



SCHOOL PROFILE

2025-26

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ACCREDITATIONS, AFFILIATIONS, & MEMBERSHIPS

Association of Independent Schools in New England
The Association of Boarding Schools
Arts Schools Network
National Association of Independent Schools
MASSCreative

School Code: 221480

Independent Arts and Academic Boarding and Day
School for Grades 9-PG

MOTTO

Non Nobis Solum - Not For Ourselves Alone

THE SCHOOL

Walnut Hill School for the Arts is an international leader in the education of young artists. We combine renowned training in five core disciplines — dance; music; theater; visual art; and writing, film & media arts — with an innovative and rigorous college-preparatory curriculum.

THE MISSION

Walnut Hill School for the Arts educates and trains creative and intellectually curious young artists to make an enduring impact in the world.

THE FACULTY

There are 42 full-time teaching faculty and 22 part-time instructors. In addition to full-time Walnut Hill faculty, our arts teachers are drawn from local organizations such as the Boston Ballet, Boston Symphony Orchestra, New England Conservatory, Boston Conservatory at Berklee, and Boston University. The student-to-faculty ratio is 7:1.

CULTURE OF LEARNING

Being a "Walnut" means living, working, and studying with a diverse and talented community of creative and passionate people from across the country and the globe. Walnut Hill's response to changing times, preparing our students to thrive as artists in today's interdisciplinary and collaborative world, include the following:

GLOBAL ONLINE ACADEMY

Walnut Hill School for the Arts is a member of Global Online Academy, a consortium of the world's leading independent schools whose mission is to reimagine learning to empower students and educators to thrive in a globally-networked society. Walnut Hill offers GOA courses to extend and enrich the offerings of the academic program and are only open to seniors and by permission to sophomores and juniors. All GOA courses and course grades will appear on Walnut Hill's official transcript, identified as GOA courses, but will not be included in calculating a student's academic GPA.

JANUARY TERM

During the month of January, Walnut Hill nurtures students and faculty with three weeks of exploration, experimentation, innovation and learning across a variety of arts, academic, interdisciplinary, citizenship, wellness and life skill subjects in a relaxed and collaborative environment. With student agency and perspective placed at the forefront of our J-Term programming, students are given the opportunity to build and contribute to their educational offerings and community by proposing courses that they lead as Student Teachers with support from faculty partners, supporting faculty with course development and delivery as Teaching Assistants, or by representing their peers as a member of the J-Term Student Planning Team. Likewise, faculty and staff are invited to propose and pilot courses in any subject, including those outside of their main area of instruction or work, giving them the space and support in which to explore their wide range of interests and experience alongside our students. Course offerings differ from year to year and are graded on a Pass (P) and No Pass (NP) basis.

THE STUDENT BODY

There are 275 students enrolled at Walnut Hill. It is a diverse community with students from all regions of the United States (27 states and Washington, DC) and 16 countries.

The student enrollment is as follows:

MUSIC 70	VISUAL ART 58	CLASS OF 2026
DANCE 60	WRITING, FILM, & MEDIA ARTS 29	82
THEATER 58		

GLOBAL DISCOVERY PROGRAMS

Walnut Hill's Global Discovery Programs aim to provide students with the opportunity to learn through immersive experiences in unfamiliar environments, make insightful cross-cultural connections, expand their communication skills, and develop a greater understanding of the world in which they live and the humans with whom they share it. Launched during the 2023-2024 academic year, Walnut Hill's Global Discovery Programs have, to date, taken students on life-changing adventures to Italy and Finland, where they have explored arts and culture, given back to local communities, and built meaningful relationships with peers and fellow artists. Global Discovery Programs are included on the Walnut Hill transcript and receive grades labeled as Pass (P) or No Pass (NP).

BRIDGE TO THE HILL

This seminar series provides an extended orientation program for all new international students. Students meet weekly in small groups during their first semester to get to know the School and the local community better and to discuss issues of cultural adjustment. When students have completed this seminar, they receive grades labeled as Pass (P) or No Pass (NP).

POST-GRADUATE GAP YEAR

For those seeking an educational gap year between high school and post-secondary studies, Walnut Hill offers a Postgraduate Gap Year for students to study intensively and prepare audition and portfolio materials. Music, Dance, Visual Art, Theater, and Writing, Film, & Media Arts disciplines maintain a focused curricula, emphasizing arts training in preparation for post-secondary studies. English Language Learning (ELL) courses are also offered as an optional program. When not practicing their art, postgraduate students are afforded the unique opportunity to make time for internships and network at neighboring arts institutions, getting an early lead on delving into the arts world ahead of college. Students entering the PG program must have completed and received a high school diploma. Walnut Hill's Postgraduate Gap Year is the only one of its kind in New England and the only one in a US metropolitan area.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The academic program at Walnut Hill School for the Arts is designed to leverage and foster the habits of a young artist's mind—careful observation, critical thinking, and a desire for deep and enduring understanding. Through a process-oriented approach that emphasizes hands-on and project-based learning, our comprehensive curriculum encourages students to recognize and value multiple perspectives when considering complex challenges.

All students commit to a full-time, college-preparatory curriculum in addition to studies in their elected arts major. Students typically take two to three academic courses each semester, which are taught for 17 weeks, five days a week, in four 70-minute blocks. Each semester-length academic course yields one full academic credit, with a final grade being issued on a semester basis (December and June).

The block schedule at Walnut Hill allows students to focus on fewer courses at a time, resulting in meaningful engagement with subject matter, promoting natural curiosity, and solidifying learning. Students master both the subject matter and the skills necessary for future academic success, while gaining valuable context for their art-making and their growing understanding of the world around them.

Starting this 2025-2026 academic school year, our Math curriculum has moved from year-long to semester-based. This change now allows students who want to follow an advanced academic pathway to petition to take a maximum of six Walnut Hill courses per year, rather than five.

Consistent with the dual mission of the School, Walnut Hill's transcripts include two separate unweighted GPAs, one for academic classes and one for arts classes.

In addition to intensive training in individual arts areas, Walnut Hill requires a minimum of 16 academic credits to graduate:

ENGLISH	4 Credits
HISTORY	2 Credits (one must be U.S. History)
LAB SCIENCES	2 Credits
MATH	3 Credits
WORLD LANGUAGES	3 Credits
ELECTIVES	2 Credits

Walnut Hill does not rank or weight grades. The grading system is as follows:

A (94-100)	B- (80-83)	D+ (67-69)
A- (90-93)	C+ (77-79)	D (64- 66)
B+ (87-89)	C (74-76)	D- (60-63)
B (84-86)	C- (70-73)	F (below 60)

ACADEMIC COURSES AND LEVELS

Below is a brief description of our departments, along with a note about the highest-level classes offered in each.

English

All English classes are designed around a program of close reading, critical thinking, analytical writing, and reflection. The core sequence includes English 9, English 10, English 11, and English 12. Writing and Thinking is required for incoming 11th & 12th grade students. Introduction to Creative Writing is offered as an English elective to 11th and 12th graders (this course is not open to WFMA majors).

The most demanding English course is Senior Seminar, which is offered through an application process to 12th graders.

History

The typical History curriculum includes The Early Modern World (1500-1800), The Modern World (1800- 2000), and United States History. Upper-level history electives are open to 12th graders and to 11th graders by permission and include Politics, Art & Activism in a Divided America (formerly Twentieth-Century History Through Art & Media), Power, Poverty & Global Justice, and Gender, Culture & Power (formerly Women, Culture & Power), and Art, Myth & the Foundations of Human Belief.

Starting this academic year, the most demanding History course is History Lab, which is offered through an application process to 12th graders.

Science

The typical Science curriculum includes Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. Students who continue work in science choose from our most demanding science courses: Chemistry 2, Biology 2: Anatomy & Physiology, Biology 2: Environmental Science, and Biology 2: Food Science.

Math

The core sequence of our Math curriculum includes Integrated Math I: Foundations of Algebra and Geometry, Integrated Math 2: Intermediate Algebra, Integrated Math 3: Advanced Algebra, Conceptual Precalculus or Precalculus, and Calculus. Upon completing Integrated Math 3, students may choose to take Statistics or Financial Literacy (formally known as Math Applications).

The most demanding math course is Advanced Math Topics: Linear Algebra and Discrete Math, and is open to students who have completed Calculus.

Starting this academic year, students who completed Integrated Math 3 were placed in either Conceptual Precalculus or Precalculus. Conceptual Precalculus is designed for students who wish to strengthen their algebraic reasoning and fluency, with an emphasis on conceptual understanding and real-world applications. Precalculus is intended for students who have excelled in Integrated Math 3 and provides the foundational skills necessary for success in Calculus.

Functions and Trigonometry, previously offered after Integrated Math 2, is no longer part of the mathematics sequence.

World Languages

All of our Language classes (beginning with the introductory level) are conducted in full-immersion classroom settings. This means that many students who transfer to Walnut Hill are placed into a lower-level language class to hone their skills.

Starting this academic year, the most demanding language classes we offer are Advanced Electives in French and Spanish. These courses are for students who have completed French or Spanish 4 and wish to continue with their world language studies.

English Language Learning

The school offers both Intermediate and Advanced courses in ELL for credit in English. ELL Reading and Writing and Creating America: U.S. History for ELL Students are sheltered courses designed to support students who have completed the ELL curriculum as they transition to mainstream English.

Additional Academic Credits for Music Majors

Music History and Music Theory are year-long courses and confer one academic credit each. Composition for Non-Majors is also a year-long course that is offered as an elective to music majors for half a credit. Final grades for these courses are factored into the academic GPA upon completion. Music History is a required course for 12th-grade classical music majors.

ARTS PROGRAM

Music

The Walnut Hill Music Department is the only high school program linking a major conservatory, New England Conservatory (NEC), with an independent school. This partnership engages students in a diverse and comprehensive music curriculum delivered at both Walnut Hill and NEC. Students can major in an orchestral instrument, piano, voice, composition, or jazz. The curriculum is enhanced by innovative performance projects, master classes by dynamic guest artists, and the thoughtful integration of contemporary topics such as entrepreneurship and civic engagement. Walnut Hill's proximity to Boston allows students to attend a wide variety of concerts by major ensembles and soloists at the city's world-class concert halls. The music program—offered within an inspiring and creative community—prepares graduates to thrive in a conservatory, university, or college setting.

Dance

Boston Ballet School's Professional Division at Walnut Hill is a one-of-a-kind education and dance training program that offers world-renowned dance instruction with a best-in-class college preparatory program to provide students with a holistic educational experience. Designed to reflect Boston Ballet's repertoire, our carefully crafted curriculum prepares dance students for the rigorous requirements of today's dance genres – from Petipa, to Balanchine, to Kylián. Curriculum includes technique, pointe, men's class,



pas de deux, variations and repertoire, modern, character, Pilates, men's conditioning, and contemporary workshops, such as Forsythe technique. Twenty-four hours of studio training each week is enhanced by various performance opportunities. The joint program educates and trains students for a future with Boston Ballet, the professional dance world, and beyond.

Theater

The Theater Department at Walnut Hill offers a comprehensive program designed to engage passionate, dedicated, and intellectually curious young artists. Our approach is Stanislavsky-based and actor-centric. This intensive training of the mind, body, and voice develops an actor who communicates an honest, compelling story through the use of text, movement, and song. In addition to offering unparalleled actor training, the program fosters an appreciation of design and production through coursework and practical application. Faculty members cultivate a supportive culture and inspire students to engage in their craft with a seriousness of purpose. Through studio work, performance opportunities, and one-on-one coaching, student artists develop the professional skills and attitudes needed to excel in university or conservatory training.

Visual Art

In the Walnut Hill Visual Art Department, students master fundamental artistic concepts while exploring varied techniques and mediums. Student artists acquire foundational skills and hone their creative impulses through personal practice, faculty guidance, and exposure to the work of peers. Classes ranging from drawing, ceramics, and painting to photography and apparel design are taught by faculty mentors who are also professional artists, attuned to the continual evolution of the arts world. Throughout the department, process is valued, focus is balanced by fun, and experimentation is celebrated. In addition to producing a portfolio of work, purposeful artistic practice allows students to build greater self-awareness and confidence, and develop an open mind-set crucial to their success in future pursuits.

Writing, Film & Media Arts (WFMA)

Writing, Film & Media Arts majors focus on developing an original voice and vision. Whether their primary creative interests lie in crafting poetry, developing screenplays, creating short films, or engaging in other forms of filmmaking and writing, this program unites students in their passion to produce compelling stories using text and image. This curriculum is supplemented by opportunities to edit, publish, curate, and collaborate inside and outside the major. Through studio courses, practicums, and master classes with notable guest artists, students invest in the process of creating dynamic stories with words and images. In all areas of study, supportive faculty help students cultivate the skills and habits necessary to approach their college pursuits with a creative and technical edge.

MATRICULATION LIST 2021–2025

The American Musical and Dramatic Academy
American University
The American University of Paris
Art Center College of Design
Babson College
Bard College
Bard College Berlin
Barnard College
Bates College
Bennington University
Berklee College of Music
Berry College
Boston College
Boston Conservatory at Berklee
Boston University
Brandeis University
Bucknell University
Butler University
California College of the Arts
California Institute of the Arts
Carnegie Mellon University
Champlain College
Chapman University
Chelsea College of Arts
Clark University
Clemson University
Cleveland Institute of Music
College for Creative Studies
College of Charleston
College of the Atlantic
Columbia University
Concordia University
Connecticut College
The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art
Cornell University
CUNY Queens College
Curtis Institute of Music
Denison University
DePaul University
Diablo Valley College
Drew University
Drexel University
Eastman School of Music
Emerson College
Emory University
Endicott College
Esmod Paris
George Washington University
Goldsmiths University
Hamilton College
Harvard University
(Harvard/NEC Dual Degree Program)
Humboldt State University

Hussian College LA
Indiana University
Ithaca College
Johns Hopkins University and Peabody Institute Dual Degree Program
The Juilliard School
Juniata College
Kenyon College
Lesley University
LIM College
London College of Fashion
Long Island University-Brooklyn
Loyola Marymount University
Loyola University New Orleans
Manhattan School of Music
Mannes School of Music (The New School)
Marymount Manhattan College
Massachusetts College of Art & Design
McGill University
Merrimack University
Middlebury College
Muhlenberg College
New England Conservatory of Music
The New School of Jazz
New York University
Northeastern University
Northwestern University
Oberlin College
Oberlin Conservatory of Music
Ohio Northern University
Pace University
Parsons School of Design (The New School)
Peabody Conservatory
Penn State University
Pitzer College
Point Park University
Pomona College
Pratt Institute
Purchase College (SUNY)
Rhode Island College
Rhode Island School of Design
Rice University
Ringling College of Art & Design
Roosevelt University
Royal College of Music, London
Royal Conservatoire Scotland
Royal Northern College of Music
Royal Welsh College

Salem State University
Salve Regina University
Santa Clara University
Savannah College of Art and Design
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
School of Visual Arts
Scripps College
Skidmore College
Smith College
Southern Methodist University
Spelman College
Stonehill University
Suffolk University
Syracuse University
Temple University
Trinity College Dublin
Tufts University
Tulane University of Louisiana
Universidad Abat Oliba CEU
The University of Arizona
University of Bath
University of British Columbia
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Irvine
University of California, Los Angeles
University of Chicago
University of Cincinnati
University of Denver
University of Hartford
University of Illinois
University of Maine
University of Manchester
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
University of Massachusetts, Lowell
University of Miami
University of Michigan
University of Notre Dame
University of Southern California
University of Tampa
University of the Arts London
University of Toronto
University of Utah
University of Vermont
University of Virginia
University of Washington-Seattle Campus
Vanderbilt University
Vassar College
Wagner College
Wesleyan University

Wheaton College
Williams College
Yale University

DANCE COMPANIES

Alonzo King Lines Ballet Trainee
Ballet Austin Trainee & Butler Fellowship
Ballet Met Trainee
Ballet San Antonio Apprentice
BalletMet Trainee
Birmingham City Ballet
Boston Ballet Graduate Program
Boston Ballet II
Charlotte Ballet
Cincinnati Ballet Trainee
Colorado Ballet
Complexions
Contemporary Ballet
English National Ballet Second School
GradPro International
Joffrey Ballet School
Joffrey Ballet Trainee
Kansas City Ballet II
Pacific Northwest Ballet-Professional Program
Philadelphia Ballet II
Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre Graduate Program
Sacramento Ballet Trainee
San Francisco Ballet School Level 8
The Rock School

