



Mission Statement

To provide an educational forum for dance students and dance educators as they develop an appreciation for the art form of dance through collaborative dance creation, performance and workshops.

Dear Arts Advocates:

Ontario Secondary School DANCEFEST is a not-for-profit organization that provides annual experiential learning for secondary school students with an extraordinary interest to learn and create dance artistry. We are asking your consideration to support our youth.

OSSDF has been central to the evolution of Dance in Education in Ontario since 2003. Thousands of secondary school dancers, educators and professional artists have been welcomed to stages across the province to provide a venue for students to develop their creativity and celebrate their passion for the artform of dance.

During the pandemic, OSSDF created virtual events in May, 2020, 2021 and 2022 with 7, 85 and 265 participants, respectively, in an effort to engage youth during isolation. We expanded our support for teachers and students by releasing virtual, bi-weekly, culturally diverse, dance workshops and lesson plans and provided those resources for free to **77 educators** and **5,046 secondary students** from **29 Ontario school boards**. In addition, many elementary teachers also requested our resources.

In 2023 and 2024, we happily returned to **LIVE in-person 4 day events** at the Theatre of Modern Arts, University of Waterloo with **373** and **406 participants**, respectively. We plan to return to the University of Waterloo, to the Humanities Theatre for OSSDF2025. It is crucial to arts education that Ontario Secondary School DANCEFEST thrive as an organization to educate, empower and inspire youth so we are looking for sponsors to support OSSDF and the volunteer Board of Directors as they organize this year's event.

Please see the attached testimonials and sponsorship suggestions. We sincerely hope you will consider supporting OSSDF to offer dance education excellence. In appreciation of your generosity, your organization's name, logo, and website link will be published in the OSSDF program, on OSSDF social media, and on the Sponsorship page of our website www.ossdancefest.ca. We will also formally thank you and give you acknowledgement at our annual event to inform all participants, teachers, and dance professionals of your kind support of Ontario Secondary School DANCEFEST's tradition as a beloved celebration of arts education.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauree

Laurel Brown (she/her)
Past-President



Educate. Encourage. Inspire.

OSSDF 2025 - DANCE for ALL!

Visit us at:

Web: www.ossdancefest.ca

Twitter and IG: [@ossdancefest](https://www.instagram.com/ossdancefest)

Facebook: [/ossdancefest](https://www.facebook.com/ossdancefest)



Ways your donation will help:

Areas of Sponsorship (Any amount helps!)	
Professional Workshop Artists	\$250 per artist (approx 8-10 total)
Adjudicators	\$2000 per adjudicator (3 total)
Awards: OVERALL Awards and Awards of Excellence For Outstanding Students and Schools	\$250 - \$750 per Experiential Learning opportunity for Student Awards \$1,500 - \$2,500 per Experiential Learning for School Awards
Nutrition Breaks	\$10-20 per student over 4 days (400-450 students)

Testimonials:

Katie Knowlton and Amber McClay Merkel attended the first DANCEFEST in 2003, were inspired to dance, choreograph and continue their education to become Dance Educators in secondary schools, and have graciously provided the following testimonials:

“As a student who grew up as a competitive studio dancer, having the opportunity to be a part of a high school dance class at Widdifield Secondary School was exciting to me. When our class was invited to attend the very first Ontario Secondary School DanceFest, I realized that this festival was like nothing I had experienced before. I was used to attending competitive dance events where the competition was high and the overall standings were the focus. I learned that OSSDF was a safe space to take chances, make mistakes, ask questions and express myself through movement created by my peers and myself. Educational workshops were offered in various styles of dance, where we met new friends, learned new skills and shared ideas. I felt truly invigorated leaving DANCEFEST as it was the first time I finally understood dance in a much more personal way.”

- Amber Merkel (McLay), Dance Teacher, West Ferris Secondary School, North Bay, Ontario

“This event is unique in that the competition itself comes secondary to the learning and collaboration of students and teachers alike who are passionate about dance. Students come to Dancefest as part of a small team at their school and leave feeling a part of a much larger united and supportive provincial-wide dance team.”

– Katie Knowlton, Dance Teacher, Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute, Kitchener, Ontario

Katie teaches Science and Dance and, prior to COVID, coached a Dance Team with over 50 students. For the past 9 years, she has brought her students to OSSDF because she loves how this enriching experience continues to spark passion for dance, fitness, creativity, and teamwork in her students as it did for her many years ago. Katie became President of OSSDF in September 2023.