

14. Oversee load-out.
 - a. Each school will be given a designated time to load out of the performance space.
 - b. Check the space to make sure everything is clear and ready for the next block to load in (or for the festival to end.)
15. Distribute Secondary festival awards during the Awards Ceremony
16. Distribute score sheets and adjudicator feedback to each participating school after the awards ceremony.
17. Run the Secondary Division meeting at the state festival.
18. Prepare and submit a division report to the board following the state festival.
19. Provide content for newsletters, blog posts, and social media as requested by the President and the Executive Director.
20. Respond to e-mails from the President and the Executive Director in a timely manner.
21. Review festival materials as requested by the President and the Executive Director.
22. Attend all board meetings and develop ideas make the division stronger; propose these ideas to the board.
23. Review the division guidelines in the MTA handbook and edit so that they remain up-to-date. Submit handbook changes to the MTA secretary two weeks prior to a board meeting.
24. Stay mindful that this position means that sometimes the Chair and Vice Chair will have to miss performances, be back stage, or do work at the festival that separates them from the main festival events. Bear in mind that these positions are to better the organization and not the individual interest of the Chair or Vice Chair.

SECONDARY FESTIVAL RULES AND GUIDELINES

1. Schools will assigned specific load-in times and held responsible for adhering to the festival schedule.
 - a. Each school will have five (5) minutes to load in from their truck / vehicle to the designated loading area and will have ten (10) minutes to move from the loading area to their 10x10 box.
 - b. Schools exceeding their allotted load-in time will have two (2) points automatically deducted from their final production score.
2. MTA and regional festival hosts will return both the written evaluation forms and the score sheets from the adjudicators to each participating school.
 - a. Participating schools will receive these documents following the close of the Awards Ceremony.
 - b. If participating schools are obligated to leave prior to the Awards Ceremony, the forms will be emailed to the primary contact's email address provided at the time of registration..
3. The MTA Awards Ceremony will announce the third-place production and note that this school will represent Mississippi at SETC in the case that one of the advancing schools is unable to attend.
 - a. This award will be announced before the announcement of the runner-up and winning production.
 - b. The third-place production will receive a physical award.
4. Prior to performance the school may move their items up to the Go Line.
 - a. The Go Line will be indicated by taped lines on the floor in the back and wings.
 - b. Schools will preset their items during the adjudication time of the previous performance.
 - c. The presetting of all items to the Go Line must be done in absolute silence and must not be seen by the audience. We insist on not disturbing the adjudication time. Out of fairness, we require the same procedure for the first show of the block even though there is not an adjudication in progress.
5. Official time begins when the festival director says "go" after the school's response.
 - a. The school is allotted 45 minutes to setup from the Go Line, perform, and strike the set to behind the Go Line.
 - b. A designated representative from each school will be instructed to call "clear" once everything has passed the Go Line.
 - c. Official time will then be stopped and recorded.

6. A second time will begin from the “clear” call.
 - a. The school will have 5 minutes to reset their production items back into the 10x10 block and to make their way to the front row of the auditorium for adjudication.
 - b. Adjudication time will begin after the allotted 5-minute strike time has ended.
7. The reset back to the 10x10 box runs just like it did before. Everything must fit in the 10x10 at the reset.
8. It is important in order for the festival to remain on schedule.
 - a. Producing organizations should rehearse the reset to the box so as not to exceed the allotted time.
 - b. Producing organizations should also practice the preset to the Go Line in order to be as efficient and unobtrusive to the adjudication as possible.
9. The dividing line between the North and South will be I-20. Any school North of I-20 will go to the festival at Mississippi State University and any school South of I-20 will go to the University of Southern Mississippi Festival.
10. Both regional festivals will cap the number of productions at 17. This does not include observing schools.
11. Each regional festival will advance four (4) productions to the State Festival.
 - a. If a region has fifteen (15) or more participating schools, the adjudicators have the discretion of advancing five (5) productions to the State Festival.
 - b. This does not include observing schools attending the festival.
12. A drop fee will be added to each regional festival to deter schools from dropping out at the last minute.

Items 1-3 approved by the Board of Directors in June 2020

Items 4-8 approved by the Board of Directors on July 11, 2015

Items 9-12 approved by the Board of Directors on July 7, 2012

SECONDARY ELIGIBILITY

1. A Traditional High School will be defined as a single school recognized within a school district and consisting of secondary students.
2. Secondary students will be defined as those students attending a Traditional High School and enrolled in grades 9-12.
3. Traditional High Schools will be eligible for all awards, as well as the right to advance.
4. Non-school groups will include all community based programs with students in grades 9-12 or the equivalent.
 - a. Non-school groups may include homeschool students as well as students enrolled in a traditional high school, charter, or magnet school.
 - b. Any non-school group or combined school group will be placed on a waiting list and granted entry into a regional festival based on registration numbers.
 - i. Non-school groups will be notified of their admission into the festival following the close of the festival's registration window.
 - ii. Non-school groups will be eligible to compete in the regional festivals and may earn all awards EXCEPT the Distinguished Play Award.
 - iii. Non-school groups are not eligible to advance to the MTA State Festival.
 - iv. A non-school group may not take a slot in a regional festival from a school group that is eligible to advance to the MTA State Festival.
 - c. A student may only compete in one show at a regional festival. (I.e. The same high school student may not participate in a show with their school and a show with a non-school group.)
 - d. The regional festival adjudicators will treat a non-school group the same as all other entrants in the regional festival by providing educational, critical feedback in the 15-minute response block and by providing the group's director with written feedback at the close of the festival.
5. Homeschool student groups are those community based programs that ONLY include homeschool students.
 - a. No students enrolled in a traditional high school may participate in this group or it will be classified as a non-school student group.

- b. Homeschool groups will be eligible to advance to MTA State Festival (as long as they qualify as a homeschool group).
 - c. Homeschool groups will be eligible for ALL awards.
6. Non-Traditional schools will be eligible to participate in Regional and State MTA Festivals
- a. Example: Adept School
 - b. Non-Traditional schools will be eligible for all awards and benefits of a traditional high school
7. While no one on the committee, the Board or the Host sites want to limit the number of production at the regional festival, the festival capacity is 17 participating schools.
- a. The first 17 entries the festival coordinator receives following the opening of festival registration will be accepted.
 - b. Schools who meet the registration deadline but exceed the festival capacity will be placed on a waiting list and notified in the event a school withdraws.
8. The order of performance will be randomly generated immediately following deadline date.
- a. Regional festival coordinators will communicate performance order to the participating schools as soon as possible.
 - b. Performance order will not be based on the order the packets are received by the Host site.
 - c. Schools with extenuating circumstances (such as administrative mandates due to state testing, etc.) must communicate their special needs with the respective regional festival coordinator.
9. The MTA Board adopts a “one show per festival rule” which means that a theatre group cannot enter a secondary show in the regionals and also enter that production in the Community Theatre Festival, Theatre for Youth Festival or any other festival. (*Adopted July 24, 2010.*)
10. As with any production of a copyrighted work, the producing organization will contract with the copyright / royalty holders to obtain written permission to perform the play. A copy of permission will be required prior to performing.
11. If a production must be edited to conform to festival production length requirements, the producing organization must obtain written permission from the publisher/royalty agent to perform in the festival. A copy of permission will also be required prior to performing.
12. If your production uses copyrighted music as part of the production, the producing organization must obtain written permission from the copyright holder in order to use their music. A copy of permission will also be required prior to performing.

Items 1-3 approved by the MTA Officers in September 2013.

Item 4 approved by the board on June 7, 2012 and revised on July 11, 2020.

Items 5-8 approved by the Executive Committee in August 2008.

Items 9-12 approved by the MTA Board of Directors on July 24, 2010.

SECONDARY PERFORMANCE / TECHNICAL RULES AND PROCEDURES

1. **Time:** Shows may not run longer than forty-five minutes. Timing begins when called by host site (and the Go Line is crossed). Timing ends when the set is completely struck: the stage must be completely cleared (and behind the Go-Line).
 - a. The forty-five minute period includes the time for setting up the stage (including any offstage sound or lighting equipment brought to the site by the participating school), lighting and sound checks at Regional Festival, performing the play, and clearing the stage.
 - b. At THE STATE FESTIVAL (MTA) there will be a twenty-minute rehearsal time. All actors and set pieces must remain in the area behind the Go Line designated by the host site until time begins and return to that area before timing will stop.
 - c. Set-up and strike are the sole responsibility of each participating school.
 - d. If any production exceeds the forty-five minute time limit, it cannot receive a Superior Rating or Best Production, advance to the State Festival from a Regional Festival, or advance to SETC from the MTA State Festival. Productions exceeding the time limit are still eligible for all other awards.

- e. The time clock may be stopped at the discretion of the site coordinator if unforeseen and extenuating circumstances arise during the forty-five minute time allotment.
2. **Running the show:** Only students from the performing school and members of the host site crew are allowed in the sound/light booth or backstage during the run of the show.
 - a. No non-students, directors or teachers may enter the booth, backstage area or communicate with their students in the booth by headset or otherwise during the run of the show except in case of a safety emergency.
 - b. Teachers and technical directors may assist with load-in, and load-out only.
 - c. Please note-not all productions last a full 45 minutes.
 3. By entering the festival, each participant assumes responsibility for making arrangements with the author and/or publisher for the right to use the play they are performing and to pay any required royalties.
 - a. No MTA-affiliated organization - including the South Regional Festival, the North Regional Festival, The State Festival (MTA), nor the host site - shall be held responsible for any unpaid royalties.
 - b. Payment of royalties must be shown prior to performance.
 4. **Technical requirements and limitations.** Each participating organization must provide all technical materials, such as set, hand and furniture properties, makeup, costumes, recorded music and special sound effects.
 5. **The organizing committee for the MTA High School Play Festival has determined that some standardization in technical guidelines is desirable.** Therefore, each Regional Festival site, and the State Festival sites will provide the following:
 - a. Multiple isolated lighting areas.
 - b. One 20-amp outlet for use by participants to power their own equipment.
 - i. Said equipment must be approved prior to the date of the Festival by the host site coordinator and must meet all applicable safety codes and regulations.
 - ii. The host site coordinator reserves the right to refuse to allow the use of a particular piece of equipment.
 - iii. Schools should bring their own extension cords.
 - c. An auxiliary cable for running sound through the facility's sound system from a participant's computer or sound device.
 - i. Festival participants must provide their own computer or sound devices.
 - ii. Schools with questions about site-specific sound capabilities should direct them to the appropriate festival coordinator.
 - d. **Light effects and follow spots:**
 - i. Simple area lighting is provided. A light plot will be provided with each festivals' technical packet.
 - ii. Lighting needs other than those listed here must be approved by the site coordinator in advance (with a minimum of two weeks' notice), and any such equipment must be supplied by the participant.
 - iii. The placement and removal of additional lighting equipment must be included in the allotted time.
 - iv. One follow-spot may be provided at the local host site coordinator's option.
 - v. The participating school must provide the operator.
 - » Some technical assistance may be provided by the host site to show how things work, but the host facility will not be provide anyone to run the follow spot for a show.
 - » The host site coordinator will notify performing groups of whether this option is available.
 - e. There will be a designated holding space where each participating school will load in and strike to as part of your time. Your local host site coordinator will provide detailed technical specifications for their facility well in advance of the Festival.
 6. **Safety.** Participants must adhere to all state, federal, county, and/or city fire codes. Absolutely no fire, pyrotechnics, combustibles or other unreasonably dangerous matter may be brought into the host facility or used in the production. Violation of this rule is grounds for disqualification and immediate removal from the festival site.
 7. **Running Crew.** Each participant must provide adequate running crew to ensure swift set changes and proper cues for lights, etc. A student familiar with the production (i.e. stage manager) should be in the control room (or on headset) to call cues.

8. Dressing rooms may be occupied no more than one show prior to your production.
9. Each participating school will have a private, fifteen-minute rehearsal period at the Regional Festival.
 - a. The site coordinator and/or stage manager will schedule technical briefings at regular intervals during each regional festival.
 - b. Each participant may use this time to examine the stage and the technical booth prior to their performance time.
10. No recording devices of any kind (audio or video) are allowed during performances.
11. Each participating school shall provide a one-sheet informational program to the festival coordinator.
 - a. This program should indicate the title of the production, the author(s), publisher (if applicable), school, director, cast and production crew lists, time/place of play, and any special advisory notes (i.e. the use of strobe lights or loud noises).
 - b. Characters may be listed with a sufficient description of their appearance to help adjudicators accurately identify actors.
 - i. Example 1: "BJORIA: dark red pants, combat boots, green army-style jacket, dreadlocks - Zoë Panlener"
 - ii. Example 2: "ENSEMBLE: blonde wig, purple pants - Chance DeLacey"
 - c. This will be the program that regional festival adjudicators receive for each production.
 - d. Any pre-production services by paid professionals or professional volunteers (people who would usually get paid for their work) must be listed in the one-sheet program.
 - e. Any contractual requirements for licensing must be listed in the one-sheet program.
 - f. See the sample one-sheet program below.
12. Schools shall also provide one clearly-printed, staged production photo with all actors in costume and labeled with the name of each character and each actor.
 - a. The purpose of this photograph is to assist the adjudicators in accurately identifying actors.
 - b. The size of this photo should not exceed 8"x10".
 - c. See the sample labeled production photo below.
13. Schools are encouraged to bring their own programs to distribute to the audience for their production.
14. Should the production contain any themes, language, activity, or subject matter that are not appropriate for all ages, a notice to that effect must appear in the program.
 - a. Disclaimers may also be announced by the Secondary Theatre Division Chair prior to the beginning of the production containing mature content.
 - b. Disclaimers may be made for but are not limited to the following content:
 - i. Mature content
 - ii. Adult language / profanity
 - iii. Firearms or weapons
 - iv. Gunshots and/or loud noises
 - v. Performers moving among audience members / Performers in the house
 - vi. Fog or haze effects
 - vii. Strobe or other lighting effects
 - viii. Overt sexual content
 - ix. Nudity
 - x. Blood and/or gore
 - xi. Historical discrimination, racism, and/or bigotry
 - xii. Drugs / alcohol / substance abuse
 - xiii. Rape or other forms of sexual, physical, and/or emotional violence
 - xiv. Suicide, suicidal ideation, or self-harm
 - xv. Child abuse

15. The set should fit into a 10' x 10' space.
 - a. Your set should be contained inside the imaginary walls of the 10x10 space.
 - b. You may stack your set as high as safety allows, but elements may not protrude from the box.
 - c. This is a Regional Festival, State Festival (MTA), and Southeastern Theatre Conference (SETC) rule.
 - d. Props that are not costumes or costume props (props worn by actors) must remain behind the "Go line" until they are told GO by the host.
 - i. Student performers may keep musical instruments such as guitars, horns, etc. with them in the dressing room for tuning and warm-ups.
 - ii. Students may not play instruments in the dressing rooms if their instrument can be heard on the stage.
 - iii. The Chair, the regional festival host, or the facilities host will notify students with musical instruments whether warming up or tuning in the dressing room is permissible.
16. No non-student may sing, act, or dance in the production.
 - a. Any portion of dialogue in the script (whether live or recorded) must be performed by a student. Historical recordings such as newscasts are allowed.
 - b. Any non-student musical accompaniment included in the production must be in a designated area, as approved by the appropriate festival coordinator (either the site host at a regional festival or the Secondary Chair at the state festival) so as not to detract from the adjudicator's assessment of the production.
 - i. Schools bringing non-student accompanists must notify the appropriate festival coordinator prior to the start of the festival.
 - ii. The festival coordinator will assess and designate an appropriate area for this individual.
 - c. Non-students may not conduct musical numbers.
 - d. No non-student may assist in any technical aspect during the running of the show or strike.
17. The designated leader of the production may only be a theatre arts educator from the represented school.
 - a. Anyone else involved in the production is not the "designated leader."
 - b. Nothing in this section should be construed to mean that guest artists cannot be involved with the production process.
18. Schools are prohibited from performing a play that was performed at their regional festival or at the MTA State Secondary Festival within the last three years. (The list of productions will be posted on the MTA website.)

Additional Points for Hosts: *(added August 2009)*

1. Participating schools will receive their adjudication forms at the awards ceremony along with their participation certificates.
2. The house and backstage will remain closed until all schools have had twenty minutes in the space and on the lighting board. This will be recorded by an unbiased timekeeper. The timekeeper will announce 2 minutes, 1 minute and 30 seconds. Schools will clear stage immediately.
3. Host sites will post directional signs backstage to assist in locating dressing rooms, rest rooms, etc.
4. Host sites will provide backstage workers to assist in directing students and answering questions.
5. Host sites are encouraged to provide a snack bar for participants. The host site can retain all proceeds from this service.

Adjudicator Information *(added August 2009)*

1. Adjudicators will not be affiliated with the host institution or another school/university in the region.
2. Graduate students cannot be used as adjudicators.
3. Adjudicators will be selected from schools outside of the host's region.
 - a. I.E. North festival has to select adjudicators from the South region or out of state, and vice versa.
 - b. This is to ensure that participating schools have an objective and impartial adjudication.
 - c. It is important to bring in adjudicators that cannot be viewed as being partial to one group or another.

4. Adjudicators will not be used at the same regional festival in consecutive years.
5. Instruct adjudicators to make full use of their time during the comments following a production.
 - a. Ask them to keep all comments relevant to the production and not bring personal stories into the allotted time.
 - b. Each adjudicator should attempt to speak to how well the production adhered to the qualities described in the adjudication rubric.

Breaking any of the rules above will result in disqualification for advancing at the regional level and disqualification for the Dominic Cunetto Best Play Award at MTA.

ETIQUETTE GUIDELINES FOR PERFORMERS, CREW, AND AUDIENCE MEMBERS

Students attending the regional festivals and the state festival must complete a **Code of Conduct** form. Teachers must review the Code of Conduct form with the students and discuss theatre etiquette with their students.

1. **Violation of these rules may result in:**
 - a. Students will not be allowed to continue at festival and/or will not be allowed to participate the following year.
 - b. Schools will not be allowed to continue at the festival and/or not be allowed to participate the following year.
2. Students attending the Festivals must be accompanied by an adult from the school or organization they are representing.
 - a. In the event of an emergency, special permission can be requested to use substitute supervision; however, all supervisors must be 21 or older.
 - b. The site coordinator must be notified in advance of such situations.
3. Once the house lights go out and a play begins, there should be no entering or leaving the theatre until after the play ends unless an emergency.
4. No flash photography, video, or sound recording is permitted during the performance of any play. Violation of this rule will result in the removal of the individual from the Festival.
5. There should be no talking backstage or in the audience during the performances or the adjudicators' critiques.
6. Rudeness in any form will not be tolerated.
 - a. Student behavior onstage, backstage, and in the audience must be courteous at all times.
 - b. There will be no use of foul language at any festival site.
7. As we are training future audiences as well as performers, directors, designers and technicians, sponsors / directors are expected to prepare students by informing their participants of these standards:
 - a. No food or drink in the theatre.
 - b. No feet on the seats.
 - c. No hats.
 - d. No distractions from the performance.
8. There will be no smoking, use of other tobacco products, alcohol or drugs by students on the grounds of preliminary or state festival sites or at any times during the festival.
9. Students are expected to participate in all festival activities.
 - a. Be courteous and attentive to all performers and workshop artists.
 - b. Disruptive students may be asked to leave a theatre workshop.
10. Any disruptive or inappropriate behavior may result in disqualification and/or dismissal from the grounds.

Each school should receive a copy of their adjudication scoring ballot and comments before they leave the Regional and State Festival. These should be given out after the awards ceremony.

REGIONAL DRAMA FESTIVAL AWARDS

The following awards are presented to the participants.

- Play Rating Certificates
 - a. These printed certificates are given to each participant to quantify the quality of their presented work.
 - b. The rating should be aligned with the adjudicators' averaged production score.
 - i. 1 - 15 = Fair
 - ii. 16 - 30 = Good
 - iii. 31 - 45 = Excellent
 - iv. 46 - 60 = Superior
- Distinguished Play Awards: These plays advance to the State Secondary Festival.
- Outstanding Direction
- Best Actor
- Best Actress
- Best Supporting Actor
- Best Supporting Actress
- Ensemble Acting
- Best Costume Design
- Best Scenic Design
- Technical Achievement
- All Star Cast
 - a. Each school should receive at least one All Star cast member.
 - b. All Star cast members should not receive another acting award, such as Best Actor/Actress; they should only receive one.
- Overall Theatrical Experience Award
 - a. This award is presented to the school contributing the most to the festival, showing general excellence in all areas of theatre production as well as displaying an attitude of cooperation throughout the festival.
 - b. This award can be given to anyone participating in the festival, and does not necessarily need to be one of the advancing schools.
 - c. This award does not have to go to the school with highest score, but it may.
 - d. This award is not a 4th place award.
 - e. In the South, this is the *Glen Menna Award*.

(Modified in 2008.)

- Peer Choice Award – each school is given a ballot and ranks the shows in order of which one they enjoyed the most.
- Theatre Arts Awards
 - a. A maximum of ten certificates may be awarded.
 - b. Adjudicators may use these awards to recognize theatrical excellence in areas not otherwise acknowledged.
 - c. Examples: Excellence in Make-up, Properties, Sound, Student Playwriting, Choreography, etc.

STATE SECONDARY FESTIVAL AWARDS

- Play Rating Certificates
 - a. These printed certificates are given to each participant to quantify the quality of their presented work.
 - b. The rating should be aligned with the adjudicators' averaged production score.
 - i. 1 - 15 = Fair
 - ii. 16 - 30 = Good
 - iii. 31 - 45 = Excellent

iv. 46 - 60 = Superior

- Dominic Cunetto Award for Best Production
- Runner Up Best Play
- Outstanding Direction
- Best Actor
- Best Actress
- Best Supporting Actor
- Best Supporting Actress
- Ensemble Acting
- Best Costume Design
- Best Scenic Design
- Technical Achievement
- All Star Cast
 - a. Each school should receive at least one All Star cast member.
 - b. All Star cast members should not receive another acting award, such as Best Actor/Actress; they should only receive one.
- Theatre Arts Awards
 - a. A maximum of ten certificates may be awarded.
 - b. Adjudicators may use these awards to recognize theatrical excellence in areas not otherwise acknowledged.
 - c. Examples: Excellence in Make-up, Properties, Sound, Student Playwriting, Choreography etc.

SECONDARY GUIDELINES FOR ADJUDICATION

1. Three out of state adjudicators will judge secondary theatre entries.
2. The central role of the adjudicator is to provide useful critical feedback, in a thoughtful, caring way. Adjudicators should provide feedback that helps participants grow as artists and people, through enriched understanding of their own collaborative work.
3. All adjudicators will be asked to participate in a festival adjudicators meeting where the Secondary Chair and MTA President will answer questions and clarify expectations.
4. Public adjudication happens at the conclusion of each production in the festival.
 - a. Adjudication will not exceed 15 total minutes, with each adjudicator being afforded 5 minutes of verbal feedback.
 - b. Responses should consist of a positive general assessment of each production and should include the adjudicator's strongest impression of specific elements of the production.
 - c. Constructive criticism should be coupled with positive reinforcement.
5. Best practices for all adjudication include:
 - a. Positive reinforcement to each performing school group about the strengths of their work alongside constructive, critical feedback to help the artists grow.
 - b. Clear suggestions and observations about how the work could be stronger.
 - i. Provide questions for the artists to consider and answer for themselves.
 - ii. Provide concrete proposals or creative alternatives.
 - c. Specific, detailed commentary about all theatrical elements.
 - i. Where possible, provide specific examples and observation about as many participant roles as are applicable
 - ii. Participant roles may include but are not limited to design, direction, performance, writing, music, choreography
 - iii. As possible, address how the multiple elements work together in each production.
 - d. Sensitivity to the participants and acknowledgment of challenges and limitations faced by the performing group.

- e. Admission of subjectivity.
 - i. Remind artists that adjudicators are selected for their expertise and have credible insight to offer.
 - ii. Remind artists that each adjudicator also has their own tastes, preferences, and perspectives.
 - iii. The job of the artist is to listen, consider the feedback, and determine for themselves what is most valuable; remind artists that they are not obligated to agree with or execute all of your ideas and comments.
 - f. Awareness of diversity.
 - i. Be mindful of your own assumptions about the students you meet and work against those assumptions during the adjudication process.
 - ii. Be cognizant of the words you choose to talk about the members of a company.
 - iii. Consider what pronouns you use to describe particular roles in the theatre. (E.g. Directors are not always “he;” costume designers are not always “she,” etc.)
 - iv. Remember that student participants have a range of abilities and that not all artists will receive adjudication the same way.
 - g. Should you find yourself needing to address themes or experiences with which you do not have personal experience, feel free to ask questions.
 - i. “What were you hoping to do with [this specific moment]?” or “What was your intention with [a specific choice]?”
 - ii. Do not hesitate to amend previous statements or recommendations in light of new information or understanding. This models learning and adapting to new knowledge for our young artists.
6. Elements to Consider as Adjudicating:
- a. MTA has divided the adjudicator response sheets into three overarching categories: Performance, Direction, and Design.
 - i. The sub-categories in the response sheets should guide respondents’ feedback, but should in no way be considered a finite list of areas available for response.
 - ii. The questions provided under each category below are suggestions to consider as respondents formulate responses and may also serve as questions to ask performing groups about their work.
 - iii. No production should be penalized for less or more of a particular element. A bare stage may support a concept as effectively as a large-scale, realized scenic design. Adjudicators should evaluate the effectiveness of the choices to the concept of the production.
 - b. Overall Production
 - i. How effectively has the production team worked with limited resources?
 - ii. Are the resources available to the production effectively employed to serve the story?
 - iii. Does there appear to have been a coherent vision for the production that all collaborators appear to understand/
 - iv. Are there any especially significant production elements? (E.g. original music composition, projection design, use of mask, choreography, etc.)
 - v. What was your overall experience of the piece as a whole? What emotional impact did it have? How did it provoke thoughts or feelings?
 - c. Performance
 - i. Voice
 - » Do actors have clear, articulated speech and adequate projection?
 - » Were the actors’ vocal / speech choices appropriate to the characters’ time and place / to the world of the piece?
 - » If there is live singing, are the voices strong and clear? Are the songs well-interpreted? Are any harmonies accurate and well-executed? Is there a balance between the voices and any other live or recorded sound or music sources?
 - » If there are accents or dialects employed: Does the voice work support the overall vision of the selection? Are the accents accurate to their point of reference / origin? Is accented voice work comprehensible and effective?
 - ii. Movement

- » How successfully have the actors physicalized and internalized the characters they are portraying or the roles they are performing?
 - » What do you notice about actors' physicality?
 - » If there is choreography: How well is it executed by the performers? How the performers move together / how does a dancer move in relationship to other actors?
- iii. Characterization
- » What clear choices have been made about the development of the characters?
 - » Do actors appear to thoroughly comprehend their character's role?
 - » Are there elements of originality to an actor's interpretation?
 - » Is there a magnetism or specific quality apparent in the performance.
 - » Is the character convincing and compelling?
- iv. Ensemble
- » Do actors remain focused when they are not at the center of the action?
 - » How does the ensemble work together?
 - » How do the members of the ensemble support each other inside the performance?
 - » What is the relationship between the whole production and the elements that make up its parts?
- v. Intent
- » How does the performance advance the storytelling / support or define the world of the piece?
 - » Do actors appear to understand and be contributing to a shared vision for the piece?
- d. Direction
- i. Material Selection
- » What audience is this play for?
 - » Has this story been told before? Does it need to be told again?
 - » Who is represented in this play? Who is not?
 - » How does the representation in the play align with social identities (race, class, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, (dis)ability, citizenship, etc.) of the students in the cast? In the audience? In the state?
 - » Who is the writer / creator of the play?
 - » What kinds of challenges does the script / content offer the participants in the production process?
 - » How did the company serve the material they selected?
 - » What is the potential social or artistic impact of the material?
- ii. Concept
- » How well has the director understood the play / material / subjects of exploration?
 - » How well has the director guided the audience to enter the world of the play and understand the rules within it or suspend their disbelief?
 - » How has the director collaborated with designers to guide how the elements work in relationship to each other?
 - » Has the director guided or provided a unique or unusual interpretation of the piece?
- iii. Staging
- » Do the actors move in space with purpose and in relationship to each other?
 - » Have the director's choices communicated time and place?
 - » Is the blocking reasonable and well-motivated? Has the director considered sight-lines and stage pictures?
 - » If there is choreography: How does the expression in the dance advance the storytelling or define the world of the piece?
- iv. Pace / Timing

- » Are the transitions tight or flowing and as well-considered as the other action of the piece?
- » Are the pacing and timing appropriate to the execution of the vision of the piece?
- v. Preparedness
 - » Is the production well-rehearsed?
 - » Do the actors seem to understand their roles as well as a collective purpose?
- e. Design - Scenic, Costume / Makeup, Sound, Lighting, Props, etc.
 - i. Appropriateness to the Material
 - » How do the design elements serve the piece and the interpretation of the piece?
 - » Are there missing elements that could serve the production and that are realistic to produce?
 - » Is intention or concept communicated through the design?
 - » How do character-specific design elements (costumes, hair, makeup, props, etc.) contribute to our understanding of the characters or performers?
 - » How do the design elements inform our understanding of time and place?
 - ii. Necessity to the Production
 - » How do the design elements help the performers do what they need to do?
 - » Do the design elements enhance the storytelling / communicate a world to the audience?
 - » Do the elements feel like they belong in the created world?
 - » Are there existing elements that feel superfluous or that detract from the piece?
 - » Are there missing elements or alternative choices worth exploring?
 - iii. Execution Quality of Design Elements
 - » Are all design elements safe for performers?
 - » Are the design elements adaptable to a variety of venues?
 - » How much care and detail has been worked into the design elements?
 - » Is the construction of the design elements remarkable in any way?
 - iv. Operation Quality of Design Elements
 - » Are elements used effectively?
 - » Are cues well-timed and well-executed?
 - v. Actor Interaction with Design Elements
 - » If there are major scenic changes, do they occur smoothly and intentionally within the performance?
 - » Do performers utilize their personal design elements (costumes, hair, makeup, props, etc.) effectively and with apparent expertise?

SECONDARY FESTIVAL ADJUDICATORS MEETING

1. Provide and review a copy of the festival program.
2. Introduce the person who will be the adjudicators' escort. The escort will stay with them all day and make sure they are where they are supposed to be.
3. Introduce the Festival Coordinators and other MTA Board Members.
4. Communicate that we will try to go to lunches/dinners as a group IF they are interested. This is not mandatory, but MTA would like to entertain them for meals when possible.
5. Show them the adjudicators room, restrooms, etc.
6. Allow them to determine where they want to sit in the auditorium, and mark off the adjacent seats as necessary.
7. Ask about any special requests or needs.
8. Provide:

- a. A copy of the Guidelines for Adjudication.
 - b. A list of the festival awards.
 - c. A clipboard, notepad, pen, and light.
 - d. A copy of the Adjudicator Festival Evaluation form.
 - e. The Adjudicator's Ballot sheets.
9. Review the verbal response procedure following a production.
 - a. All three adjudicators share a 15-minute response.
 - b. The adjudicators will rotate the order in which they speak.
 10. Explain about remitting receipts:
 - a. The Executive Director must receive all receipts before they leave on Sunday.
 - b. MTA will pay for the hotel room upon checkout. They do not need to pay.
 - c. Ask the adjudicators to provide all receipts including travel and food receipts as soon as the festival is over.
 - d. MTA can calculate mileage based on the State of Mississippi handbook.
 - e. If the adjudicators have any other festival-related expenses, they should turn those receipts in as well.
 11. Invite the adjudicators to join us for the party. There will be informal socials Friday and Saturday night after the last production.
 12. Reinforce that adjudicators should not discuss any production before the awards ceremony.
 13. Ask for questions.

SECONDARY DIRECTORS MEETING INFORMATION

The following people should attend the Director's Meeting:

- Division Chair and Co-Chair
- The Director/Sponsor or one person designated by the Director/Sponsor from each school or theatre in the performance block
- Host Technical Advisor
- Local Technical Personnel
- Time Keepers

Items to be Covered During Meeting

1. Introduction of Participants
2. Introduction of Technical Personnel
 - a. Explanation of duties
 - b. Explanation of technical capabilities
3. Collect three copies of each production's program for adjudicators. (Provide program copies to each adjudicator copy prior to the production.)
4. Confirm familiarity with guidelines
5. Confirm method of timekeeping
6. Explain and tour the physical production space
 - a. Review 10x10 blocks
 - b. Review load-in areas
 - c. Tour dressing rooms and restrooms
7. Confirm that all of the required materials have been received prior to production beginning.
8. Explain to the director/sponsor/representative about the awards ceremony and encourage participation in the Workshops AND Divisional Meetings.

9. Encourage directors to complete the post-festival survey. Explain that this will assist us with planning future festivals.

SECONDARY CODE OF CONDUCT

(Revised September 2016)

Knowing that any organization is judged largely by the behavior of its individual members, we who attend the Mississippi Theatre Association Convention agree that registering at the State Convention constitutes our subscribing to the following rules, which comprise the Code of Conduct.

1. Each Sponsor is responsible for each and every one of his/her students. Therefore, students must keep their sponsor informed of their whereabouts at all times.
2. Members registered at the convention should be present for all scheduled meetings and on time.
3. Curfew is promptly at midnight unless the Convention Chair announces otherwise. This means in your own room and respectfully quiet.
4. Members may visit other members' rooms only with the Sponsor's knowledge and approval.
5. No Alcohol and/or other drug, in any form, shall be possessed by a minor at this state convention.
6. All registered members are expected to wear official name badges at all times.
7. Each registered member is expected to display and exert leadership qualities in a responsible manner, which will lead to the organized success of this Convention. Members should conduct themselves in such a manner that their actions will reflect favorably on their school and community and all of those responsible for providing the student with this educational opportunity.
8. Each student will conduct themselves in an orderly fashion and will not in any way destroy, mutilate or alter ANY of the facilities while at the State convention.
9. Each student will act as an adult and as professionals during all productions, critiques, workshops and social events associated with the Convention.
10. Student will NOT use electronic devices including cell phones, iPods, etc. while in the theatre or auditorium. All devices will be kept OFF. Students also should NOT send or receive TEXT MESSAGES during productions or critiques. This will result in the Festival Chairman taking up cell phones, iPods, etc.
11. Students will be respectful, courtesy and congenial to others performing. This includes not talking during critiques, announcements and performances.

MTA ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG POLICY FOR MINORS

No student attending any Mississippi Theatre Association activity shall be permitted to carry on his/her person or in any other manner have in his/her possession, in any way, or be under the influence of alcohol and/or other drugs. The provisions of this policy shall not apply to any student who is under the care of a licensed physician and who is taking medication which is under the supervision and direction of such physician.

This policy is for the sole and exclusive protection of the students of this association and their general welfare, and nothing herein shall be construed to avoid any prosecution under applicable criminal statute. MTA may report any violation of this policy to the student's school sponsor, parents, school principal, district superintendent and also to the proper law enforcement officials.

SAMPLE ONE-SHEET PROGRAM FOR SECONDARY FESTIVALS

PEOPLE HOLDING SIGNS

By: Jayde Gibson

South Central High School – Festival Production

SETTING

Washington D.C. – 1913, 1963, 2014

New York City – 1969, 1982, 2020

CAST

EILEEN (long, salmon-colored dress with poofy sleeves ♦ - sign: "Votes for Women") Joyce Gibbons

BRAXTON (male, African American, khakis, button up - sign: "We Demand Jobs Now!") Mo Perry

ALEXA (cloth mask, fitted green cardigan, jeans - sign: "#BLM") Meera Branch

SUKHMANI (black slacks, floral shirt ♦, hijab - sign: "Water's rising, should we?") Sumiya Els

MILLIE (long brown hair in braids, flower power dress ♦ - sign: "Make anything but War!") Kaitlyn Smith

TAYLA (black turtleneck, tweed vest ♦, chinos, black afro - sign: "Power to the People") Nikki Martin

ENSEMBLE: Hannah Evans (short hair, solid grey shirt, blue jeans, combat boots)

Marcus Ordnithan (crew-cut brown hair, bomber jacket, aviator sunglasses)

Kurt Kirkland (shaggy light brown hair, very tall and thin, basketball shorts and jersey)

Emily Sanders (blonde hair in French braid, pencil skirt ♦, white blouse, blazer ♦, pumps)

Lizzy Franklin (tall and thin, braided hair with beads, baggy black sweatpants and graphic tee)

PRODUCTION TEAM & CREW

DIRECTOR Dillon Zavala

STUDENT ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Alisha Berger

LIGHT OPERATOR Yasmin Ashley

SOUND OPERATOR JoAnna Roth

STUDENT PRODUCTION DESIGNER (SCENIC, COSTUME, & MAKEUP) Aaisha Berger

PUBLICITY DESIGNER (POSTER, TICKETS, SOCIAL MEDIA) Frank Hellman

SET CONSTRUCTION SCHS Theatre Production Class

COSTUME CONSTRUCTION & ACQUISITION Scott Hannetty* & SCHS Theatre Production Class

CREDITS

PEOPLE HOLDING SIGNS is produced through special arrangement with the playwright, Jayde Gibson.

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Erase Racism by J.Lang (c) copyright 2020 Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution (3.0) license. <http://dig.ccmixer.org/files/djlang59/61875> Ft: Donnie Ozone

*Scott Hannetty is a local professional costumer who volunteered to build certain costume pieces for SCHS's festival production. Scott's professionally-constructed costumes are marked in the cast list with [♦].

SAMPLE LABELED PRODUCTION PHOTO

