered in schools, despite its immense benefits to childhood development.

Dance education is uniquely equipped to address education improvements with a two-fold impact on both arts and physical education.

Firstly, dance has great physiological benefits. Dance as exercise is fun, safe, and requires only a safe community space without the need for equipment. Dance classes instigate moderate to vigorous physical activity, and a 2011 study on 150 teenage girls demonstrated that dance programming increased daily physical fitness by 70 percent (O'Neill). Additionally, dance can increase motor skill development which is an essential skill for children. Simply participating in two dance classes a week significantly improved the balance and fine motor skills of elementary school children (Anjos & Ferraro). Dance also increases brain development and has been shown to improve general executive function in children, including increasing inhibitory control ability and working memory capacity (Rudd).

In addition to physical activity, dance also has numerous psychological benefits. Dance cultivates creativity and self-expression, critical skills for personal identity development. Even a six-week dance program for elementary school students found a measurable increase in creativity

levels (Neville & Makopoulou). Giving students the opportunity to choreograph as well as collaborate with their peers will provide growth opportunities not found in a traditional classroom environment. The action of dancing, especially performing, can also help children develop internal confidence, a skill that is not easily learned through standard school curriculum. Additionally, dance therapy has been employed to treat depression and has demonstrated abilities to reduce total cholesterol levels, low-density lipoprotein cholesterol, and other associated depressive symptoms (Robinson, Matheson, & Kraemer). Mental health is a priority especially for students in West Philadelphia who are surrounded by stressful and unstable environments and may be dealing with extreme issues like gun violence.

Along with its aid in childhood development, dance is not only a need but a want for female-identifying elementary and middle school students. Athletic afterschool programming in Comegys and Hamilton schools largely focuses on sports such as basketball and football. Traditionally, girls are not drawn to these activities and lack participation in athletics. As a result, according to Sara Kelly, Director of UACS Sports, Fitness, & Health and Director of Young Quakers Community Athletics, many girls at Comegys and Hamilton schools have repeatedly requested “cheer” programming. In a workshop on self-advocacy, students at Hamilton were tasked with selecting a problem in their school they wanted to solve, which led a group of girls to choose to advocate for cheerleading classes during recess. While this program is not inherently cheer-focused, dancing is a close adjacent that fulfills their interest in girl-focused recess activity.

My goal with the dance program is to fulfill dancing’s myriad of benefits for elementary and middle school students along with providing an outlet for fun and athletic activity. Through the program, students will develop their dance skills while also learning creativity, perseverance,

and hard work. Dance provides a unique experience that cannot be taught in a classroom, and I will work to cultivate a program in which every student is heard and valued.

CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY I: ANNEKA IGNATIUS' PSL: THE COPELAND DANCE PROGRAM FOR PAUL ROBESON HIGH SCHOOL

Anneka's program proposal aims to solve a similar problem in the West Philadelphia community, a lack of access to dance education. While we both attempt to solve the same problem, we propose different solutions. Anneka's PSL focuses on Robeson High School. As a member of Arts House Dance Company, she utilizes their group as the primary catalyst in her program.

The program proposal outlines a comprehensive after-school dance initiative for students at Robeson High School. The program, developed in collaboration with Penn's Dance Arts Council, offers a weekly, for-credit curriculum featuring four dance styles: hip hop, ballet, jazz, and contemporary. Every week, the style of dance rotates. Penn students, selected for their passion and expertise in dance, serve as instructors and mentors, guiding students through skill development and creative exploration. The teaching team is divided into the four styles who individually prepare lesson plans that are submitted to Anneka.

The students at Robeson High School walk to the Penn Platt Performing Arts House to learn dance every week. While this is a great model in theory, the walk from Robeson High School to Platt Performing Arts House is a lengthy 20 to 25 minutes and causes a time constraint for both busy Penn students and Robeson high schoolers. My program instead takes Penn students to the schools, eliminating the need for student travel.

My main inspiration from Anneka's PSL was her organization and attention to detail in the implementation section of her paper. She logically describes the steps that the director of the program needs to take, which are similar to my program as we aim to solve the same problem. While her proposal was not implemented, I can utilize the resources and insights from her PSL to improve the approach for my program. I especially thought her emphasis on Penn student relationships with the students was valuable.

CASE STUDY II: AFTER SCHOOL ARTS AT PENN PROGRAM

After School Arts at Penn (ASAP) is a year-long program founded in 2008 that teaches art to local Philadelphia students. The program is directed by Laurie McCall, Director of Platt Student Performing Arts House, and the student-run Penn Performing Arts Council. Every Wednesday, from October through April of the school year, Philadelphia students ages 10-14 participate in a series of workshops taught by Penn students in different art disciplines including dance, theater, singing, instrumental music, and creative writing. At the conclusion of the program, students have the opportunity to showcase their talents in a public performance at Platt House. I spoke to Laurie McCall regarding her experience with community service at Penn and longstanding involvement leading the ASAP program.

ASAP operates at the Platt House where students are required to commute to on their own. This is the greatest delineation between my program and ASAP. While ASAP hosts Philadelphia students on Penn campus, this program brings Penn students to the source of West Philadelphia students who may not have the means to travel every week. Therefore, this program fills a unique need of providing West Philadelphia students with dance education at their convenience.

A general outline of a typical day in the program is detailed below.

Time	Activity Name	Description
3:30-4:00pm	Optional Arts Activity	Students arrive at Platt House via individual transportation. They have the opportunity to participate in an optional art activity that takes place in the lobby.
4:00-4:30pm	Warmup	Students move to the dance studio within Platt House and participate in a warmup. Occasionally, guest teachers are invited to lead warmup or teach a short workshop.
4:30-5:00pm	Workshop Session 1	Students are presented with the option to select one of the art disciplines to study for thirty minutes. They can choose from dance, theater, singing, instrumental music, or creative writing. Penn student volunteers lead their respective workshops typically in a group setting. Instrumental music workshops are one-on-one sessions due to the nature of traditional individualized music lessons.
5:00-5:30pm	Workshop Session 2	Students rotate to a new art discipline of their choosing and practice that subject for thirty minutes.

From my case study of ASAP, I was inspired by their system of recruiting and training Penn student teachers. Rather than naming them as teachers, ASAP calls the Penn students leading the workshops “mentors”. Since the dance program’s goal is to also provide mentorship for its participants, I plan to rename Penn student teachers as mentors. ASAP recruits Penn students every September through the respective student councils, for example Dance Arts Council and Theatre Arts Council. They also promote their program during the annual Student Activities fair. Interested Penn students are invited to apply via a Google Form and are required to answer a short essay question about why they are interested in mentoring for ASAP. If accepted, the Penn student mentors will participate in a Mentor Training Session before beginning to volunteer. The training session is a one-time two-hour commitment that teaches newly anointed Penn Mentors how to work with the age group, prepare lesson plans, and manage a classroom. The training also includes valuable information on the socioeconomic climate of Philadelphia and how Penn Mentors can work in ways that are appropriate for students from all backgrounds. Laurie McCall explained that the training session has looked different every year. Occasionally, ASAP invites Netter Center staff to lead the session or the session is organized internally by ASAP leadership.

Laurie McCall attests that the program retains 30 to 40 participants every year. While there is high demand from the young Philadelphia community for arts programming, McCall explains that recruiting Penn Mentors who can teach dance is a large challenge for ASAP. Currently, the program has only one Penn Mentor in the dance discipline and is actively looking for more. I was surprised to learn this, since I expected dance to be a popular discipline because of the high number of dance groups on campus. The low interest in teaching dance is now a

major concern of mine, and I anticipate recruitment to be the program's focus in the coming years to build up a reliable and committed base of Penn teachers.

OVERVIEW OF THE PILOT PROGRAM

PREFACE

The Quaker Girls Dance Team is the University of Pennsylvania's premier dance team. We perform at university events such as football games, basketball games, and Quaker Days as well as our annual highlighted appearance at a Philadelphia 76ers halftime show. The main genre we perform is pom, which is a mix of jazz, cheer, and technique. Since we are not under either the athletics or the dance department, our team falls under the status of a University of Pennsylvania club defaulting our main source of funding through the Student Activities Council (SAC). Since the team is entirely student-run, we independently campaign fundraisers to keep our team funded.

About a month after I had formulated my idea for this program, Naomi Phemister-Jimenez, Co-Captain of the Quaker Girls Dance Team, announced that Sara Kelly had reached out to our team to propose a collaboration program with the Netter Center. I was very excited as this seemed like a perfect avenue to pilot the beginnings of my program. A week later, five Quaker Girls team members, including myself and Naomi, met with Sara Kelly to discuss the logistics of a dance program.

I would like to credit Naomi Phemister-Jimenez for the founding of the program as she led and organized the initial programming. Under her direction and with Kelly's guidance, the program became fully operational within two weeks. She was instrumental in forming a partnership with the Netter Center and designed the logistics and curriculum for the Spring 2024 program.

SCHEDULE AND LOGISTICS

As the program currently functions, we teach dance at the schools weekly. Every Friday, Quaker Girls teach a morning and afternoon session, one at each school site. Our team is divided into two groups of three to four Quaker Girls each. In the mornings, the first group teaches at Hamilton and runs a dance station during recess. In the afternoons, the second group teaches at Comegys through afterschool programming. Out of the 14 girls on our team, nine participate in volunteering at the schools.

By the end of this school year, Quaker Girls will have taught dance at Hamilton six times, starting on March 15 and ending on May 3. One Friday in March was skipped due to Spring Break. Comegys started later on April 12 due to scheduling conflicts and will end on May 3, totalling four Fridays.

When teaching at the schools, we wear our uniforms, sparkly dresses with tights. We each bring our sparkly red poms and one of the girls will bring a speaker. Dance is a great activity because it requires little equipment besides music and large open space. We usually teach outdoors if weather permits, however, the dance class is adaptable and can be easily relocated indoors if needed. The concept of bringing dance to the schools is straightforward and affordable as we just need to bring ourselves and our passion for dance.

HAMILTON SCHOOL

Time	Activity
10:15am-10:30am	Quaker Girls depart from Penn campus and travel to Hamilton via Septa Bus Line 21

10:30am-10:45am	Following lunch, the first group of students are led outside to the blacktop area to start dancing.
10:45am-12:45pm	Dance class, refer to the general structure below. The students have staggered lunch and recess times. After the first session, Quaker Girls remain outside to teach the following groups. One routine is taught to all students, however, it is modified slightly for each age group to match the appropriate difficulty.
12:45pm-1:15pm	Quaker Girls leave Hamilton and travel back to Penn campus via Septa Bus

COMEGYS SCHOOL

Time	Activity
3:15pm-3:45pm	Quaker Girls depart from Penn campus and travel to Comegys via Septa Trolley Line 11 or 13
3:45pm-4:15pm	Afterschool snack is provided to Comegys students. Quaker Girls sit at the tables with the students and socialize with them. We attempt to recruit as many students as possible to join our dance class.
4:15pm-5:15pm	Dance class, refer to the general structure below. Participating students are led outside to a grassy area behind the play structure.
5:15pm-5:45pm	Quaker Girls leave Comegys and travel back to Penn campus via Septa

	Trolly
--	--------

TRANSPORTATION

To transport to Hamilton and Comegys, the Quaker Girls utilize the SEPTA Bus Line 21 and Trolly Line 11 or 13 respectively. The fare is \$2.00 per ride, totaling to \$4.00 round trip. On occasion, some girls opt to take an Uber for ease and faster transportation. Sara Kelly initially offered SEPTA Disposable Smart Media (DSM) passes for Quaker Girls to use. The passes have to be picked up weekly and are loaded with two-trips each. However, due to the quick implementation of the program, we did not end up using them and instead opted to cover the SEPTA fare individually. The cost of Ubers are not eligible to be covered by the Netter Center.

DANCE CLASS STRUCTURE

Time	Activity
15 minutes	Warmup. Students are led in a warmup that includes jumping jacks, stretching, and socialization. Students and Quaker Girls sit in a circle while stretching, in which Quaker Girls ask students about their day and how they are.
40 minutes	Quaker Girls teach a 30-second routine. We modified some of our routines from the season to make them easier for the students. Before teaching the dance, Quaker Girls would perform the “advanced” version of the dance which made the students become excited and motivated to learn. The dances are taught slowly, with Quaker Girls demonstrating

	movements in short sections, and the students learning first with counts and then repeating the section with music. Students are allowed autonomy with each dance; they are given the freedom to choose which trick they want to learn or are welcome to choreograph or improv the end of the dance.
5 minutes	Showcase! At the end of the class, students perform their learned routine for the Quaker Girls. We give our poms to the students, which increases excitement and enthusiasm. They often call over their friends from the playground to watch their performance. The Quaker Girls give lots of praise and encouragement to boost the students' confidence.

REFLECTION ON EXPERIENCE IN THE PILOT PROGRAM

I regularly volunteer in the afternoon session at Comegys since the morning session occurs during my weekly quiz for my Math 2400 course. During my time at Comegys, I have fully enjoyed the experience teaching girls dance. Connecting with young girls at Comegys, I feel proud to be a part of the Quaker Girls team. I find joy in bringing dance to the community and sharing my passion with young girls.

The first time I entered the Comegys lunchroom, one of the girls jumped out of her seat and ran towards me to greet me with a hug. Sitting with the girls at lunch, many of them offered hugs and were fascinated by our sparkled dresses. While in the lunchroom, the students always seem excited and ready to dance. Their genuine friendliness is clear when they approach the Quaker Girls and ask a multitude of questions. Although we are often misnamed as

“cheerleaders”, we received overwhelmingly positive responses from students when asked if they want to dance with us. Their excitement to dance is inspiring and pushes me to make this a sustainable and long-standing program.

During the last two weeks of the Comegys programming, the Quaker Girls were joined by two Silverman Fellows from the Netter Center. The Netter Center Silverman Fellows work to improve literacy and arts opportunities in UACS schools. The two Silverman Fellows present at Comegys were members of Arts House Dance Company, another Penn dance group. Although they did not have experience in Quaker Girls style dance, they participated in learning the choreography and acted as assistant teachers by guiding lost students. They also expressed that learning different styles of dance was fun and engaging for them. From this experience of collaboration across dance groups, I identified including dancers from other groups as a potential area of growth for the program.

On the last day of the dance programming at Comegys, I fully recognized the growth of our students even over the short period of two months. One student, Aiyla, was partially passionate about the dance lessons and attended every session in full. She asked me if she could lead the warm-up, and she recalled the warmup routine perfectly, leading the group of girls. She had paid attention to the warm-up routine and memorized it over the course of the dance sessions.

Then, at the end of the class, she and her friend Corey, wanted to show the Quaker Girls a routine they had choreographed. Witnessing students like Aiyla and Corey showcase the routine they had diligently choreographed outside of class served as a powerful testament to the profound impact of a dance program. As they confidently performed movements learned and honed through the program, it became evident that beyond physical skills, dance instills a sense

of empowerment and confidence in its participants. Their dedication and enthusiasm not only underscored the immediate benefits of the program but also illuminated its capacity to foster long-term personal growth and development.

Aiyla and Corey's journey exemplifies the ripple effect of arts education, wherein the skills acquired extend far beyond the dance floor. Through their commitment to practice and creativity, they not only mastered choreography but also cultivated invaluable traits such as perseverance, teamwork, and self-expression. Furthermore, their enthusiasm and dedication serve as a catalyst for program sustainability and long-term impact. Their success reaffirms the importance of creating an environment where every student feels empowered to explore their potential and pursue their passions. Their story inspires me to implement the program's mission to provide equitable access to arts education and create a program where every student can thrive and succeed.

ISSUES IN THE PILOT PROGRAM

LACK OF DIVERSITY

Sara Kelly recently showcased our program at a conference, where she presented a photo of the Hamilton dance program. Almost immediately, the panel highlighted a significant concern: the noticeable lack of diversity among the dance instructors. As seen below, the photo displays five Caucasian Quaker Girls alongside five African American Hamilton students. Given that our team is predominantly composed of Caucasian individuals, with only one African American member, addressing this diversity gap internally poses a considerable challenge.



As Quaker Girls, we strive to be role models for the young girls in our program, and therefore, diversity should be our first priority. When discussing the topic of diversity with Naomi, she mentioned that many girls become fascinated with her and other Quaker Girls' hair. Many girls have admired Naomi's hair and expressed a desire to have hair like hers, often asking to touch or experiment with different hairstyles. Naomi found this trend disheartening, as she believes it's crucial for the girls to embrace their own hair and identity instead of idolizing hers. This underscores the necessity for greater diversity among our teaching team. It is essential that the girls' exposure to role models extends beyond a homogeneous representation, ensuring that they see themselves reflected in those they look up to.

DANCE CLASS ORGANIZATION

When asked about the current challenges that the program faces, both Naomi and Maya Walton, a freshman on the team who regularly volunteers at Comegys, cited attention span and focus as their biggest struggle as teachers of the program. I can also attest to this. While interest is initially high, students often become distracted during all sections of the dance class. Dancing outdoors on the blacktop, we compete with endless distractions including the play structure, the participants' friends, and other sports occurring simultaneously with our dance class.

Traditionally, dance classes take place in an isolated studio with a mirror, free of distractions. Outside, students often run off to talk to their peers or join them on the play structure. Without internal motivation, Naomi explains that it is very difficult to keep the students focused.

Focusing on the Hamilton site, several Quaker Girls have concerns regarding dance class organization. Alyssa Ingram, a senior on Quaker Girls Dance Team and member of the executive board, expressed challenges with teaching a dance class during recess. At Hamilton, our current program overlaps with Young Quakers Community Athletics, a partnership program between the Netter Center and Penn Athletics, and shares the space of recess time. Because we do not want to interfere with Young Quakers programming, Alyssa states that it is difficult to retain the conventional organization of a dance class and would like to see more structured recess time.

Kendall Allen, upcoming 2024-2025 Co-Captain of Quaker Girls and regular volunteer at Hamilton, mentioned that recess time is used as a rewards system for students at Hamilton, causing disruptions in the dance class. Hamilton students who behave well are rewarded with more time outside during recess and each student's time is uniquely regulated. Due to the constant influx and outflow of students in the dance class, Kendall reflects that this is challenging for the Quaker Girl teachers because there is an ever-changing wheel of students. The overall class is slowed down when portions of the dance have to be re-taught due to students arriving late or removed from recess early in the middle of dancing. Since this is a function of Hamilton's internal policies and behavior systems, we as guests and volunteers at Hamilton have little autonomy over this issue. However, I plan to propose a new dance class structure in the solution section that would alleviate some of the disorganization.

PENN STUDENT COMMITMENT AND PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY

A major concern I have about this program revolves around commitment and sustainability. Since the majority of the program responsibilities fall on the nine Quaker Girls who are volunteering their time, it is sometimes difficult to sustain the program every Friday. Penn students are traditionally very busy and have a bad habit of relaxing commitments such as volunteering during exam seasons. Volunteering at one school requires from two and a half to three hours of time for each session, which is a lengthy commitment every Friday year-round.

On one of the Fridays, one of the Quaker Girl members was sick and another had an exam, leaving only two Quaker Girls for the Comegys session. As a result, we had to cancel the session which is the last thing we want to do for the girls at Comegys who were expecting us and the sustainability of this program. Additionally, it is clear that the girls notice when there are less Quaker Girls present. At another Friday session at Comegys, only myself and another Quaker Girl were able to attend. When we arrived at the Comegys lunch room, we were greeted by our students, who immediately started questioning where the rest of our team was. They took notice that our teaching team had decreased, demonstrating how much they value their dance classes and the relationships they formed with the Quaker Girl teachers.

My goal is to foster a program built on the base of committed and passionate dance teachers. While Penn students tend to take on various activities, I want to set a precedent for this program as a serious and valuable commitment. Dance sessions at the schools should not be missed or canceled except for extreme cases.

With these areas for growth in mind, I will propose solutions to the current challenges to our program as well as future development ideas in the next section.

SOLUTION: STREAMLINING AND EXPANSION EXISTING PROGRAM

Based on the experience of the existing pilot, I plan to streamline and expand the program through the steps outlined in this section. The goal of the initiatives I plan to implement are to improve the program's ability to increase access to dance education in West Philadelphia schools. In this section, I will describe two directions of improvement. The first initiative will be expanding the Penn student teaching team to include dancers from the Penn Dance Arts Council. The second initiative will involve organizing a Dance Clinic and Basketball Performance event for the participants in the program. Together, these two developments will push the program closer to fulfilling its goal of increasing dance opportunities to West Philadelphia students.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITY

Providing a dance performance opportunity for the students in the program would offer a valuable incentive for them to remain focused during weekly dance classes. Since many Quaker Girls have encountered challenges with student distraction, I propose that shifting the program to become performance-oriented will alleviate this problem. As of now, students lack internal motivation to learn choreography or improve their dance skills, causing them to associate the classes with low intrinsic value. When students are presented with the concrete goal of a tangible future performance, they will be more motivated to focus and actively participate in the weekly classes.

Students in the dance program at Hamilton and Comegys will be invited to perform with the Quaker Girls at the University of Pennsylvania Women's Basketball Team Home Opener Game in November of each year. On the day of the performance, the Quaker Girls and program Mentors will host a two-hour Dance Clinic in which they will teach, review, and prepare the student performance. I will detail the logistics of this event in the implementation section.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DANCE PERFORMANCE

Performing is an essential aspect of the dance experience. Dancers train and perfect their technique for a singular goal, their performance. In the context of dance performance for the young students in West Philadelphia, the significance and impact of performing take on a deeper resonance. For these students, dance becomes not only a form of artistic expression but also a pathway to empowerment. Dance performance offers them a platform to showcase their talents and abilities, providing a sense of achievement and recognition that may be lacking in other areas of their lives. Moreover, the act of receiving support and applause from an audience affirms their worth and potential, instilling confidence and self-esteem.

Participating in dance performances also exposes these young students to new opportunities and experiences not found in a typical classroom setting. Furthermore, dance performance serves as a form of social connection and community building for these students. It brings together individuals from diverse backgrounds who share a common passion, fostering friendships and support networks that extend beyond the dance studio.

EXPANSION OF THE PROGRAM TEACHING TEAM

One of the primary concerns that was discussed in the previous section is the heavy time commitment for the Quaker Girls Dance Team. While many members of the team are personally passionate about community service and already are involved in University partnership programs in West Philadelphia outside of dance, the time commitment is very lengthy for the limited amount of team members we have. Since the program has been in place, over a period of two months, each participating Quaker Girl has committed between 10 to 20 hours of her time.

To resolve this issue, I propose that the program will be primarily taught by the Quaker Girls while also enlisting the help of additional Penn dancers. These additional teachers will be recruited through the Penn Dance Arts Council (DAC).

DANCE ARTS COUNCIL PARTNERSHIP

DAC is an umbrella organization that oversees the logistics and funding of Penn dance groups. Currently, DAC includes African Rhythms, Arts House Dance Company, Onda Latina, Pan-Asian Dance Troupe, PenNaach, Penn Dance Company, Penn Dhamaka, Penn Yalla, Soundworks Tap Factory, Sparks Dance Company, Strictly Funk Dance Company, and West Philly Swingers. Each dance group is student-run and also has its own leadership team. The main focus of DAC performing arts groups is to practice and perform their specialized forms of dance. Most groups hold a lengthy and competitive audition process, often including one or two days of two-hour audition sessions.

Although DAC itself does not have a community service program, DAC currently includes Sparks Dance Company and After School Performing Arts (ASAP) which are independent groups that sponsor their own community service initiatives. Joy Gong, a member of Sparks Dance Company and also current Dance Arts Council Chair, commented that while Sparks does involve themselves with community service, their main focus is practicing and preparing their bi-annual performance concerts rather than their service initiatives.

When asked about DAC's involvement in community service, she highlighted their annual Emily Sachs Day of Dance event. The Emily Sachs Day of Dance honors Emily Sachs, a Penn student and Arts House Dance Company member who passed away from an asthma attack in 1995. Each DAC group is required to host a 45-minute workshop for this event. Student participants are charged \$5 per class or \$10 for the day with all proceeds benefiting the

Community Asthma Prevention Program at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Joy contends that the Day of Dance event holds long standing significance within the DAC community.

However, she noted that many groups view hosting a workshop as more of an obligation, not because of a lack of passion for community service, but because they did not know Emily Sachs or feel connected to her legacy.

Since it is clear that DAC currently lacks a strong community service initiative for dancers at Penn, I anticipate that the interest for volunteering for Quaker Girls will be high. Additionally, because dance groups at Penn are very competitive, there is an overflow of dancers who are technically trained but are not accepted to the group of their choice. I personally have several friends who are dancers but have been removed from the Penn dance community due to being rejected from dance groups or simply do not have the time to commit to a full-time performing group. Many dance groups require three to four two-hour practices each week. As a result, they are looking for ways to continue dancing that are lower commitment. These Penn dancers would be a great fit for the program where they can continue dancing while also contributing to the West Philadelphia community.

Additionally, many dancers inherently have a passion for community service. As demonstrated by the Quaker Girls Dance Team, when presented with the opportunity, Penn dancers will volunteer their time to improve their community. While participating in the program was not mandatory, nine out of 14 Quaker Girls volunteered to jumpstart the program because they felt genuinely passionate about bringing dance to the community and specifically to young students in West Philadelphia. Therefore, I can conclude that this same passion would extend to the broader Penn dance community.

Since the Quaker Girls team lies in-between dance and athletics, we do not currently have ties within DAC. However, Joy Gong, Dance Arts Council Chair, has graciously agreed to promote the program internally within DAC to assist Quaker Girls in recruiting Penn dancers to act as teachers for the program. I will outline the specific details of Penn dancer recruitment and Joy's role in the implementation section.

DESIRED OVERALL OUTCOME OF PROGRAM

The goal of this program is to provide a space for West Philadelphia students and Penn students to learn and engage positively with each other. Our primary objective is first, to increase access to dance in the West Philadelphia community and specifically, to students at Hamilton and Comegys. Secondly, the hope of the program is to cultivate mutually beneficial relationships between West Philadelphia and Penn students where each group can learn from one another and grow together.

DESIRED OUTCOME FOR PROGRAM STUDENTS

The primary objective of the program is to introduce the students of West Philadelphia to the enriching world of dance. Our goal extends beyond mere exposure. We aspire to build a strong dance foundation in dance for these students, fostering their technical skills and cultivating a habit of weekly dance practice. The fundamental skills they learn from this program can be applied to any style of dance, laying a versatile groundwork for their future exploration.

While I do not expect every student to pursue dance outside of the program, I am hopeful that the program can instill an affinity for dance within the students. The most desired outcome would be for some of the students to continue their dance journey into high school and possibly even college.

The intrinsic benefits of dance extend beyond simply learning techniques. Engaging in dance, particularly in choreography, nurtures individuality and creativity, essential traits applicable across various disciplines. Moreover, the act of performing instills confidence, a quality invaluable for personal growth. Specifically in younger students, dance has numerous developmental benefits that include enhanced motor skills, improved memory retention, and even serving as a means of combating depression.

At its core, the goal of this program is not for the students to learn dance itself. The goal is for the students to benefit from the program in any type of way possible. Rather than learning dance, it's about providing them with invaluable mentorship and guidance, offering older role models who lend attentive ears and engaging interactions. Witnessing the excitement of the students in the pilot program as they eagerly share their dance moves with the Quaker Girls or simply cherish the opportunity to be heard underscores the significance of these relationships. Through our program, students gain not only proficiency in dance but also invaluable mentors who affirm their significance and ensure they feel heard and valued.

DESIRED OUTCOME FOR PENN STUDENT MENTORS

Students at the University of Pennsylvania are generally sheltered within the university “bubble” that cultivates a safe and comfortable environment for Penn students. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that Penn is situated within the vibrant context of an urban environment. Therefore, the aim of this program is to broaden the horizons of Penn students and provide them with meaningful exposure to the education space of West Philadelphia. By encouraging Penn students to acknowledge their privilege and engage with the wider community, this initiative seeks to lay the foundation for a genuine commitment to community service.

Secondly, Penn student Mentors will develop their skills in teaching and relationship building. Each Penn Mentor has the opportunity to engage with young students who will see them as role models. Rather than seeing their responsibility as teaching dance to the program participants, it is imperative that they learn to serve as empathetic friends who will listen and value what the students have to say. Penn Mentors who volunteer to choreograph dances will also gain leadership experience in teaching a dance class. Each Mentor has the potential to become a leader within the teaching team.

By joining the Penn Mentor community, the Penn students will gain a new community of dancers outside of their original group within the Dance Arts Council. Penn Mentors can learn new styles of dance from fellow teachers and will therefore increase their abilities as well-rounded dancers.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE DANCE STARS PROGRAM

The program will run every Friday from the beginning of October to the end of April. The 16 Penn Mentors who make up the teaching team, including six Quaker Girls, will teach weekly dance classes at Hamilton and Comegys schools. The morning Penn Mentors will commute to Hamilton school during their recess from 10:15am to 1:15pm. The afternoon Penn Mentors will commute to Comegys school during their afterschool programming from 3:15pm to 5:45pm. The selected Penn Mentors will lead the program with myself and the Quaker Girls Dance Team as key catalysts. I will be the primary catalyst who will organize and run logistics for the weekly program as well as the Dance Clinic and Basketball Performance event. The key agents as described below will play instrumental roles in the development and sustainability of the program.

The program will culminate in a Dance Clinic and Basketball Performance event in mid-November. I am aiming to utilize the Home Opener Women's Basketball Game Halftime as a collaborative performance between the Quaker Girls, the Penn Mentors in the program, and the student participants. Although the date has not yet been set, traditionally, the Home Opener Game occurs mid-November on a Saturday night. The Dance Clinic will be a two-hour session prior to the game that will prepare the participants for the performance by refining the dance. Sara Kelly along with the Netter Center will be a key agent in coordinating the Dance Clinic and Basketball Performance event.

KEY AGENTS

**DIRECTOR OF UNIVERSITY-ASSISTED COMMUNITY SCHOOLS (UACS)
SPORTS, FITNESS, & HEALTH AND DIRECTOR OF YOUNG QUAKERS
COMMUNITY ATHLETICS, SARA KELLY**

Sara Kelly directs the Young Quakers Community Athletics program and is responsible for facilitating the relationship between Penn student volunteers and their respective UACS sites. This program currently operates as a component within the overarching Young Quakers. Young Quakers is a program under the Netter Center that coordinates recess and after school athletics programming at UACS schools. Penn Athletics volunteers are commonly at the Hamilton and Comegys sites. Therefore, Sara Kelly is my primary contact to organize logistics between the Quaker Girls, Young Quakers, and Hamilton Principal Torrence Rothmiller and Comegys Principal Rauchaun DuPree. Since this program is part of Young Quakers, we do not have to communicate directly with the respective principal of each site.

Ms. Kelly has approved the participation of Quaker Girls programming as part of the Young Quakers program and communicated our presence at the schools with their respective site coordinators, Jade Medley at Comegys and Alyssa Ridley at Hamilton. I will continue to stay in contact with her to ensure the continuation of the program as a partnership between Quaker Girls, Young Quakers, and the UACS sites. She has been instrumental in the development of this program and will continue to serve as an advisor for the future growth and expansion of this work.

Furthermore, Sara Kelly has agreed to be a key agent in the day-of logistics for the basketball performance. Her connections to the Women's Basketball Team coordinator will assist the program in securing a performance date. She will be instrumental in organizing transportation, funding, and materials for the event, the details of which will be discussed in the implementation section of this paper.

CURRENT CHAIR OF PENN'S DANCE ARTS COUNCIL (DAC), JOY GONG

The Dance Arts Council Chair is responsible for overseeing the operations of the 12 dance groups DAC encompasses. Even though Quaker Girls is not under DAC, Joy Gong has agreed to promote the program internally to all general DAC members. Upon receiving the application link and flyer, she will email the DAC list to recruit Penn dance students to apply to become a dance mentor for the program. Since community service is a core value for the DAC team, she has agreed that future DAC Chairs will also be responsive to promoting the Quaker Girls program to the DAC community.

I asked Joy if community service could be implemented as a requirement for DAC groups. SAC clubs are required to host at least one community service event per semester in order to receive funding, and I proposed a similar rule for DAC. Joy explained that since DAC

already requires its groups to host a workshop for the Emily Sachs Day of Dance event, additional requirements would place too much strain on dance groups whose goals are inherently to serve Penn student dancers.

PROGRAM PENN STUDENT MENTORS

Quaker Girls and members of the Dance Arts Council will collaborate to serve as teachers and mentors for the program. Because Quaker Girls have gained the experience of working with the students in Spring 2024, they will take the lead on teaching and choreographing. Penn students experienced in any type of dance are welcome to apply and would be evaluated equally. Based on the amount of applications and qualified candidates, I will evaluate the number of Penn dancers who will teach in the program.

With six Quaker Girls committed to the program for the next year, including myself, I will accept an additional ten Dance Arts Council members to staff the program. In total, the program will have 16 Penn Student Mentors. Based on schedule preferences, I will divide the group in half where eight Penn Student Mentors will be assigned to the morning session at Hamilton and the remaining eight will be assigned to the afternoon session at Comegys. Based on the experience in the program, a minimum of four Quaker Girls was needed to manage the students and teach the dance class. Therefore, assuming four Fridays in a month, each Penn Student Mentor will be committed to attending two sessions per month where they will commute to their assigned school site and teach dance alongside the Quaker Girls. Every Penn Student Mentor will also be required to be present at the basketball performance and assist at the Dance Clinic.

**PLATT STUDENT PERFORMING ARTS HOUSE DIRECTOR, LAURIE
MCCALL**

As Director of the Platt Student Performing Arts House, Laurie McCall oversees both the Dance Arts Council and the After School Arts at Penn program. Ms. McCall will be instrumental in expanding the reach of the program to both Penn student volunteers and prospective Philadelphia students. She has generously agreed to act as a supporter of our program and a mentor for the Quaker Girls dance team.

Regarding the basketball performance opportunity, our program will give priority to students currently participating in the program at Comegys and Hamilton. Ms. McCall expressed interest in having the students in ASAP participate in the event. I will open the event to them as the intrinsic goal of my program is to provide greater dance education access to the greater Philadelphia student community. Girls and boys in elementary and middle school will be welcome to participate in the performance and dance clinic free of cost. Ms. McCall has agreed to promote the dance clinic and basketball performance to her Philadelphia students enrolled in the ASAP program. To increase promotion, I will volunteer to guest teach a thirty-minute workshop at the ASAP program in order to generate interest and recruit potential students. I will also recruit fellow Quaker Girls to join me in teaching at ASAP.

**DIRECTOR OF BASKETBALL OPERATIONS FOR THE PENN WOMEN'S
BASKETBALL PROGRAM, CHRISTINE WOODS & PENN ATHLETICS
DIRECTOR OF MARKETING, KEVIN NGUYEN**

Christine Woods and Kevin Nguyen work together to organize all the plans for the Penn Women's Basketball Team home games for the 2024-2025 season. The Quaker Girls Dance

Team also communicates with Kevin Nguyen to schedule performances for Penn Football and Basketball games. For the performance opportunity for this program, I am aiming to secure the halftime spot for the Women's Basketball Home Opener game at the beginning of the season. Although the game schedule has not been finalized for the 2024-2025 basketball season, both Ms. Woods and Mr. Nguyen enthusiastically approved the Quaker Girls and Philadelphia students to perform in the halftime time slot. Once the date of the Home Opener is set, they will reach out to me and Sara Kelly to coordinate the logistics for the performance.

KEY CATALYSTS

QUAKER GIRLS DANCE TEAM

The main responsibility of the Quaker Girls Dance Team is to lead and act as Penn Mentor teachers for the program. Currently, nine Quaker Girls volunteer with the program, three of which are seniors who will be graduating at the end of this school year. Of the six Quaker Girls who will continue on the team, all of them have agreed to continue volunteering for the next year.

Overall, the Quaker Girls recognize the program as an important initiative for the team and will dedicate the necessary resources and time to support its needs. The Quaker Girls Executive Team consists of two Co-Captains, Assistant Director, Outreach Chair, Publicity Representative, Social Chair, and Finance Chair. As a collective, the Executive Team will work together to develop the program. Each week, they have agreed to dedicate a five to ten minute portion of our meeting time to discussion of the program which can be adjusted accordingly. Furthermore, the Executive Team will aid in the recruitment and selection of Penn dance mentors at the start of each school year. Finally, the Publicity Representative will promote the program on

our social media to increase interests from prospective teachers. Quaker Girls members will also advertise on their respective social media platforms.

QUAKER GIRLS OUTREACH CHAIR, LAUREN VAN

For the 2024-2025 school year, I have been elected as Outreach Chair as part of the Quaker Girls Executive Team. Quaker Girls has historically had a position of Outreach Chair, however, this role has previously focused on recruitment and the audition process for the Quaker Girls team. Since our new involvement in this program, the responsibilities of Outreach Chair has been changed to mainly focus on directing the Netter Center Program.

As a catalyst, I will serve as the main point of contact between the Quaker Girls Dance Team and its respective teaching team, the Young Quakers program and its director Sara Kelly, and finally, the sites themselves. At the beginning of each year, I will oversee the recruitment, application process, and selection of Penn DAC Mentors. To promote the program, I will personally place flyers around campus including the Platt Performing Arts House to recruit interested dancers. Additionally, I plan to organize and lead the Mentor Training Session for the newly appointed Penn Mentors.

Regarding the basketball performance and dance clinic event, I will be communicating with the basketball coordinator and respective Penn Athletics staff to secure the necessary gym space. I will be mainly collaborating with Sara Kelly to organize the performance day logistics.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE FOR THE OVERALL PROGRAM

In the below section, I will detail the implementation process for the overall program. In explaining the timeline of the program, I use dates in-line with the 2024-2025 school year, however, the exact dates of the actionable items can be shifted accordingly based on the year. For

sustainability of the program, the timeline dates are flexible and will be adjusted depending on the calendar year.

PENN STUDENT MENTOR RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND TRAINING

AUGUST 1ST - AUGUST 31ST: MENTOR RECRUITMENT

Before beginning the program, my main priority is to secure a dedicated teaching base to sustain the program for the first semester. Prior to the start of the school year, I will create a Google Form to collect the contact information of Dance Arts Council members and incoming freshmen who might be interested in volunteering. I will also create a flyer detailing the background information on the program that has the link to the Google Form as well as my email for questions. Then, I will send the materials along with a short description of the program to Joy Gong, current Dance Arts Council Chair, who has agreed to send out the information to the Dance Arts Council email base.

As Outreach Chair for the Quaker Girls Dance Team, I am also responsible for organizing the audition process for the team as well as recruiting interested dancers. Therefore, I will be coordinating Quaker Girls' presence at the Student Activities Council (SAC) Fair and organizing staffing for the table. At the SAC Fair, the Quaker Girls team will promote both our auditions for the team and this program. On the Google Form for Quaker Girls Auditions, I will create a question that asks if the candidate would be interested in volunteering for the program. I will make and print 50-100 small versions of the flyer to distribute at both the Dance Arts Council and Quaker Girls table. Additionally, the Quaker Girls will post the flyer on our social media and promote the program to our following.

SEPTEMBER 1ST - SEPTEMBER 7TH: APPLICATION PROCESS

Immediately following the SAC Fair, around September 1st, I will send an email to those who filled out the Google Form for those interested in solely volunteering with the program as well as the auditionees who indicated they would also be interested. In the email, I will explain the background information of dance education in the West Philadelphia school district. I will also highlight the pilot program of Quaker Girls teaching dance at Hamilton and Comegys in Spring 2024. The email will emphasize the importance of this commitment and if selected, students will be required to attend two Friday sessions per month for the school year. The email will also contain an application form with a short 100 word essay question, “Why do you want to be a Penn Student Mentor for the program?”, and asks the applicant to detail their availability on Fridays for the semester. I will emphasize that all styles of dance and experience levels are welcome, and applicants will have space to describe their dance training or experience. The deadline for the application will be a week following the date that the email is sent out, around September 7th.

SEPTEMBER 7TH - SEPTEMBER 14TH: PROGRAM MENTOR SELECTION

Once I receive the applications, I will assess the next step in the process based on the number of applicants. Ideally, I want to recruit ten additional Penn student dancers to act as Penn Mentors for the program. If the number of applicants is more than double this number, the Quaker Girls Executive Team, myself included, will conduct interviews of the qualified dancers. If the number of applicants is around ten, I will review and accept Penn dancers based on dance qualifications, availability to commit to the program, and expressed interest. Additionally, I will prioritize diversity when recruiting for the teaching team. As expressed in the “Issues in Current Program” section, diversity and representation within our Penn Mentors is one of my top

priorities for improving the program. The selection process will take approximately one week, ideally from September 7th-14th. Selected applicants will be notified of their acceptance via email by latest on September 14th and be invited to attend the mandatory Penn Mentor training session. Once selected, I will email Sara Kelly the names and email addresses of the accepted candidates to start the clearance process.

In the event that not enough Penn dancers apply to the program, I will execute the following plan. Typically, between 30 to 40 Penn students audition for the Quaker Girls Dance Team every fall semester. Auditions entail learning and performing a minute-long pom-style combination and are designed to test dance abilities and technique. In the Fall 2023 term, myself, along with five other freshmen, were selected to join the team, leaving a surplus of more than 20 students who were not chosen. For those not selected, I will identify auditionees who have a dance foundation and offer them to participate as part of the Quaker Girls community service program instead of a team member. My hope is that these students will be more inclined to volunteer as Penn Student Mentors because of their desire to be a part of the Quaker Girls team.

SEPTEMBER 15TH - SEPTEMBER 28TH: MENTOR TRAINING AND PENN MENTOR CLEARANCES

The Penn Mentor training session will occur no later than one week after the mentors are notified of their acceptance, between September 15th and 21st. All newly accepted Penn Mentors and returning Quaker Girls participating in the program will be required to attend. Quaker Girl practice typically occurs on Mondays and Fridays from 8:00-9:30pm at a dance studio in Pottruck Gym. The Quaker Girls pay for this space out of our own funds. The Penn Mentor training session will take place from 7:00-8:00pm before practice on either Monday or Friday.

During the training session, I will give a background presentation on West Philadelphia and the context of dance education. I will take heavy inspiration from the Urbs 1780 introduction presentation on the history of the West Philadelphia community. Following this, I will outline the structure of the program and give a brief overview of our Spring 2024 pilot program. Throughout the presentation, I will emphasize the expected dedication and commitment for the program. All Penn Mentors will be required to commit to the dates of their volunteering during this training session. Finally, the session will conclude with an overview of the clearance process needed to work with the students. I will provide detailed instructions for the Penn student Mentors regarding fingerprinting, child abuse clearances, and the FBI background check. The program Mentors will have one week, ideally September 21st-September 28th, to obtain their clearances and submit them to the Netter Center.

PROGRAM TEACHING SCHEDULE

The program should begin on the first Friday of October, after all of the Penn Mentors have completed the clearance process. The program will run every Friday for the remainder of the year, pausing for both Philadelphia School District and Penn-recognized holidays and breaks.

I plan to preserve similar logistics to the pilot program currently in place. I outlined the schedule in the “Overview of Current Program” section, however, I will reiterate the general implementation plan. As an overview, the Penn Mentor dance teaching team will teach at Hamilton and Comegys every Friday, during Hamilton recess and Comegys afterschool programming. The teaching team will consist of 16 members total, each required to commit to two sessions per month. For each school site, the Penn Mentors will rotate who will be responsible for creating and teaching choreography each week. A sample schedule is shown below.

Class Day	Morning		Afternoon		Theme
	Choreographer (10:30-12:45 @ Hamilton)	Assistant Mentors (morning)	Choreographer (3:30-5:30 @ Comegys)	Assistant Mentors (afternoon)	
3/15	Naomi	Kendall, Caroline, Alyssa	Lauren	Maya, Naomi, Ireland	Barbie
3/22	Kendall	Naomi, Alyssa, Solange	Maya	Lauren, Jessica, Sophie	TikTok
4/19	Alyssa	Naomi, Solange, Caroline	Lauren	Maya, Naomi, Jessica	Disney
4/26	Kendall	Alyssa, Caroline, Solange	Jessica	Lauren, Maya, Kendall	Under the Sea

As seen in the schedule above, one Penn Mentor will be responsible for choreographing and teaching a dance while the other three Mentors will act as assistant to the choreographer. Each week, the music and choreography can follow a theme. During the pilot, the student participants especially enjoyed the Barbie and TikTok themes. Our goal is to create dance classes that engage the students by relating to their interests. The schedule will be finalized on the first

training session so that the Penn Mentors can have the dates solidified in their calendars to avoid future scheduling conflicts.

TRANSPORTATION

During the pilot program, the Quaker Girls had to finance their own transportation to the school sites. However, I do not want any Penn Mentor's volunteering opportunities to be potentially limited by financial background. Therefore, I will take a poll on the Penn Mentors who would like SEPTA Keys from the Netter Center. As discussed in the "Overview of Current Program" section, the Netter Center will provide two-trip Septa Keys to volunteers free of charge. I would like to provide this as an option for Penn Mentors. On the Wednesday of each week, I will personally pick up the requested number of SEPTA Keys from the Netter Center. On Friday morning, I will distribute the SEPTA Keys to the Penn Mentors at the designated meeting location for each site.

SAMPLE DANCE LESSON PLAN

The following table shows a sample lesson plan for a typical day in the program. I plan to keep the same schedule of transportation as the pilot program; please refer to the tables provided in the "Overview of Current Pilot Program" section. The schedule is adapted from the pilot program with a few highlighted changes as described below.

Time	Activity Name	Description
15 minutes	Warmup	Students are led in a warmup that includes jumping jacks, stretching, and

		socialization. Students and Penn Mentors sit in a circle while stretching, in which the Penn Mentors ask students about their day and how they are doing. To retain attention span, experienced returning participants will be asked to volunteer to lead the warmup routine.
15 minutes	Across the floor and technique development	In a typical dance class, the students will learn short combinations that teach different tricks or dance moves. Then, the students will “go across the floor” and practice the move. Students in the program are generally excited and motivated to learn new tricks. They repeatedly ask to learn how to do aerials (a cartwheel with no hands) or backbends. The Penn Mentors will channel this excitement and redirect it to focus on developing proper dance technique.
25 minutes	Penn Mentors teach a 20-second routine	The teaching is led by the designated choreographer. The dances are taught

		slowly, with Penn Mentors demonstrating movements in short sections, and the students learning first with counts and then repeating the section with music. Students are allowed autonomy with each dance; they are given the freedom to choose which trick they want to learn or are welcome to choreograph or improv the end of the dance.
5 minutes	Showcase!	At the end of the class, students perform their learned routine for the Penn Mentors. We give our poms to the students, which increases excitement and enthusiasm. The Penn Mentors give lots of praise and encouragement to boost the students' confidence.

HIGHLIGHTED CHANGES FROM THE PILOT PROGRAM

One of the main issues with the pilot program that I discussed in the “Overview of Current Pilot Program” was the level of organization and attention span within the dance class. The students become distracted easily and can have a difficult time focusing on learning

choreography. My interpretation of this problem is that the 40 minutes that we spent teaching a routine was too long for young elementary students. They quickly became bored listening to the same song and learning a lengthy dance. Therefore, my solution is to decrease the time of the choreography and redirect the class focus on developing proper dance technique.

The addition of the technique portion of the dance class will help to improve the fundamental dance skills of the students. The fundamentals of dance include flexibility, strength, and tricks. Learning the basic dance skills will provide the participants with tangible growth. The hope of adding this portion is that the students will be gradually able to improve as dancers over time. Therefore, they can solidify their basic dance technique and apply it to other areas of dance.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE FOR THE DANCE CLINIC AND BASKETBALL PERFORMANCE

FINALIZING THE LOGISTICS

AUGUST 23RD - AUGUST 30TH: SECURING BASKETBALL PERFORMANCE AND DANCE CLINIC DATE

On the first day of the school year, I will email the Director of Basketball Operations for the Penn Women's Basketball Program, Christine Woods and Penn Athletics Assistant Director of Marketing, Kevin Nguyen, to inquire about the Women's Basketball game schedule. Once the game schedule has been finalized, I will ask for the Quaker Girls, program Penn Mentors, and the Philadelphia student dance clinic participants to be scheduled to perform at halftime at the season Home Opener game. Typically, the Home Opener occurs mid-November on a Saturday. If the Home Opener game is not available, I will request a Women's Basketball Game at the

beginning of December. Since Christine Woods and Kevin Nguyen have pre-approved this request, I do not anticipate any issues regarding securing the performance opportunity for the program.

After solidifying the date of the halftime performance, I will also request to reserve the John R. Rockwell Gymnasium for the day of the performance by contacting Kevin Nguyen. The Rockwell Gym is a basketball court space directly adjacent to the Palestra, where the Women's Basketball Game will be held. The Rockwell Gym will be used for the dance clinic prior to the performance to teach the choreography to the participants.

SEPTEMBER 1ST - SEPTEMBER 14TH: WORKING WITH SARA KELLY TO FINALIZE DAY-OF LOGISTICS

During the first week of September, I will meet with Sara Kelly to organize the day-of logistics for the Dance Clinic and Basketball Performance.

By the date of this meeting, I will write a detailed description of the Dance Clinic and Basketball Performance logistics and schedule in a letter to the parents, informing them of the event. Sara Kelly and I will review and revise the letter as appropriate. After finalizing the letter detailing the event, Sara Kelly will send the letter and permission slip to the site directors and principals of Hamilton and Comegys. These four people include site coordinators, Jade Medley at Comegys and Alyssa Ridley at Hamilton, and Hamilton Principal Torrence Rothmiller and Comegys Principal Rauchaun DuPree. We will request them to promote the Dance Clinic and Basketball Performance event by forwarding the letter and permission slip to the parents and students at Comegys and Hamilton.

Sara Kelly has graciously agreed to include the Dance Clinic expenses under the Netter Center. The main expenses I anticipate are transportation, food, and dance materials. During this

meeting, we will discuss the ability of the Netter Center to fund the event. The Quaker Girls dance team is very experienced in fundraising and will volunteer to fundraise for the event in the case that the Netter Center budget cannot cover the entire cost.

Sara Kelly has volunteered the Netter Center bus as a mode of transportation for Hamilton and Comegys students. On the day of the Dance Clinic, the Netter Center bus will pick-up students at Hamilton and Comegys and drive them to Penn campus. The student participants will also have the option of transporting themselves via their parents to the Rockwell Gym.

Following the two-hour dance clinic and prior to the basketball game, we will provide a meal to the participants, Quaker Girls, and program Penn Mentors. The meal will be catered by a company sponsored by the Netter Center, assuming that it is within their budget. One Quaker Girl will be designated to pick-up the food from the caterer who will deliver it to the Rockwell Gym.

If the budget allows, I would like to purchase cheer pom poms for the students to use. The pom poms are a source of excitement for the students. I anticipate that a pair of pom poms will cost around \$2. Based on the number of students who sign up to participate in the program, I will coordinate the final cost with Sara Kelly and the Netter Center. By ordering on Amazon, the pom poms could arrive as fast as one day. I will order the pom poms on November 1st, following the deadline for the permission slips.

We also discussed the possibility of ordering T-shirts for the students in the program. If we conclude that there is enough room in the budget for T-shirts, I will design and place a bulk order of the shirts by the end of the second week of September. Typically, custom T-shirts take about a month to print and deliver. Therefore, I cannot wait until I receive a final headcount for

the participants. Following the first Friday in October, the first day of the program, I will estimate the amount of T-shirts to order based on the number of student participants.

OCTOBER 18TH: DISTRIBUTING PERMISSION SLIPS TO PARENTS OF PARTICIPANTS

In the past, the majority of Quaker Girls programming occurs during the normal school day at Hamilton or during the afterschool program at Comegys. Student parents and guardians do not need to sign additional approval forms for their children to participate in dance classes. However, for the basketball performance opportunity and associated dance clinic, the parents and guardians must approve their student's participation by signing a permission slip provided by the Netter Center. These permission slips will be distributed by the Penn Mentors to the students at Hamilton and Comegys. Myself, along with the teaching team, will heavily encourage the students to participate in the Dance Clinic and Basketball Performance. Parents and guardians will also be invited and are encouraged to attend the basketball halftime performance.

The student participants will be instructed to give the permission slip and letter to their parents. If they allow their child to participate in the Dance Clinic and Basketball Performance, they are requested to complete the permission slip and return by the following week. The dates of permission slip and letter distribution are subject to change based on the date of the basketball performance. The permission slips and letters should be given to the students at least one month before the performance. The permission slips will be due by the end of the month on October 31st.

Because I have agreed with Laurie McCall, the Director of Platt Student Performing Arts House, to expand the participant base to her students in the After School Arts at Penn program, I

will email the permission slip and letter to her to distribute. Once the permission slips are due on October 31st, I will visit her office in the Platt House to pick-up the permission slips.

NOVEMBER 1ST - NOVEMBER 10TH: MATERIALS ORGANIZATION

Once the participants submit their permission slips, I will have a finalized headcount of the number of participants in the Dance Clinic and Basketball Performance event. I will place the order for pom poms on Amazon on November 1st, accounting for a few extra in case more students decide to join the event at the last minute. Based on the number of participants, I will coordinate with Sara Kelly to place an order for catering.

DAY-OF SCHEDULE AND LOGISTICS

All Quaker Girls, regardless of their involvement in the program, will be required to attend the Dance Clinic and perform with the students in the dance performance at halftime. All program Penn Mentors will also be required to attend and participate in the Dance Clinic and Basketball Performance. As of the current plan of performing during the Penn Women's Basketball Home Opener Game, the event will occur on a Saturday night in mid-November.

A schedule of the Dance Clinic and Basketball Performance are detailed below.

Time	Activity Name	Description	Location
Transportation			
2:00pm- 2:15pm	Depart from the Netter Center	The Netter Center bus will leave from the Netter Center and drive 15 minutes to the first pick-up location at	Netter Center

		Hamilton school. I will be on the bus along with another Quaker Girl to keep a headcount and ensure that all the students are accounted for.	
2:15pm- 2:30pm	Pick-up at Hamilton	The Netter Center bus will pick-up participants from Hamilton school and drive 10 minutes to Comegys to pick up the rest of the participants.	Hamilton School
2:30pm- 2:45pm	Pick-up at Comegys	The Netter Center bus will pick-up participants from Comegys school and drive 10 minutes to the Rockwell Gym.	Comegys School
2:15pm- 2:30pm	Penn Mentors and Quaker Girls arrive	The Penn Mentors and Quaker Girls will be required to arrive at the Rockwell Gym at least 15 minutes before the participants are set to arrive. All dance teachers will wear name tags. Besides a check-in table and a table for the catered food, little set-up is needed, therefore it is not	Rockwell Gym

		necessary for the teaching team to arrive earlier than 15 minutes.	
2:45pm- 3:00pm	Participants arrive	All participants using their own mode of transportation will be asked to arrive about 15 minutes before the start of the Dance Clinic. Two Quaker Girls will be responsible for checking-in students when they enter Rockwell Gym. I will have printed out a list of the names of the students for those in-charge of check-in to refer to. When checking in students, they will give each participant a name tag where they can write their names.	Rockwell Gym
Dance Clinic			
3:00pm- 3:30pm	Warm-up	Penn Mentors along with volunteer Comegys and Hamilton program students will lead a warm-up. The warm-up will include light cardio, stretching, and an introduction session. All program participants will sit in a	Rockwell Gym

		circle to socialize and create a welcome environment. All Penn Mentors will introduce themselves and share a fun fact about themselves.	
3:30pm-4:00pm	Across the floor	To teach the students basic dance terms and moves, the Penn Mentors will lead an across the floor exercise where students will learn short dance moves. In groups of three to five, the participants will “go across the floor” to practice dance technique.	Rockwell Gym
4:00pm-5:00pm	Choreography	The Penn Mentors and Quaker Girls will teach a one minute dance routine to all participants. They will teach the dance in slow 10 second intervals so the participants can learn the choreography in short sections. At the end of the hour, the students will have the opportunity to practice mock performances in front of the Quaker Girls and Penn Mentors.	Rockwell Gym

5:00pm- 5:50pm	Dinner	Dinner will be provided to all participants and teachers at the clinic. At 5:00pm, a Quaker Girl will meet the caterer to pick-up the food. One additional Quaker Girls will organize the food on a table outside of the gym.	Rockwell Gym
5:50-6:00pm	Walk to The Palestra	All Dance Clinic participants and teachers will walk to The Palestra from Rockwell Gym. The walk is two minutes, however, I account for traveling with a big group and many young children.	Rockwell Gym
Women's Basketball Game			
6:00pm- 7:00pm	Start of the Women's Basketball Game	Before the game starts, pom poms will be distributed to the students. They can use the poms to cheer during the game. If T-shirts are available, the Penn Mentors will also distribute the T-shirts for the students to wear at this time. Students will be able to sit in the audience and watch the first half of the	The Palestra

		game.	
7:00pm- 7:15pm	Halftime performance	Students will perform with the Quaker Girls and program Penn Mentors at the halftime of the game.	The Palestra
7:15pm- 8:30pm	Second half of the Women's Basketball Game	Students have the option to be picked up by their parents earlier than the end of the game. Before leaving, the students will be required to check-out with either one of the two designated check-out Quaker Girls. Once the Quaker Girls see that the student is with a parent or guardian, they will check off their name and the student will be released. No student may leave without a parent or guardian being present.	The Palestra
Transportation			
8:30pm- 8:45pm	Drop-off at Comegys	The Netter Center bus will drive all participants from the Palestra and drive 10 minutes to Comegys to drop off Comegys students. Two Quaker	Comegys School

		Girls, including myself, will be present in the bus. I will remain in the bus and the other Quaker Girl will stay with the students at Comegys and make sure each student is picked up by their parents or guardian.	
8:45pm-9:00pm	Drop-off at Hamilton	From Comegys, the Netter Center bus will drive to Hamilton and drop off the remaining students. I will wait with the students until each one is picked up by their parents or guardians.	Hamilton School

As a note of precaution, the timeline of the implementation for the Dance Clinic and Basketball Performance are highly subject to change based on the date of the performance. The timeline outlined above utilizes a mid-November date for the performance. However, the timeline is flexible and can be adjusted accordingly.

EVALUATION OF PROGRAM SUCCESS

SURVEY FOR PENN MENTORS

At the end of each semester, I will create a survey for the Penn Mentors for them to reflect on their experience in the program and to gather feedback on how to improve the program for future years. The survey will be via a Google Form. A sample of the survey questions is outlined below.

Survey Questions

1. What was your favorite memory as a Penn Mentor this semester?
2. In what ways has your perspective as a Penn student changed?
3. On a scale of 1-10, rate your overall experience as a Penn Dance Mentor.
3. What are some ways you think the program could improve?
4. Would you recommend this program to other Penn student dancers?
6. Please provide any additional feedback below if you weren't able to describe it above.

Following the completion of the survey, I will host a one-hour meeting to discuss the feedback and potential ways to improve the Penn Mentor experience. The meeting will occur with the Quaker Girls Executive Team to ensure that all ideas are discussed thoroughly.

SURVEY FOR STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

Because the majority of our audience are young elementary students, they could have difficulty formulating feedback on the program. For example, during the pilot program, I asked several students to rate their experience in the program on a scale of 1 to 10. I received responses such as 14 or 100 out of 10. While it is great that the students seem to clearly enjoy the dance classes, the program would best benefit from constructive criticism. As a result, my goal is to create a survey that will garner the most helpful feedback from the participants.

At the end of each semester, I will print out a physical survey for the student participants to fill out. Because most elementary and middle school students do not own phones, I opted for a physical survey and not a Google Form. The survey will contain free response questions. My hope is that free response questions will provide more helpful feedback rather than questions based on a scale. Some of the questions that I will ask the students are detailed below.

Survey Questions

1. What did you like most about the program?
2. What did you like least about the program?
3. Describe your favorite memory from the dance classes.
4. Would you consider pursuing dance after the program?

After compiling the survey responses and summarizing them, I will relay the participants' feedback to the teaching team consisting of Quaker Girls and program Mentors. In an hour-long meeting at the end of the semester, we will discuss how to implement changes to the curriculum that reflect the students' feedback.

PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY

The program's sustainability depends largely on the level of dedication and commitment from future Outreach Chairs within the Quaker Girls Dance Team. Since I am currently a freshman, I plan to invest a significant amount of my time and resources into the development of the program over the course of the next three years during my time at Penn. I also recognize that since I have already dedicated careful consideration and thought into the program through this paper, I am more inclined to view the program as one of my priorities. However, many Penn students participate in a variety of clubs and organizations that each demand significant time commitment. My goal within this paper is to outline a clear and sustainable program that will be manageable for future Outreach Chairs. I also plan to mentor an underclassmen Quaker Girl on how to direct the program who then will inherit the role of director when I become a senior. I plan to abdicate my position when I become a senior so that the next program director can gain guided experience leading the program while I am still at Penn.

The Quaker Girls team will also play a large role in who will be selected as Outreach Chair in future years. At the end of every school year, the team hosts elections. The elections take place via Zoom where girls interested in running for Executive Positions will give a short speech explaining why they would be a good fit for the leadership role. At the conclusion of the speeches, the rest of the team will vote to elect the positions for the next school year. For the 2024-2025 school year, the position of Outreach Chair has been revised to reflect the expansive duties as director of this program. The specifics of the responsibilities of the Quaker Girls Executive Team is detailed in our team constitution. The Outreach Chair role also includes recruiting for the umbrella Quaker Girls Dance Team and organizing fundraisers. Since the director of the program requires a significant amount of outside time and dedication, I envision the role of director to evolve as a separate position from the Outreach Chair.

The Penn Mentors will also play an instrumental role in the success of the program. At the start of every school year, the Quaker Girls Dance Team will host auditions for the Penn Mentors. It is common for Penn students to drop clubs after a semester if their goals or commitments change. If a significant number of Penn Mentors decide to leave the program, the Outreach Chair will host spring semester applications to keep the teaching team strong.

Finally, the sustainability of the program depends on the responsiveness of the school sites that the Penn Mentors teach at. Therefore, it is essential that Penn Mentors uphold themselves to the highest quality of relationships with staff at Comegys and Hamilton schools. We also must cultivate a strong relationship with Sara Kelly and the Netter Center by providing reliable and quality dance programming.

LONG-TERM GOALS

EXPANSION OF DANCE STYLES

Because the pilot program was solely taught by Quaker Girls, I anticipate the future of the program to look different than it does now. The Quaker Girls dance style is a unique blend of pom, cheer, and jazz. However, since the Penn student dance teachers will come from a diverse background of dance experience, the program will evolve into teaching a variety of dance styles. My goal is to build a strong base of dedicated Penn dancers who are passionate about sharing their dance style with the students in the program. Each Penn Mentor will have the opportunity to choreograph their own dance and teach it to the students. As a result, the students will be exposed to a greater breadth of dance styles. Additionally, the Penn Mentors will be able to learn dance from each other, a unique experience that is rarely provided in the Dance Arts Council. Since Penn dancers typically stay with one dance group throughout their college experience, the program will offer special opportunities for dancers to experience new types of dance.

EXPANSION OF SCHOOL SITES AND PARTICIPANT AUDIENCE

If the first year of the program runs well and establishes a strong Penn Mentor teaching base, I propose that the next year, the program could expand to additional school sites within West Philadelphia. The Young Quakers program also operates at the UACS Henry C. Lea School. The next step in the development of the program would be to expand the teaching team to be able to run dance programming at Lea.

Regarding the Dance Clinic, my goal would be to open the clinic and performance opportunity to the greater Philadelphia community. If the pilot clinic in Winter 2024 runs well and garners interest, the following year, we can recruit additional participants by reaching out to neighboring West Philadelphia schools. I hope to provide the opportunity to learn dance and

perform at a college basketball game to as many Philadelphia students as possible. It would be a great opportunity to unite the community and demonstrate the power of dance in bringing people together. Students would be able to gain dance skills as well as make new connections outside of their school.

CONCLUSION: FROM HERE TO THERE

Throughout the process of brainstorming for my PSL, I knew I wanted to focus on elementary and middle school education in West Philadelphia. After reading several previous PSLs, I recognized that past students applied their personal strengths and involvements to ensure that their PSLs were achievable. Therefore, I identified two possible areas of focus for my own PSL: engineering and dance. I'm currently a board member of Access Engineering, a club that sponsors Philadelphia students to attend engineering lessons every Saturday at Penn. I'm also a member of the Quaker Girls Dance Team and have been dancing since I was three years old. While I am passionate about both of these subjects, I ultimately decided to base my PSL on dance education in West Philadelphia elementary and middle schools.

While I recognize that STEM education is an important area of focus for West Philadelphia, I felt that my work with Access Engineering already devotes substantial effort towards this goal. I plan to continue volunteering with Access Engineering during my undergraduate time at Penn and will hopefully advance the organization towards realizing our aim of providing supplementary engineering education for West Philadelphia high school students.

After solidifying my PSL objective of providing dance education to West Philadelphia schools, a serendipitous event coincided with the planning of my PSL. Sara Kelly, the Director of UACS Sports, Fitness, & Health and Director of Young Quakers Community Athletics at the

Netter Center, reached out to the Quaker Girls Dance Team to partner with the Netter Center to create a dance program at Andrew Hamilton and Comegys Elementary schools. As a team, we met with Sara to coordinate and shape the beginnings of the program. We started to teach at Hamilton and Comegys in mid-March and continued through the end of the school year.

Initially, I was concerned that my PSL was already completed for me as the program had already started. However, after discussing with Professor Theresa Simmonds and Dr. Harkavy, I decided against changing the topic of my PSL. My new goal was to utilize the current dance program with the Quaker Girls as a pilot. I decided that my PSL would recommend future steps for the program and improvements.

Then, I met with Sara Kelly to discuss my ideas for the dance program. She agreed to be my point of contact at the Netter Center to sponsor my PSL. Before interviewing her, I had several ideas on how to grow the program, possibly expanding to more schools and integrating more Penn dance teachers. However, after our conversation, I realized that while expansion is important, sustainability is also equally important to the depth of impact of a program.

Based on our discussion, I envisioned my PSL to focus on two points of the dance program. The first would be sustainability. Quaker Girls is a small team of about 15 girls, which makes it difficult to sustain teaching at two schools every week. Therefore, my goal is to expand our teacher base to more Penn students. I wanted to work with the Penn Dance Arts Council to achieve this goal. Building a stronger foundation of committed and passionate Penn students to support the program will help the sustainability of the program for future years. The second point of my PSL will be to create a performance opportunity for the participants. The Quaker Girls dance team performs at numerous football and basketball games throughout the year. I believe

that organizing a performance for the students will provide a concrete goal for them to work towards, helping increase retention and interest in our program.

The next steps for my PSL were to conduct research on existing programs to gain a holistic view of the impact of dance on elementary and middle school education. Although I had wanted to interview CityStep Penn, a dance program with similar interests, they did not respond to my multiple attempts at contact. I was able to meet with Joy Gong, the upcoming director of the Penn Dance Arts Council, to collaborate on recruiting Penn Mentors for the program. I then interviewed several Quaker Girl teachers and current students in the program for first-person accounts of the program's impact.

In a last meeting with Sara Kelly, we solidified the logistics and planning for the Dance Clinic and Basketball Performance event. Following our meeting, we were able to obtain preliminary approval from the basketball coordinator for the halftime performance at the Women's Basketball Home Opener Game.

At the end of the year, I was elected as the new Outreach Chair for the Quaker Girls Executive Team. Therefore, I would be directly responsible for the development and continuation of the program within the Quaker Girls team. Establishing this role within the executive team is essential to the sustainability of the program to ensure that the program continues even beyond my graduation.

After completing the PSL, I am excited to implement these actions in the coming year. I recognize that the program has a long journey in working to increase dance access to students in West Philadelphia. However, I am looking forward to the future development of the program and its impact for West Philadelphia students.

REFLECTION

Reflecting on this seminar, I feel significantly more efficacious. The act of creating a program from start to finish emboldens me with self-efficacy. Thinking through all the steps needed to create a program has taught me about the hard work it takes to build something from the ground up. I really enjoyed interviewing people regarding my PSL, and I learned about great projects that students and faculty on campus are passionate about. Taking inspiration from my interviewees has made me feel more confident about being efficacious on campus and taking the initiative to create a sustainable program. I want to especially credit my program mentor Sara Kelly for her great insight and inspirational philosophy regarding community service and how to best serve West Philadelphia.

Taking this seminar has made me feel both more and less optimistic. At the beginning of the seminar, I felt that my idea of the community surrounding Penn, especially West Philadelphia, was clarified. Coming to Penn, I was previously unaware of the inequalities surrounding the “Penn bubble”, and I felt grateful for this seminar for opening my eyes. I also initially felt disappointed by the university’s lack of PILOTS and general attitude towards the West Philadelphia community. However, as the course continued, I felt more optimistic as I learned more about the Netter Center’s programs as well as the amazing people who drive the Netter Center’s work. Towards the end of the course, I feel even more confident about Penn’s future because of my peer’s PSL work. In our small group discussions, I love learning about other people’s ideas for their programs and the genuine passion they have for aiding the community. Each group leverages their personal strengths to create unique and impactful programs. I feel proud that the Penn community is working towards positive change in the surrounding communities.

At the beginning of the semester, my goal was to engage with and serve the community while deepening my understanding of effective community outreach. When I first joined this seminar, I was unaware of the PSL process and was under the impression that our main focus for the class was working with our high school students in the Junior Jumpstart Program. Now, my goals are more oriented toward the success of the program that I outline in my PSL. Since I have become heavily involved in the Quaker Girls program with the Netter Center, I recently was elected to lead the program for the 2024-25 school year. My goal is to establish this program as a longstanding commitment for the Quaker Girls dance team and Penn dance community. I hope to build a program that is sustainable and continues even after I graduate.

I feel that I have reached my goals of both broadening my knowledge of the West Philadelphia and Penn relationship as well as becoming more efficacious in building my own program. I am most grateful for the relationship that I built with my mentee at Robeson, Keyesia Edwards. Although she was shy and quiet in the beginning, she now feels comfortable sharing her life experiences with me and asking me questions about what she needs. I'm thoroughly impressed with her drive and perseverance; she is set on her goals and knows what she wants in the future. Keyesia juggles many activities including multiple varsity sports, an almost full-time job, and starting her own business, and is committed to all of them. I offered to continue meeting with her over the summer and being a resource for her next year when she starts applying to colleges. In addition to my volunteering at Robeson, I appreciate the skills and knowledge I learned through the PSL process. Thinking through the complexities of the PSL was a great experience that cannot be found in any other course here at Penn. After completing my PSL, I feel proud and confident that I can generate a positive impact in my community.

I am especially thankful to Dr. Harkavy, Professor Theresa Simmonds, our class TA Tsion

Bezabih, and the entirety of my seminar peers for their valuable insight, guidance, and exceptional experiences that have inspired me and contributed to the formulation of this program. I feel that I have grown immensely as a student and community member from this course, and I am excited to continue developing the dance program for the rest of my time at Penn.

WORKS CITED

- Anjos, Isabelle de Vasconcellos Corrêa dos, and Alexandre Archanjo Ferraro. "The Influence of Educational Dance on the Motor Development of Children." *Revista Paulista de Pediatria*, Sociedade de Pediatria de São Paulo, 21 May 2018, www.scielo.br/j/rpp/a/rGdVZKZZFR4zQcKg8jpDGLk/?format=html&lang=en.
- "Art for Life's Sake: The Case for Arts Education." *American Academy of Arts & Sciences*, 2021, www.amacad.org/sites/default/files/publication/downloads/2021-Art-for-Lifes-Sake.pdf.
- Neville, Ross D., and Kyriaki Makopoulou. "Effect of a Six-Week Dance-Based Physical Education ..." *Sage Journals*, journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1356336X20939586. Accessed 12 May 2024.
- "Art Education Programs Slowly Rebuild after Schools' Budget Crisis." *Chalkbeat*, Chalkbeat, 1 Nov. 2023, www.chalkbeat.org/philadelphia/2019/10/8/22186530/education-programs-slowly-rebuild-after-schools-budget-crisis/.
- O'Neill, Jennifer R, et al. "The Contribution of Dance to Daily Physical Activity among Adolescent Girls - International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity." *SpringerLink*, BioMed Central, 4 Aug. 2011, link.springer.com/article/10.1186/1479-5868-8-87.
- "Philadelphia's Poor." *The Pew Charitable Trusts*, The Pew Charitable Trusts, 15 Nov. 2017, www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/reports/2017/11/philadelphias-poor.
- Rabkin, Nick, and E. C. Hedberg. *What the Declines Mean for Arts Participation*, 2008, www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/2008-SPPA-ArtsLearning.pdf.
- Reardon, Sean F. "School Segregation and Racial Academic Achievement Gaps." *Stanford Center for Education Policy Analysis*, Oct. 2015, cepa.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/wp15-12v201510.pdf.
- "A Retrospective on Arts Education in Denver." *Scribd*, Scribd, Mar. 2016, www.scribd.com/doc/301750253/A-Retrospective-on-Arts-Education-in-Denver.
- Robinson, Thomas N., et al. "A Randomized Controlled Trial of Culturally Tailored Dance and Reducing Screen Time to Prevent Weight Gain in

Low-Income African American Girls: Stanford Gems.” *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, JAMA Network, 1 Nov. 2010, jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/article-abstract/383967.

Rudd, James, et al. “Comparing the Efficacy (RCT) of Learning a Dance Choreography and Practicing Creative Dance on Improving Executive Functions and Motor Competence in 6–7 Years Old Children.” *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, Elsevier, 25 Nov. 2020, www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1469029220308311?casa_token=s16lyRyw__IAAAAAA%3AjmoHrohgd3EdOEvoORiF6GR5mYKi6nzWwi1lWO12XdxBjFpFeczwEtXf4ywmF7dONPLD-e6p_W0.

“School District Argues Need for More City, State Funding.” *The Philadelphia Tribune*, 7 Dec. 2023, www.phillytrib.com/news/local_news/school-district-argues-need-for-more-city-state-funding/article_05c55010-f05d-5f3b-a987-cb4310f6cce0.html#:~:text=According%20to%20Herbstman%2C%20Philadelphia%20students,city%20for%20its%20operating%20fund.

Zatynski, Mandy. “ArtScan at a Glance.” *Education Commission of the States*, 7 May 2024, www.ecs.org/artscan-at-a-glance/.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS

Interview #1: Sara Kelly

Director of Netter Center Young Quakers Program

April 5, 2024

In an initial meeting with Sara Kelly, I presented ideas for improving current Quaker Girls dance programming. She provided very insightful feedback on her vision for the future of the program. We discussed the importance of expansion versus depth of relationship with students. She cautioned me to be careful of expanding the program too quickly and potentially losing quality of impact on each student participant. We also discussed the challenges with West Philadelphia school programming and how the Quaker Girls could fit within the programming currently in place.

Interview #2: Sara Kelly

April 17, 2024

I met with Sara Kelly during one of the URBS 1780 classes along with a peer from the course. She presented the pilot Quaker Girls dance program to a conference and shared the feedback with me. I had previously sent her a photo of the Quaker Girls and students at Hamilton which she shared at the conference. The overall feedback on the program was positive, however, the clear lack of diversity from the photo was highlighted. My focus now was on diversifying Penn student teachers. In response to this, I proposed reaching out to the Dance Arts Council to cultivate a larger and more diverse volunteer base.

In this meeting, we also discussed the idea of an end-of-program performance. Sara Kelly mentioned the Netter Center's relationship with the Penn Women's Basketball Team, and we

became very excited at the possibility of hosting a student performance at the Women's Basketball Home Opener game.

Interview #3: Sahar Maleki

Director of Hamilton Basketball Programming

April 18, 2024

As recommended by Sara Kelly, I met with Sahar Maleki who is a current freshman at Penn. Upon coming to Penn, she became heavily involved with the Netter Center. She holds an internship position as coordinate of basketball programming at Hamilton. Since she was primarily responsible for organizing and spearheading the popular basketball program, I asked her for advice on starting a program of similar nature. Her response focused on the importance of cultivating student engagement by genuinely connecting with the students at the school. I truly benefited from her advice and implemented her ideology within many steps of the program.

When discussing potential performance opportunities, Sahar agreed to collaborate to have the students in this program perform at the halftime of the basketball program tournaments during the upcoming school year. I envision these halftime performances to prepare the Hamilton students for the Dance Clinic and Dance Performance at the Women's Basketball game.

Interview #4: Naomi Phemister-Jimenez

Co-Captain of the Quaker Girls and Found of Pilot Program

April 21, 2024

As the founder of the pilot, I found Naomi's reflection on the program to be invaluable to curating its future goals. When asked about the state of the current program, Naomi commented that the biggest "win" was not related to dance. Her goal with the program is to provide role models for the young girls and boys in the schools. Rather than teaching dance, she sees the

Quaker Girls as people who can serve as friends to the students who will listen and interact with them on a one-on-one basis. She explained that rather than learning to dance, the students would rather show the Quaker Girls a trick or talk about their days. The students need to be heard and seen, and the program does a great job in filling this role. I found her inherent values of the program to be very inspiring.

Naomi was also concerned with the issue of diversity and representation within the Quaker Girls and program teaching team. I presented her my ideas of involving the Dance Arts Council to expand our teaching base, which she was very receptive to.

Interview #5: Maya Walton

Quaker Girls 2024-2025 Finance Chair

April 26, 2024

Maya Walton is a freshman on the team and will serve as the Finance Chair in the upcoming school year. She frequently volunteers at Comegys. During our meeting, we mainly discussed the positive influence of volunteering as part of the program on Penn students. She explained that regularly teaching dance at Comegys has expanded her view of the Philadelphia community and made her more well-rounded as a college student. When asked about the future of the program, she emphasized more dance teachers who can volunteer for both their own benefit and the program's.

Interview #6: Joy Gong

Dance Arts Council 2024-2025 Chair

April 28, 2024

Joy discussed the current community service initiatives that the Dance Arts Council oversees, including Sparks Dance Company who hosts community service events and the Emily

Sachs Day of Dance event. My main goal in meeting with Joy was to promote this program to the Dance Arts Council members. After I introduced the program, Joy agreed to promote the Penn Mentor application to all Dance Arts Council members in the fall.

I proposed making community service participation mandatory for Dance Arts Council members. The Student Activities Council who oversees the general Penn Clubs requires every club to participate or host at least one community service event per semester. Mirroring this, I proposed that the Dance Arts Council could implement a similar policy. However, Joy conceded that because dance groups are required to host a workshop during the Emily Sachs Day of Dance event, the Dance Arts Council leadership cannot mandate additional community service requirements.

Interview #7: Alyssa Ingram

Quaker Girls 2023-2024 Outreach Chair

April 28, 2024

Alyssa Ingram is a senior on the Quaker Girls Dance Team who served as the previous Outreach Chair. In our meeting, she expressed concerns over the organization of programming at Hamilton. She mentioned that it seemed difficult for the students to be able to focus on the dance lesson. She has a considerable amount of experience volunteering in the West Philadelphia community and will have a career in education after graduation. As a result, I found her advice and concerns very insightful.

Interview #8: Kendall Allen

Quaker Girls 2024-2025 Co-Captain

April 28, 2024

Kendall Allen is a junior on the Quaker Girls team and will serve as Co-Captain in the upcoming school year. When I met with her to discuss dance programming at Hamilton, she also expressed similar concerns as Alyssa. Her main concern was imposing on the staff and teachers at Hamilton. She felt that there needs to be greater organization within the recess time, however, she acknowledged that the Quaker Girls do not have the power nor the responsibility to interfere with the organization of Hamilton recess. She suggested that rotating students in stations would provide greater structure and help the dance lessons be more effective.

Interview #9: Sara Kelly

April 29, 2024

In this meeting, we finalized the logistics for the Dance Clinic and Dance Performance. While she agreed that the Netter Center could probably cover the majority of the costs of the clinic, she said this was not guaranteed. Therefore, it will be the responsibility of the Quaker Girls to supply partial funding if needed. Her feedback is always valuable and very appreciated.

Interview #10: Laurie McCall

Director of the Platt Performing Arts House

April 30, 2024

Laurie McCall directs the Platt Performing Arts House that includes the Dance Arts Council as well as the other performing arts groups. She also directs the After School Arts at Penn program. We discussed the logistics of the program and how she recruits Penn students to teach. I utilized similar methods in this program. She also expressed interest in partnering with the Quaker Girls for the Dance Clinic. Her experience within the dance education field will be valuable for the growth of the program.