

What is THE WIGGLE JIG?

BalletMet's *The Wiggle Jig* is a comprehensive outreach dance program for early childhood students ages three to five. First developed in 2009, *The Wiggle Jig* helps children develop their social, cognitive, and motor/movement skills, all in the context of supporting healthy childhood development.

Aided by generous financial support from private and corporate funding sources, BalletMet works with a variety of organizations to bring *The Wiggle Jig* to the community. The comprehensive programming includes 10 weeks of dance classes (one class per week) taught by two dance educators and an accompanist, professional development for teachers, tours of BalletMet's Dance Center, the literacy companion book *Leap and Twirl* written specifically for the program, and an evaluation protocol.

Since 2009, *The Wiggle Jig* has inspired thousands of central Ohio preschool children to build their executive function and critical thinking abilities, to be more aware of how their emotions and behaviors affect others, and to have fun while being introduced to the world of dance.



How You CAN HELP

To learn more about how you can support the work of BalletMet's *The Wiggle Jig* program and share it with the community, please contact education@balletmet.org.



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Photography by Jennifer Zmuda



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BalletMet's
THE WIGGLE JIG

2023-2024

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW



The *Wiggle Jig's* programming was delivered in 10-week blocks across four educational sessions:

**Summer 2023 | Fall 2023 |
Winter 2024 | Spring 2024**

During that period, a total of 12 preschool classes at 8 sites across central Ohio received *The Wiggle Jig* programming. These sites included early childhood programs at Head Start centers, Columbus City Schools, The Childhood League Center, and the YMCA.

8

CENTRAL OHIO SITES

12

PRESCHOOL CLASSES

188

PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

PROGRAM SITES



Key Findings and AREAS OF IMPACT

MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS IN MOTOR CONTROL



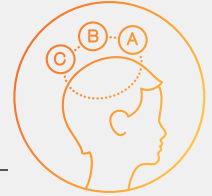
Students showed great improvement, with **over 98% improving in at least one of the 10 different developmental motor skills**, and **over 25% showing improvement across all 10 of them**. Additionally, every concept showed improvement by at least 69% of the children. This is a comprehensive movement curriculum, and improvement in one facet supports improvement in others.

INCREASED ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND OTHERS' EMOTIONS



The dance instruction emphasizes the ability to understand and communicate with others. Preschoolers who took part in *The Wiggle Jig* showed **significant improvement in their socio-emotional abilities over time**.

INCREASED ABILITY TO USE EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SKILLS



The dance instruction emphasizes the ability to plan, remember, and execute multiple, connected motions. As with the socio-emotional factor, preschoolers taking part in *The Wiggle Jig* also showed **significant improvement in their ability to shift behaviors and inhibit responses** over time.

TEACHERS FIND VALUE IN USING DANCE IN THE CLASSROOM



Overall, teachers find value in incorporating dance/movement in their classroom and are willing to continue to do this in the future.