

**BUCKS  
COUNTY  
PLAYHOUSE**

70 South Main Street  
New Hope, PA 18938  
[www.buckscountyplayhouse.org](http://www.buckscountyplayhouse.org)



**BUCKS COUNTY PLAYHOUSE**  
**student**  
**THEATER FESTIVAL**  
**HANDBOOK**



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# Welcome to the Festival!



The network of Bucks  
County Playhouse  
Student Theater Festival  
alumni is ever-expanding  
and we are excited to  
welcome you and your  
show to our stage!

The Student Theater Festival at Bucks County Playhouse is in its 56th year! Originally known as Dramafest for one act plays, the Student Theater Festival has evolved into a multi-week celebration showcasing talented student performers from all over the region. Students perform on the historic stage, take workshops to develop their knowledge and skills in the arts and receive feedback from theater professionals.

When the Playhouse closed in 2010, Newtown Arts Company, located in Newtown, PA, hosted the Festival for the next two years. After a lavish \$6 million renovation, the Playhouse reopened its doors in 2012 and welcomed the Student Theater Festival back to its stage along with a partnership with Newtown Arts Company, a relationship that remains a strong component of the Festival to this day.

# Preparing for the Festival

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## Registration

To register a school or group for the Festival, download and complete the registration form found on our website. Then mail the completed form and payment to:

Bucks County Playhouse  
Student Theater Festival  
12 W. Mechanic Street, Unit 2A  
New Hope, PA 18938

## Payment

- Payment is required to reserve a performance slot for the Festival, on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Final payment is due two weeks before your designated day, which includes the per student fee.
- We accept checks, credit cards, and purchase orders.

## Teacher Orientation

There will be a virtual orientation held for teachers, directors, and group leaders approximately one month prior to the Festival. BCP staff will review the Festival guidelines, safety protocols, and answer questions.

## Cast & Crew List

Teachers/directors/group leaders will complete a form with cast & crew list information. This form is due one week prior to their date at the Festival. This form is given to the adjudicators.

## Tech Rider

- Prior to the Festival, teachers/directors will receive a tech rider from BCP staff.
- This tech rider is a form that teachers/directors will fill out that includes basic information about your production, such as title, run time, size of cast and crew, a list of lighting and sound cues, and a list of props and set pieces you plan to bring to the Festival.
- Schools must return this completed tech rider one week before their date at the Festival.
- These tech riders allow BCP production staff to prepare for performances in advance and are integral to making the day run smoothly.

## Rehearse the Changeover

We encourage schools/groups to rehearse and time, not only their performance, but the set up and clean up before and after their performance. This ensures the changeover between each performance goes as efficiently as possible at the Festival.

## Consider What to Bring

While selecting which performance to bring to the Festival, also consider which props, set pieces, and costumes are necessary to tell the story and what you can do without. Take into account how much time you will need to prep and clear these items during the allotted changeover time between performances.



# About the Day

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## Sample Daily Schedule

- 8:30AM-9:00AM Arrival/ Registration/ Load In
- 9:00AM- Welcome
- 9:30AM-10:30AM- Workshop Session 1
- 10:45AM-11:45AM- Workshop Session 2
- 11:45AM-12:45PM- Lunch
- 12:45PM- Welcome and Guest Artist Introduction
- 12:50PM-5:00PM- Performances and Feedback
- 5:00PM-5:30PM-Load-Out/Awards

## Arrival and Registration

Schools and groups arrive at the Playhouse, unload props at the loading dock and check in at our theater lobby. Upon check in teachers/directors will receive a welcome packet which includes playbills of the Festival with the day's schedule, wristbands and tickets to the workshops. Welcome remarks begin at 9:00 am and then students are dismissed for the morning's workshops.

## Lunch

Participants are welcome to bring their own lunches and sit in our spacious courtyard or on the promenade along the river. There are ample tables, chairs and benches. There are also many quaint restaurants in New Hope for participants to explore during the lunch break.

## The New Hope-Lambertville Bridge

The New Hope-Lambertville bridge CANNOT accommodate school buses and charter buses. Buses should enter New Hope from New Jersey via the Route 202 bridge just north of town or via the 295 bridge to the south. Personal vehicles and vans can drive over the New Hope-Lambertville bridge.

## Parking in the Playhouse Parking Lot

Parking in our lot is \$3 per hour or \$30 for the entire day (CARS & VANS ONLY). It is a public lot, so it is open to other visitors to New Hope so spaces in this lot are not guaranteed. Please note buses CANNOT park in our parking lot. However, we welcome buses to pull into our lot to drop off group members before finding additional parking.

## Parking for Buses

If you are bringing a bus, you must park off-site following drop off of your students and supplies. Further information about bus parking will be provided closer to the Festival dates.

## Parking in New Hope

Metered street parking can be found throughout New Hope. You can pay at the kiosk meters on the street with cash or card, or use the ParkMobile app on your smart phone.

# About the Day

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## Workshops

- In the morning, each student takes two one-hour-long workshops. There are three to four workshops offered which may include, but are not limited to: movement, dance, tap/jazz, improv, theater games, Shakespearean acting, audition technique, panels with theater professionals, and a variety of other subjects.
- At check in, teachers/directors receive tickets to distribute to students upon arriving at the Festival. Each student should receive two tickets from their teacher. Tickets are labeled clearly with session 1 and session 2 along with the name and location of the workshop.
- The workshops are an important part of the Festival experience. We expect all students to attend two workshops unless they are assigned to tech their school's performance in the theater at their scheduled time.

## Order of Performances

- Performance slots are arranged in an order to allow for the best flow of the afternoon performances and adjudication.
- BCP staff will make every effort to group performances of plays and musicals together in the daily schedule.

## COVID-19 Safety Protocols

- Starting AUGUST 12, 2022, masks for guests are highly encouraged, but not required.
- Proof of vaccination or negative PCR test are no longer required.
- Schools are welcome to have students wear masks during the performances or workshops if that is their preference.
- Plastic clear face shields are not required for performers. Schools are welcome to have their students wear clear face shields while performing.
- This policy is subject to change at any time at the discretion of theater management.
- The Playhouse's full COVID policy can be found here on our website:  
<https://bcptheater.org/termsconditions>



# About the Performances

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## Tech

- During the morning while students attend their workshops, a designated person (teachers, advisers, directors and/or student directors) will work with Bucks County Playhouse production staff to prepare the technical elements of their performances.
- Each school will program their lighting and sound with Bucks County Playhouse production staff including reviewing any needs such as: keyboard, chairs, tables, etc.
- Shows will be teched in the order of performances in the afternoon. Each school will receive approximately 15 minutes per segment to work with Bucks County Playhouse production staff to tech their performance(s).
- Teachers, advisers and directors must tech during their allotted time in the morning.
- All shows must be teched before the lunch break and before performances begin in the afternoon.
- Schools must submit a completed tech rider one week prior to their Festival date.
- Schools with incomplete tech riders will be provided with limited lighting and sound options.

## Time Limit

- Performance slots are 20 minutes.
- Performances will be timed by Bucks County Playhouse staff.
- There will be a 15-minute changeover between each performance. The onstage school will clear the stage and return to the theater and the next school will go backstage to prepare for their performance. Once the first school has returned to the house, the adjudicators will give them notes during the remaining time left in the changeover.
- If a performance goes over the allotted time, there will be a 2-minute warning from the Stage Manager, followed by a dimming of the lights and fade out. This is to ensure that all performances receive the same amount of time on stage and to keep the Festival on schedule.
- Schools may sign up for a maximum of two time slots per day. Schools can perform two 20-minute segments of their show, for example an Act 1 and Act 2, but they will not be performed consecutively.

## Stage Dimensions

- The stage depth is 30' with about 15' of wing space on either side.
- The proscenium height is 19'3" and width 29'9".

# About the Performances

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## Content

- Selected material can be from published sources and/or student-written/directed.
- To make the Student Theater Festival enjoyable for all participants, material should be suitable for a public performance before a general audience at your own school. We ask that selections contain no extreme adult language, nudity, sex, violence or other content that, in the view of the Festival, could be considered offensive.

## Set, Props, and Projections

- Storage, wing and dressing room space is extremely limited backstage at the Playhouse. Set pieces, backdrops, flats and large furniture pieces cannot be used. Only handheld props and smaller furniture pieces can be brought to the Playhouse.
- Participating schools will be provided with a list of furniture that will be available at the Playhouse for their use. The purpose of this is to limit the quantity of set pieces, furniture and props being stored backstage.
- Each participating school will have access to a small table to store props, costumes and supplies backstage.
- No liquids are allowed on stage.

- Use of the projector may be available to schools during the Festival. For more information about availability of the projector and for specifications, please contact Emily Anacker to discuss your school's needs.

## Weapon Policy

- Safety for all students, teachers, staff and guests participating in the Student Theater Festival is of the utmost importance. Please read our weapon policy carefully.\*
- BCP defines a weapon as: anything that is traditionally considered a weapon (i.e. blades, batons/clubs, replica firearms, etc.) or any item that could be used as a weapon.
- BCP staff must be notified by the teacher, advisor or director of use of any and all weapons used in a performance upon registering for the Festival.
- Weapons must be noted on the school's tech rider.
- All weapons must be presented upon load-in to Playhouse staff on the day of the Festival.
- Bucks County Playhouse reserves the right to deny the use of any and all weapons used on our stage and in our facilities at any time.
- The following are never allowed at the Festival:
  - Real blades or guns of any kind
  - Guns with blanks
  - Retractable knives or swords
  - Blunted blades of any kind

*\*In accordance with the Actors' Equity Association Agreement and Rules Governing Employment in Small Professional Theaters Stage Fighting Policy and the Yale School of Drama Prop Weapon and Stage Combat Policy.*



# About the Performances

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## Sound

- Schools need to provide a flash drive or file of their musical tracks.
- Schools may have no more than three musicians if using live music.
- A piano or keyboard will be available. Please notify Emily Anacker if you require a keyboard or piano.
- Please note your sound needs and preferences on your tech rider.

## Feedback from Adjudicators

- Typically, the guest artists who lead the morning workshops will give feedback at the afternoon performances. This is done so the guest artists have a chance to meet the students in the morning and to provide continuity for the students throughout the day.
- Following each performance, when students have returned to their seats in the theater, adjudicators share their feedback.
- Feedback is positive in nature, designed to enhance the performance and provide insight on how students and teachers may improve future productions.

## Awards

- Each day culminates with a short awards ceremony.
- Daily awards are given out to schools and individuals that show excellence in their performances.
- Adjudicators deliberate following the final performance of the day and award the schools and individuals that stood out to highlight their performances.
- Daily awards are subject to change and categories vary year to year and day to day during the Festival.

*Please Note: The Festival does not focus on competition, but rather on a supportive environment to share talent, collaborate with theater students that they would not normally meet, and to encourage their fellow performers.*



# FAQs

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## What does it cost to attend the Festival?

- \$65 per 20-minute performance slot
- \$25 per student
- Free for teachers, advisors, and chaperones

## Do I bring costumes?

Schools may bring costumes, but they are not judged on them. Please remember that storage is very limited backstage, so we encourage schools to only bring costumes if necessary.

## Can I bring two segments of the same show?

Yes, schools can perform 20 minutes of Act 1 and Act 2 – but they will not be performed consecutively.

## How many performances can I bring?

We limit schools to two performances per day. Schools may attend more than one day of the Festival and bring different performances on each date.

## How do I sign up?

The registration form is available to download on our website. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis and we try to accommodate each school and-

their schedules. We ask that schools give us several choices of dates.

## How do I pay?

Schools may pay for their initial registration over the phone with credit card, or mail a check or money order. **Do not send cash in the mail.** Bucks County Playhouse is not responsible for the loss of cash sent in the mail. Please refer to the Festival registration form for further details.

## Is it open to the public? Can my students' families buy tickets?

- The Student Theater Festival afternoon performances (generally beginning at 12:50pm) are free and open to the public! Parents and members of the community are welcome to come watch students perform on the historic Playhouse stage free of charge!
- A schedule of performances will be listed in the Student Theater Festival program which will be distributed to participants when they arrive.
- **Families, please note:** While we do our best to stay on schedule, your child's performance may not happen at the exact time it is listed in the program. We recommend that you arrive before your child's schedule time and prepare for the possibility that we may be slightly ahead or behind schedule.

# FAQs

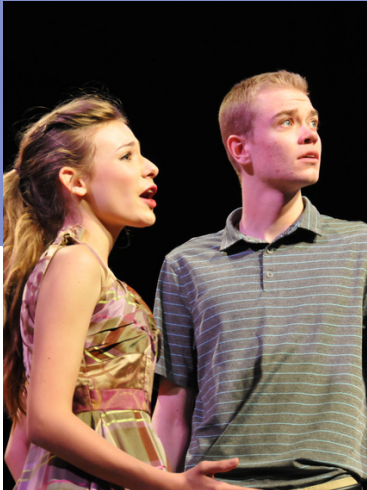
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## What if my students don't want to take a dance class?

There are several options for workshops, and they change each year—improv, theater games, movement, dance, tap/jazz, Shakespeare, acting for the camera, audition prep, and more. In recent years, we have also offered workshops in technical theater like costume design and rigging as well as panels with the staff of the Playhouse.

## Do my students have to attend the morning workshops?

The workshops are an important part of the Festival experience. We expect all students to attend these workshops unless they are teching their school's performance in the theater at their scheduled time.







# CONTACT US

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