



Theatre Handbook

2021-2022

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Letter From The Directors

Dear Parents and Student,

Thank you for joining the Wolverine Theatre Family. We are so very thrilled to have you join our department and hope that your participation during your time with us is pleasant, fun, and positive. Our classes are structured in a way that allows for the student to choose their own path. Regardless of if your preference is Acting, Technical Theatre, or if you are a Hybrid and love both, there are opportunities for everyone.

This Student Handbook contains important information for WHS Theatre students. The student and parent/guardians should read and understand all of the information in this handbook. We at Wakeland Theatre want everyone to do the best they can and this packet is your best understanding of how our department runs and the expectations that we have for our department. This handbook should be the first place you turn to in the future when you have any questions about our department or theatre program.

Please know that this handbook is not intended to be a strict rulebook of things NOT to do, It simply is a place that helps guide you and your student to understand our practices, protocols and expectations. We absolutely want your student to be successful, but we want them to enjoy their experience while they are here, and knowing how we operate is the best way to jump right into our family and participate.

We do believe that HARD WORK pays off. Whatever your student puts into our program, they will see returns on. Rehearsal and practice are at the very heart of what we try to instill in our students. Helping to create a supportive environment for exploration and discovery is key to learning new skills and fine tuning your craft. We believe that the focus should be on *process* and that the *product* will always follow hard work in the pursuit of excellence.

We hope you will find this handbook helpful, but if you have any questions or concerns, know that you are always welcome to contact us for any additional information or clarification, and once again, we are so excited to have you in our program.

Jonette Dalfonzo
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Wolverine Theatre Family

Our theatre department is known for being a big, tightly knit family. We look out for one another and we strive to be supportive and encouraging to **everyone** involved in our program. Being a member of our department requires a great deal of hard work and commitment, but our students gain experiences and memories that last a lifetime. As a member of Wakeland High School Theater, the sponsors, principals, teachers, and community hold you to a high standard of behavior.

Mission Statement

Wakeland High School Theatre is dedicated to fostering its art by mentoring and educating students while integrating practical training with academic studies, and by cultivating an audience within the school, district and community. The WHS Theatre Department strives to use all the resources available to strengthen our students, to build on the existing program, and to continue to improve the quality of theatre education in Frisco ISD.

Wakeland High School Theatre Standards:

Keep in mind you are a representative of WHS Theatre and all it stands for:

- We are organized and academically responsible.
- We strive to maintain physical and emotional health.
- We are focused and hard working.
- We are able to “leave it at the door.”
- We are dedicated to excellence in arts.
- We treat each other with kindness and compassion
- There is no difference between freshman or senior, Theatre 1 or Theatre 4, chorus or lead. Everybody shows respect to others.
- It takes everyone to produce great art. Actors and technicians work harmoniously and support one another.
- We respect and encourage each other’s extracurricular organizations throughout the school such as football, Legacy Line, band, and other ventures.
- We hold ourselves to a high standard and strive to represent the WHS graduate profile.
- We represent the theatre program well, no matter where we are or what we are doing.

Course Offerings

Theatre 1* (Intro to Theatre):

This fine arts class is designed to give students a peek into the world of drama. It is a survey course that gives a broad overview of all the aspects of production. Teamwork, improvisation, and basic acting skills are highlighted; including movement, voice mechanics, and script analysis, as well as a brief study in theatrical history. Students will be expected to perform monologues, scenes and improvisations in a studio setting. The course also covers an introduction to the technical side of theatre: Sound, Costumes, Make-up, Publicity, Props, and Sets. Practical hands-on opportunities will be offered to demonstrate skills learned once classroom terminology and safety information is mastered. Special attention is paid to the student's comfort level onstage and building their self confidence.

Theatre 2* (Beginning Acting):

This acting concentrated class continues to build on the knowledge learned in Theatre 1, and teaches the student acting by exposing them to different approaches to bringing a script to life. The student will spend a year in an acting studio atmosphere, experimenting with different genres of theatre. Emphasis is placed on characterization and working with other characters onstage. The actor will spend time working on acting basics, including improvisation and monologue. All enrolled in Beginning Acting are required to see every show to support their fellow actors.

Theatre 3 & 4* (Advanced Acting):

This class explores acting approaches at a deeper level and allows the students to deepen their knowledge on all aspects of production: advanced movement, voice, focus exercises, audition prep, script analysis, duet/group work, the fundamentals of directing, as well as multiple methodologies of acting will be explored. All enrolled in Advanced Acting are required to see every show to support their fellow actors.

Tech Theatre 1* (Beginning Tech):

The students will be exposed to many areas of Technical Theatre in this class. This class does not require an extra-curricular time commitment. A broad overview of theatre safety practices, physical theatre spaces, stagecraft basics, scenic construction, stage lighting, sound engineering, properties management and construction, costuming, hair and makeup, marketing and publicity. All enrolled in Tech 1 are required to see or participate in every show to support their fellow actors.

Tech Theatre 2:

The students will be exposed to many areas of Technical Theatre in this class. There is an emphasis placed on developing previously learned skills and schemas, broadening the understanding of each element of technical theatre further developing in a specific discipline and building upon prior knowledge in the capacity of a designer. Design practices, practical application of skills, and eventual leadership roles will be explored. Students should be prepared for working on WHS Theatre Productions and other organizational events. This class does not require an extra-curricular time commitment. All enrolled in Tech 2 are required to see or participate in every show to support their fellow actors. The student also creates original designs according to the guidelines outlined in the rules for the UIL Theatrical Design Contest.

Tech Theatre 3 & 4* (Advanced Tech):

The students will be exposed to many areas of Technical Theatre in this class. There is an emphasis placed on developing previously learned skills and schemas, broadening the understanding of each element of technical theatre further developing in a specific discipline and building upon prior knowledge in the capacity of a designer. Design practices, practical application of skills, and eventual leadership roles will be explored. Students should be prepared for working on WHS Theatre Productions and other organizational events. This class MAY require an extra-curricular time commitment. All enrolled in Advanced Tech are required to see or participate in every show to support their fellow actors. The student also creates original designs according to the guidelines outlined in the rules for the UIL Theatrical Design Contest.

Theatre Production*:

This production concentrated class teaches the students all the different aspects of a full production and how they unify to create a moving, memorable experience. Students will experience all aspects of production, yet will have the freedom to “specialize.” Through collaboration, performance students will refine their own personal style for character development. Technical students will be given the opportunity to design and lead crews, including scenic, lighting, props, publicity, costume, makeup and sound. At the completion of this class, students will be well prepared to participate as a member of a theatre company. **All students should be prepared to spend a significant amount of time as needed outside of class in preparation for all upcoming productions.** Everyone in this class is required to be a part of every WHS mainstage production.

** Requires audition/application/interview and/or teacher approval.*

Year At A Glance

Fall Show

The type of show, chosen for the fall play, alternates each year between a comedy or a drama. Auditions for fall show usually take place at the start of school. Depending on the show, auditions will either be open to any theatre student enrolled at Wakeland, or it will be closed to Theatre Production students only. Typically the show is performed near the end of September.

Winter Musical

Our annual winter musical is produced in conjunction with the choir, orchestra, and dance departments. Auditions for musical are open to any student enrolled at Wakeland. After fall show closes, there is a one to two week turn around to learn audition material before the audition process begins. Typically the show takes place in the middle of January.

Class Plays and Other Opportunities

Depending on our season, we make as many performance opportunities for our actors and technicians as possible. Our Theatre 3-4 class typically does a children's show each year. In the spring we try to do senior directed shows as well.

UIL One Act Play

One-Act auditions are open to anyone enrolled in a Theatre Class at Wakeland. Since One-Act is a UIL competition, the directors are highly selective when it comes to auditions. One Act auditions occur in mid-December and rehearsal starts the Monday after the musical ends. The cast, crew, and alternates are expected to attend all rehearsals and competitions unless otherwise stated by the directors.

Drama Club

Our drama club is open to any student at Wakeland. It is a student-led organization. Typically the meetings are held during power lunch once a month. Each month they try to have an activity outside of school.

Our drama club is divided into families to give each student an opportunity to be a part of a smaller group. The families typically have communication threads led by one of our officers. This is the way the officers will communicate with their family. It also affords students with questions an easy place to get answers.

Our slate of officers runs the drama club. The directors are advisors for this group. The directors will facilitate the students' success and are guided by what the students want the club to accomplish.

Our officers will also run workshops before musical auditions (for both actors and technicians). These workshops will help all involved prepare for auditions and be able to do the best they possibly can!

Actor and Technician Health/Safety

In addition to maintaining high grades and being a well-rounded theatre student of Wakeland High School, student health and well-being is a top priority in our theatre department. This includes both physical and emotional health.

Physical Health

- **Be safe!** Always follow safety precautions in our Theatre and shop areas- Nothing is more important than your safety.
- **Drink water!** It's important that students are hydrated during rehearsals. However, DO NOT share any drinks, because it can spread diseases from 1 actor to 20.
- **Avoid germs!** Wash your hands and don't eat or drink after others.
- **Sick? Stay home!** Please do not come to school or rehearsal if you have had a fever or are throwing up/had diarrhea in the past 24 hours. Don't risk the health of your fellow castmates. If you have to miss a rehearsal, be professional and communicate with Dalfonzo and Yowell through email and provide them with a doctor's note or parent excuse when you return. Be truthful about your illness - and how we can support you- but, don't milk being "sick".
- **Stay healthy!** Take time to take care of yourself by getting the right amount of sleep. Make sure that you aren't eating too much or too little. Your body is your tool and in theatre, your body is very important to the performance of the art. Be cautious about anything you put in your body.

Mental Health

- **Stay ahead of classwork and homework.** Stay ahead on your work, create routines that work for you. Don't let school stress you out to the point of mental instability. Communicate in advance with teachers about your busy schedule if you think you won't be able to do everything on time. They will be more willing to work with you if you talk to them ahead of time. Also, don't be afraid to reach out to other actors and technicians if you need help with your school work. Everyone brings different strengths to the table so someone may be an expert in the course you struggle with.
- **Know your limits.** You can do it all, but you can't do it all at the same time. Be able to recognize what is going to be too much in your schedule and do not overcommit.
- **Limit social media time.** While social media is a great tool to interact with friends, if social media is hurting you more than helping you, consider limiting your use to further your positive mental health.
- **Maintain family time.** Keep good relationships with your family members and do your part to contribute at home. Mom and Dad are the ones that allow you to participate, and their support is essential!
- **Medication.** Be sure that any medication taken is prescribed to you, and **don't bring it to school**, unless it is distributed or handled through our school nurse.
- **Seek help.** Your mental health is important- if you are ever at risk or are engaging in unhealthy behavior, discuss with your parents the benefits of seeing a therapist or psychiatrist if you think it could help you.

Audition Information/Tips

- Be as memorized as possible! Familiarize yourself with difficult vocabulary and character names.
- Do as much research as you can on your own before the actual audition. Read the play and research the time period, place, and important events that occurred during that time.
- Prior to your audition, fill out a COMPLETE conflict calendar so the directors can cast the show and make rehearsal schedules accordingly. Make note of all the important dates included in the packet for your personal schedule.
- Choose what roles you select on your audition form wisely. Make sure you're okay with being cast in any role you select. Declining a role after casting could result in you not being considered for casting again.
- Dress well. Don't dress "in costume" for the role you want to be cast as. Dress in a way that helps you "find" the character.
- Arrive fifteen minutes early.
- Be respectful of how others rehearse and prepare
- Be supportive of everyone
- Let your nerves go. The directors want you to succeed!
- Your script is not a mask! The directors understand you will not be completely memorized for cold reads. However, be present- don't hide behind your script. Allow the paper to become an extension of your arm.
- Be brave. Take risks. Being memorable is more important than being safe, and the directors will respect strong choices, regardless of whether they agree with them. Set yourself apart.
- Try to find differentiation in each character you read for. Vocal and physical changes are wonderful in an audition room.
- Be open to roles you haven't considered. The directors know where to place you to make the best show possible.
- During musical auditions, there will be vocal, dance, and acting requirements. Even if one of those areas is not your strong suit, go in with a positive mindset and have fun because that is what musical is all about!
- Don't be afraid to ask your peers or upperclassmen for help. We are a family, so if you ever need someone to run through a scene with, review steps to a dance with, or just someone to listen to your audition pieces before you go into the audition room, there is always someone you can reach out to.

Rehearsal Etiquette

Rehearsals for a production are highly valuable and essential to the successful execution of a stage play. The rehearsal process is not only where the direction of the show is found, but also where actors and technicians develop and grow the most, expanding their knowledge and experience. Some important considerations for rehearsals are:

- If you have issues with another person in the cast or are disappointed with how the casting of the show turned out, then leave it at the rehearsal door. Don't let your conflicts ruin the experience for you or others around you.
- Always come overly prepared. Bring your script and a pencil to every rehearsal.
- Know your lines within the first two weeks of rehearsal.
- Be respectful and kind to everyone
- When the directors ask you a question, give you a note, or give instructions, always respond with: "Yes, ma'am/sir.," "Thank you.," or "Can you please explain?" Go with the flow and don't argue. The time to share ideas or have a brief discussion is after rehearsal.
- If you're an actor in the show, do character work - this may be on your own time. Rehearsal is for putting the show together with others. It really does help, I promise! This can include writing in a journal, making a collage, making a playlist. Find whatever works for you!
- Be on time! (Early is on time, on time is late!)
- Stay quiet backstage so the time we have together is focused and efficient.
- There is no division between actors and technicians. Have mutual respect and get along.
- There is always something to do. Ask your fellow actors or technicians if they need help and be proactive or study lines.
- While positive feedback is encouraged, try not to direct your peers.
- If not previously written on a conflict calendar, send a written notice of conflict at LEAST 48 hours in advance to the stage manager and director (email is preferable). However, not all conflicts will be approved, it must be a legitimate reason.
- If you are an understudy, you are expected to know your lines and blocking as well as the lines and blocking for your understudy role.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you need to get in contact with a director use the following information:

Dalfonzo: dalfonzj@friscoisd.org

Yowell: yowella@friscoisd.org

Grades and Eligibility

Wolverine Theatre students pride themselves on maintaining a high level of academic work. We encourage students to not just meet the minimum, but to do their best work in reaching their academic potential in all classes, not just in Theatre classes.

As is the case with all other extracurricular activities in the state of Texas, “no pass, no play” is in effect. Therefore, in order to remain a part in a play/musical, every member is required to meet basic UIL eligibility rules.

According to state law, to be eligible to participate, all students must have passing grades (70 or higher) in all classes at the end of each nine-week grading period. Students failing one or more subjects are not eligible to participate in extracurricular performances for three weeks after failing. After the Interim Progress Report, if an ineligible student is passing *all classes*, the student may regain eligibility at that time. If the ineligible student is failing any class at the time of the Interim Progress Report, the student remains ineligible for the remainder of the nine-week period.

In addition to the above state law, Frisco ISD has enhanced rules which prohibit any students from attending any extracurricular activity if he/she has been absent, either excused or unexcused, from the majority of his or her core classes during the day. These local rules affect students any time the theatre must miss any classes during the school day (for ThesFest, OAP clinics, touring productions, spring trip, etc.). *Good grades and impeccable attendance records* assure each student’s eligibility to participate.

We encourage all students to be proactive in maintaining academic health or in asking for help. Let Dalfonzo or Yowell know at the first hint of a concern. They are not looking to punish you, but to help get you back on track and do your best. Asking for a “bail out” in the last days before a grading period is unacceptable.

Please know all classes should have a morning and afternoon set of tutorials for each course offered. It is strongly encouraged that you attend a tutorial that does not conflict with rehearsal, however if necessary, we will make arrangements for you to attend tutorials and make-up sessions as necessary in order to bring you back up to an acceptable and eligible academic level.

Estimated Expenses

We would like to keep the cost of participating in our program as minimal as possible. At the same time, in order to provide superior performance opportunities and quality productions, there are a few supplies that are required to complete this course. In addition to standard supplies (paper, pen, pencil, etc.), students are required to pay the following:

Curricular

- There is no class fee for any of the curricular classes.
- Supplies or props may be required for acting classes. Usually these can be found at home.
- There is a supply list for technical theatre classes. This list will be sent home after school starts. These are supplies for building and design.

Extra Curricular Activities

- Production Fees for **each** show you are cast in
 - \$50 for fall show or UIL
 - \$100 for musical
- Texas State Thespian Convention:
 - Costs (registration and transportation) \$250 (This event is optional attendees must be approved by directors)
- Proper rehearsal clothes and shoes (as needed for shows)
- Make-up and Hair supplies (We do ask that you purchase your own make-up and hair supplies to prevent cross contamination, infection, or the spread of disease)
- Miscellaneous expenses (Master classes, show day meals, costume pieces, field trip opportunities, drama club events etc.)

Community Theatre and Camps

Outside the School Year

There are also many opportunities for theatre camps during the summer. Camps are highly suggested as we see a major change in all students that attend a camp in the summer. Here are some of the camps in Texas that we recommend:

- Texas Tech Theater Camp:
<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/uil/Academics/2014/Camp/TheatreandTechnicalCamp2014>
- Camp on the Coast (Texas A&M Corpus Christi Theater Camp):
<http://cla.tamucc.edu/theatre/events/camp.html>
- Tal Lostracco's Summer Theatre Camp at Southwestern University:
<http://www.talscamp.com/>
- Texas A&M Commerce Lion Camp:
<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/colleges/humanitiesSocialSciencesArts/departments/massMediaCommunicationTheatre/lionTheatreCamp.aspx>
- The Perfect Performance: <http://www.theperfectperformance.com>
- SFA Summer Theatre Workshop:
<http://www.theatre.sfasu.edu/programs.php?link=summerworkshop>

Booster Club/Volunteers

The Wakeland Theatre Booster Club is a 501(c)(3) parent volunteer organization that supports the theatre department at WakelandHigh School in Frisco, Texas. Through parent and community involvement and support, the booster club provides training for students, costumes, supplies, tech equipment and volunteer hours to the theatre department.

Booster club membership is \$50 per year. There is a parent meeting at the beginning of each school year where you will have the opportunity to join the booster club. If you cannot attend this meeting, please contact one of the directors and they can get the forms for you to join.

Even though our students are mostly grown, they still thrive with the support of awesome parents working behind the scenes!

Fundraising

Our booster club will run one fundraiser each year. Information about this fundraiser will be sent via email to our theatre families. This money enables Wolverine Theatre to purchase extra technical equipment or pay for extra items for productions for the theatre department. We cater the fundraiser to the current needs of the theatre department.

UIL One Act Play

University Interscholastic League One-Act Play is a competition that hundreds of theatre departments across the state of Texas compete in. The OAP is one of Wakeland's most advanced shows made up of the most devoted and passionate actors and technicians in our department. One-Act auditions are held in or around December and the competition may continue through April. The length of the experience may vary depending on the number of advancements. OAP is a 40-minute show with a 7-minute set up and strike time. If you would like to learn more about UIL OAP and the rules for the performances, please visit the UIL website: <http://www.uiltexas.org/>

One-Act Considerations:

- If auditioning for one-act, be prepared for a lot of rehearsals. UIL is a large time commitment and you need to be adaptable to any changes to the rehearsal schedule (Addition or removal of rehearsals, weekend rehearsals, and potentially extended rehearsals)
- Keep your grades up. If you fail a class, you can't perform and have to be removed from the show.
- The performance venue is TBD depending on the level of competition. Consequently, OAP is always flexible and portable by nature.
- There are many levels of advancement at UIL OAP, including zone, district, bi-district, area, region, and state, so performance times and dates vary depending on level of advancement.
- Sometimes the critique from clinicians and judges can seem harsh, so always give others around you compliments on their performance. We all need it sometimes.
- Only audition if you are able to be 100% dedicated to the show and can maintain a flexible schedule.
- At competitions, be respectful of other school's shows. Please remember that everyone is trying their hardest and we should support them for that. Save your critique for when you are on the bus!
- Treat every competition official with respect. This includes contest managers, judges, and local technicians.
- OAP students are held to a high standard and are expected to maintain the graduate profile.

UIL Theatrical Design

Students are able to participate in a theatrical design competition sponsored by UIL. Each year, a prompt will be released. A play or book will be chosen and everyone is required to use this play/book. The 2021-2022 selected show is Agatha Christie's, *Murder on the Orient Express*, as adapted by Ken Ludwig.

Students can submit designs in costumes, make-up, marketing, and set design. This allows students a way to get their creativity flowing and gives them an opportunity to showcase their talents in technical theatre. Students can either work individually or can work as a group. The work also includes inspiration boards and justification papers. There are special rules for costuming, set, and marketing.

You must have a theatre teacher mentor/sponsor you, so if you are interested in the theatrical design competition talk to Yowell. There is a very specific format for how designs have to be submitted.

For information on what the current play is and to see past submissions visit:

<http://www.uiltexas.org/theatre/theatrical-design>



I.T.S Troupe #7160

The International Thespian Society (ITS) is the Educational Theatre Association's student honorary organization. ITS recognizes the achievements of high school and middle school theatre students. Since 1929, EdTA has inducted more than 2 million Thespians into ITS. That number continues to grow, with more than 36,000 students from around the country being inducted each year.

Having a Thespian troupe at Wakeland raises the profile and stature of our theatre program, making both your school and community aware of your activities and success. Having this honor status recognized by an international organization lends additional weight to the honor, making it a valuable addition to any student's resume.

ITS celebrates the work of all theatre student artists and technicians. This includes students who perform as well as students who prefer technical or staff positions. Our suggested point system reflects this sensibility. ITS values a well-rounded theatre education as well, so we recommend that all students be required to earn points over the course of more than one production and in more than one discipline. In fact most inductees earn points in several fields, i.e. performance, set construction, publicity, and make-up.

It is the mission of Thespian Troupe 7160 to welcome all students of theatre and encourage those who share a passion for our craft. We aim to grow professionally, push ourselves artistically, and explore the depths of theatre arts through performance and technical production. Through camaraderie, collaboration, and compassion, the Wakeland thespians will utilize a strong work-ethic and a growth mindset to sustain a successful program built on the legacies of the past and promises of the future.

Our Thespian troupe is led by troupe directors Jonette Dalfonzo and Aaron Yowell. Students can earn an invitation to be inducted into the Thespian Society by earning ten points. One point is awarded for each 10 hours of work performed on WHS extra curricular activities. Students will track their hours as we move through the year.



INTERNATIONALSM
THESPIAN SOCIETY

HONORING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN THEATRE