



STUDENT HANDBOOK
2021-2022

HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL
413 E. 13TH ST.
HOUSTON, TX 77008

WELCOME TO THE HEIGHTS HIGH THEATRE DEPARTMENT.

We are so excited that you or your student has shown an interest in the Theatre Arts. Theatre is a multi-faceted, exciting, and educational area of study. We work very hard doing a lot of different activities, developing numerous skills along the way, and hopefully having fun in the process. We are lucky to have a very supportive administration, staff, and community who are interested in what we do. In the Heights High Theatre Department, we strive for excellence, encourage creativity, foster relationships and cooperation, and exhibit pride for the department, school, and community. Go Bulldogs!

In the following pages, you will find information that will help you begin the new year on the right foot and will help you meet the exciting challenges that this magnificent theatre holds for all of us. You will also find several documents that YOU AND YOUR PARENT(s) / GUARDIAN(s) must sign and return to the theatre teacher by the designated date in order to participate fully in the theatre activities.

There are two main components of HHT.

- The first is the curricular component. This is comprised of the Theatre classes that you or your student is enrolled in. Students will work in class on activities and projects while learning about Theatre. There will be some homework and studying necessary for class but we try to keep that to a minimum. This component is what determines the students' grades. As a part of the class there may be Co-curricular performances in the evening that your student will have the opportunity to take advantage of.
- The second component of the department is the extra-curricular program or HHT/ the Company as we will refer to it. The Company is the group of Theatre students who wish to pursue their learning and love of Theatre outside the classroom. We will be producing showcases and productions, getting together for occasional meetings, maybe taking a field trip, and other activities that will arise. There will be a membership fee of \$25 (but you will get an awesome T-shirt) to join the company. Membership in The Company is open to all Heights HS students but membership is not required as a part of the curricular component. More about the company is explained throughout the packet.

We are looking forward to an outstanding year. Please read through the entire packet and fill out the necessary paperwork and return to a director in the M130 or M131. Thank you so much and please feel free to email if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

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HEIGHTS HIGH THEATRE COMPANY

The Company is the extra-curricular Theatre Program at HHS. The Company is opened to students who are currently enrolled in a Theatre class and any current HHS who is interested in Theatre. Students in Theatre classes are not required to join The Company, but it is certainly encouraged.

As a member The Company, students will be eligible to audition for productions, sign up for trips, attend club meetings, and participate in other activities planned throughout the year.

THE SHOWS

Our production schedule will change slightly from year to year. There will be a combination of co-curricular shows, extra-curricular shows, showcases, musicals etc. Participation in shows is a privilege and big commitment. A Theatre Production is a team where every member of cast and crew has individual responsibilities that are vital to the show. **Students and parents should always review the rehearsal calendar closely to ensure that students can attend rehearsals.**

AUDITIONS

Auditioning for any show can be a scary experience for many. All students who go through the audition process have already accomplished something and hopefully will learn from the experience. All students who want to be onstage as a part of the cast have to go through the audition process. Please know that depending on the show and the number of students auditioning, not all students who audition will make it into the cast. Good sportsmanship by all of those involved will help insure that students see this as a bump in the road and not a major defeat. Students may only receive one chance to read/sing in an audition. Audition materials including calendar and contract will be available about a week before auditions begin.

TECH ON SHOWS

The tech and backstage work in Theatre is just as important to the storytelling as the acting done onstage. These Company members will help build and run the show during the rehearsals and performances. They will be working with the sets, costumes, lights, sound, make-up, and publicity. Students who are interested in working tech will fill out a Tech application form the first day of auditions. Students who audition and don't make the cast will still have the chance to sign up for tech (and we hope very much that they will).

RULES & EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN A PRODUCTION

Once you are involved in a HHT production, there are certain procedures the entire company (cast and crew) must follow.

- Wear appropriate attire for auditions and rehearsals including closed toe shoes.
- Do not talk while the director is talking and take directions the first time it is given.
- Alert the director if you are on or taking any new medications, this is for emergency precautions.
- Follow school dress code.
- Cast must pay for their a makeup kit (about \$20) this will be included in the production fees
- Highlight and write all blocking and cues into your script in pencil only, for rehearsal a pencil is required at all times.
- Be present at all rehearsal except those highlighted on the conflict sheet. Unexcused absences could result in replacement.
- Be in the Performance Hall (or other rehearsal space) ready for roll call on weekdays on time. Two tardies will equal one unexcused absence.
- Missing an entrance is considered a tardy.
- If a company member has tutorials or other conflict, they must have a director sign a note then give the note to the stage Manager before rehearsal begins.
- Fully participate in warm-ups and be extremely focused.
- Every day after rehearsal and after every show nights the theatre room, stage, and other facilities must be reset for class the next day before the company is dismissed.
- Check the call board every day.
- Remain passing all classes.
- Maintain an outstanding discipline record.
- Obey the Chain of Command
 - Faculty Directors
 - Stage Manager(s)
 - Parent Volunteers
 - Crew Heads
 - Cast and Crew
- Cell phones should be left on the edge of the stage or with the stage manager during rehearsal
- Students must be present at school on a show day by 11:30.
- On a show night, be on time for call and complete designated jobs in a focused manner.
- Actors will take stage makeup and costumes off before going out to meet their fans.
- Everyone is required to participate in strike fully and stay until strike is complete.

ELIGIBILITY NO PASS, NO PLAY

A student may not participate in any extracurricular activity if a grade lower than 70 is earned in any class at the end of the six-weeks reporting period. This student may continue to participate in all practices and preparations as determined necessary by the coach, director, or sponsor of the organization during this time of ineligibility. This student may regain full eligibility status to participate in the extracurricular activity if at the end of the designated 3 weeks period all grades in all classes are equal or greater than 70.

Theatre productions are considered extra-curricular activities and therefore “No pass, no play” does apply. In addition, during the production process the director will keep an eye on student grades and reserves the right to replace a student if they are in danger of failing at the report card and waiting until the end of the six weeks could jeopardize the production and other students’ success.

CONDUCT

The Heights High Theatre Department students have a high profile on campus and in the community. It is imperative that the conduct and appearance of all theatre students be above reproach. Theatre students will have the opportunity to participate in many exciting events on stage and behind the scenes. As representatives of Heights HS, our students must reflect an image of positive leadership, character, responsibility, and good sportsmanship.

Any student who receives an “N” or “U” in conduct in any class will not be allowed to participate in theatre extra-curricular activities.

Any student assigned to in-school suspension the day before or on the day of a production, contest or field trip will not be allowed to participate in that activity.

In accordance with HISD policy, any student suspended from school for any reason will not be permitted to participate in any theatre activities during the period of suspension.

Any student who walks out of a rehearsal or quits during a rehearsal process for a performance without just cause defined by the directors, will not be allowed to participate in another theatre performance for the year.

Any student who is not directly connected to the production through the audition, casting and technical assignment process shall not be allowed in the rehearsal process backstage.

Any student who does not use theatre safety and etiquette guidelines established by the Heights Theatre Department will not be allowed to participate in any theatre activity for the remainder of the year.

THEATRE COURSES

Acting/ Performance Courses

Theatre I

This course is open to grades 9-12. This is a beginning Theatre Arts class that will explore many of the elements of Theatre including: storytelling, pantomime, stage movement, acting, technical theatre, performance, and theatre history. This course will help students develop confidence, cooperation, and critical-thinking skills.

Theatre II **prerequisite - completion of Theatre I**

This course is open to grades 10-12 who have completed and passed Theatre I. Students will further develop the skills that they were introduced to in Theatre I. The class will explore Theatre through its different components building students' knowledge and experience through projects and performances.

Theatre Production **prerequisite- completion of Theatre I, audition, and director approval. Space limited.**

Theatre Production class is made up of students who have completed Theatre I and who are interested in a more rigorous and involved Theatre class. Students must audition the previous spring and receive director approval to receive placement in the Production class. Space is limited. Production will be one specific period for students who audition and are selected.

- In Production, students will work on advanced projects, productions, and showcases. Some after school practices may be required in order to participate in public performances.
- A calendar of practices will be sent home before any work on any class showcase or production begins.
- Students who cannot commit to the afterschool practices or evening performances will work on behind the scenes aspects of the performances or given assignments for in-class performance.
- Students selected for Theatre Production are required to be active members of the company and are encouraged to participate in all Company productions and activities.
- Students who do not make the Production class or cannot fit the specific period into their schedule, will be placed into a Theatre II, III, or IV class.
- Placement in Advanced Production class does not guarantee casting in extra-curricular mainstage productions.
- Auditioning for Production class in no way guarantees placement in the class. All decisions are made by the Theatre directors.

THEATRE COURSES CONT'D

Technical Theatre courses

Tech Theatre I

This course is open to grades 9-12. This course combines a wide variety of activities which promote growth in the following areas: theatre safety, critical thinking, research techniques, script analysis, designing, planning, and building skills for theatre production. This course will give each student the opportunity to develop confidence and skill in the design, construction and execution processes involved in play production.

Tech Theatre II prerequisite - completion of Tech I

This course is open to grades 10-12 who have completed and passed Tech I. Students will further develop the skills that they were introduced to in Tech I. The class will focus on production design and construction and build a portfolio of work.

Advanced Tech (Tech III and Tech IV) prerequisite - completion of Tech I and Tech II, with director approval

This course is open to grades 11-12 who have completed and passed Tech I and II. Students will further develop the skills that they were introduced to in Tech I. The class will focus on production design and construction, work to maintain the performance hall, design for mainstage productions, and build portfolios to aid those interested in entering a university program.

- In Advanced Tech, students will work on advanced projects, productions, and showcases. Some after school practices may be required.
- Students selected for Advanced Tech are required to be active members of the company and are encouraged to participate in all Company productions and activities.

THESPIAN TROUPE # 8375

The International Thespian Society (ITS), founded in 1929, is an honorary organization for high school and middle school theatre students located at more than 4,200 affiliated secondary schools across America, Canada, and abroad. The mission of ITS is to honor student achievement in the theatre arts. High school inductees are known as *Thespians* and junior high/middle school inductees are known as *Junior Thespians*. ITS is a division of the Educational Theatre Association (EdTA).

Thespians. Only students who have completed all eligibility requirements and had their induction fees and information submitted to the National Office by the troupe director are members of the Thespian troupe and the International Thespian Society. It is not possible to induct or maintain Thespian membership locally without registering through the National Office. Participation in an induction ceremony alone does not constitute induction. The induction ceremony is the local celebration of induction into ITS. A student's failure to maintain satisfactory standards of membership may result in removal of local troupe benefits but not national membership

Thespian apprentices. The process of induction should be explained as soon as a student begins secondary school theatre. Students who are still earning their induction points are sometimes referred to as Thespian apprentices. Apprentices may be invited to attend Thespian troupe meetings and social events and even vote for troupe officers at the troupe's discretion. Although they are not official troupe members yet, Thespian apprentices are affiliated with the troupe for the purpose of chapter and other event participation.

THESPIAN INDUCTIONS

- Thespian Inductions will be held once a year towards the end of each school year.
- Students who have met the requirements for induction will be given an invitation to join the Junior Thespian troupe.
- Induction does cost a fee. (\$35 as of 3/31/2021)
- Student do not have to induct.
- If a student chooses not to induct, they will not have another opportunity until the end of the next school year.

THESPIAN POINTS

The *Junior Thespian point system* provides the recommended number of points awarded for a specific assignment. Troupe directors may use their discretion in awarding points according to the student's quality of work and cooperation. Quality may include the caliber of the work done and the educational value of the experience. The troupe director makes the final decision regarding the awarding of Junior Thespian points.

Induction criteria.

Grade at time of induction. Only students in grades nine through 12 (or the international equivalent) may be inducted into the high school Thespian troupe.

Thespian points. The *high school Thespian point system* provides the recommended number of points awarded for a specific assignment. Troupe directors may use their discretion in awarding points according to the student's quality of work and cooperation. Quality may include the caliber of the work done and the educational value of the experience. The troupe director makes the final decision regarding the awarding of Thespian points.

Troupes may adopt changes to the point system to meet the unique needs of their theatre programs and students.

Thespian point system summary.

- Inducted Junior Thespians automatically begin their high school careers with half of the points needed for high school Thespian induction.
- One point represents approximately 10 hours of excellent work. Use this formula in awarding points for items not specifically listed in the point system.
- To become a Thespian, a student must earn 10 points, the equivalent of 100 hours of work. Five of those points should be acquired at the school where he or she is to be inducted.
- Induction points should be earned in at least two of the listed categories, for example, acting and production. Points for induction must be earned by participating in at least two school productions.
- At the troupe director's discretion, students may earn up to five points toward induction through participation in community, children's, middle school, or professional theatre. Once inducted, students may continue to earn points for theatre participation outside of school.
- Thespian membership is offered to all students who qualify. No student can be elected into the troupe, and no student can be denied membership if he or she has fulfilled all membership requirements.

BENEFITS OF JUNIOR THESPIAN INDUCTION

- Membership in the only international honor society for high school theatre arts students—a recognized demonstration of achievement and a valuable addition to college and employment applications.
- An official Thespian induction pin.
- A personalized membership certificate and membership card.
- Log-in access to his or her member dashboard page and a variety of online benefits.
- A one-year, bimonthly subscription to the print edition of *Dramatics* magazine (a \$38 value). The first issue arrives within six to eight weeks. They may also renew at a special member rate.
- Log-in access to *Dramatics Digital* from induction through the year *following* graduation.
- A bumper sticker that reads: *Proud parent of a theatre arts honor student*.
- Special member pricing on theatre books and digital media through the online EdTA store.
- Thespian-level access to the Theatre Education Community.
- Leadership opportunities at the troupe, chapter, and national levels.
- Eligibility for scholarships, grants, and awards through EdTA and its chapters.
See schooltheatre.org/ags.
- Eligibility to receive additional Thespian honors, including graduation and honor items, advancement through Thespian honor ranks, and Thespian scholar distinction. See *Recognizing exceptional Thespian achievement* below.

THE ITS POINTS SYSTEM

(aka How do I get points?)

<u>Category</u>	<u>Position/work done</u>	<u>One Act</u>	<u>Full Length</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>Position/work done</u>	<u>One Act</u>	<u>Full Length</u>	
Acting	Major role	4	8	Directing	Director	4	8	
	Minor role	3	5		Assistant director	3	6	
	Walk-on	1	2		Vocal director	3	6	
	Chorus	1	3		Video producer/director	3	4	
	Dancer	1	3		Assistant vocal director	2	5	
	Understudy	1	2		Orchestra or band director	3	6	
Production	Stage manager	4	8		Assistant orchestra or band director	2	5	
	Stage crew	2	4		Choreographer	4	7	
	Lighting technician	3	6		Assistant choreographer	3	5	
	Lighting crew	2	3		Writing	Original play (produced)	5	8
	Set designer	4	5			Original radio script (produced)	4	6
	Set construction crew	3	5			Original TV script (produced)	4	6
	Costumer	3	6			Original play (unproduced)	1	2
	Costume crew	2	5	Original radio script (unproduced)		.5	1.5	
	Properties manager	3	5	Original TV script (unproduced)		.5	1.5	
	Properties crew	2	3	Miscellaneous	Oral interpretation		2	
	Sound technician	3	5		Duet acting scenes		2	
	Sound crew	2	3		Participation in theatre festival or contest		3	
	Video editor	1.5	2		Attending theatre festival		1/day	
	Video crew	1.5	3		Assembly program		1	
Makeup manager	3	5	Advocacy	Participation in advocacy event		1/day		
Rehearsal prompter	2	4		Local advocacy work		.1/hour		
Pianist	3	6	Officers	President		6		
Musicians	2	3		Vice president, treasurer, or web editor		4		
Business	Business manager	4		6	Secretary/clerk		5	
	Business crew	2		4	International Thespian Officer (ITO)		10	
	Publicity manager	3		5	State Thespian Officer (STO)		8	
	Publicity crew	2		3	Audience	Troupe directors may award points at the hourly rate for attending productions, or they may award .5 point for attending <i>and</i> writing a critique or report reflecting the educational value of the experience.		
	Ticket manager	2	4					
	Ticket crew	1	3					
	House manager	2	4					
	House crew	1	2					
	Ushers	1	2					
	Programs	1	3					
Program crew	1	2						

**HEIGHTS HIGH
THEATRE COMPANY
MEMBERSHIP FORM**

Student Name _____

HISD email _____

Grade _____

Home Phone _____

Student Cell Phone (not required) _____

T-shirt size (adult sizes only) _____

I, _____ (student name), have read the HHT Handbook and agree to abide by the articles and guidelines as laid out within it. I have enclosed my \$25.00 dues/ t-shirt payment for the 20____-20____ school year. I promise to always represent Heights High Theatre with pride and citizenship throughout the school and community.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

For Official Use Only:

Dues Paid: _____

Date: _____ Director Initials: _____