



**CORVALLIS SCHOOL DISTRICT GUIDELINES ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND
INCLUSION (DEI) FOR THE CSD THEATERS PROGRAM**

Corvallis School District is committed to ensuring equitable access to participation in theater productions, classes, and activities for all students, regardless of age, citizenship, color, disability, socioeconomic status, gender expression, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation. Corvallis School District acknowledges that American theater productions have had a history of preferential treatment toward white actors, creators, and directors. The Corvallis School Board has made a commitment to anti-racist practice in our district and Corvallis School District is committed to disrupting systemic racism that is harmful to our historically underrepresented populations in K-12 education. Based on compelling testimonies of discriminatory experiences from past theater students (particularly students of color), the Corvallis School District is committed to taking the same anti-racist stance in our theater program. The concrete actions contained in this document will work to provide meaningful theater education and opportunities to all students who choose to participate in the District's theater program.

A Theater Diversity Advisory Committee (TDAC) will be created to monitor and advise the District on diversity and equity improvements in the CSD Theater program. Focus areas for improvement will be monitored by members of TDAC and are included in this document. The designated TDAC Equity Advocate will be the point of contact for staff and students.

Section 1: Theater Diversity Advisory Committee

- A. The Corvallis School District shall create a Theatre Diversity Advisory Committee (TDAC), a committee recruited from district staff, student representatives, community members, and alumni coming from underrepresented backgrounds and/or experience in

anti-racist work, to advise the theater department's play selection, casting, and diversity and equity efforts.

- B. Members of TDAC will not be Corvallis School District theater department staff.
- C. Staff and student representatives do not need to be involved in theater to be on TDAC.
- D. TDAC members shall be volunteers. TDAC members who take on additional consulting responsibilities may be eligible for stipends. See Appendix A for detailed position descriptions and stipend information.
- E. Members will apply for positions on TDAC via an online application in the winter prior to the next school year. The application will be made available on the CSD Theaters webpage and weekly school communications in October of each year.
- F. TDAC members shall be selected by the District Equity Coordinator or the District Equity Coordinator's designee(s). Members shall be notified of approval or denial for the committee no later than December 15 of each year by the District Equity Coordinator or designee. Selected members shall serve one calendar year beginning in March.
- G. TDAC shall include a minimum of 4 members and a maximum of 9 members. The committee must include at least 2 student members. Should fewer than 3 total applications or 2 student applications be received, additional recruitment shall be conducted via email communications to families from the school.
- H. The first TDAC meeting shall occur no later than December 30 to determine committee roles (e.g., TDAC Equity Advocate), set the meeting calendar, and begin planning for the upcoming school year.
- I. TDAC shall meet at least three times during the year. TDAC is encouraged to meet beyond the minimum requirements.
- J. TDAC shall have at least one meeting per year dedicated to reviewing plays for the following season. All plays for the following season will be reviewed by TDAC who will collaborate in the decision making about plays prior to licensing.
 - a. TDAC shall review each play to ensure that the following does not exist: propagation of racist, sexist, homophobic, or otherwise discriminatory ideas. (This does not refer to plays where discrimination is acknowledged, such as *Hairspray*, but plays where discrimination is represented without challenge (for example, *The King and I*).

- b. TDAC will review each play to ensure that the play can be cast in accordance to the guidelines outlined in Section 2: Casting Guidelines.
- c. TDAC shall reject a play's approval if it does not meet the standards outlined in (a) and (b).
- d. At this meeting, TDAC will determine whether an adult cultural consultant/dramaturg is needed.
- e. TDAC has the authority to suspend the Section 2D below when considering play selection if it deems that it would be in the best interest of the community. Section 2D shall not be lifted without input from organizations and/or multiple people representing relevant racial or cultural backgrounds (example show: *Fiddler on the Roof*).
- f. TDAC will read thoroughly and completely the proposed script. Movie versions or other interpretations on video or stage must not be used for the evaluation as these represent another director's interpretation of the original script.
- g. TDAC should not advise against a play for any of the following reasons:
 - i. Creative difference/difference in taste.
 - ii. Beliefs in what is "appropriate" or "inappropriate" for students that do not have to do with equity (i.e., sexual content, violence, etc.).
- K. One adult member of TDAC shall be appointed as the TDAC Equity Advocate and will be introduced to students at auditions and first rehearsal meetings. The Equity Advocate will explain casting and production equity guidelines to students at these times. The Equity Advocate shall receive a stipend. For detailed duties see Appendix A.
- L. The TDAC Equity Advocate shall attend all auditions and callbacks.
- M. Adult members of TDAC will collaborate in casting decisions and may request audition and casting notes for review.
- N. Information about individual students discussed at auditions, meetings, and rehearsals shall remain confidential. Pertinent information may be shared with the TDAC, but individual information must still remain confidential outside the committee.
- O. TDAC student members will work with the TDAC Equity Advocate to organize an annual meeting for all students involved or interested in the theater program to review implementation of DEI guidelines, address ongoing concerns, and provide student input.

The Equity Advocate will use this feedback to inform possible changes to the guidelines and operational advice to the theater department.

- P. TDAC will have at least one meeting per year with theater department staff dedicated to reviewing progress on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the theater department and discussing potential improvements.
- Q. Students who believe there has been a violation of these equity guidelines should report the issue to the TDAC Equity Advocate.
 - a. As a first step, the TDAC Equity Advocate shall attempt to mediate the issue.
 - b. If mediation is unsuccessful, the TDAC Equity Advocate shall report the issue to the District Equity Coordinator and help the student report the concern through the Corvallis School District's [Bias Response Procedure](#).
 - c. Students shall not be retaliated against for reporting. Complaints of retaliation shall be referred to the TDAC Equity Advocate and the District Equity Coordinator.
 - d. Members of TDAC who become aware of behavior that may violate District sexual harassment policies shall immediately report to a district official.
 - e. Direct complaints related to educational programs and services may be made to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.
- R. If the theater department is unable to recruit students who reflect the diversity of the school, TDAC will work with the department to find solutions to increase accessibility to minority student participation.
- S. TDAC may advise on all elements of this document, as well as other equity, diversity, and inclusion issues related to the theater. It does not have authority over other aspects of creative decision making.
- T. The District Equity Coordinator shall oversee the enforcement of DEI Guidelines and TDAC. The District Equity Coordinator should attend at least two meetings and is ultimately responsible for the successful execution of committee decisions and guidelines. TDAC shall escalate issues to the District Equity Coordinator if it is unable to resolve conflicts independently.

Section 2: Casting Guidelines

- A. Students shall be considered for casting in all roles regardless of race, culture, socioeconomic status, language, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, and weight except for specific exceptions below.
- B. Roles shall not be precast, with the exception of roles described in Part E below. Auditions shall be open to all students.
- C. The show's director shall strive to have a cast that reflects the diversity of the school, including in leading roles.
- D. Roles that are meant for people of color (in other words, race is central to the character or story, for example, certain roles in *Hairspray*, *Raisin in the Sun*, or *West Side Story*) shall be played by people who are of the designated racial/ethnic group.
- E. Plays for the next production season shall be chosen in anticipation of appropriate casting requirements. Casting may be determined prior to licensing in order to ensure roles are suitably filled. If the appropriate race-specific cast is not available, another show should be chosen.
- F. If the show's director wants to direct a play where certain roles are race-specific but is unsure if they can find appropriate cast members to play those roles, they should seek approval from CSD Theater Production staff, TDAC, and the play's author when possible in order to use actors outside of the designated racial group.
- G. Casting decisions and directing choices shall not perpetuate harmful racist stereotypes.
- H. Family unit roles shall not be cast based on similar physical appearance or physical characteristics (for example, casting one family as people of all the same race).
- I. Casting non-K-12 students shall be limited to non-speaking ensemble roles.
Understanding that school productions are first and foremost an educational opportunity, the theater department should select plays that it can reliably cast with students only. In emergency circumstances, where the production cannot otherwise proceed and no student can be found to take on a part, adults may be cast in consultation with the CSD Theaters Production Team, show's director and TDAC. The show's director must ensure that the following steps have been taken prior to approving a non-student adult actor for a speaking/singing role:

- a. First, the show's director must pursue alternatives, such as having a student "speak" the words of a song, cutting songs/scenes when an option, etc.
 - b. If the first option is unviable, the show's director must conduct further rounds of auditions in an effort to find a student actor.
 - c. Casting an adult actor in a non-ensemble speaking role should be considered an absolute last resort.
- J. Audition forms shall ask students for their racial/ethnic identity, gender identity, and whether students are comfortable playing a role outside their gender identity. Questions about a student's identity shall be voluntary.
- K. A standardized rubric shall be used to evaluate students at auditions. The rubric shall be developed by the CSD Theater Production staff in consultation with TDAC.
- L. All rubrics and other audition and casting notes shall be kept on file for at least five years after auditions.

Section 3: Production Values

- A. Makeup, hair design, and other changes to the body may not be used to imply ethnic background or exaggerate physical ethnic stereotypes, including changes to skin color, body structure, and hair. Blackface, brownface, yellowface, and reface are explicitly prohibited. Culturally appropriate costuming is acceptable if approved by TDAC.
- B. Students shall be allowed to use glasses, hearing aids, crutches, wheelchairs, or any similar aids onstage.
- C. The use of accents from historically marginalized communities is prohibited except from members of those communities.
- D. Plays with culturally-specific content shall employ a qualified adult dramaturg or other cultural consultant who belongs to the culture(s) involved to ensure culturally competent execution of productions in terms of directing, casting, costuming, production values, script interpretation, etc.
- E. The TDAC Equity Advocate and Adult Dramaturg shall be paid at the rate of \$400 per show. A student dramaturg may receive school credit. Stipends shall come from the theater department's production budget. For job duties and stipends information for TDAC members see Appendix A.

- F. Onstage intimate and sexual acts such as kissing and close touching shall not be done without the express informed consent of students involved. Students shall not be turned down for a part, removed from a production, or retaliated against if they decline to participate in such acts. The performer and show's director will collaborate to find a mutually acceptable solution.
- G. Hypersexual plays, costuming choices, and acting/dancing styles shall not be used without the express informed consent of students. Themes of sexuality shall be brought up with a focus on informed consent and communication with students involved.
- H. The Technical Director shall strive to have a technical crew and behind-the-scenes participation that reflects the diversity of the school.
- I. At least one performance (play, set of short plays, revue, poetry slam, or similar event) during the season needs to be directed by an outside director of color or student director(s)/organizer(s) with the goal of encouraging diverse leadership and creative liberties. These shows shall be publicized on the same level as other shows with similar budget and venue size.
- J. All programs shall include a trigger warning for depictions of sexual assault, racially insensitive language, gunshots, strobe effects, and any other actions that could cause reemerging trauma.
- K. Actors, technical crew, and stage managers involved in productions shall spend no more than 3 hours a day at rehearsal/play preparation, excluding tech week. Stage managers and designers receiving independent study credit may spend up to 4 hours a day at rehearsal/play preparation, excluding tech week.
- L. Students shall be excused from rehearsals by 9:30 p.m., including tech week and excluding dress rehearsals.
 - a. Students cannot be compelled to be at the theater for rehearsal or play preparation on weekends or beyond the allotted hours. Students will not be penalized for leaving early.
- M. All students involved in a production must be credited in the playbill.

Section 4: Miscellaneous

- A. Stage managers and designers may receive independent study credit for production work.
- B. Students shall be informed that they can request an activity fee waiver.

- C. Paid staff members in the theater department shall be required to take an annual professional development course on diversity, equity, and inclusion, to be determined by the recommendation of the District Equity Coordinator.
- D. Students may participate in International Thespian Society activities while involved in the CSD Theaters program.
- E. The theater department shall write a mission statement that supports the values of promoting diversity and inclusion in consultation with TDAC. The mission statement will be reviewed every three years. It will be posted on the CSD Theaters website and provided to students.

Section 5: Administration

- A. This document shall be provided to all students who participate in any theater department programs, including classes, productions, master classes, and any other activities. Paper copies will be available upon request. These guidelines will be part of the audition information given and production contracts related to each performance.
- B. Amendments to the content of these guidelines will be reviewed by the District Equity Coordinator in consultation with TDAC.

The Corvallis School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, citizenship, color, disability, gender expression, gender identity, national origin, parental or marital status, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation in its programs and activities, and provides equal access to designated youth groups.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding discrimination:

Jennifer Duvall, Human Resources Director and Title IX coordinator, jennifer.duvall@corvallis.k12.or.us
541-757-5840 | 1555 SW 35th Street, Corvallis, OR 97333

APPENDIX A: POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Position	Requirement	Duties	Stipend
All TDAC Committee Members	Required Position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually review plays for the following season prior to licensing. Review casting to ensure compliance with Section 2: Casting Guidelines. Attend all TDAC meetings. Review progress on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the theater department. Find solutions to increase accessibility to minority student participation. Representatives are invited to all rehearsals, production meetings, and dress rehearsals. 	Committee Members are primarily volunteers. However, adult TDAC members may receive stipends if they take on additional responsibilities such as dramaturgy/cultural consulting or the position of the TDAC Equity Advocate.
TDAC Equity Advocate	Required Position (Must be an adult)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain casting and production equity guidelines to students at auditions and first rehearsal meetings. Presentation of the DEI Guidelines and Student Handbook will be coordinated between the CSD Theaters’ production team, the show’s director, and TDAC. Ensure all students have access to the written DEI guidelines. Attend all auditions and callbacks to monitor for equitable casting practices. Attend most production meetings. Attend all dress rehearsals. Mediate equity-related issues between students and the theater department as an advocate for students. Lead students through the Bias Response Procedure as needed. Serve as a liaison between students, the theater department, TDAC, and the District Equity Coordinator. Oversee annual student feedback meeting to inform possible changes to the guidelines and operational advice to the theater department. 	\$400 per show
TDAC Student	Required Position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out listed duties of TDAC members. 	During the first year of TDAC’s implementation, student members

Members		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organize an annual meeting for all students involved or interested in the theater program to review implementation of DEI guidelines, address ongoing concerns, and provide student input. ● Empower fellow students to share concerns and contribute to an anti-racist theater program. 	shall be volunteers. After the first year, Corvallis High School should look into providing student members with independent study credit.
Adult Dramaturg/ Cultural Consultant	<p>Required based on recommendation of TDAC.</p> <p>Must be from a background of cultural relevance to the production.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure culturally competent execution of productions in terms of directing, casting, costuming, production values, script interpretation, etc. ● Research historical and cultural context for shows. ● When possible, assist the director in editing, modifying, and/or reinterpreting scripts to minimize harm to people of marginalized identities. ● Provide cultural curriculum and education for students to incorporate into the production. ● Create a dramaturgical note for the production program. 	\$400 per show