



PRMS Theatre Handbook

Introduction

Dear PRMS Students and Parents,

Welcome to the Pearson Ranch Middle School Theatre Program! I hope you had a relaxing and fun summer. I look forward to welcoming many of you back to the program, as well as embracing those of you who are new to Pearson Ranch. Theatre is a vehicle for personal expression and self-discovery. The practice of theatre teaches creativity, collaboration, communication and empathy. Through our interactions with others, we are able to find our place in this world. At PRMS, we believe in collaboration and change. In our second year of operation, there is a lot of opportunity for growth and I look forward to collaborating with students, parents and the PRMS community to build our program into something that is uniquely ours.

Please take a moment to read through this handbook and use it to refer to throughout the year. It contains information regarding expectations and policies that will guide the program throughout the year. The study of theatre requires creativity, collaboration and compassion. These principles will guide us and help us to grow as both individuals and as a group.

Due to the necessity and emphasis on community, we encourage parents to get involved in support of the program. The Volunteer and Fundraising section of this handbook outline ways in which parents can become more involved with our community. If you are interested in volunteering, please indicate that on the bottom of the signature page.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns throughout the year. I look forward to meeting and working with you as we build a sustainable theatre program at PRMS!

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Theatre Director

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Prmstheatre.weebly.com

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Expectations:

During the first weeks of school, students will work with the Theatre Director to develop a Treatment Agreement for the department outlining our commitments to how we will treat each other. The below guidelines are expected of all theatre students during class and in after school rehearsals and performances:

1. Be Prompt: Students should be on time to class and ready to work in the assigned space when the bell rings or at the designated start times.
2. Be Prepared: Students must dress appropriately for class and rehearsals. (See the Attire section for detailed information.)
3. Be Present: Students should use their class and rehearsal time to focus on theatre-related projects and performances and limit distractions. Cell phones must be put away at the start of class or rehearsal unless otherwise indicated by the teacher.
4. Be Kind: Students must practice appropriate theatre etiquette at all times and be kind to fellow classmates, teachers and guests.

Materials & Attire:

All theatre students must bring the following to class and rehearsal every day:

- Notebook or Composition Book to use as a process journal. This item will be kept in the classroom.
- Pencil and highlighter to mark scripts etc.
- Folder or binder with brads to keep scripts and other handouts.

Theatre is a very active art form. Students should come prepared in clothing they are able to move in and with close-toed shoes (no flip flops). In addition, painting and other craft activities may be performed with notice (via Remind). Students should wear old shirts or smocks during these times.

The following is a wish list of items we would like for our classroom. Donations are appreciated!

- Tissues
- Paper Towels
- Markers
- Card Stock (in a variety of colors)
- Books and plays to add to our classroom library

Cell Phones & Social Media:

It is important that Theatre remain a safe environment to encourage risk-taking in performance. Students may not use cellphones in class, rehearsals or during performances without express permission of the director. Students are not to take unauthorized photography or recording of classmates, rehearsals or performances for any reason.

In addition, we want to support our theatre students and community both in person and online. We would like your assistance in modeling and teaching appropriate use of social media to our students. Several of our performance opportunities happen within festival-type settings. We encourage students, parents and directors to support the PRMS program as well as the greater theatre community in a positive way. However, please refrain from using negative critiques or comments online.

Students should feel supported, appreciated and encouraged by their peers in the theatre department. If you have a concern regarding online chatter or the inappropriate use of social media please notify your theatre director. We want our students to feel safe both online and in theatre space.

Grading:

Minor Grades - 50%

- Professionalism: Theatre is a collaborative art form. Therefore students must practice working on a team. Students must demonstrate appropriate professionalism during class time. This means coming to class on time, having all required materials, dressing appropriately and collaborating with others. Grades will be given daily for a maximum of 20 points per day or 100 points per week.
- Process journal assignments: Students will be assigned a reflective journal daily. These assignments are focused on encouraging students to reflect and document their learning. Students will receive up to 20 points daily for completion or 100 points per week.
- Practice assignments: These are smaller assignments in support of a project or performance.

Major Grades - 50%

- **Performances & Projects:** At least two major performances and projects will be assigned each marking period. These will be presented in class, unless otherwise indicated. A required end of the year sharing will take place for all students to showcase their work. Please see the calendar for more information. Community performances may arise from time to time throughout the year. Students will not be required to participate in any additional performances outside of the April End of the Year showcase. Students who will be unable to attend must give at least 4 weeks prior notice and will be given an alternative assignment. Allowances will be made on a case by case basis for illness and family emergencies. Students who fail to give prior notice to the director will not be allowed to make up the grade.
- All students are expected to attend one theatrical performance per semester. These performances may be at PRMS or in the community. Students must complete a brief reflection and bring in a program or ticket stub for a grade. Opportunities will be given throughout the year to view extracurricular performances inside and outside of the district. Further guidelines can be found on Google Classroom. Students who are unable to complete this assignment will be given an alternative assignment upon request.

Late work will be accepted following the Pearson Ranch Middle School Policy. Student assignments are expected to be turned in on time. Assignments turned in up to seven days after the due date will receive an automatic deduction of 15 points. After the initial seven days has expired, students may turn the work in for a maximum of a 50%.

Extracurricular Activities & Performances:

Academic Eligibility:

State law does not allow a student to participate in U.I.L., district or region competitions, or any other extra-curricular activities unless all grades on the six weeks report card are 70 or above. Students remain ineligible for a period of three weeks, at which time they may regain eligibility if all grades are 70 or above. Students who fail are still eligible to perform co-curricular events such as concerts and pep rallies where no admission is charged.

Activities:

The following activities require students to be Academically eligible per UIL rules.

One Act Play: This is a district-wide festival happening in the fall. Performances will take place at PRMS and the McNeil PAC.

Musical: This will take place in February on our Campus.

Improv Night: Students who will be entering as a performance team are required to be academically eligible.

Mock UIL: This will be another district-wide festival that follows the rules and format of the High School UIL theatrical competition. This event will take place at the end of April at Westwood High School.

Please see the Theatre Calendar on the website for a more complete list of dates.

Contracts:

Students who are cast in roles or as performance technicians in after school activities will be offered a show "contract". This document will outline all student expectations for rehearsals and performances as stated below. It is our hope that students will be successful and fulfill their roles according to expectations. In the event, that students do not fulfill their expectations, they may be asked to leave the production. Parents will be made aware of any issues and students will be given multiple opportunities to correct behavior prior to dismissal.

Rehearsals:

After school productions are extra-curricular and not required for class participation. It is both a privilege and a responsibility to be a part of any theatre production. Students are expected to adhere to the following during rehearsals and performances.

- Student will attend all rehearsals, to which they are called, on time and stay for the full period. Rehearsal schedules will be published in advance. Not all students will be called to all rehearsals. Students will be allowed to list conflicts at the beginning of the rehearsal period with the exception of tech week and performances. In the event that a student must miss a rehearsal due to illness or emergency, students or parents must contact the director before NOON on the day of rehearsal. Excessive absences from rehearsal (more than two) without notification may result in dismissal from the production.
- Student will learn lines, blocking, and/or complete crew assignment(s) by the designated date on the schedule. No excuses or exceptions.
- For a successful production, everyone must pay attention to the director. Student will listen to the directors, stage manager, or other personnel. Student will also practice theatre etiquette and agree to be courteous and quiet when others are on stage AND to help enforce quiet backstage and in the dressing rooms.

Cell phone use is not allowed during rehearsals or performances. No behavior will be tolerated that detracts from the rehearsal or performance process. Distracting behavior during rehearsals can be cause for dismissal from the production.

- The primary purpose of school is education. Student agrees to put in any extra time needed to maintain good grades. Student also agrees to use rehearsal time when they are not on stage as study time. If a student is failing ANY class, this can be cause for dismissal from the production.
- Student realizes that the best productions are those where people work together (Ensemble). Student will support the other members of the cast and crew in any way they can and to do the very best with the role(s) I have been assigned. There are no small parts, only small actors.
- Student agrees not to alter hair length/style/color without gaining written consent of the director before alteration.
- Student agrees to attend weekend build days, and evening or weekend rehearsals as necessary. (Check the rehearsal schedule for these dates and times.)
- Student will contribute to the Strike at the end of the production regardless of role in the production (actor or technician).

Audience Etiquette:

PRMS Theatre takes part in a district festival and UIL every year. In addition, parents and students may attend events at other schools and in the community to enrich their theatre program experience. It is important to remember that you are a representative of the PRMS theatre department at all outside events and should practice responsible audience etiquette by adhering to the following:

- Arrive on time. Remember the saying, “early is on time and on time is late.” If you must arrive late to a performance, please wait until a scene change or the end of a song to take your seat.
- Appropriate audience responses include: applause, vigorous applause, laughter, tears, and standing ovations (at the end of the performance). Other responses should be kept to yourself.
- Dress appropriately. Theatre is a special, communal experience. Casual dress is acceptable, but sloppy attire is not.
- Refrain from unauthorized photography and videography. Performances are licensed on a per show basis. Licensing agreements contain specific information about photography and videography during shows. Violation of these policies could result in fines and other consequences. Reminders will be posted at all PRMS events as well as stated before the show.

- Refrain from negative commentary before, during and after the show. Performing in front of people takes a lot of courage, hard work and determination. We want to insure that all students involved with shows at PRMS or other schools have a positive experience. Refrain from speaking negatively about the show, students or teachers in any performance setting.

Fundraising

At PRMS Theatre, we have the gift of state-of-the art performance spaces and classroom facilities. I am excited about the learning that will take place in these rooms this year. Among our many goals for the upcoming school year, is to produce a musical. This is a thrilling and exciting undertaking. However, this will add significantly to our production costs for this year.

As your theatre director, I am invested in producing the highest quality work for the Pearson Ranch community using the resources available. I am committed to providing the students with learning and performance experiences they can be proud of.

The district does not provide funding to support extracurricular performances. Our season will consist of a One Act Play in the Fall, a Musical and Junior UIL competition in the spring. To support the costs of production (royalties, sets, costumes, etc.) I have set a fundraising budget of \$5,000 for the year. We will need your support to help us reach this fundraising goal.

Fundraisers planned for this year include the following:

Market Days: September 29th - This is a yard sale type event. Vendors will pay for booths to sell crafts, goods, food, services. We will have food trucks on site as well as games for the community. We will need parent volunteers to help sign up and organize vendors as well as work the event the day of.

Musical Ad Sales: November 12 - February 1 - All students participating in the musical as actors or technicians will be required to sell \$100 in program ad sales to offset the cost of the production. Students who complete this will receive two complimentary tickets to the musical performance of their choice.

Improv Night: March 8th - We will host an improv competition night for students at PRMS and throughout the district. Get a team together and join in the fun!

Volunteers

As you can tell from this handbook, we have a lot going on at PRMS Theatre! We need your help in making this year a success. Parent volunteers will be needed throughout the year to help with the following:

- Fundraiser planning and organization
- Fundraiser - day of volunteers
- Build sets
- Construct props
- Procure and/or sew costumes
- Publicity - spread the word about our shows

Any person wishing to volunteer in RRISD is required to complete a Volunteer Application each school year, to improve student safety. Please complete [the online application](#) as early as possible. If you are interested in volunteering with us, [please register here](#). There are also links on the PRMS Theatre website under Volunteers.



PRMS Theatre Handbook Acknowledgement Form

Please return this page to your theatre director.

I have received, reviewed, understand, and agree with the policies and guidelines in the Pearson Ranch Middle School Theatre Handbook. I further agree to abide by the procedures set forth.

Student Name: _____
(print)

Student Signature: _____

Grade: _____

Student ID: _____

I have received and reviewed the 2018-2019 Theatre Handbook, and I agree to assist the director in helping my child meet expectations.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____
(print)

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____