



# IOWA HIGH SCHOOL **MUSICAL THEATER AWARDS**

Presented By  **EMC**  
INSURANCE

## **2023-2024 RULES AND GUIDELINES**

### Table of Contents

PROGRAM OVERVIEW.....	2
ELIGIBILITY .....	3
REGISTRATION TO PARTICIPATE AND FEES .....	4
TEACHER/DIRECTOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....	5
PHOTO/VIDEO RELEASE.....	6
RECOGNITION OF PARTICIPATION.....	6
ADJUDICATION PROCESS .....	7
LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND OTHER RESOURCES.....	9
AWARDS – TYPES AND PROCESSES.....	10
ADJUDICATION-BASED AWARD DETERMINATIONS AND NOTIFICATION .....	11
BEHIND-THE-SCENES AWARDS .....	12
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AWARD .....	15
IMPACT AWARD.....	16
AWARDS SHOWCASE .....	17
APPENDIX A: 2023-2024 AWARDS CATEGORIES .....	20

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards, presented by EMC Insurance Companies, is an initiative of Des Moines Performing Arts that celebrates the extraordinary achievements of young musical theater artists. The program aims to create visibility and support for high school musical theater programs and to highlight the importance of arts education.

The program consists of four main components:

### 1. ADJUDICATION

Panels of adjudicators comprised of performing arts educators and professionals review each participating school's musical production. Students and directors receive valuable constructive feedback that can be used to grow and strengthen their future work.

### 2. LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Participating schools receive access to exclusive learning opportunities offered throughout the year that are designed to help both students and directors advance their understanding of the craft. Workshops and master classes addressing performance, technical and creative topics are led by theater professionals from the state of Iowa as well as by Broadway industry experts.

### 3. AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

Based on adjudication results, schools receive awards that honor their achievements in performance, technical and creative categories.

The Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards are designed to be celebratory rather than competitive in nature. Any student or school at an outstanding level is recognized for their achievement. Multiple honorees may be named in each category as achievements merit.

### 4. AWARDS SHOWCASE – Thursday, May 30, 2023

The year culminates in a professionally produced Awards Showcase event held at the Des Moines Civic Center – Iowa's top destination for touring Broadway productions. The Awards Showcase is a full evening featuring excerpts from award-winning productions.

In addition to being a celebration of student achievements, the Awards Showcase allows students to watch and learn from their musical theater peers, as well as to work directly with a guest choreographer and music director from New York City to rehearse several special medley performances for the Awards Showcase.

We anticipate that once again Iowa PBS will partner with Des Moines Performing Arts to livestream the Awards Showcase and to broadcast a highlights special statewide.

## ELIGIBILITY

### **School Location**

Eligible high schools must be located in the state of Iowa.

### **Production Dates**

Musical productions must take place between October 1, 2023 and April 28, 2024.

(If your school is not producing a musical during the 2023-2024 school year or is producing a musical outside of eligible production dates, as listed above, you may register by electing to receive access to IHSMTA learning opportunities only.)

### **Casting**

If participating in the adjudication process, musical productions must be primarily cast with currently enrolled high school students.

### **Qualifying Musicals**

To be adjudicated, a musical production qualifies if it fits one of the following categories:

1. A published musical, operetta, or revue that is currently held by a licensing house or is in the public domain.
2. An original piece which features an original script, music, and/or lyrics and which is covered under a valid copyright.
3. An original theatrical compilation of musical/text material from other sources that is presented with the approval or permission of the original creators and their representatives. This excludes show choir, choral or vocal jazz arrangements.

## REGISTRATION TO PARTICIPATE AND FEES

Registrations for the 2023-2024 Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards are accepted online through **Friday, September 15, 2023**.

### Capacity & Wait List Process

Please be advised: a finite number of schools per production weekend will be accepted for adjudication due to anticipated adjudicator capacities. As such, schools are encouraged to register their musical for adjudication early, as we will honor requests for adjudication on a first-come, first-serve basis by weekend.

If a production registers after predicted capacity has already been met for its performance weekend, the school will be wait listed until program staff determines if there are adequate adjudicators to increase capacity. If additional capacity is possible, the waitlisted school will be notified. Schools that remain on the wait list will be granted access to learning opportunities. (Awards Showcase representation by waitlisted schools will be contingent on the final number of overall schools accepted for adjudication throughout the program year. This will be determined and communicated by early spring.)

### Fees

Registration for all schools requires a \$95 fee. Most learning opportunities will be offered free of charge, but some may have additional costs associated with participation.

The registration fee (or a purchase order showing that the payment process has been initiated) is due by **October 20, 2023**. Please do not submit payment until after you have received an invoice from Des Moines Performing Arts.

Acceptable payment methods:

1. Checks should be made payable to Des Moines Performing Arts and sent to:  
*Des Moines Performing Arts*  
*Attn: Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards*  
*221 Walnut Street*  
*Des Moines, Iowa 50309*
2. The registration fee may be paid by credit card by calling 515-246-2355 during business hours.

**Please note:** IHSMTA reserves the right to withhold a school's feedback, honors, and showcase invitation(s), if applicable, until after the registration fee is received in full.

### Multiple Productions & Casts

If a school wishes to have more than one musical adjudicated, the second production carries an adjudication fee of \$355 to help cover the associated costs of a second adjudicator team. Please register your second production during the registration window, but be advised: acceptance of a second musical will not be approved until after registration closes. Priority will be given to ensuring as many schools as possible are able to experience adjudication prior to a school's second musical being accepted. If registering more than one production, please email [education@dmpa.org](mailto:education@dmpa.org) to communicate which production you would like prioritized, if given the choice.

Likewise, productions that double-cast and wish to have both casts reviewed, will be assessed an additional \$355 for the secondary cast. Please see [page 7](#) for full information regarding double-casting. Similar to above, adjudicating any double-casting will be approved on a case-by-case basis, dependent on adjudicator capacity for the performance dates in question.

**REGISTER YOUR SCHOOL HERE: [SCHOOL REGISTRATION FORM](#)**

## TEACHER/DIRECTOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Expectations for the teacher/director's role within the program are:

1. Maintain open and regular communication with Des Moines Performing Arts regarding program needs and participation.
2. Act as the primary liaison between Des Moines Performing Arts and the school community (faculty, students, parents, etc.). This includes but is not limited to:
  - Distribution of important updates and information related to the program to your program participants and administration.
  - Filling out all applicable forms about your production for adjudication, if applicable.
  - Coordinating learning opportunity registrations and participation.
  - Tracking deadlines and submitting necessary assets.
  - Ensuring students receive support submitting materials for any additional award categories.
3. If participating in adjudication, provide Des Moines Performing Arts with digital production photographs **within 2 weeks** of your final performance for use at the final Awards Showcase and for promotional purposes.

Submit production photos online at [<<< ihstma.awardsplatform.com >>>](http://ihstma.awardsplatform.com)

(As the program has grown, we have seen an upwards trend in school production photos being published or broadcast by media outlets such as the *Des Moines Register* in their promotion of the final Awards Showcase. Help us make sure your school is represented well by submitting as high quality photos as possible that feature your final product well.)

4. Coordinate school's participation in end-of-year programming, based on final parameters communicated in the spring. At this time, we anticipate this will likely include the following responsibilities:
  - Schedule and coordinate rehearsals with students prior to the Awards Showcase, if performing.
  - Provide Des Moines Performing Arts with sheet music from any invited performances from your production in a readable format, when and if requested.
  - If school is invited to perform at the Awards Showcase and accepts the invitation, attend the school's tech rehearsal, on Tuesday, May 28 or Wednesday, May 29 as assigned.  
(The 2024 Awards Showcase is currently scheduled for Thursday, May 30, 2023.)
  - Submit or assist students with submission of digital or other materials as requested.

## PHOTO/VIDEO RELEASE

During the course of the program, there may be times when Des Moines Performing Arts will photograph or video students, school staff, volunteers, and audience members. Please be aware that by participating in the program, teachers and students are giving full rights and permissions to Des Moines Performing Arts for the use of such video and photos. Please also be aware that Des Moines Performing Arts may use a school's name and students' names in press releases and other program communications. Please inform program staff in writing if an individual's name should not be published.

## RECOGNITION OF PARTICIPATION

Adjudicated productions are required to recognize their involvement in the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards within their musical playbills or virtual materials.

### 1. PRINTED PLAYBILLS

Schools printing playbills are asked to include a half-page graphic within their playbill, available online here: [PDF version](#), [jpeg version](#)

If your playbill format cannot accommodate, please contact program staff to explore alternatives.

### 2. VIRTUAL MATERIALS

In offering a virtual viewing option, we encourage schools to use the following language on a landing page or opening credits:

*This production is being adjudicated as part of the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards, presented by EMC Insurance Companies – a program of Des Moines Performing Arts which celebrates the extraordinary achievements of Iowa students in high school musical theater. For more information, visit [DMPA.org/education](http://DMPA.org/education). #IHSMTA*

Des Moines Performing Arts encourages schools to further announce their participation in the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards in school newspapers, newsletters and school or program websites. Des Moines Performing Arts will post promotional information on each participating high school musical on the Des Moines Performing Arts website and social media platforms.

## ADJUDICATION PROCESS

### Adjudicators

Adjudicators are qualified performing arts professionals and performing arts educators. All adjudicators go through program training on rubric scoring and feedback. Adjudicators are required to inform program staff if there is a conflict of interest with a participating school and will not be scheduled to review a show for which there is a conflict of interest.

### Rubrics

Adjudicators use a set of standard rubrics to review each school's production. Directors receive a copy of the rubrics prior to the school's production. The rubrics are used to review each production on its own merit and are not used to compare one production against another.

Adjudication Standards and Evaluation Rubrics can be found online here:

<https://desmoinesperformingarts.org/ihsmta-directors/>.

### Adjudication Form

**Two weeks** prior to the production, directors are required to submit a completed Adjudication Form. This form gathers information on cast, creative and technical roles, thereby helping adjudicators determine which awards a school is eligible to receive. This is also an opportunity for directors to communicate with adjudicators about the resources available to their school and any additional information they would like to share about their production.

Access the Adjudication Form at [<<< ihsmta.awardsplatform.com >>>](https://ihsmta.awardsplatform.com) and select the category that corresponds with your show's production dates.

#### *NOTES ON PRINCIPAL ROLES AND FEATURED ENSEMBLES:*

*Program staff will work with you prior to filling out the Adjudication Form to determine which principal roles will be reviewed. In most cases, the number of principal roles reviewed is limited to **six**. If the school is producing a Jimmy Awards qualifying show, your adjudicated roles must include all roles considered qualifying for the Jimmy Awards unless prior authorization has been made with program staff. Schools may submit more than six principal roles for adjudication only if your production has more than six qualifying roles for the Jimmy Awards and all submitted roles are Jimmy Awards qualifying. See Jimmy Awards qualifying show/role list at:*

*<https://www.jimmyawards.com/participation/qualifying-shows-and-roles/>*

*In the event the production has at least one elective principal role "slot" still available, you may submit a small group of students for consideration as a "featured ensemble." A featured ensemble is considered a small group of characters who operate primarily as a unit and for whom it would be difficult for adjudicators to distinguish enough to adjudicate as individuals. Examples include the Schoolboard Quartet in *The Music Man* or the Narrator trio in *Little Shop of Horrors*.*

*For 2023-2024, the featured dancer category has been eliminated.*

### Double-Casting

Productions which double-cast (either completely or only certain roles) must communicate that information to program staff with enough lead time to make sure adjudicators are appropriately scheduled to review the performances by the designated/primary cast. **Any individual roles not seen by at least two adjudicators will be ineligible for award consideration.**

Fall shows must communicate double-casting schedules by October 13, 2023; spring shows must communicate double-casting schedules by January 15, 2024.

Contingent on adjudicator ability, schools may elect to have both casts adjudicated. If you desire to have both casts reviewed, please communicate that you wish to have both casts reviewed by the dates listed above so that a second adjudicator team can be explored for your production. Please note that an additional \$355 fee

## ADJUDICATION PROCESS, cont.

is assessed to review the second cast's performance dates. A second cast is defined as a full second cast, partial second cast or one role with two students alternating performances.

### Logistics

Schools will provide complimentary tickets for adjudicators and program staff:

- Up to three adjudicators will attend each participating school's production.
- An adjudication "steward" will also likely be assigned to attend your production. Adjudication stewards are a subset of program staff and adjudicators who help ensure consistency across the Evaluation Rubrics. In some cases, one of the assigned adjudicators may also be an adjudicator steward; in other cases, a fourth adjudicator or a member of program staff will attend as the steward. (Schools will receive no more than three sets of adjudication feedback.)
- Each school must provide two complimentary tickets per adjudicator/steward (generally six to eight tickets total) on the performance date(s) for which adjudicators/stewards are available to attend.

Adjudicators and program staff may not all attend the same performance. Des Moines Performing Arts will communicate with each school director which performance(s) the adjudicators and staff members are attending one week prior to opening night of the production. In extenuating circumstances, occasional last-minute adjudicator schedule changes may be requested.

Tickets should be held at the box office for adjudicators to pick up the night of the performance. Tickets should be held under the name "Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards" and not the name of the adjudicator. Adjudicator names will not be shared with the school in advance.

### Adjudicator seating arrangements:

- *Reserved Seating:* Adjudicator seats should be on an aisle and placed as inconspicuous as possible while still allowing for a strong viewing experience and the ability to take notes during the performance. Adjudicators attending the same performance prefer their pairs of tickets be spaced throughout the auditorium and not right next to each other if possible.
- *General Admission:* If you anticipate a full house, reserve seats for adjudicators using the same criteria for placement listed above. Please mark the seats simply "RESERVED". Please **do not indicate** on the signs that they are reserved for adjudicators or the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards. Adjudicators attending the same performance prefer their reserved seats be spaced throughout the auditorium and not all right next to each other. If you anticipate ample open seating, adjudicators may select their own seats.

Please note: in many GA houses, adjudicators with reserved seats may ultimately choose a different spot to sit that they feel better suits their needs. They are asked to communicate that they moved with someone at the school, but sometimes this step gets missed. In the event you do not see anyone sitting in the seats set aside for an adjudicator, please do not panic. However, we do recommend you send an email to program staff so that we can follow up with the adjudicator to verify if they were or were not present and take appropriate action accordingly.

### ADJUDICATOR FEEDBACK

Adjudicators' scores and comments about the production will be shared with the director following the performance. Directors are encouraged to use the adjudicator feedback and rubrics for reflection and future growth. Schools should anticipate receiving feedback within three weeks after the performance. (All efforts are made to turn around feedback sooner, but peak production weeks may necessitate more time for processing.) Directors are encouraged to consider sharing the adjudicator feedback with collaborators, administrators, and students as they feel is appropriate.



## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND OTHER RESOURCES

Participating schools receive access to various learning opportunities for students and theater educators throughout the year. These learning opportunities may include, but are not limited to, Broadway master classes, technical and performance workshops led by Iowa theater professionals, and opportunities for theater educators. Learning opportunities will be announced throughout the year as details are confirmed. Offerings may be a mix of virtual and in-person formats. Most learning opportunities carry no additional fee but select opportunities may carry an additional fee.

Examples of past learning opportunities include:

- Vocal masterclass with Tony Award-winner Kelli O'Hara
- Stage Management workshop with professional stage manager Janet Albanese
- Two-day Directors Seminar focused on sharing best practices, answering burning questions, and participating in hands-on workshops, with option for directors to receive license renewal credit.
- Acting-The Song-workshop with Iowa State professor Cason Murphy

Announced learning opportunities can be found online here:

<https://desmoinesperformingarts.org/ihsmta-directors/>

### **Other Resources**

#### **Ticket Exchange**

Participating schools are invited to participate in the IHSMTA Ticket Exchange program. The ticket exchange encourages students and educators to see other productions and to lend support to the endeavors of their peers. All directors who indicate interest in participating in the ticket exchange on their application will receive a list of other participating schools' production dates and contact information by mid-October via email. The number of tickets to be exchanged between schools will be determined by the teachers and schools involved. Reservations will be made between schools and **not** through the Des Moines Performing Arts education department.

#### **Director Peer Review**

Participating schools are invited to participate in the Director Peer Review program — a pathway for schools to invite another school director to attend a rehearsal in order to give feedback. Visiting directors serve as another set of eyes to affirm what is working, make suggestions for improvement, etc. Feedback may be given to just the production director or include students and members of the production team.

Directors willing to give feedback to other school productions will be listed in a directory provided to all participating schools by mid-October via email. Requests for a peer review, scheduling, and other details will be worked out between the participating directors and **not** through Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards staff.

## AWARDS - TYPES AND PROCESSES

A complete listing of award categories may be found in [Appendix A](#).

### **Awards Based Solely on Adjudication**

Many awards given through the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards are based solely on adjudicator scores, comments, and nominations. No additional submission materials are needed to be considered for the following awards:

- Outstanding Musical Production
- Outstanding Overall Performance
- Outstanding Overall Technical and Creative Achievement
- Distinguished Scene
- Ensemble\*
- Student Orchestra\*
- Principal Role\*
- Featured Ensemble\*

See [page 11](#) for an overview of the system used for determining awards and honors through the adjudication process.

### **Awards with Additional Components**

There are several award categories that require additional submission materials and evaluation for consideration. Additional submission materials are needed to be considered for the following awards:

- Behind-The-Scenes Role\*
- Community Engagement\*
- Impact Award

Please see pages 12-16 for specific details and processes for these categories with additional application components.

*\*Award categories indicated with an asterisk are given in two tiers: Outstanding and Special Recognition:*

- *An “Outstanding” designation represents the highest degree of excellence achieved within the category.*
- *A “Special Recognition” designation can be considered the equivalent of honorable mention.*

*Multiple honorees may be named for each category within both tiers based on scores and nominations.*

## ADJUDICATION-BASED AWARD DETERMINATIONS AND NOTIFICATION

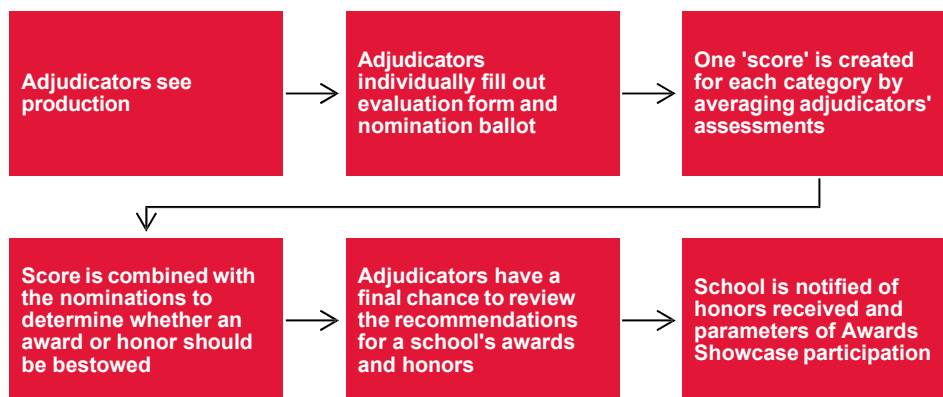
For each category under consideration for an award, each adjudicator takes part in a two-step process after seeing a production:

1. Adjudicators individually fill out an **evaluation form** using the scoring rubric. (The combined evaluation forms are shared back with the directors and schools shortly after the production closes with the goal of providing feedback.)
2. Adjudicators also individually fill out a **nomination ballot**, which is seen only by Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards staff.

Program staff then combine the evaluation forms and nomination ballots to determine the awards and recognitions to bestow. First, the evaluation forms are used to **assign a score to each category or individual performance element**. This is done by averaging the adjudicators' assessments utilizing the scoring rubric. The score is then combined with the **number of nominations** received to determine if an award or recognition should be bestowed.

As the last step of the process, adjudicators have the chance to do a **final review and input** of the honors a school will receive. Recommendations for the cumulative awards and recognitions that a school should receive are shared based on the scores and nominations. Adjudicators affirm the recommendations. If adjudicators disagree with a recommendation, particularly if an award or recognition is on the "bubble" of being recognized or not, adjudicators may override the initial recommendation.

### AWARD DETERMINATION PROCESS



Notifications of awards received will be sent to school directors on a rolling basis, based on timing of productions.

Multiple schools and individual students may be recognized for outstanding achievement or special recognition within the same category as scores and nominations warrant. The program is designed to be celebratory and not directly competitive; anyone who meets the standards set for honors will be recognized accordingly.

## BEHIND-THE-SCENES AWARDS

As noted, there are some award categories that require additional components outside of adjudication. This includes Behind-The-Scenes Awards.

Behind-The-Scenes Awards for specific areas are given for **individual and team** contributions by students. To evaluate the specific contributions made by students, these areas utilize a **student-created** portfolio in addition to production feedback.

### Areas

Students whose work or contributions fit in any of the following areas may submit a digital portfolio to be considered for an outstanding achievement in a Behind-The-Scenes achievement role award:

<b>Creative Roles (primarily design or direction focused)</b>	<b>Technical Roles (primarily execution focused)</b>	<b>Business Roles (primarily administrative focused)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Direction</li> <li>➤ Music Direction</li> <li>➤ Lighting Design</li> <li>➤ Sound Design</li> <li>➤ Scenic Design</li> <li>➤ Props Design</li> <li>➤ Costume Design</li> <li>➤ Hair/Makeup Design</li> <li>➤ Choreography</li> <li>➤ Dramaturgy</li> <li>➤ Other applicable aspect of the production not listed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Stage Management</li> <li>➤ Technical Direction</li> <li>➤ Backstage Crew (props, set, costume construction or maintenance, hair/makeup, etc.)</li> <li>➤ Board Operations (Lights, Sound, etc.)</li> <li>➤ Video Production (used as part of the show)</li> <li>➤ Other applicable aspect of the production not listed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Marketing and Publicity</li> <li>➤ Video Production (used for promotion)</li> <li>➤ Front of House Management (event management, ushers, box office, etc.)</li> <li>➤ Playbill/Program Design</li> <li>➤ Social Media</li> <li>➤ Other applicable aspect of the production not listed</li> </ul>

*Please note: Students serving in assistant capacities may also be considered.*

### Steps to Be Considered

There are two components to be considered for a Behind-The-Scenes award.

#### Step One: Submit a Portfolio

Applying students will submit a self-created, digital portfolio in support of their work on the production. Portfolio deadlines are on a rolling basis based on production dates. Those deadlines are as follows:

- October through November productions – Portfolios due by Friday, December 1, 2023 at 4 PM
- December through March productions – Portfolios due by Friday, April 5, 2024 at 4 PM
- April productions – Portfolios due by Tuesday, April 30, 2024 at 4 PM

#### Portfolio Requirements:

1. **Personal essay\*** about the students' experience with the production. Potential topics include vision or goal for your role, how it fits within the goals for the overall production, what worked well, challenges, any learning from the process. For a team, the essay can be co-created about multiple experiences or by a representative for the collective experience of the team.

\*Acceptable formats for the essay:

- 1-2 page written essay, double-spaced
- 2-4 minute recorded essay; may either take the format of a video with the student(s) speaking to the camera or an audio file of the student recording themselves speaking their response

## BEHIND-THE-SCENES AWARDS, CONT.

### Portfolio Requirements, cont.

Regardless of essay format, the content should feel organized and pre-planned.

For recorded essays, you will be further prompted to run your recording through a speech to text converter prior to submitting and to copy/paste a transcript of your recording into your submission form. This will aid adjudicators in re-visiting your essay during your interview, for reference purposes.

- 2. Artifacts** that demonstrate the students' work on the production. Possible artifacts include scans of renderings, sketches, prompt book, crew or shift lists, lighting plots, videos, and photos. Multiple artifacts are encouraged. Create a Microsoft Word or PDF document that includes your digital artifacts. Include your name, school, and production title in the top left of each artifact document. *It is highly recommended that you document your process as you work on your production.* Documentation of all stages of your work, from conception to completion, will bolster the understanding and scope of your achievements.

If using video as a supplemental artifact, please upload to Vimeo or Youtube and **include the link in each artifact document**. If the video is longer than five minutes, indicate the start and end time; the panelists will only review up to five minutes total across all artifacts.

For each artifact, include a short paragraph that identifies your artifact and describes what the artifact demonstrates about your work.

### Step Two: Interview with Adjudicator Panel

A brief virtual interview will be scheduled between a panel of adjudicators and the student or team after the portfolio is received. This is an opportunity for the adjudicators to ask clarifying questions after reviewing the portfolio and for the applicant(s) to provide additional insight into their process.

Interviews are scheduled on a rolling basis based on production dates. Interview dates are as follows:

- October through November productions – Interviews scheduled December 7-8, 2024
- December through March productions – Interviews scheduled April 11-12, 2024
- April productions – Interviews scheduled May 2-3, 2024

Adjudicators will be asked to review the applicant portfolio and virtual interview based on a rubric. [BEHIND-THE-SCENES RUBRICS](#) (note that rubrics are periodically updated)

*NOTE: There is no additional fee to be considered for a Behind-The-Scenes award.*

### Application Process

All portfolios must be submitted digitally.

1. Submit your portfolio at [ihsmta.awardsplatform.com >>>](https://ihsmta.awardsplatform.com) and select the "Behind-The-Scenes Submission" category
2. As part of the form, you will be required to upload an electronic version of your personal essay and your artifact document(s).

## **BEHIND-THE-SCENES AWARDS, CONT.**

### **Application Process, cont.**

3. As part of the form, you will also indicate your availability for your virtual interview with the adjudicator panel. Assigned interview times will be communicated to students shortly after the portfolio submission deadline.

A special 2-page Behind-The-Scenes Overview document written with students in mind is available at the following link. You may find this helpful for sharing with qualifying students when helping them to plan their portfolio materials. It includes a further resource to aid them in planning potential artifacts for their portfolio.

### [OVERVIEW FOR STUDENTS RESOURCE](#)

*NOTE: There is no additional fee to be considered for a Behind-The- Scenes Award.*

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AWARD

As noted, there are some award categories that require additional components outside of adjudication. This includes Community Engagement Award.

### Scope

Theater has the power to move, enlighten and to promote change. The Community Engagement Award is presented to schools that utilize their production and its theme/message in a meaningful way to make a difference within the community. This award challenges schools to use their musical productions to creatively make connections, fill a need, resolve conflict, provide services, or engage their community in other unique ways.

Community Engagement projects typically meet one or more of the following goals:

- Create awareness about a related issue or cause.
- Raise funds or supplies for a related issue or cause.
- Remove participation barriers for those who traditionally do not have access to live arts.

When designing a community engagement project, schools are encouraged to think about the following questions: Was the musical chosen to coincide with a social, political, economic or community initiative? Is there contextual information you are providing to your audience in innovative ways such as post-show discussions, lobby displays or innovative programs with partner organizations who are experts on the topic? How has positive change or learning come about as a direct result of working with the community? What will the impact of this production be after the show has closed?

### Recent Examples of Community Engagement Projects by Participating Schools:

- LES MISERABLES includes the story of a mother experiencing homelessness and poverty. Fort Dodge Senior's team came together to collect supplies for a local women's and family shelter.
- The town of Beaumont suffers a tragic car accident that sets the plot of FOOTLOOSE in motion. The cast and crew at Dallas Center-Grimes raised awareness about the dangers of impaired driving through a mock car crash demonstration and other audience education activities at each performance.
- The cast and crew of INTO THE WOODS at Aplington-Parkersburg wanted to emphasize that 'no one is alone.' They partnered with a local mental health organization to provide audiences with mental health resources and to raise funds for the organization.

### Application

To be considered, submit an online Community Engagement Award Application. Application deadlines are on a rolling basis based on production dates. Those deadlines are as follows:

- October through November productions – Portfolios due by Friday, December 1, 2023 at 4 PM
- December through March productions – Portfolios due by Friday, April 5, 2024 at 4 PM
- April productions – Portfolios due by Tuesday, April 30, 2024 at 4 PM

The application consists of a 1-2 page summary of your project and any supplementary materials that demonstrate its implementation. (A minimum of two photos of the project is required.) In your summary, please clearly articulate the project's goal, any partners, and how it relates to the specific themes or messages of the show you produced.

Applications should be submitted online at [ihsmta.awardsplatform.com >>>](https://ihsmta.awardsplatform.com)

*NOTE: There is no additional fee to be considered for a Community Engagement Award.*

## IMPACT AWARD

As noted, there are some award categories that require additional components outside of adjudication. This includes the Impact Award.

### Scope

While the primary focus of the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards is to celebrate student achievements, adults also make tremendous contributions to school drama programs and make a lasting impact on students.

The Impact Award is a student-nominated award presented to adults who lead and/or support their school's productions. This award provides an avenue to recognize educators, staff, or community members, such as parent volunteers, who go above and beyond to support the high school musical experience.

Past recipients include tenured directors, dedicated custodial staff, faithful production team members, and super volunteers. Encourage students to think widely about adults whose depth of impact may or may not be seen by the average audience member.

### Nomination Process

To be considered, a current student or group of students must complete the nomination process online. If submitting a nomination as a group of students, please identify one student to serve as the primary contact for the nomination. All nominations must be completed and received by **Friday, April 5, 2024 at 4 PM**.

The nomination process consists of the following components:

- 1-2 page essay written by the nominating student describing how the nominee goes above and beyond to make a positive impact on students' experience in their high school musical.
- Written testimonials from three to six individuals who have worked directly with the nominee on one or more school musical production(s). Testimonials may come from, but are not limited to:
  - Current high school students
  - Alumni of the school's drama program
  - Production Staff (Director, Music Director, Choreographer, Costumer, etc.)
  - Other adults that work on productions with the nominee (school employees and community members are acceptable)
  - School Administrators
  - Parents

Each testimonial should be no more than 300 words.

Nominations should be submitted online at [ihsmta.awardsplatform.com >>>](https://ihsmta.awardsplatform.com)

(Please note, the nomination form asks for the nominee's years of service at the school, the nominee's role in the school musical, and whether they are a school staff member, a contracted adult or a volunteer.)

*NOTE: There is no additional fee to nominate someone for an Impact Award.*



## AWARDS SHOWCASE – THURSDAY, MAY 30, 2024

One of the goals of the Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards is to provide as many students as reasonably possible with the experience of showcasing their work at the Des Moines Civic Center and to collaborate with theater professionals. In addition to celebrating their work, this allows students from across schools to be inspired by the work of peers that they may not otherwise have a chance to experience.

**Types of Participation** - There are several pathways for participation in the Awards Showcase:

**1. Inter-School Medleys (Featuring student representatives from all adjudicated schools)**

All adjudicated schools will have the opportunities for select student representatives to participate in an inter-school medley. Students who perform in the inter-school medleys will work with the Awards Showcase choreographer and music director (typically guest Broadway artists from New York City) as well as students from other schools. Directors will receive information by mid-spring about the parameters of this year's inter-school medleys, including how students qualify to participate. Based on the parameters given, directors will be asked to confirm which of their students will participate in each inter-school medley in advance of the Awards Showcase week.

**2. Production Excerpt Performances**

Some schools will be invited to showcase an excerpt from their school's musical production. Production Excerpt Performance invitation parameters will be determined closer to the 2024 Awards Showcase. Performance parameters will be sent out with performance invitations. In addition to performance excerpts, productions will also be highlighted in videos throughout the event. See note about eligibility for Production Excerpt invitations on [Page 18](#), as well as additional insight into music, wardrobe and set expectations.

**3. Specialty Student Tracks**

In addition, there are three additional specialty tracks for students based on further application or qualification.

**A. Triple Threat Award Program**

Select students will be invited to participate in the Triple Threat Award Program – an advanced skills track for select student recipients of Outstanding Achievement in a Principal Role award\*. Details on 2023-2024 program components will be provided to directors in early spring. Past components have included: preparing a special medley for the Awards Showcase, individualized coaching sessions, and auditions for prizes such as camp scholarships and representation at the National High School Musical Theatre Awards.

*\*Please note: due to learnings from the 2023 Awards Showcase about maximum program capacity, we anticipate that there will be additional qualification components or parameters introduced in 2024 to ensure a higher quality experience for program participants.*

**B. Behind-The-Scenes Awards Program**

Select students will be invited to participate in the Behind-The-Scenes Awards track - an advanced track for student recipients of Outstanding Achievement in a Behind-The-Scenes Role award. Details on the 2023-2024 program components will be provided to directors in early spring. Past components have included: networking sessions, exclusive learning opportunities with theatrical professionals, a celebratory dinner, and public platform to showcase their work via video.

**C. Assistant Stage Manager Program**

A limited number of students will have the opportunity to serve as Assistant Stage Managers for the Awards Showcase rehearsals and events. Students will work directly with professional stage management to assist in executing the Awards Showcase event. Details on eligibility requirements and the application process will be provided to directors in early spring.

## AWARDS SHOWCASE, cont.

### Additional Notes on Types of Participation

#### Production Excerpt Performances

##### **Eligibility**

Eligibility to perform an excerpt from your school's production at the Awards Showcase is also contingent on IHSMTA being able to secure the needed performance rights. Most productions in the past have been approved with little problem. In the event rights cannot be secured, IHSMTA regrets that it may have to revoke a school's invitation to perform an excerpt from their production.

*Please note: Excerpts from GREASE are not eligible for Awards Showcase inclusion due to rights limitations. Schools producing GREASE may still be adjudicated and receive awards; however, they will not be considered for an excerpt feature at the showcase.*

##### **Music**

Excerpt performances will be accompanied by the Awards Showcase band, made up of musicians provided by Des Moines Performing Arts.

If invited to perform an excerpt from your production, directors will be asked to submit copies of music for their school's performance. **As such, please keep all copies of production music after your production closes pending approval from your licensing house** (specifically the piano/conductor score, percussion, bass, guitar, cello and violin parts). Des Moines Performing Arts will work with licensing houses to attain extensions on music and will send you a copy of this permission for your records once secured. If you do not receive confirmation of permission to keep your music prior to your performance dates, please inquire with program staff for a status check. You are responsible for meeting the conditions of your contract, unless written documentation from the licensing house is provided to you that amends your materials' return date details.

All submitted music should be clear and readable. This includes all cuts and transitions being clearly marked in all scores/parts submitted. In addition, please ensure that your cuts adhere to the time guidelines set forth in your performance invitation.

##### **Wardrobe**

No costumes from the production will be worn during the Awards Showcase event. Performers will wear all black per full guidelines communicated in the spring.

##### **Sets**

No sets from school productions will be used during the Awards Showcase event. Schools may elect to utilize basic boxes, stair units or similar elements to create levels or visual interest. Units must be black and portable enough for students to move them on and off stage quickly. Directors should communicate what, if any, units they will be using in advance to order to make arrangements for loading in and storing the units.

## **AWARDS SHOWCASE, cont.**

### **Advance Preparation and Rehearsals**

Each school performing an excerpt from their production – either a solo or ensemble excerpt – must attend one tech rehearsal in the days prior to the Awards Showcase. The tech rehearsal will include an orientation period, a chance for school director(s) to finesse spacing on the Civic Center stage, a run through of the number with the Awards Showcase band, and mic check for soloists. Students should arrive fully knowing their music and blocking so that the tech rehearsal can be used for final tweaks. This year's tech rehearsals will be held **Tuesday, May 28 and Wednesday, May 29**. Specific dates and times will be assigned as we approach the showcase. (The Awards Showcase will be held on Thursday, May 30.)

Music for the inter-school medleys (typically the Opening and Finale medleys) will be provided to school directors to distribute to their participating students in May. Each inter-school medley will have two or more group rehearsals between **May 22 and May 30, 2024**. Full attendance at the group rehearsals is mandatory to perform in an inter-school medley.

Students in inter-school medleys are expected to learn and memorize their music in advance of their first group rehearsal, as rehearsals will be focused on learning choreography, assigning any solos, and stylization. It is up to each school director's discretion whether assistance from the school will be offered in preparing for the inter-school medleys or whether participating students should prepare themselves independently.

### **Tickets to the Awards Showcase**

On-sale information and additional ticketing information will be provided to all directors once available to share with their students and school community. Tickets typically go on-sale in mid-May after all performance invitations have been issued.

## APPENDIX A: 2023-2024 AWARDS CATEGORIES

### PRODUCTION AWARDS

---

#### **Outstanding Musical Production**

Takes into consideration all performance, technical, and creative elements

#### **Outstanding Overall Performance**

Takes into consideration all performance elements

#### **Outstanding Overall Technical and Creative Achievement**

Takes into consideration all technical and creative elements

#### **Distinguished Scene**

#### **Ensemble\***

#### **Student Orchestra\***

Requires the orchestra to be comprised of at least 75% students

#### **Community Engagement\***

Awarded to schools that create and implement activities or events that engage their local community with their high school's production and its theme or message

### INDIVIDUAL/TEAM STUDENT AWARDS

---

#### **Principal Role\***

#### **Featured Ensemble\***

#### **Behind-The-Scenes Role\*\***

Includes Stage Management, Technical Direction, Backstage Crew (props, set, costumes, hair/makeup, etc.), Board Operations, Master Carpenter, Video Production (used as part of the show), Direction, Music Direction, Lighting Design, Sound Design, Set Design, Props Design, Costume Design, Hair/Makeup Design, Choreography, Dramaturgy, Marketing and Publicity, Video Production (used for promotion), Front of House Management (event management, ushers, box office, etc.) or other applicable aspect of the production not listed

*(Awarded to schools where students serve in these roles and those students completed the portfolio submission process to be considered.)*

### OTHER AWARDS

---

#### **Impact Award**

Given to adults, based on student nomination

*\*Award categories indicated with an asterisk are given in two tiers: Outstanding and Special Recognition:*

- An "Outstanding" designation represents the highest degree of excellence achieved within the category.*
- "Special Recognition" can be considered the equivalent of an honorable mention.*

*Multiple honorees may be named for each category within both tiers based on scores and nominations.*