

Rockwall-Heath High School

Heath Hawk Theatre Company



2020-2021 Handbook

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Facebook: Heath Hawk Theatre Company
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Dear Student and Parent of RHHS Theatre 2021-2022,

Welcome to Heath Hawk Theatre Company! Thank you for joining. We value your membership and welcome your participation.

In the following pages you will find information that will help you begin the school year with success. It is our hope that your experiences in our department will be both positive and enlightening. We have developed a challenging curriculum designed to prepare beginning students with appreciation for and understanding of theatre, and at the same time prepare advanced students with the skills necessary to continue career or educational goals in theatre, be it college, conservatory, acting school, or an apprenticeship program.

Please read this entire handbook as it contains important information for the RHHS theatre student. The student and parent/guardian should read and understand all of the information in this handbook. The RHHS Theatre staff wants every student to succeed. We hope this information will help them do just that.

This handbook has four purposes: (1) to inform the student and their parents/guardians about HEATH HAWK THEATRE COMPANY; (2) to help keep students on track; and (3) to guide our visiting guest artist/teachers. Lastly (4), to provide an understanding of the expectations, rules, and regulations that will create a positive team environment for learning and discover which helps to create high school years that are simultaneously hard work and fun. Students and parents/guardians should turn to it anytime they have a question regarding the theatre program. None of these rules are arbitrary or capricious.

The policies in this handbook are agreements- agreements between you, your fellow students, you and your family, you and your work. We hope the lessons you learn with us will last a lifetime.

In the back of this handbook you will find several documents that YOU AND YOUR PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S) must sign and return to the theatre office within the first week of school in order to participate fully in the theatre department and activities within.

Our expectations are high for you and for our department. Welcome to the HEATH HAWKS THEATRE FAMILY! We look forward to the wonderful year!

Kate Kimmis and Colby Savell, RHHS Theatre Directors

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Heath Hawk Theatre Company

DEPARTMENT GOALS & OBJECTIVES

-A MISSION STATEMENT & OVERVIEW-

Overview

The education of both students and audience is a paramount at RHHS Theatre. Performing socially relevant works that encompass many genres, the RHHS Theatre Company strives to achieve artistic merit through connection with our school and community.

RHHS Theatre students will grow and flourish in a rigorous, supportive environment that requires dedication, commitment and a strong sense of professionalism and responsibility. RHHS theatre students will showcase their training in a series of public performances including the fall show, musical, UIL One-Act Play and other performance opportunities.

Theatre as taught in high school is intended to fulfill four basic purposes:

1. **THEATRE AS SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY**, giving the student a break from regular academic activities, fulfilling the same needs of a sports activity and providing artistic rigor.
2. **THEATRE AS LIFE ENRICHMENT** to produce aesthetically responsive citizens with life-long interest in the arts
3. **THEATRE AS THERAPY** to enhance students' personal growth and development and self-discovery, developing self-confidence, teaching group work, etc.
4. **THEATRE AS TRAINING** as preparation for continued and future studies and participation in the field.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to build a safe and inclusive home for young creatives to stand in solidarity with one another to create a more harmonious future through inspiring works of theatre. By sharing our unique stories, we shape better humans willing to grow in self-reflection and empathy.

Our Department Core Values

1. People Matter
2. Work Together
3. Be the Person You Want to Work With
4. Strive for Excellence

RULES, REGULATIONS, AND EXPECTATIONS

**** (Please see our classroom syllabus for classroom rules) ****

Academics and Eligibility

We do not sacrifice academics for the arts. Remember our goal is to help you achieve your career goals- and academics are an important part of this. Academic grades must be kept in good order during the period of participation in extra-curricular activities. **Students must pass all classes to participate in any production.** No grade lower than a 70 is acceptable. Grades will be checked often and study halls will be held if a student is in danger of failing a class. Excessive absences during the school year will not be tolerated. Students are expected to be in all classes and to be prepared for each class. Students enrolled in advanced theatre courses (Production Class/Center Stage) must maintain a passing average in theatre to remain in the class.

State law requires that you “pass to play.” Keep directors posted on academic difficulties. Do not wait until the last minute to take care of academic challenges. Stay on top of grades. Attend tutoring sessions offered by individual teachers as often as possible. Do not use theatre as the excuse for failing a course. We are willing to help with academic courses and tutoring. Students are ALWAYS allowed to attend tutoring sessions and to make-up tests. Please be sure to communicate tutorials and make-ups with your director prior to missing a rehearsal.

Production Contracts

Know what you are taking on BEFORE you take it on. A production contract that cites their obligations to the production will be signed by all students and parents as part of the audition process. No student will be cast or considered for cast or crew without this parental agreement. **Violation of the contract can lead to dismissal from the production, the class, and/or the department.** A detailed rehearsal schedule and complete scene breakdown will be distributed to cast, crew, and parents allowing for enough advanced time to adjust personal schedules and determine conflicts. Students involved in UIL OAP may rehearse at special times- like over Spring Break. Make sure these days are available prior to signing contract.

Terminating Production Contract

Students are expected to honor contracts as signed. Contracts between student and the Heath Hawks Theatre Company are taken very seriously. It is the responsibility of the student to honor and fulfill all commitments as agreed to within the contract. Should a student void any contractual agreement, all future relationships within the department are to be voided. Students who do not fulfill contracts will not be cast in future productions and are expected to select a new course of study. If student voids contract in the middle of a semester and cannot drop the class, student will be given individual course studies until the end of the semester. If the possibility exists for students to be removed from the class, removal will take place immediately. Once a student ends the relationship, the decision is final and terminal. We hope all parents will work with students in teaching the value of honoring commitments and the importance of fulfilling contracts. Teaching children to honor their word is perhaps the best skill set we can provide future generations.

Removal from Show/Class/Department Policy

The success of a show is dependent on each member of the production team fulfilling his or her responsibilities. As such, any member of the cast or crew not pulling their weight must be replaced. The RHHS Theatre Department strictly adheres to a three-strike policy. After three strikes are received for non-compliant behavior, a team member (cast or crew) will be removed from the production. ****The director can remove a student from a show or Theatre class/department at any time****

Strikes can be received in the following ways:

- More than 15 minutes late to rehearsal on one occasion without prior notice to SM or director (by 10 am, or at least 2 hours prior)
- Up to 10 minutes late on three separate occasions without 2 hours prior notice to SM or director
- Not off-book by assigned date
- Coming unprepared (without script, shoes, costume pieces, etc.) to rehearsal
- Disrespect toward cast, SM, ASM, or Directors
- Other incidents at the discretion of the director: inappropriate use of cellphones, inappropriate posts on social media/group chats regarding the show or cast mates, issues with dressing rooms, not cleaning up after yourself, playing with props, not being in the appropriate place at the appropriate time

Immediate Dismissal from the Production/Class/Department:

- Breaking rules in the RISD Student Code of Conduct or the RHHS Theatre Handbook that result in serious office infractions
- Failure to show to a dress rehearsal, workday, or other call without notice to the SM, ASM, or director
- Multiple classroom infractions that break a Department/Campus Behavior Plan
- Overt Defiance- disrupting class, creating a hostile environment for students and/or staff, vandalism of school or personal property
 - Note: Over defiance is considered severe behavior and will result in: immediate referral, contact of parents, and permanent removal from the theatre program for the duration of the student's high school career. OVER DEFIANCE IS NEVER TOLERATED

Transportation

School transportation is provided for all contests, festivals, and competitions. Parents will be asked to complete the RISD Medical Form which will suffice for travel permission throughout the school year.

To parents of students that do not drive: Please be on time to pick up your child from school. Students should be picked up in a timely manner. They will not be permitted to “hang out” after school hours. This is for the safety of all students. **ALL STUDENTS SHOULD BE GONE 30 minutes after the end of rehearsal.** Parents should park in a parking space when picking up their student. Waiting in the fire lane is against the law and causes major traffic back up.

Financial Obligations/Fees

Theatre fees may include the cost of scripts and upkeep of the class supplies and costumes used. Students are responsible for replacing, at their own expense, any items that become lost, stolen, or damaged. This includes folders, scripts, costumes, and classroom items. Students must be current with all fees in order to participate in certain activities (i.e. field trips, UIL, etc.). Students in EVERY theatre class are required to see ONE theatrical production per year and complete a show report. This equals one test grade the 6th Six Weeks. Failure to complete the show report will result in a summative grade of zero.

Expenses and Equipment

We offer several optional activities that require a fee from the students for participation. Please take note of the following activities and plan accordingly for payment to the theatre department. Checks are made to RHHS with theatre in the memo line. Students are financially responsible for items assigned, rented, checked out, or utilized during class/production. Students are responsible for any damages or loss.

Production Fees

Production fees are charged for some Heath Hawk Theatre Company shows. These fees cover production t-shirts, production costs, costume rentals, and/or dry-cleaning. All production fees are due within one week of posting cast list. Students with financial issues may work out a payment plan with directors. All fees must be paid in full prior to opening night or the role will be recast.

Thespian Society dues (per year): \$25 (includes Thespian Club shirt)

Texas State Thespian Festival: \$200+

Production fees: \$25+ (due upon casting. Includes show shirt, script, costume cleaning)

Thespian Society Induction fee: \$30+ one-time fee (see EdTA website)

Theatre Letter Sweaters and Cords: \$115 and up. Paid upon earning points

Fundraisers

Fundraisers are held during the year to assist students and departmental needs

Student Enrollment

Theatre production students and/or Center Stage students MUST audition for each show throughout the season. If the student is not cast in the production, he/she will serve on the production crew. Technical Theatre students are required to serve on the production crew for the fall show and winter musical.

Outside Theatre Activities

As always, we are thrilled and encourage students to be well rounded and participate in other activities including theatrical productions. However, Heath Hawk Theatre Company calendar is set early on and dates are given at the beginning of each school year. Please keep in mind that grades are given for your exhibition of skills during performance times. You are expected to be here for outside rehearsals and performances. In fairness to everyone, please note these dates. We appreciate your checking and double-checking any and all conflicts. If conflicts arise please inform your director as soon as possible.

Communication

It is very important that you communicate everything with your theatre teachers. Whether it be illness, family emergency, vacation, class trip, bad day at school, et cetera, it helps us to create a better environment for everyone involved. If you are going to miss a class or rehearsal, it is IMPERATIVE that you call or email as soon as possible and let us know where you are and when you'll be returning. This helps us rearrange rehearsals and class to help the group succeed.

RHHS Theatre uses Remind to communicate with students. Please make sure you have signed up for Remind. By connecting yourself with these accounts, you will receive text notifications anytime the directors release news regarding the class/show/department. The Remind system is set at the beginning of each new school year. Please check the class syllabus and/or call board for Remind.

Parent/Teacher: Parents/Guardians are encouraged to contact the RHHS Theatre Faculty if you have questions regarding the program or your child's work and progress. The best way to make contact is via email. Contact us at kate.kimmis@rockwallisd.org or colby.savell@rockwallisd.org Please keep emails short and concise. Emails are not an effective replacement for a conference/discussion nor do they benefit the educational needs of the student. We are happy to meet with you and will gladly set up appointments for a phone conference or personal meeting. We do ask all parents refrain from sending emails or notes to get your child out of rehearsals early. Taking students out of rehearsal early often brings the entire rehearsal to a standstill. We work as an ensemble and all members of the cast and crew are needed to meet our goals and deadlines. All scheduling conflicts can be addressed through approved departmental protocol. If there is an emergency, please let us know. We simply ask all parents to respect, observe, and value the rehearsal process. Additionally, we want to empower our students to serve as their own advocates when working out rehearsal conflicts.

Student/Teacher: Students may communicate with the teacher by setting up an appointment and/or via email. If an emergency arises and student cannot attend rehearsals, student must contact a director or stage manager by 10:00 am the day the rehearsal is to be missed or 24 hours prior depending on the emergency. Other students may not speak on behalf of the student. Please accept the responsibility of your commitment.

Schedules

Students with multiple scheduling conflicts (which include other campus activities) are to provide all schedules to directors. Directors will work out conflicts with the directors/coaches/teachers to set up a personalized student calendar that accommodates both the student and organizations involved.

Attendance: Throughout the production process, you are allowed:

- 2 excused rehearsals (listed on conflict sheet)
- 0 unexcused rehearsals
- 0 "No Shows"
 - You cannot "forget" to show to a scheduled rehearsal
 - 3 tardies or early dismissals equal a no show
 - Academic Interventions are NOT an excused absence.

Violating this attendance policy will result in removal from a show

Protocol for Conflicts

Prior to auditioning and/or signing up for a production, a rehearsal schedule will be provided. Include all conflicts in your audition/cast/crew paperwork. If the director chooses to work with a student with numerous conflicts, a personalized student schedule may be arranged. However, upon signing the production contract, additional conflicts with the exception of an emergency are rarely allowed. Should conflicts arise, students may present the director/staff with a written request to be excused from an entire or partial rehearsal as quickly as possible. A written response allowing or disallowing the request will follow. It is never appropriate to send messages concerning attendance through friends or outsiders. Please take care of all attendance responsibilities personally.

Attendance Requirements

Each student will have at least one required outside of class vent/duty for the class they are in OR one required play attendance and report. Calendar updates will always be posted to our webpage. **Center Stage students are required to participate in every Theatre Dept. activity/show.** Theatre II-IV students are required to perform in ONE showcase per year, usually in the spring.

The state curriculum requires student's attendance at play performances once each year. Attending play performances enhances the student's personal development and establishes a "common ground" for discussion. Not only do we want the student to see his/her fellow students work, we discuss the plays and performances in detail in a class "post-mortem" and in writing. For Center Stage we place a great deal of importance on department productions and expect ALL students to participate. To get credit for each performance the student must "check in" with the teacher in charge before AND after the performance and be an active participant in the post-mortem discussion. Advanced students are required to see two performances **outside** the department each semester. To receive credit for attendance to a performance, a copy of the printed program of that event and a performance analysis must be presented to the theatre teacher within three school days after the event to receive attendance credit. Since these are class assignments, we can make arrangements for discounts on tickets, IOU's, for the student to usher at the event, or, if necessary, find funds to pay for a ticket.

Recommendation Letters

Please follow the directions listed below before asking for recommendation letters:

- *Complete and submit the request form at least one week in advance for all recommendation letters
- *Provide all information pertinent for recommendation letter
- *Provide pre-addressed envelope

Do not ask for a recommendation letter if you have:

- *Quite a play or theatre course
- *Not served on crews for a production
- *Have less than an 85 in theatre
- *Not attended work calls

Opportunities and One-Act Play Clinics

During OAP season, several clinics will be scheduled for all students participating. Clinic dates will be included in the theatre department calendar. Members of the OAP cast and crew MUST attend all clinics and contest dates. Respect and appreciation will be given to all clinicians and judges.

**Please see our UIL OAP Handbook (given to those students participating for each contest)

**For more information about the UIL OAP Contest, please visit the website:

<http://www.uil texas.org/theatre>

To the Parent/Guardian Regarding Community Involvement

We value parents'/guardians' involvement and hope you will be an integral part of your students' progress and The Heath Hawks Theatre family.

Any successful theatre needs everyone working together and doing his or her part. No group can operate the Theatre Department program by itself- be it teacher/artists, students, or parents/guardians. It needs all of us helping however we can.

A theatre department parent/guardian volunteer form is attached to this handbook. Please fill out the questionnaire and send it back to school with your student.

Care of Facilities

We are very lucky to have the spaces we have. To keep our facilities clean, in order, and lasting, we ask that everyone hold themselves personally responsible for the care of our tech room, Black Box Theatre, PAC, dressing areas, shop, and costume and prop storage. As we travel this same respect will be given to other's spaces.

NO GUM, SODAS, FOOD will be allowed in the PAC at any time

Center Stage Expectations

- All Center Stage students are required to participate in all productions
- All Center Stage students are expected to be active members of the Thespian Troupe. Thespian demerits will be issued for tardies to rehearsal, behaviors deemed inappropriate in rehearsals, on field trips, et cetera to any Center Stage student, at any time, at the director's discretion
- All Center Stage Students are required to attend a middle school rehearsal to assist each term to learn directing skills.

****To remain in the RHHS Center Stage Class you must uphold the rules, regulations, and expectations outlined in the RHHS Theatre Department Handbook AND Center Stage Handbook****

Seniors and Juniors

Please make plans in advance to take your SAT/ACT exams for college. Plan ahead and look closely at our theatre calendar. It will take a great deal of planning to make everything work, but it is possible.

College Visits- Again, we request that you look at the calendar when planning visits. If at all possible, do most of them over your summer. A very good time is when we're not in a production. Each upper classmen is granted ONE excused rehearsal for a college visit only. It is imperative you let your director know as soon as possible. If you miss a rehearsal for a visit, make it a rehearsal early in the process, not the week before or of a performance. Do not schedule visits within contest dates. You will be replaced in the cast/crew and asked to drop the class if this happens. It is also recommended (from other parents) that you schedule your senior pictures during the summer. No one is excused from tech/dress/performance week.

Seniors are strongly encouraged to audition for Texas Thespians College Auditions and the North Texas Auditions. For more information or if you need a college audition coach, please see Mrs. Kimmis or Mr. Savell.

RHHS Theatre Letter Sweaters

To earn an Award Sweater in Theatre, a student must:

1. Meet all TEA academic requirements
2. Be a member of good standing of the Theatre Program* (see below)
3. Been enrolled in and/or completed an “upper” level theatre class, e.g. Theatre 2, 3, 4; Technical Theatre 2,3,4; Theatre Production 2,3,4
4. Accumulate 50 Thespian Points as per the Heath Hawk Theatre Co. revision of ITS Official Points System.
5. Have recommendation of the Theatre Director(s)

In addition to the above criteria, the student must also complete one of the following:

6. Advance to the “Region” level in UIL One-Act Play
7. Participate in UIL One-Act Play for 2 or more years
8. Participate in 4 or more productions; participation should be a minimum of 2 separate categories (i.e. acting, production)

Member in good standing is a critical prerequisite to earn an Award Sweater in Theatre. The criteria for this component will be defined by the theatre director and approved by the campus principal. It will be published in the campus theatre handbook/information as distributed by the campus theatre director.

Students wearing letter sweaters represent more than their own individual achievement. Any student committing a serious offense as described in the Rockwall ISD Student Code of Conduct, or the organization by-laws, which may bring disrepute on the organization, school, or district, will forfeit the award sweater if the offense occurs at any time during the remainder of the student’s high school career.

The letter sweater is usually ordered in the late Fall/Spring of the year in which the student becomes eligible for the letter sweater award.

You can find the Letter Sweater order form on our Theatre Website

Heath Hawk Theatre Dept Handbook Acknowledgement

Return with signatures by Sept 11th, 2020

I have read the RHHS Theatre Dept Handbook online and understand its contents

Student Name (Printed):

Class: _____ Grade: _____ Class Period: _____

Student Signature:

Parent Name:

Parent Signature:

Date: _____

____ Yes ____ No: Mrs. Kimmis and/or Mr. Savell may message my student about class assignments and other RHHS Theatre Department updates using **Remind** messaging



Heath Hawk Theatre Company

Parent Involvement Form

I am interested in joining the Heath Hawks Theatre Parent Volunteer Group!

Parent Name: _____

Email: _____

Student Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

I/We can assist The Heath Hawks Theatre Company in the following ways (please check all that apply):

- _____ Chaperone student activities (field trips, performances)
- _____ Social/Hospitality
- _____ T-shirt Distribution
- _____ Help setup and strike (tear down) for performances
- _____ Video performance with camcorder (for educational purposes only)
- _____ Provide assistance with UIL One-Act Play Competition (car pools, food pickup and Delivery, concessions, etc.)
- _____ Sell tickets at performances
- _____ Sell tickets during lunch/before or after school
- _____ Handout programs at performances
- _____ Assist in costume making
- _____ Set painting/building
- _____ Theatre Errands
- _____ Providing Intermission Concession/Desserts
- _____ Classroom Project Assistant (for larger classes/projects)
- _____ Providing snacks/water during rehearsals
- _____ Back stage parent- supports our team back stage during performances
- _____ Parent Volunteer Leader- organizes ticket sales, potlucks, et cetera
- _____ Other (Please list your wonderful talents/resources!)