



## NDEO Works: From NDEO Goals to NDEO Priorities for Dance Education

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# NDEO Works

## From NDEO Goals to NDEO Priorities for Dance Education

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From its inception in 1998, the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) Board used ever-evolving versions of an Applied Strategic Plan (ASP) based on our organizational mission, “to advance dance education centered in the arts [to provide] the dance artist, educator and administrator a network of resources and support, a base for advocacy and research, and access to professional development opportunities that focus on the importance of dance in the human experience” (National Dance Education Organization 2016). Each ASP consisted of goals and related objectives to develop and grow the organization. While the wording and order changed as NDEO grew, the essential nature of the goals remained the same. From 2011 to 2016, NDEO used these three goals to direct its operations and develop member services:

- Strengthen dance education in the arts;
- Strengthen the national voice and vision for dance and advocate for dance education in the arts; and
- Assist states in developing infrastructures to support state and national goals in dance education in the arts.

Fortifying the structure, governances, and finances of NDEO, an important goal in earlier ASPs, did not enter into the recent ASP process, as we have a very solid governance structure and financial stability. The ASP task force gathered in mid August 2016, where we shifted our thinking 180 degrees. Two essential questions were posed to the group before the retreat: How do we push the field forward; what is our next set of priorities? These questions changed how we

viewed our collected information and the resources we had used. We recognized that from 1998 to 2016, each ASP had focused on how our mission-driven goals and objectives had focused on building NDEO’s organizational capacity and stature. Highlighting the essential needs of the field through NDEO Priorities for Dance Education calls each of us to action, as individuals and as a whole community, and emphasizes NDEO’s role as a change agent in arts education and as a “home” through which we share ideas and gain support for change. Of course, to serve our constituents and the field, NDEO must to continue to grow its reach, service capacity, and financial base.

This cutting edge approach to framing ideas is not new to NDEO. As stated in *NDEO Works: Honoring the Synergy*,

NDEO embodies the concept of synergy. Our membership is made of a diverse group of dance educators, all working toward a common goal. The vision of NDEO is not one that can be achieved by any one individual, group, or organization working alone. It is only through our shared efforts and contributions that such a goal can be reached (McGreevy-Nichols and Dooling 2015, 45).

The simplicity and truth of these priorities have the potential to inspire each of us to further and deepen our connections and collaborations with one another, similar to the synergistic effect that the National Honor Society for Dance Arts has had in bringing diverse members of the dance community together (46).

Priorities discussed in NDEO's Priorities for Dance Education were revealed at the annual conference. They provide an overarching perspective of the needs of the field through which NDEO and its individual members will be able to define and frame their actions for the next five years, 2016–2021. The Policy Board approved this new guiding framework for NDEO at its October 5, 2016 meeting. The new Policy Board will use it to create action plans for the organization. The three Priorities for Dance Education are discussed in the following sections.

## PRIORITY AREA 1: CONNECT THE FIELD

### Big Idea

Dance education creates a wide range of opportunities to illuminate, embody, and express oneself as an individual and as a participant in a variety of communities. NDEO and its partners work collaboratively and collectively using dance strategies to promote a range of professional and cultural practices, transcend perceived differences, and honor the individual within the growing community of dance educators.

### Goal

Develop, cultivate, and promote a community of individuals, organizations, and institutions that share a passion for excellence in dance education, artistry, research, and administration.

## PRIORITY AREA 2: BUILD KNOWLEDGE

### Big Idea

To carry out the work outlined in the industry standards, dance educators need easy access to a wide range of timely, useful, and accurate information that can support their efforts. NDEO and its many partners work to ensure that all dance educators and other key stakeholders and decision makers have the knowledge and resources needed to deliver dance education in fine arts.

## Goal

Build, promote, and disseminate knowledge that impacts teaching and learning in and through dance.

## PRIORITY AREA 3: CULTIVATE LEADERSHIP IN DANCE

### Big Idea

“The chief objective of leadership is the creation of a human community held together by the work bond for a common purpose” (Drucker as quoted in Watson 2004). Recognizing that all dance professionals are leaders in their own situations, access to resources and mentors are essential for leadership development in order to strengthen the role and contribution of the field of dance in and through the preparation and support of dance educators and leaders.

### Goal

Equip experienced and emerging professionals in the field with opportunities to develop and exhibit leadership skills.

For more information concerning the process behind the plan and for next steps, be sure to read “Practical Resources for Dance Educators! NDEO Priorities for Dance Education: Our Call to Action” in *Dance Education in Practice* (Gingrasso [Forthcoming](#)).

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