



# Youth Individual Events

Hello,

My name is Lauren Ray, and I am your current Chair of Secondary Individual Events (2IEs) for the Mississippi Theatre Association. I want to introduce myself and this year's IEs team. This email will also provide you with some information about this year's Secondary IEs.

## **About this year's team:**

I am a high school theatre and communications teacher at Northwest Rankin High School in Flowood, MS. I've served in several different capacities on the MTA board since 2017, and I'm excited to provide assistance and support to anyone producing secondary theatre across the state! **Save my cell number: 601.331.6696**, and text me if you have questions!

Working with 2IEs this year will be co-Vice Chairpeople David Orace Kelly and Roxie Hood. David is the upper school theatre teacher (acting and technical theatre) at St. Andrew's Episcopal School. Roxie Hood is an Algebra II teacher at Jackson Academy and skilled theatre maker (most recently on stage with Center Players Community Theatre in Madison, MS). Her focus is on the rules and systems that make evaluation and tabulation run as smoothly as possible.

We would not be able to offer the incredible variety of events that 2IEs provides without the dedicated support of folks like Roxie and David.

### **About this year's festival cycle:**

We are thrilled to once again be able to offer individual and small-group competition in acting, musical, and tech/design divisions. We continue to pilot on-site events that will give more students a chance to demonstrate their varied theatrical skills!

Many of the adjustments to this year's guidelines are in direct response to the feedback we received from last year's festival. Your input matters a great deal! If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about the way our festival is run, let us know!

The 2023-2024 MTA handbook has the complete operations manual for our division. (The table of contents is dynamic: you can click to navigate to the pages you are trying to access!) If anything in the handbook is unclear, let me know.

Schools will receive access to their personalized Individual Events organizer very soon. **All entries must be in the organizer by November 1, 2024.** As in prior years, drops, swaps, and changes to selections may continue until November 15, 2024. No additional entries will be accepted after the November 15 deadline.

A school / organization may have ten (10) entries in each event. A student may enter up to five (5) events. On-site pilot events do not count toward this 5-entry limit.

- Solo event registration is \$10 per entry.
- Duet event registration is \$20 per entry.
- Group event registration is \$30 per entry (regardless of the number of students in the group).
- Pilot event registration is \$5 per entry.

There is also an Individual Events competition for adults on-site at the MTA State Festival, and we encourage teachers to participate! Registration for Adult IEs will be included with schools' organizational registration information. Talk to Jessica Wilkinson for more information or guidance on how to participate.

## Notable notes:

1. As we have done for the past three years, **performance IEs will begin with a virtual preliminary round.** Submission guidelines are changing from last year; information for how to film, upload, and submit preliminary performance videos will follow in a subsequent email.
2. **All performance events will have a final round.** If an event has 30 or more entries, there will be 15 finalists selected by rank as determined by the preliminary judges' evaluation. If an event has fewer than 30 entries, the final round will include half of the entries. Finalists will perform live on Saturday at the State Festival in January for a panel of qualified judges whose evaluation will determine the top-ranking entries.
3. Following much discussion about entry limits and quality of technical events, **we will offer but not require that entrants in technical events submit a preliminary work in progress.pdf for initial feedback.** For this year, we will continue to accept all entries at MTA in January, but last year's large numbers suggested a need for either adjustment to entry limits or a preliminary gate.

Our decision at the moment is to pilot this preliminary gate without having it impact students' ability to enter the event and to continue to receive and monitor feedback. Students who submit their *work in progress.pdf* will receive initial feedback from qualified tech/design respondents in January prior to the State Festival. **We welcome your feedback about this decision.**

## Material Selection:

We encourage students to begin looking for their selections as soon as they are able. In regard to material selection as per MTA Handbook:

1. Material must be drawn from **published plays.**
  - a. Works from other literary forms such as poetry, fiction, stand up/sketch comedy, or song lyrics are not permitted.
  - b. Original works are prohibited except in the Original Scene category.

- c. Musical Theatre material must be from published musicals. Popular music will not be permitted unless it is included in the score of a published musical.
  - d. Entrants will be required to identify the company that holds the rights to the play or musical from which their material is selected.
2. In events with more than one participant, each participant must be actively involved in the scene.
- 3. Selections should be appropriate to the performers and should provide interest, intelligibility, and literary value.**
- 4. Performers should demonstrate evidence of understanding in regards to the selection's context and intent.**
5. Entrants should use discretion in regards to language and subject matter.
  - a. Directors will attest that they have seen and approved the material their students are performing and that it appropriately reflects the standards of the student's school and community.
  - b. MTA supports a policy permitting the widest possible range of dramatic material and is not responsible for the perceived decency of selections that students enter in the Individual Events Festival.
  - c. No student may enter any Individual Event with a selection that their school is bringing to any MTA-sponsored festival during the current school year or brought to any MTA-sponsored festival during the previous school year.

## 2024-2025 Changes

- Performance Categories
  - Due to large entry numbers in solo performance events, Acting 9/10, Acting 11/12, Musical 9/10, and Musical 11/12 will now be:
    - Acting 9/10,
    - Acting 11,
    - Acting 12,
    - Musical 9/10,
    - Musical 11, and
    - Musical 12.
  - Schools will have ten (10) entries in each performance category.
- Design Categories
  - The Open Division for Evaluation Only (ODEO) is now a main tech/design event.
  - Schools will have ten (10) entries in ODEO. (This is a change from last year's five entries.)
  - Makeup Design is **no longer** a main tech/design event.
    - Students with fully-fledged makeup designs are encouraged to enter them into ODEO.

- The Costume Design guidelines have been amended to allow for one of the three required renderings to be a detailed hair-and-makeup rendering. (This is not a requirement.)
- Pilot Events
  - MTA will pilot one or both of the following events on-site at the State Festival.
- Tech Relay
  - Schools will have ten (10) entries and can designate a number of entries without having to name participating students until after performance finals are announced.
  - Students will participate in teams of three (3) to five (5) in four (4) to six (6) relay-style competitions.
  - A comprehensive handbook will follow that explains the full guidelines for this event.
- Splash Scenes
  - Schools will have ten (10) entries and can designate a number of entries without having to name participating students until after performance finals are announced.
  - Teachers will receive this year's splash scene in November.
  - The scene will be from a public domain work or a work that we otherwise have publication and distribution rights to.
  - Names and identifying information about characters will be removed.
  - Characters will be designated "A" and "B."
  - Students will work with the other splash scene participants in their school to learn and prepare the scene.
  - At the State Festival, there will be a morning rehearsal and training session in which students will be paired with other A's or B's. In the afternoon, students will be randomly assigned a partner, given a limited amount of time to prepare, and invited to perform for a panel of adjudicators.

Secondary Individual Events registration will open as soon as possible! We will share your personalized entries organizer as soon as it is ready.

To help us with this process, please respond to this email with the following:

NAME OF SCHOOL is planning on participating in MTA's Secondary Individual Events.

-OR-

NAME OF SCHOOL is interested in participating in MTA's Secondary Individual Event, but I need more information. Please call me at PHONE NUMBER during the hours of AVAILABILITY.

Feel free to forward this information to any other secondary theatre teachers who you feel might not receive MTA emails. Reach out if you have any questions about Individual Events this year!

Sincerely,

Lauren Ray & The 2024-2025 2IEs Team

[Lauren Ray](#)

[David Kelly](#)

[Roxie Hood](#)