

Commercial Dance Occupations

Labor Market Analysis: San Diego County

August 2026

Summary

NEW PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION?	EVIDENCE OF A SUPPLY GAP?	AT OR ABOVE THE LIVING WAGE?	EXPECTED LEVEL(S) OF EDUCATION
 Do Not Proceed	 	 	☐ Doctorate Degree ☐ Master's Degree ☐ Bachelor's Degree ☐ Associate degree ☐ Some College or Certificate ☒ HS Diploma or Equivalent ☒ Less Than a HS Diploma ☐ Apprenticeship
SUPPORT FOR PROGRAM MODIFICATION?	NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS THAT PROVIDE TRAINING	NUMBER OF ANNUAL JOB OPENINGS	
 	HIGH 	LOW 	

The San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence (COE) developed this brief to assist the region's community colleges with strategic planning and program development. *Commercial Dance Occupations* include "Choreographers" and "Dancers." According to available data, *Commercial Dance Occupations* in San Diego County have a labor market demand of 33 annual job openings (while average demand for a single occupation in San Diego County is 289 annual job openings), and eight institutions supply 31 awards for these occupations. Entry-level wages are below the living wage. This brief recommends that the colleges do not proceed with developing a new program for these occupations and supports a program modification because 1) supply is met in the region; 2) these occupations' entry-level wages are below the living wage; and 3) the expected education is no formal educational credential or a high school diploma or equivalent.

Introduction

This report provides labor market information in San Diego County for the following occupational codes in the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system:¹

- **Choreographers** (SOC 27-2032): Create new dance routines and rehearse the performance of routines. May direct and stage presentations.
- **Dancers** (SOC 27-2031): Perform dances. May perform on stage, for broadcasting, or for video recording.

For the purpose of this report, these occupations are referred to as *Commercial Dance Occupations*.

Projected Occupational Demand

Between 2025 and 2030, businesses in San Diego County will need to hire **33** employees annually to fill new jobs and backfill positions made vacant through turnover and retirement (Exhibit 1). Dancers account for the largest share of demand, with **21** annual openings. Overall employment is projected to increase by **nine** jobs, or **four percent**, during the five-year period.

Exhibit 1: Number of Jobs for Commercial Dance Occupations (2025-2030)²

Occupational Title	2025 Jobs	2030 Jobs	2025-2030 Net Jobs Change	2025-2030 % Jobs Change	Annual Job Openings (Demand)
Dancers	139	144	5	4%	21
Choreographers	81	84	4	5%	12
Total	220	228	9	4%	33

¹ The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is used by federal statistical agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for collecting, calculating, and disseminating data. [bls.gov/soc](https://www.bls.gov/soc)

² Lightcast Q3 2026; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Earnings

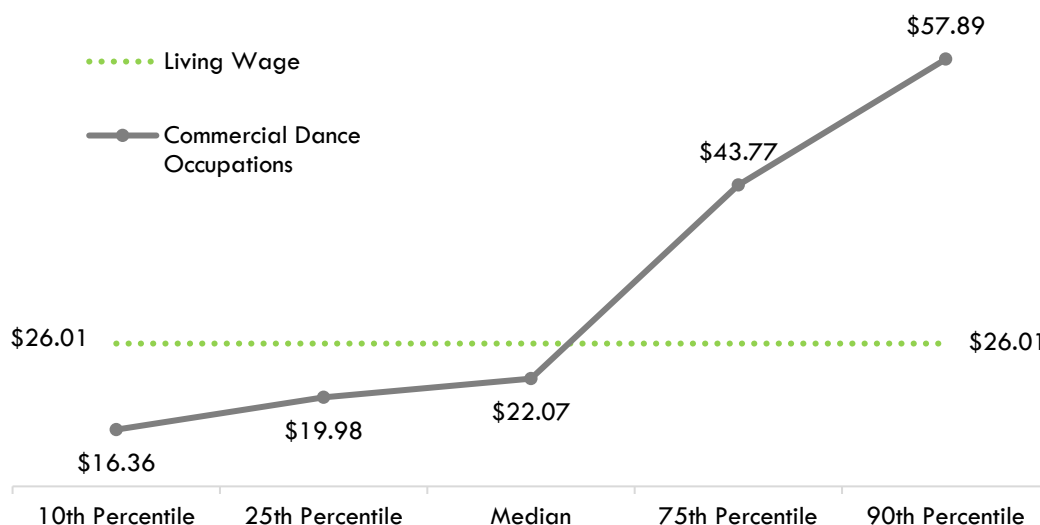
According to traditional labor market information (LMI), entry-level hourly earnings for *Commercial Dance Occupations* range from \$19.29 to \$20.67 (Exhibit 2).³

Exhibit 2: Hourly Earnings for *Commercial Dance Occupations* in San Diego County⁴

Occupational Title	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75th Percentile)
Choreographers	\$20.67	\$24.03	\$42.37
Dancers	\$19.29	\$20.11	\$45.17

On average, entry-level hourly earnings for employed *Commercial Dance Occupations* are \$19.98—or approximately \$41,563 annually. This is below the living wage of \$26.01 per hour for a single adult in San Diego County (Exhibit 3).⁵⁶

Exhibit 3: Average Hourly Earnings for *Commercial Dance Occupations* in San Diego County⁷⁸



³ Traditional LMI is generally historical data captured by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics or the California Employment Development Department. It may not reflect recent technological, economic, or legislative changes.

⁴ Lightcast Q3 2026; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

⁵ Annualized salaries assume a full-time position with 2,080 work hours. Multiplying the hourly wage by 2,080 yields the annual salary.

⁶ Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington. The Self-Sufficiency Standard for California 2024.

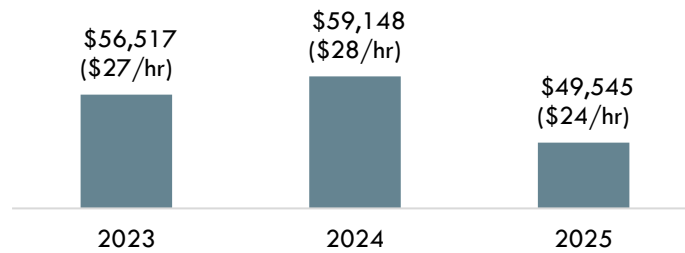
selfsufficiencystandard.org/california

⁷ The 10th and 25th percentiles may be considered entry-level wages; the 75th and 90th percentiles may be considered experienced wages.

⁸ Lightcast Q3 2026; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

In online job postings, employers also advertised between \$24 and \$28 per hour between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2025 for *Commercial Dance Occupations* in San Diego County (Exhibit 4). Employer-advertised wages varied during the period and ended lower in 2025 than in 2023 or 2024.⁹

Exhibit 4: Entry-Level Advertised Salaries in Online Job Postings for *Commercial Dance Occupations* in San Diego County (2023-2025)



Expected Level of Education

According to traditional LMI reported to the California Employment Development Department and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Commercial Dance Occupations* typically require either **no formal educational credential** or a **high school diploma or equivalent** for entry-level employment (Exhibit 5).¹⁰

Exhibit 5: National Educational Attainment for *Commercial Dance Occupations*¹¹

Occupational Title	Typical Entry-Level Education
Choreographers	High school diploma or equivalent
Dancers	No formal educational credential

Similarly, a **high school diploma or GED** was the most requested listed educational requirement in online job postings for *Commercial Dance Occupations* in San Diego County between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2025. Employers also requested the certifications shown in Exhibit 6, including CPR, first aid, and TS/SCI clearance.¹²

⁹ Lightcast Q3 2026; Job Posting Analytics, January 2023 through December 2025.

¹⁰ Lightcast Q3 2026; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

¹¹ Lightcast Q3 2026; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

¹² Lightcast Q3 2026; Job Posting Analytics, January 2023 through December 2025.

Exhibit 6: Top Certifications for Commercial Dance Occupations in San Diego County in Online Job Postings (2023-2025)¹³

1. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification
2. First Aid Certification
3. Top Secret-Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI Clearance)

Educational Supply

Educational supply for an occupation can be estimated by analyzing the number of awards in related Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) or Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes. There are **two** TOP codes and **two** CIP codes related to *Commercial Dance Occupations* (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7: Related TOP and CIP Codes for Commercial Dance Occupations¹⁴

TOP or CIP Code	TOP or CIP Program Title
TOP 1008.00	Dance
TOP 1008.10	Commercial Dance
CIP 50.0301	Dance, General
CIP 50.0399	Dance, Other

According to TOP data, **six** community colleges supply the region with awards for these occupations: Grossmont College, MiraCosta College, Palomar College, San Diego City College, San Diego Mesa College, and Southwestern College. According to CIP data, **two** non-community-college institutions supply the region with awards for these occupations: San Diego State University and University of California-San Diego. Combined, the **eight** institutions confer an average of **31** awards annually (Exhibit 8). Displayed subgroup totals may differ by one due to rounding.

¹³ Lightcast Q3 2026; Job Posting Analytics, January 2023 through December 2025.

¹⁴ This brief uses a conservative estimate of program supply based on the two TOP and two CIP codes listed in Exhibit 7.

**Exhibit 8: Number of Awards (Certificates and Degrees) Conferred by Postsecondary Institutions
(Program Year 2021-22 Through Program Year 2024-25 Average)**

TOP or CIP Code	TOP or CIP Program Title	3-Yr Annual Average CC Awards (PY22-23 to PY24-25)	Other Institutions 3-Yr Average Awards (PY21-22 to PY23-24)	Total Average Supply (PY21-22 to PY24-25)
1008.00	Dance	13	0	13
	Grossmont	5	0	
	• Associate degree	2	0	
	• Certificate 30 < 60 units	0	0	
	• Certificate 16 < 30 units	2	0	
	MiraCosta	2	0	
	• Associate degree	2	0	
	Palomar	0	0	
	• Certificate 16 < 30 units	0	0	
	San Diego City	1	0	
	• Associate degree	1	0	
	San Diego Mesa	2	0	
	• Associate degree	2	0	
	• Certificate 16 < 30 units	0	0	
	Southwestern	3	0	
	• Associate degree	3	0	
1008.10	Commercial Dance	8	0	8
	MiraCosta	1	0	
	• Certificate 16 < 30 units	1	0	
	Palomar	7	0	
	• Associate degree	3	0	
	• Certificate 16 < 30 units	4	0	
50.0301	Dance, General	0	10	10
	San Diego State University	0	6	
	• Bachelor's degree	0	6	

TOP or CIP Code	TOP or CIP Program Title	3-Yr Annual Average CC Awards (PY22-23 to PY24-25)	Other Institutions 3-Yr Average Awards (PY21-22 to PY23-24)	Total Average Supply (PY21-22 to PY24-25)
	University of California-San Diego	0	4	
	• Bachelor's degree	0	4	
Total				31

Demand vs. Supply

Comparing labor demand with labor supply suggests that supply meets demand for these occupations in San Diego County, with 33 annual openings and 31 awards. Comparatively, there are 462 annual openings in California and 446 awards, suggesting that supply meets demand across the state (Exhibit 9).¹⁵¹⁶

Exhibit 9: Labor Demand (Annual Openings) Compared with Labor Supply (Average Annual Awards)

	Demand (Annual Openings)	Supply (Average Annual Awards)	Supply Gap or Oversupply
San Diego	33	31	2
California	462	446	16

Please note: This is a basic analysis of supply and demand of labor. The data does not include workers currently in the labor force who could fill these positions or workers who are not captured by publicly available data. This data should be used to discuss the potential gaps or oversupply of workers; however, it should not be the only basis for determining whether or not a program should be developed.

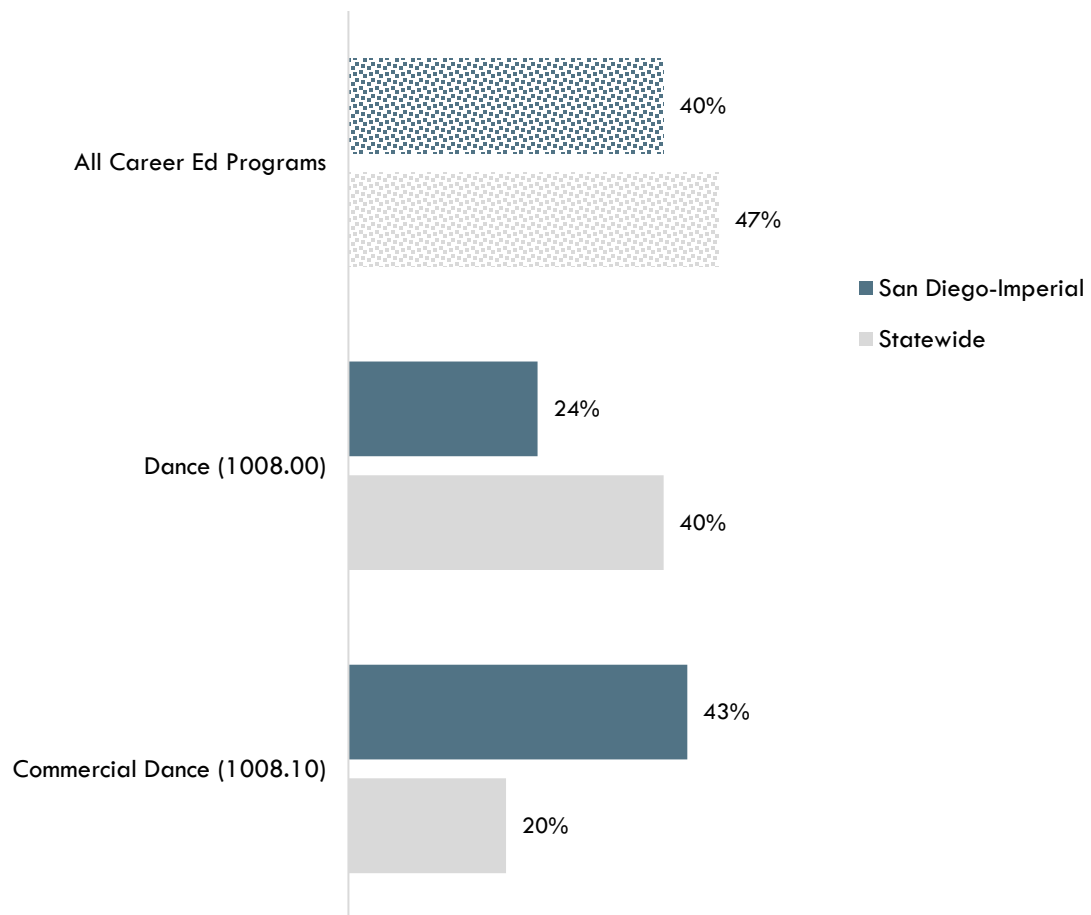
¹⁵ San Diego County and California demand data are from Lightcast Q3 2026 projections for 2025–2030. Community college award data are from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart; other postsecondary award data are from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.

¹⁶ California Community Colleges Centers of Excellence. Supply and Demand Tables. coeccc.net/our-resources

Student Outcomes and Regional Comparisons

According to the California Community Colleges DataVista, available San Diego-Imperial outcomes show that 24% to 43% of students earned a living wage after completing a related program, compared with 20% to 40% statewide. The comparable rates for all Career Education programs were 40% in the region and 47% statewide (Exhibit 10).¹⁷

Exhibit 10: Percentage of Students Who Earned a Living Wage by Program, PY2023-24¹⁸



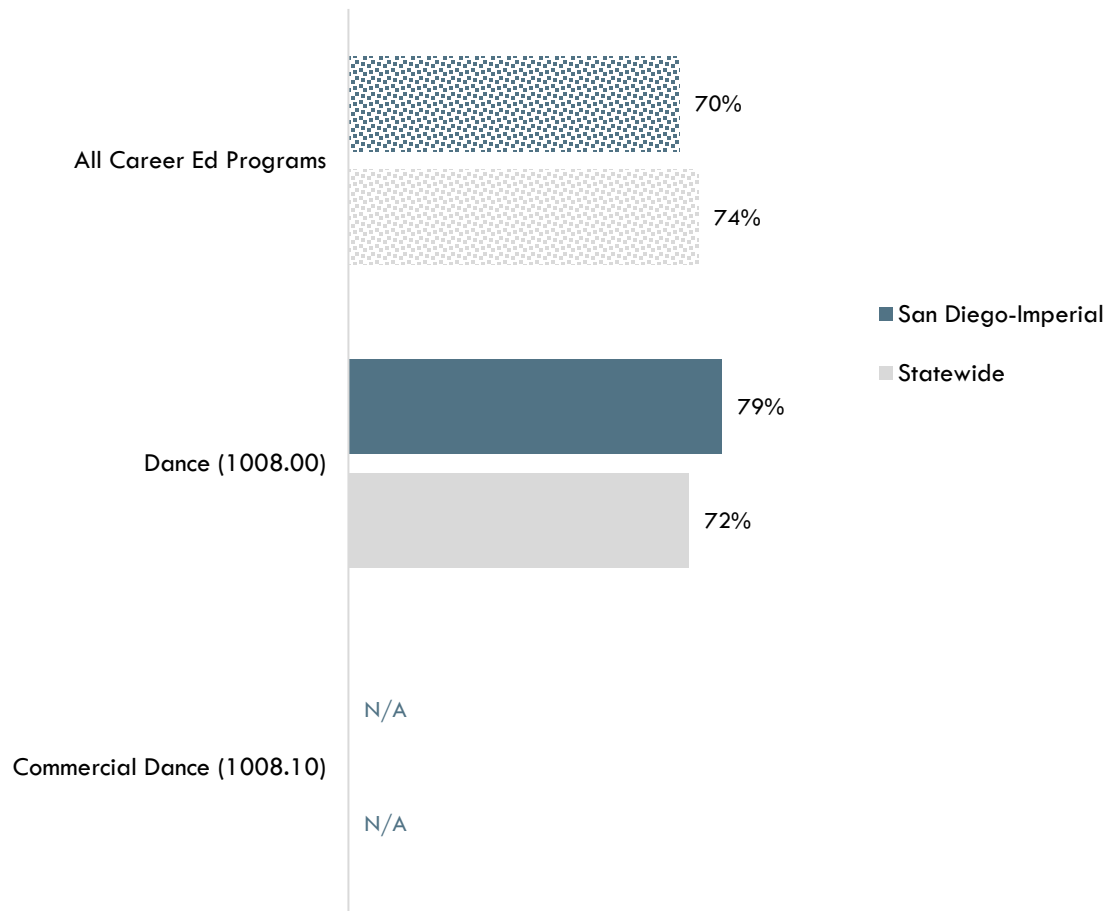
"N/A" indicates insufficient data.

¹⁷ California Community Colleges DataVista. datavista.cccco.edu

¹⁸ Most recent year with available data is Program Year 2023–24. The measure reports the percentage of completers and skills builders who exited and attained a living wage.

According to DataVista, available San Diego-Imperial outcomes show that 79% of Dance students reported a job closely related to their field of study after completing the program. Comparable Commercial Dance data were insufficient. The statewide Dance rate was 72%; comparable statewide Commercial Dance data were insufficient. The comparable rates for all Career Education programs were 70% in the region and 74% statewide (Exhibit 11).¹⁹

Exhibit 11: Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study by Program, PY2022-23²⁰



"N/A" indicates insufficient data.

¹⁹ California Community Colleges DataVista. datavista.cccco.edu

²⁰ Most recent year with available data is Program Year 2022–23. The measure reports the percentage of CTE Outcomes Survey respondents employed in the same or a similar field as their program of study.

Employers

Between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2025, the top employers in San Diego County for *Commercial Dance Occupations* included [Seaworld San Diego](#), [Seaworld Entertainment](#), [Seaworld Parks & Entertainment](#), [North Coast Repertory Theatre](#), and [Music Pillars](#), based on online job postings (Exhibit 12).

Exhibit 12: Top Employers for Commercial Dance Occupations in San Diego County²¹

Top Employers	
• Seaworld San Diego • Seaworld Entertainment • Seaworld Parks & Entertainment • North Coast Repertory Theatre • Music Pillars	• Fusion Dance Solana Beach • Sea World Co., Ltd • San Diego Zoo • Teachme.to • Liberty Tax

Skills

Exhibit 13 lists the top specialized, soft, and software skills that appeared in online job postings between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2025.

Exhibit 13: Top Skills for Commercial Dance Occupations in San Diego County²²

Specialized Skills	Soft Skills	Software Skills
• Lifting Ability • Choreography • Costume Design • Auditions • Puppetry	• Communication • Positivity • Leadership • Verbal Communication Skills • Enthusiasm • Memorization • Writing • Teaching	• N/A

²¹ Lightcast Q3 2026; Job Posting Analytics, January 2023 through December 2025.

²² Lightcast Q3 2026; Job Posting Analytics, January 2023 through December 2025. Skills must populate in at least 10% of job postings to be listed.

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Important Disclaimers

All representations included in this report have been produced from primary research and/or secondary review of publicly and/or privately available data and/or research reports. This study examines the most recent data available at the time of the analysis; however, data sets are updated regularly and may not be consistent with previous reports. Efforts have been made to qualify and validate the accuracy of the data and the report findings; however, neither the California Community Colleges Centers of Excellence (COE), COE host district, nor California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office are responsible for the applications or decisions made by individuals and/or organizations based on this study or its recommendations.