



DIRECTORS NOTES FOR METG DRAMA FESTIVAL

DIRECTORS' ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

In January, a mandatory meeting will be held, the time and place to be announced at your performance site.

A participating director or designated adult will be required to attend the organizational meeting prior to each level of festival. Failure to do so will mean forfeiture of the right to participate in the festival.

INFORMATION TO SEND TO THE METG PRESIDENT

- Proof of royalty payment either by receipt from publisher or copy of check with royalty bill BEFORE EACH LEVEL OF FESTIVAL.
- Permission to perform a cutting, if applicable.
- Use-of-music request form detailing what music or dance will be included in a performance. The Guild president must approve all music and dance prior to the festival performance.
- Written request for waivers with students' names and reason. ***A waiver is a request for a student to miss seeing another school's performance. Waivers are considered for conflicting school-related or religious activities only.***

SITE MEETING

Schools will be told the site at which they are to perform and meet with their hosts and other performing schools to accomplish the following:

- Exchange phone numbers and mailing information.
- Submit information on the dimensions and number of set pieces in each production.
- Draw for performance position and time.
- Receive a running schedule for the day/days of festival including time for arrival and the directors' meeting.

- Receive information on the Host School's sound and lighting systems and any specials available.
- Receive information on the Host School's stage dimensions and curtains available.
- Establish technical rehearsal times for each school.
- Receive info on completing medical and liability forms to be completed by parents/guardians of all participating students ONLINE.
- Receive information on refreshments available and cost of meals.
- INFORM the host of any Special Needs requirements for actors or techies.



TECHNICAL REHEARSAL

TIME REQUIREMENTS

- For preliminary and semi-final festivals, each participating school will be allowed **rehearsal time** on the Host School's stage the week prior to the festival.
 - Preliminary Round:
 - 90 minutes for NEW schools or NEW directors to festival
 - 75 minutes to returning schools
 - Semi-final Round: 60 minutes
 - Final Round: 50 minutes

BRING TO TECH REHEARSAL

- **Your set.** Bringing your set will enable you to solve problems of offloading, and your host will be able to decide where your set can be stored on festival day. If you cannot bring the set, a paper pattern the size of the floor plan of your set pieces will facilitate spiking the set and focusing lights.
- Your cast and those crew members with specific jobs for the tech rehearsal, such as stage manager and light and sound operators. Students without specific jobs tend to get restless and can detract from a smooth running rehearsal.

- A folder or envelope the following forms.
 1. Company Breakdown Sheet differentiating work done by students from that of adults.
 2. Teacher Sign off sheet that all health and liability forms for each cast and crew member have been completed online.
 3. A copy of your script.
 4. Timer Information Sheet detailing cues from your show.
 5. A director's concept statement (optional).
 6. Any other forms or money that the host school may require.

REMINDERS

- Try to deal with any questions or special requests for equipment before the tech rehearsal day.
- Be on time. Arriving either too early or too late can cause problems for the host and for other schools who may be teching that day.
- Plan your rehearsal time ahead. What will you do first and who will do what? The better use you make of your time, the easier the festival day will go.
- Have at least one adult present at all times during the tech rehearsal to provide supervision and general assistance.

YOUR HOST WILL PROVIDE

- Lights, sound, and stage area set up exactly as they will be on the day of festival.
- An area for the storage of your set.
- Technical assistants ready to help and tape to spike the stage.
- Two students who will act as official hosts for the tech rehearsal as well as the festival day. These students will fill a variety of roles, including answering questions, running errands, and being goodwill ambassadors.
- A clear indication of when the tech rehearsal begins, a notice at the sixty-minute mark, and a ten minute warning before the end.
- A brief tour of the building, including the location of your school's home base for the festival day, make-up area, cafeteria, directors' room, set storage area, etc. This tour is not part of your tech time.

A TYPICAL TECH REHEARSAL

The following are some things that you might want to consider doing at your technical rehearsal.

- Check light and sound cues.
- Give your technicians adequate time to learn the equipment.
- Check actors' voices. Can they be heard from various areas of the stage in various areas of the auditorium? Have actors listen to each other.
- Check make-up under lighting conditions. One or two actors is enough to tell if make-up is realistic and appropriate.
- Spike set, curtains, teasers, and anything that is being flown. Use tape provided to spike the floor where set pieces to facilitate set on festival day.
- Note any adjustments that must be made to maneuver scenery and set pieces through hallways and doors prior to festival day.
- Run only selected scenes from your show, especially sections that include complex tech cues, difficult entrances and exits, etc.
- Have at least one adult present at all times during the tech rehearsal to provide supervision and general assistance.



FESTIVAL DAY

ARRIVAL

- Plan your arrival so you will be able to unload your sets, get settled in your room and be on time for the directors' meeting.
- Provide adult supervision to be sure all your set pieces, costumes, make-up, and props are unloaded safely and stored in the area designated by the host school.
- Students from the host school will greet you and give you name tags for you and your cast and crew. Name tags must be worn throughout the day to allow your group entry backstage and into the auditorium without having to purchase tickets.
- You will attend the directors' meeting at the time specified on the day's schedule and arrange to meet your students in the auditorium following the meeting..

DIRECTORS' MEETING

- Directors will be introduced to your adjudicators, supervisors, timers, nurse, checker, and other official personnel for the day.
- The role of the adjudicator is to evaluate the performances.
- The role of the supervisor is to see that the festival is run properly. If you have questions or problems that your host can't solve, you should ask the supervisors.
- Each director will be asked if his/her school has any program changes or pre-approved waivers to announce.
- In the order of performance, each director will be asked to provide the following information:
 1. Name of school and title of show.
 2. Description of opening moment of the play, e.g., curtain, sound cue, light cue, spoken word, etc..
 3. Description of closing moment of the play, e.g. curtain, blackout or fade, sound cue, final spoken words, etc.
 4. Approximate running time of the production.
 5. Description and number of internal blackouts or curtains (to prevent timers from turning off stopwatches too early.)
 6. Entrances or exit through the auditorium. Since no one is permitted to enter or leave during a performance, the host staff needs to know if entrances and exits through the auditorium are part of your performance.
 7. For check-in purposes, directors must state whether they choose to be with their students during the 50-minute prep period immediately prior to their school's performance or be in the auditorium to watch the play prior to their own performance.
 8. Directors may make a verbal statement or submit a written statement if there is something of particular interest they want the adjudicators to be aware of concerning their respective productions

FESTIVAL PERFORMANCES

- Festival students and their directors are required to watch all plays, with the exception of the play immediately prior to their own performance. The absence of a student or director from a required performance may result in the disqualification of the school.
- Directors must take attendance and check-in before each play. Taking attendance rather than just counting heads is strongly suggested. It is each director's responsibility to keep track of his/her students at all times during the day.
- After taking attendance, directors must check in with the "checker" before each play begins, including their own productions. The host school checker will be centrally located in the auditorium during the breaks between shows. Also directors and students must be seated in the auditorium before the next play begins. Checking in as quickly as possible will help to keep the day on schedule.
- Directors are required to watch their own play from a seat in the auditorium and are also subject to the check-in rule.
- All Students and directors are expected to accord each play proper attention and to display appropriate audience behavior.
- Directors are encouraged to engage their students in constructive discussion throughout the day about aspects of each production they find particularly noteworthy.

GETTING READY TO PERFORM

- Each school will be allowed a 50-minute preparation period, regardless of the running time of the previous play.
- Directors must watch their own plays from a seat in the auditorium and may not take any part in the actual running of their productions. The running of all shows must be done entirely by students.
- Directors may not touch the scenery during their five-minute set-up and strike times, but they are permitted to be on stage in an advisory capacity. Please refer to the festival rulebook for specifics regarding the 5 minute set-up.
- All plays must adhere to a strict 40-minute running time. Any play exceeding the time limit will be disqualified; however, cast and crew members will still be eligible for all star company awards.

- Three officials appointed by the host school who are not adjudicators, high school students or participating directors will time each play and the set up. The fourth official timekeeper, the Stage Manager will also time the set up and strike of each play.
- A director is permitted to sit next to a timekeeper during the performance of his/her play and to receive the benefit of any disparity in a judgment should the timekeepers disagree.
- The official running time and set up time will be posted in a prominent public location after each performance.

AFTER THE PERFORMANCES

- The time between the end of scheduled performances and the awards ceremony is extremely busy: adjudicators are determining the winning schools, selecting all-star company members, and completing the writing of their critiques; supervisors are copying critiques for all the schools, preparing certificates, organizing materials for directors to take home and setting up the awards ceremony, Directors must be understanding of the amount of work that needs to be done and be prepared to allow a minimum of two hours for it to be accomplished.
- Use the time after the final performance to collect your school's belongings, load your set onto your truck, and clean up your classroom and dressing area. Remember to be a "good guest." Return the rooms you used to the way they were when you entered.
- Student attendance at the awards ceremony is not mandatory.
- Directors should pick up their packets (critiques and materials turned in before the festival) at the conclusion of the awards ceremony. The supervisor will inform directors where the packets are located.
- Adjudicators and supervisors will be available for a brief period at the end of the awards ceremony to answer any questions individual directors may have about their production and/or written critiques. However, this is not the time to enter into prolonged discussion or debate about choices the adjudicators made. Directors have several venues for expressing their views on the festival and judging process. First, an online adjudicator review form is on the METG website; please take the time to fill it out and return it to The Guild. Second, The Guild holds an open forum at its April meeting for directors to express their opinions about adjudicators and the process used to adjudicate productions. The Guild takes your comments, written or oral, very seriously in the selection of adjudicators for future festivals.
- Directors of the winning schools are required to attend an organizational meeting for the next round the day following the festival. After prelims, the meeting is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. at a site to be announced; after the semi-finals, the meeting is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. at a site to be announced.