

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

FSTA Young Actors Studio (YAS) Lead Teaching Artist Dance (5-9 grade)



Position: Lead Teaching Artist - Dance

Status: Non-exempt, Part Time

Reports to: Academy Director

Dates: September 26, 2026 - May 22, 2027, Saturdays 9:30AM-12:30PM, with the possibility of yearly contract renewal should both parties agree.

Compensation: \$65/hour for teaching; \$15/hour for administrative and curriculum development

Location: Milwaukee Youth Arts Center (Downtown Milwaukee)

About First Stage

First Stage, Milwaukee's premiere non-profit theater for young people and families, is a nationally acclaimed professional theater company drawing annual audiences of more than 120,000 people. First Stage's production season includes four to five productions at the Todd Wehr Theater, as well as our First Steps and Young Company Series of productions at Goodman Mainstage Hall at the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center - a total of more than 400 performances annually. First Stage also offers Theater in-Education programs, serving 20,000 students in classrooms annually throughout southeastern Wisconsin. The First Stage Theater Academy, the largest and most high-impact training program of its kind in the nation, teaches "life skills through stage skills" to nearly 2,000 young people ages 3-18 each year.

First Stage is committed to dismantling structures that may prevent ALL people from applying for employment with us. First Stage celebrates the richness of our world by cultivating Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity as they inspire the creativity that nurtures great art, artists, and audiences. First Stage strongly encourages candidates from historically underrepresented groups to apply.

First Stage is an equal opportunity employer and as such, we consider individuals for employment according to their abilities and performance. Employment decisions are made without regard to race, age, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, physical or mental disability, marital or veteran status, or any other classification protected by law.

Position Summary

First Stage Theater Academy seeks a Young Actors Studio (YAS) Lead Teaching Artist - Dance for the school year. As a Lead Teaching Artist, you must believe in the mission of First Stage, to transform lives through theater, and work to create a safe, welcoming, inspiring, and motivating environment for students, teachers, and families. The Lead Teaching Artist develops and delivers Dance-focused curriculum while collaborating with fellow teaching artists to support a cohesive and high-quality training program for students.

Program Overview:

The Young Actors Studio is a rigorous, multi-year, process-based training program for students in grades 5-9, designed to prepare actors for advanced ensemble work. Students

participate in a multi-disciplinary curriculum that includes Acting, Voice, and Dance, with each discipline working in tandem to support the development of the whole performer.

Teaching Artists in this program serve as core members of the Young Actors Studio faculty and are expected to lead with strong pedagogical practice, clear structure, and a commitment to student growth. This role requires consistency in weekly instruction, preparation, and collaboration across disciplines to support a cohesive learning experience.

The Young Actors Studio is structured as a multi-year progression, with students advancing through three levels (YAS 1, YAS 2, and YAS 3) as they progress through the program. Each Saturday is divided into two class blocks, with Teaching Artists working with two of the three groups each week. This allows Teaching Artists to engage with students at different stages of their development while supporting their growth over time.

Dance is a vital component of the Young Actors Studio experience, supporting storytelling through movement, physical awareness, and ensemble connection. This class focuses on building strength, alignment, coordination, and expressive movement while helping students develop confidence in their physical instrument.

Students explore a range of movement styles and are guided through structured warm-ups, across-the-floor work, and choreography that reinforces musicality, storytelling, and ensemble awareness. The Dance Teaching Artist is responsible for creating an environment that encourages exploration, discipline, and risk-taking while meeting students where they are in their physical development.

Responsibilities and Duties

- Develop and submit age and contextually appropriate lesson plans based on Academy guideposts.
- Lead movement-based instruction focused on alignment, strength, coordination, and storytelling through movement.
- Teach and develop choreography that supports ensemble work and performance skills.
- Integrate movement work in collaboration with Acting and Voice Teaching Artists.
- Work with the Academy Director on a continual basis to develop and facilitate curriculum.
- Maintain a safe learning environment through supporting student well-being, confidence, and personal growth.
- Manage classroom behavior, procedures, and assessments.
- Attend all required meetings, trainings, and program planning sessions.
- Participate in cross-disciplinary collaboration to support a unified student experience.
- Collaborate with YAS faculty to guide students through a devised, audition-based, process-driven sharing experience, supporting material development, rehearsal structure, and student ownership of the work.
- Support program sharing opportunities as needed.
- Be a team player, lead by example, exhibit a strong work ethic and be committed to the First Stage philosophy of teaching life skills through stage skills and transforming lives through theater.

- Engage with and support the efforts of First Stage and the Belonging-Equity-Access-Diversity (BEAD) Committee to create a safe, equitable, and inclusive work environment.

Qualifications: The requirements listed below are representative of knowledge, skills, and/or abilities required. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with accessibility needs to perform essential functions

- Prior teaching experience, including creating curriculum, managing a classroom, and writing lesson plans.
- Strong background in dance, movement, choreography, or physical theater.
- Ability to collaborate within a multi-disciplinary teaching team.
- Ability to travel to the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center (325 W Walnut St, Milwaukee, WI).
- This position involves working with young people; therefore, a satisfactory background check is a condition of employment and must be successfully completed prior to hire.

Education/Experience

- A Bachelor's degree or higher in Dance, Education, Theatre Arts or similar training is preferred.

TO APPLY

Please send cover letter and resume with your experience, teaching philosophy, a sample Dance lesson plan, and optional materials such as a choreography reel to Academy Director, J.T. Backes with YAS Lead Teaching Artist- Dance in the subject line. jtbackes@firststage.org

No phone calls, please. Application submission period will remain open until position is filled.