



NC Presents

THE
DPAC
RISING
STAR AWARDS

PART OF THE NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL THEATRE AWARDS



2023/2024 SEASON

HANDBOOK

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



TABLE OF CONTENTS

About The DPAC Rising Star Awards.....	1
Goals.....	1
Awards Categories.....	1
Awards Categories Defined.....	2
Eligibility.....	2
Cost to Participate.....	3
Added Support for New Participants.....	3
Application Process.....	3
School Registration.....	4
Student Nominations & Show Details.....	5
Post-Production Submissions.....	5
Adjudication Process.....	6
Opening Number Invitation.....	7
Student Stage Management.....	7
Guidelines.....	8
Timeline.....	9
Visual Arts Inclusion with Durham Art Guild.....	9
Scoring.....	9
Judges Assessment Form – Students.....	10
Student Score Sheet Defined	11
Judges Assessment Form – Production.....	12
Production Score Sheet Defined	14

ABOUT THE DPAC RISING STAR AWARDS

Previously known as Triangle Rising Stars, **The DPAC Rising Star Awards** is a program designed to celebrate outstanding achievements in high school musical theater throughout Central, North Carolina. The program focuses attention on the meaningful work being done both on and off stage by dedicated teachers and students.

To participate, one school representative can apply to have their production and students reviewed by our panel of qualified adjudicators. In the spring **The DPAC Rising Star Awards** will host a ceremony on DPAC's stage where top area high school musical students perform together and compete against one another for educational scholarships and other prizes.

This program is a member of **The National High School Musical Theater Awards** (NHSMTA), a national program that unites high school musical theater awards programs from across the country. The Best Actor and Actress of The DPAC Rising Star Awards will have an all-expense paid trip to New York where they will compete against the winners from dozens of regional competitions and similar awards programs from other parts of the country. The program impacts over 140,000 students annually who participate in high school musical theatre competitions sponsored by over forty professional theatres (like DPAC) throughout the US.

[CLICK HERE](#) to watch a PBS special that documents what happens at The National High School Music Awards in New York City.

GOALS

- 1) To encourage, recognize and honor excellence in high school musical theater performances across Central North Carolina.
- 2) To provide quality educational experiences in dance, theater, and music for high school student finalists.
- 3) To grow audiences and advocates for arts education across Central North Carolina.

AWARDS CATEGORIES

The DPAC Rising Star Awards recognizes achievements made by student performers and made by the collective school production.

Student Awards Categories

- Best Actor
- Best Actress
- Best Dancer
- The DPAC Shining Star

Production Awards Categories

- Best Ensemble
- Best Musical
- Best Costume Design
- Best Student Orchestra
- Best Set Design
- Best Choreography
- Best Lighting Design

AWARD CATEGORIES DEFINED

BEST ACTOR & BEST ACTRESS AWARDS

Best Actor and Best Actress are provided with \$2,000 academic scholarships and will be invited to represent The DPAC Rising Star Awards in an all-expense paid trip to the National High School Musical Theater Awards program in mid-June of 2023 in New York City. After a week of coaching, auditions, rehearsals and a final performance on Broadway, a handful of students from the elite program will be awarded scholarships and other prizes.

BEST DANCER AWARD

One of the Top 20 Finalists will be recognized as Best Dancer during the live awards ceremony. This person will be determined during a dance audition during the week of rehearsals leading up to the live awards ceremony. The winner of this category receives a trophy and a \$500 scholarship.

THE DPAC SHINING STAR AWARD

This award is selected not by the panel of adjudicators, but by the Top 20 Finalists themselves. The award will go to the student who exhibits positivity and an enthusiastic spirit in all Rising Star related activities as well as in interactions with other finalists. The winner of this category receives a trophy and a \$500 scholarship.

BEST ENSEMBLE & BEST MUSICAL AWARDS

The theater programs who win either the Best Ensemble and the Best Musical Awards receive \$1,000, a trophy and recognition during the live awards ceremony at DPAC.

BEST COSTUME DESIGN, BEST STUDENT ORCHESTRA, BEST SET DESIGN, BEST CHOREOGRAPHY, BEST LIGHTING DESIGN

Each of these categories receive a trophy and recognition during the live awards ceremony at DPAC.

ELIGIBILITY

The DPAC Rising Star Awards program is open to public and private high schools producing musical theater in Central North Carolina. To be eligible for our 2023/2024 season, programs should meet the following qualifications:

SCHOOL LOCATION

All high schools in Central North Carolina are invited to participate. Currently schools in the following counties are eligible to participate: Alamance, Caswell, Chatham, Davidson, Davie, Durham, Forsyth, Franklin, Granville, Guilford, Harnett, Johnston, Lee, Orange, Person, Randolph, Rockingham, Stokes, Vance, Wake, Warren and Yadkin.

The DPAC Rising Star Awards aims to be as inclusive as possible for participants. If your county is in Central North Carolina and not listed here, please email mrindoks@dpacnc.com to request the addition of your area.

PRODUCTION DATES

High school musical theater productions should take place between October 26th, 2023 and April 12, 2024.

If your production is scheduled for mid to late April, and if you are unable to adjust musical dates this school year in order to participate, please email mrindoks@dpacnc.com. We recognize that your school calendars are set long before we announce program information and dates each fall. While we can make no promises, we will do our best to work with any schools who wish to participate but fall outside of our window this school year.

PRODUCTION & STUDENT ROLE REQUIREMENTS

Schools must choose a musical from a list of qualified productions. Students being nominated for Best Actor and Actress must be cast in qualifying lead roles.

The current NHSMTA qualifying lead roles and musicals can be found at nhsmta.com, or by [CLICKING HERE](#).

GENDER IDENTIFICATION FOR STUDENT NOMINEES

The DPAC Rising Star Awards follows the guidelines provided by NHSMTA. While the “Best Actor” and “Best Actress” titles do imply gender, we will welcome students of all gender identities in the manner that feels most applicable to each participating student. If you have any questions about this subject, please email mrindoks@dpacnc.com and this can be discussed further with a personal conversation.

COST TO PARTICIPATE

Through the **generosity of our sponsors**, The DPAC Rising Star Awards are run at **no cost** to those who register and participate.

ADDED SUPPORT FOR NEW SCHOOL PARTICIPANTS

Do you have any questions? We have a program expert who is willing to come to your school and to meet with you and your students in person to talk about the process, expectations, highlight reels and more. If you would like to inquire about this option, please email mrindoks@dpacnc.com.

APPLICATION PROCESS

There are **three steps** for schools and student participants this year.

Step One: School Registration

Step Two: Student Nominations & Show Details

Step Three: Post-Production Submissions

All three phases of the application process must be completed using Acceptd. To register your school for participation and adjudication, visit: <https://DPACrisingstar.getacceptd.com>.

SCHOOL REGISTRATION

The registration deadline is December 1, 2023. Any submissions received after this registration period will require special approval and will be subject to judges' availability.

If you are unable to confirm your show dates or the musical that your school will produce, you are still welcome to register. You can email these details as they are solidified to mrindoks@dpacnc.com.

If your production takes place in October, please let us know on your application and email mrindoks@dpacnc.com to notify staff of the quickly approaching dates. We will prioritize assigning judges to those shows.

Each participating school needs to select one staff member/responsible adult associated with the program to act as the School Representative. Any materials submitted separately by various students, other teachers, or parents will not be accepted.

During the School Registration phase of the application process, you will be asked to submit the following things:

- School Representative Name
- School Representative Contact Information
- School Name
- Image of School Logo
- Musical Title
- Is this musical on the approved list of shows provided by NHSMTA?
- Are there any roles in the production NOT listed on the NHSMTA Qualifying Roles list that you wish to appeal?
- Production Dates & Times
- Production Budget
- Licensing Company
- High School Production Location/Address
- Special Notes (anything the judges should know about arriving at the school and locating theater)
- Agreement to provide The DPAC Rising Star Awards adjudication team with complimentary tickets to your school's musical.

STUDENT NOMINATIONS & SHOW DETAILS

The second phase of the application process is **due two weeks prior to the Opening Night** of your school's production. These pre-production items are necessary for judges to score your production and to know which students have been nominated.

During the Student Nomination & Show Details phase of the application process, you will be asked to provide the following information:

- Student Nominee Names
- Student Nominee Contact Information
- Student Nominee Parent/Guardian Information
- Student Nominee NHSMTA Role Played*
- Who was responsible for your production's set design and build?
- Who was responsible for your production's costume design?
- Will your production be using a track or live accompaniment?
- Will your production be accompanied by a student orchestra?**
- Who was your production's choreographer?
- Who was your production's lighting designer?
- Special Notes (anything unique or special to share about the creation of your production)

* Please check the NHSMTA Qualifying Roles List (here: <https://www.jimmyawards.com/participation/qualifying-shows-and-roles/>). If the role is not listed as a Qualifying Role in the School's Production, please contact us at mrindoks@dpacnc.com. Please note that all appeals are subject to approval by The DPAC Rising Star Awards' parent organization: the National High School Musical Theatre Awards.

**To qualify for the "Best Student Orchestra" award, the majority of orchestra members must be high school students currently enrolled in the participating school.

POST-PRODUCTION SUBMISSIONS

The Post-Production phase of the application process is **due two weeks after the Closing Night** of your school's production.

For any productions taking place in April, please note that the absolute latest date for Post-Production submissions will be Friday, April 12.

The Post-Production phase of the application process will require providing the below listed items:

- Student Nominee Video Uploads (to be completed by the student and uploaded by the designated school representative)*
 - Video Upload #1. Solo Submission
 - Students should record themselves singing one solo from their musical production and nominated role. There are no requirements for accompaniment, use of tracks, or choice to sing acapella. Make sure that the video quality and sound quality are good and consistent.
 - Video Upload #2. Dance Submission*
 - [Use this video to learn a quick dance routine.](#) Students should record a video of themselves performing this dance number.
- Student Nominee Sheet Music.
 - Student nominees must choose one song from their nominated role. Usually this is their “big number”. This song will be the number performed on DPAC stage if chosen as a Top 20 Student Finalist. This sheet music should be for the same song that the student chose for their video upload.
 - **Sheet music should be a scan of the piano conductor score.** Not from the vocal score or chorus book.
- Production Photos Featuring Student Nominees
 - Upload three photos of each student nominee performing in their nominated role.
- Production Highlight Reel*
 - Video highlight reel should not exceed two minutes in length. Highlight reel should feature group numbers, ensemble performance and choreography execution.
 - Poor quality highlight reels will not affect your score in any way, but they are still important tools used in the spring judges meeting and help determine our official finalists.

*Video submissions are NOT scored or adjudicated. They are important tools used during the spring judges meeting to provide some insight into a student or school being discussed for any of the judges who were not assigned to review your musical in person.

ADJUDICATION PROCESS

Each fall DPAC appoints a group of qualified year-round judges to attend and review registered high school musical theater productions. It is DPAC’s promise to send two or more adjudicators to review every registered show. The score sheets and adjudication guidelines used by our year-round judges are provided at the end of this handbook.

In April, the entire group of year-round judges will come to DPAC for the annual **Spring Judges Meeting** where finalists will be determined in all categories. This group of judges will determine the winners of

each production category and will select 20 students (10 Best Actress nominees and 10 Best Actor nominees) to be our Top 20 Student Finalists.

In late April, DPAC will announce these Top 20 Student Finalists as well as finalists in all other categories.

Top 20 Student Finalists will participate in two weeks of rehearsals, coaching and auditioning leading up to the in-person awards ceremony at DPAC in early May.

The DPAC Rising Star Awards will host an awards ceremony on DPAC's stage on **May 9, 2024**. This ceremony will be adjudicated live by 3 specially selected ceremony judges. These three individuals will have incredible resumes that include Broadway credits, connections to reputable talent agencies, and more. These ceremony judges will determine which two students are crowned as "Best Actor" and "Best Actress" who go on to represent our program nationally at the Jimmy Awards.

OPENING NUMBER INVITATION

Each participating school will be invited to send two (2) student representatives to perform in the Opening Number at The DPAC Rising Star Awards. School representatives will be asked to determine who those two students are by April 16, 2024. DPAC will send an email to each school representative in early April with instructions on how to submit these two selected students.

Opening Number rehearsals are mandatory for these specially selected students. These rehearsals are scheduled for April 20 and April 21, 2024.

Only two representatives from each school will be invited. If your school is submitting more than one musical this year, you will not be eligible to submit additional students. This opportunity is for each participating school, not each participating musical. It is up to each school to determine how these students are selected.

STUDENT STAGE MANAGERS

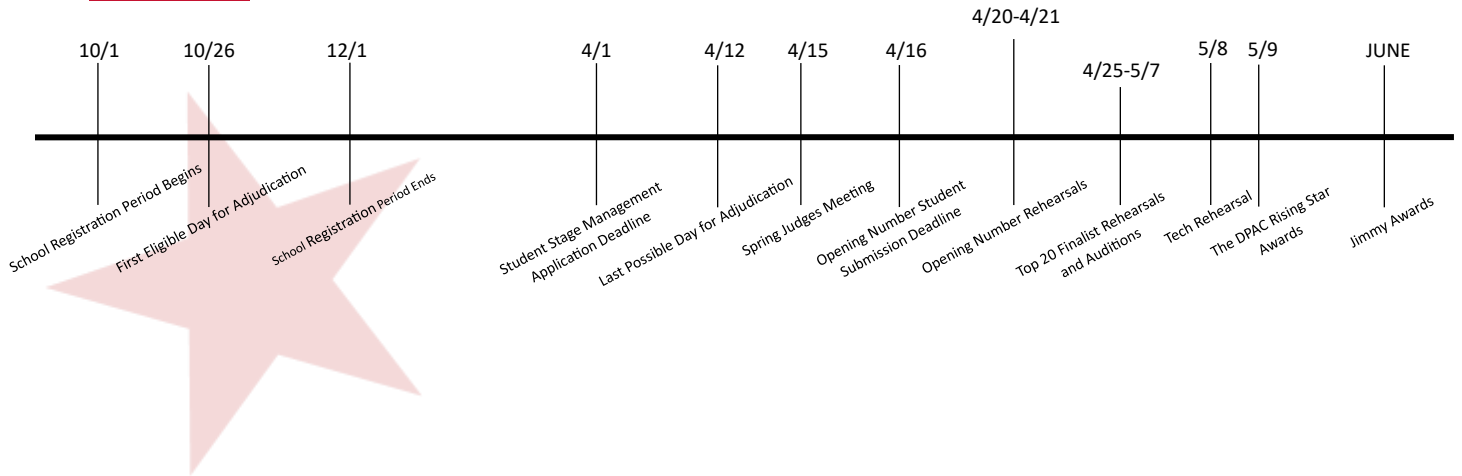
The DPAC Rising Star Awards will be selecting a small number of students to serve as Stage Managers for the live awards ceremony. Those interested in applying for this special opportunity must be available for every rehearsal, tech and the performance.

To apply, student stage managers should send their resume, cover letter and references to mrindoks@dpacnc.com. Deadline for applications is April 1, 2024.

GUIDELINES

- All deadlines are final.
- The Best Actor and Best Actress nominees must be current high school students, grades 9-12.
- Students selected as Top 20 Student Finalists will be required to attend rehearsals, workshops and auditions scheduled April 25 – May 8, 2024.
- Top 20 Student Finalists will participate in a live event celebrating high school musical theater achievements on May 9, 2024. This event will include performances from each student finalist and will be adjudicated live by three Ceremony Judges.
- Each participating school will receive 10 complimentary tickets to The DPAC Rising Star Awards on May 9, 2024. Seating will be General Admission. The complimentary tickets will be mobile and sent to the designated school representative (the person who submits all application materials) to distribute.
- Top 20 Student Finalists will each receive 4 complimentary tickets to the awards ceremony.
- Opening Number students will receive 1 complimentary ticket each, for their personal use after their performance is complete.
- Student Stage Managers will receive 2 complimentary tickets to the awards ceremony.
- In the event that a Best Actor or Best Actress Finalists is not able to participate, a runner-up in the same category will be eligible to participate.
- All decisions are final.
- All prizes and awards are subject to change.
- Students will only be judged on the role performed in their high school musical.
- No double casting will be accepted. If you choose to double cast your production, you must only send us the dates for the performances including the cast that you want to be reviewed.
- Only students nominated for Best Actor and Best Actress will be considered for a Top 20 Student Finalist placement.
- Schools may nominate up to four (4) total students for adjudication per musical. Two (2) for Best Actor and two (2) for Best Actress. Some exceptions might be allowed if a school would prefer to nominate more or less for either category, just so long as the total number of student nominees does not exceed four (4).
- While the “Best Actor” and “Best Actress” titles do imply gender, we will welcome students of all gender identities in the manner that feels most applicable to each participating student. If you have any questions about this subject, please email mrindoks@dpacnc.com and this can be discussed further with a personal conversation.

TIMELINE



VISUAL ARTS INCLUSION WITH DURHAM ART GUILD

NEW THIS YEAR! The DPAC Rising Star Awards will be working with Durham Art Guild to celebrate achievements made by high school visual art students.

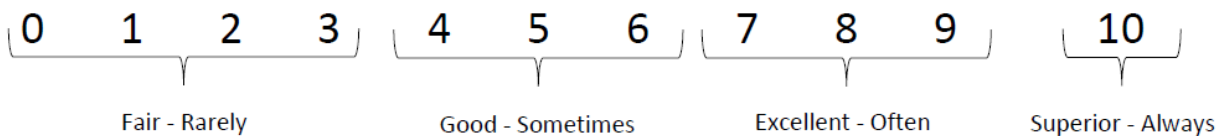
Only students from participating high schools will be eligible. Information will be emailed to each participating high school after the registration deadline concludes in December of 2023.

One student from each participating high school will be selected to have their work featured in a pop-up gallery in DPAC's lobby at The DPAC Rising Star Awards on May 9, 2024.

Each student whose artwork is selected will receive one complimentary ticket to The DPAC Rising Star Awards on May 9, 2024.

SCORING

The DPAC Rising Star Awards' year-round judges will be using a 1-10 scoring model when critiquing performances. Sample score sheets and adjudication guidelines are provided in the pages that follow.



THE
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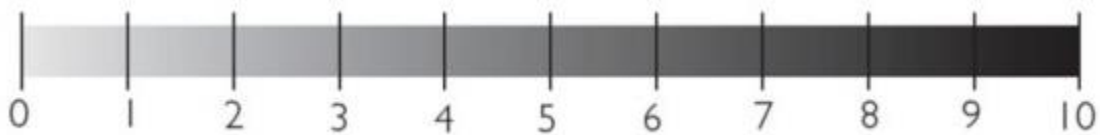
PART OF THE NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL THEATRE AWARDS

JUDGES ASSESSMENT FORM

STUDENT NOMINEES

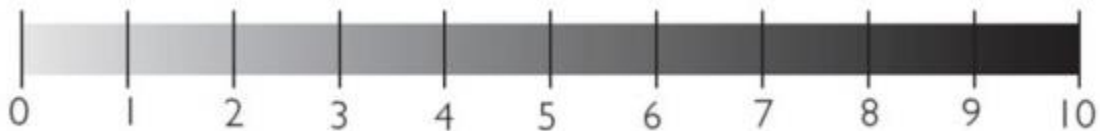
ACTING

Acting Choices / Emotional Specificity / Focus and Concentration



VOCAL

Diction / Pitch / Vocal Choices Appropriate for Character



MOVEMENT

Rhythm and Technique / Physicality



OTHER

"Magic" / Consistency & Overall Presentation



ADJUDICATION GUIDELINES

STUDENT SCORE SHEET DEFINED

ACTING

Acting Choices: Ability to make choices throughout that remain true to the character. Performer's ownership and overall execution of role.

Emotional Specificity: Performer's ability to express varied emotions throughout performance congruent with story arc of show.

Focus and Concentration: Performer's engagement throughout show. Ability to remain focused and dedicated to character throughout.

VOCAL

Diction: Performer's ability to deliver clear, crisp consonants. Performer's delivery of lines in both song and spoken word. Audience's ability to clearly understand the vocals.

Pitch: Performer's ability to sing in pitch, i.e. not flat or sharp.

Vocal Choices Appropriate for Character: Performer's ability to carry character development in song and spoken word.

MOVEMENT

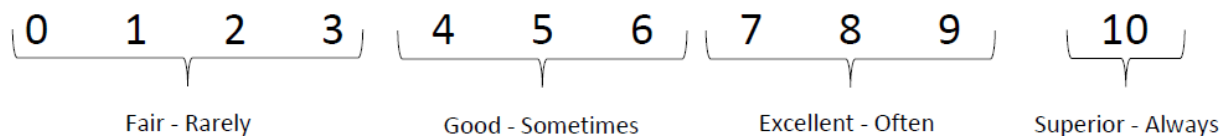
Rhythm and Technique: Performer's ability to move with a beat and accurately respond to musical cues. Performer's ability to cleanly execute choreography.

Physicality: Character choices mirrored in physical body. Performer's ownership of character's physical form. Body awareness.

OTHER

"Magic": That special "it" factor. Performer's level of star quality.

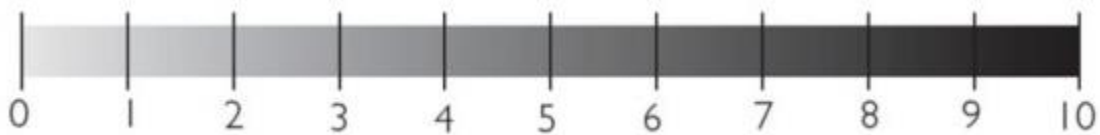
Consistency/Overall Presentation: Performer's ability to embody character in acting, vocals and movement (and dance, if applicable) consistently throughout show.



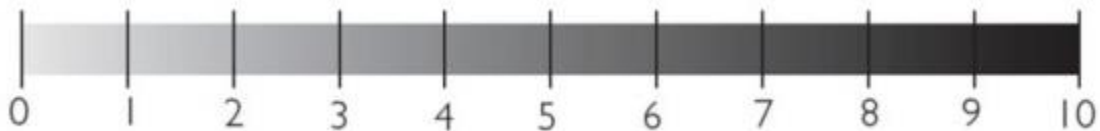
JUDGES ASSESSMENT FORM

PRODUCTION CATEGORIES

SET DESIGN



COSTUME DESIGN



STUDENT ORCHESTRA



CHOREOGRAPHY



LIGHTING DESIGN

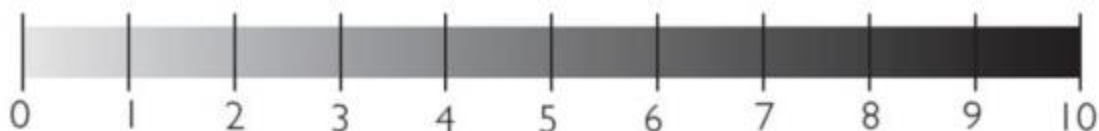


JUDGES ASSESSMENT FORM

PRODUCTION CATEGORIES [CONTINUED]

ENSEMBLE

Group Dynamic / Cohesiveness



OVERALL MUSICAL PRESENTATION

Consistency / "Magic" / Overall Presentation



ADJUDICATION GUIDELINES

PRODUCTION SCORE SHEET DEFINED

SET DESIGN

Overall Set Success: the level of style, structure and use of space.

Creativity: Consider production budget, space and other resources, how this production team used what they had to create the world for the production.

Key Players: Consider whether the set was built by students and school faculty/staff/parents or whether professional third party was hired for the job.

COSTUME DESIGN

Overall Costume Success: the ability for costumes to be thoughtful and relevant to the story.

Creativity: Consider production budget and what was achieved with those resources.

Key Players: Consider whether the costumes were created by students. Consider if costumes were handmade. Consider whether a third party was hired to create costumes, or if the costumes were rented.

STUDENT ORCHESTRA

Overall Student Orchestra Success: Ability for performers to be in pitch with adequate volume and proper diction.

Eligibility: A majority of orchestra members must be high school students enrolled at the nominated school in order to be eligible for this category.

CHOREOGRAPHY

Overall Choreography: Narrative, creative, style, dynamics, level of difficulty and execution. Consider both choreography design and execution.

Creativity and Student Involvement: Consider whether choreography is unique or if it imitates well known professional productions. Consider whether the show was choreographed by an adult professional, or if a student performed this role.

LIGHTING DESIGN

Overall Lighting: The use of color, atmosphere, time and cueing.

Creativity and Use of Resources: Consider school budget and what was accomplished in the space with the equipment on hand. Consider when students are participating in tech roles such as lighting design, and who is running the lighting board during the production.

ADJUDICATION GUIDELINES

PRODUCTION SCORE SHEET DEFINED [CONTINUED]

ENSEMBLE

Group Dynamic: Ability to work as a team or unit. Level of trust among entire cast.

Overall Ensemble: The ability for performers to sing and act as one cohesive unit while also showing individual characters. Active engagement, enhances world of the play and drives story.

The Best Ensemble finalists will have featured an incredibly talented cast of actors and actresses, so much so that the cast overshadows everything else about the production.

OVERALL MUSICAL PRESENTATION

Consistency: Cast's ability to deliver strong and unified performance consistently throughout show.

"Magic": That special "it" factor. The entire casts level of presence and star quality.

Overall Presentation: Overall presentation of technical execution and musical direction. Cohesiveness and vocal capabilities of ensemble. Ease of set changes, limited distractions, timing and execution of cues. Quality of every aspect of the performance. Interpretation, casting, use of space, consistency, artistic vision, clarity of story.

Creativity and Use of Resources: Consider what was accomplished with the budget at hand. Consider the role that students play in every aspect, including tech and other production elements. Consider what was accomplished with the unique resources each school has access to.

The Best Musical finalists will prove their ability to showcase the diverse talents of the performers. The finalists in this category will have a theme evident through music, movements, props and costumes. They will have shown absolute ability to produce quality musical theater.

