



BYLAWS

Confirmed 8.24.26

Who We Are

Created in 2008, the Hershey Theatre Apollo Awards (HTAA) are presented annually to recognize outstanding achievement by local high school students in their musical and play productions. Modeled after the Tony Awards, the ceremony is held every May and is produced and presented through the Hershey Theatre Education Department.

The Hershey Theatre Apollo Awards focus solely on the performances of youth, honoring their acting, singing, and dancing abilities. The HTAA program is committed to recognizing only the actual performances of the high school students themselves.

Program Eligibility

Any public or private high school or recognized home school group based in Cumberland, Dauphin, Juniata, Lebanon and Perry counties may participate, as well as Lancaster County schools within a 35-mile radius of Hershey Theatre. Additional schools outside this area will be considered on a case-by-case basis based on their proximity to Hershey Theatre.

Private schools and home school groups must have a minimum of 50% of their eligible cast (9th–12th grade students) live within the covered HTAA region.

Student Eligibility

Any student attending public or private high school or a recognized home school group in one of the registered school districts is eligible to participate in the Hershey Theatre Apollo Awards program.

- A student may only represent one (1) school and will only be evaluated for one (1) role in the Fall Play season and/or one (1) role in the Spring Musical season to be considered for an HTAA nomination.
- Some schools present more than one (1) Fall Play. Students participating in multiple performances are eligible to be nominated for one (1) role in each play, since they are representing only one (1) school.
- In the event that understudies are used by a participating school and the student understudy must perform due to an emergency or similar event, HTAA staff will work with the director on a case-by-case basis to determine eligibility.

Double Casting

Schools are permitted to double cast a production. To qualify for double casting, at least 80% of the character roles to be evaluated must be played by different students. A maximum of eight (8) character roles will be evaluated from each cast, so therefore at least six of the eight evaluated students must be played by different people in each cast. Any student participating in both casts will only be evaluated in one cast.

Each school is required to complete a registration form for each cast and pay a \$75, non-refundable registration fee, for each cast.

Requirements of Schools

- Each school is required to pay a non-refundable registration fee of \$75 for each cast that is participating.
- Photographs or still shots from the show/dress rehearsal will be collected and used in a montage of all participating schools in a pre-show video on the evening of the ceremony.
- Each participating school must provide up to ten (10) complimentary tickets for Apollo Evaluators (one ticket for each evaluator; one ticket for a guest).
 - Every school's production will be attended by five (5) evaluators representing the Hershey Theatre Apollo Awards. The HTAA staff will reserve maximum of ten (10) COMPLIMENTARY SEATS TO EACH OF THE SCHOOL'S PERFORMANCES. At least one week prior to each of the school's productions, a representative of the HTAA will contact the school's ticket office to verify which shows the evaluators will attend and how many tickets will be needed for each show. All other seats being held for the HTAA evaluators may then be released. If a guest cancels and will not be accompanying an evaluator to the performance, the evaluator will inform the box office that the other seat may be released upon redeeming. If an evaluator is unable to attend an assigned performance, the HTAA committee will reassign that evaluator to another performance or assign a new evaluator to fill in.
 - Please respect the need for the evaluators to attend your performances anonymously. Tickets should be reserved under each evaluator's name, which will be supplied to the person in charge of ticketing. Each evaluator will pick up his/her tickets on the night/afternoon of the show. Do not mail tickets to Hershey Theatre.
 - The HTAA staff strongly encourages directors to refrain from telling their cast members or crew when the HTAA evaluators will be in the audience. The adjudicators must see a typical production. Please refrain from giving any type of special treatment to the evaluators. For example, do not cordon off an area for the evaluators or make the seating recognizable in any way; do not gift them merchandise or show-related items; please advise your staff and cast not to talk to the evaluators about the production or specific actors; etc. We are committed to establishing discretion to ensure objectivity during the entire process.

Apollo Ceremony Requirements

- Rehearsals are required and mandatory for both school and individual performances. If there is a schedule conflict, please contact HTAA staff immediately.
- Students nominated for Outstanding Lead Actor and Actress in a Play will perform a brief monologue from their nominated role of no longer than 30 seconds.
- Students nominated for Outstanding Lead Actor and Actress in a Musical will perform a brief solo from their nominated role of no longer than one minute and twenty seconds.
- Schools nominated in the categories of Outstanding Musical – Large School and Outstanding Musical – Small School will select one number from their show to perform during the evening of the ceremony. The selected number must be no longer than four (4) minutes in length. Mash-ups or performing more than one number are not permitted.
- HTAA will secure performance rights for school and individual performances, as well as extended return dates on script and music materials. In rare instances, a school or student may be asked to perform a different selection if rights to the original selection are not approved.
- Hand props and costumes are permitted for the school's performance. If show costumes were rented, it is the school's responsibility to coordinate extended rental. If the school is unable to retain the costumes, uniformity of dress is encouraged.
- No scenery, drops or flats are permitted. Use and design of lighting is at the sole discretion of the HTAA production staff.
- School must limit the number of performers in their production number to no more than 35 students.
- School must provide both male and female chaperones. No more than four (4) per school. Chaperones must stay through the rehearsal and performance.
- Each participating school is invited to select two (2) students from their student body to perform in the Opening Number for the HTAA ceremony.
- Directors of each participating school are responsible for the receipt and dissemination of all materials to students including facilitating participation in rehearsal schedule and music memorization for all Apollo performances.

Apollo Award Evaluation Process

Five (5) evaluators are sent to each school's production. Evaluators have one week to complete the evaluation forms and return them to the Hershey Theatre Education Department. The highest and lowest score for each evaluated student/school will be removed and the remaining three scores will be added together for a final score. In the rare case that an evaluator is unable to attend their assigned performance and no replacement can be made, the fifth score will be obtained using an average of the remaining four scores.

Nominations will be announced for each of the 16 respective categories:

- Outstanding Student Orchestra
- Outstanding Dance Number
- Outstanding Play
- Outstanding Musical – Large School (1,000+ students enrolled)
- Outstanding Musical – Small School (< 1,000 students enrolled)
- Outstanding Playwright
- Outstanding Featured Performer in a Play

- Outstanding Featured Performer in a Musical
- Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Play
- Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Play
- Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Musical
- Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Musical
- Outstanding Lead Actress in a Play
- Outstanding Lead Actor in a Play
- Outstanding Lead Actress in a Musical
- Outstanding Lead Actor in a Musical

Five (5) nominations are accepted in each category, with the exception of Outstanding Musical – Large School and Outstanding Musical – Small School, which will each have three nominations. Scores may be tied and result in additional nominations in a specific category. Honorable Mentions will be made as scoring deems appropriate.

The highest scoring nominee in each category will be the award recipient. Results are kept confidential until announced on the evening of the awards show.

A category must have a minimum of five (5) registered students or schools in order to be eligible for an award in that category. If a category does not meet this requirement, the registered participants will be notified.

Evaluators are trained each program year. Evaluators receive instruction in the use of our evaluation scale, scoring method, and feedback expectations.

HTAA is committed to not using AI in feedback provided to the directors.

Evaluators are added to the committee each year. Each new perspective adjudicator must complete and submit an application for review to the Hershey Theatre Education Department. Applications are reviewed and vetted by the HTAA committee prior to participation as a HTAA evaluator. The HTAA Advisory Board has assembled a diverse group of evaluators experienced in the world of theater and education. Through use of our evaluation scale, all adjudicators view each production through a common perspective.

Evaluators with a vested interest, either professionally or personally, with an individual school will not be assigned to evaluate that school's performance during the nomination process.

Productions will be limited to 10 per weekend to allow sufficient evaluator coverage at all performances.

Playwright Eligibility

- Student must be in grades 9-12, attending public or private high school: students in equivalent grades may be home schooled or attend cyber school.
- Students must live in the region represented by HTAA. Students are NOT required to attend a high school that currently participates in the HTAA.
- Collaborations will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Original plays only; no screenplays, musicals, or adaptations will be accepted or reviewed. Submissions must be one act plays, with a maximum of 30 minutes.
- There will be a maximum of eight characters.

- Students may not submit more than one play.
- Students may resend a prior submission one (1) time for consideration. The script must be reworked based on constructive feedback given by the HTAA playwright evaluation team.

Playwright Requirements

- Student playwrights must designate a supervising teacher, who will act as a liaison between the student and HTAA staff. Homeschool students may designate a parent as the supervising teacher.
- Students may submit their work in hard copy or electronic version for review.
- Students must keep the original script. *Scripts will not be returned.*

Entry Formatting Requirements

- Scripts must be submitted in .pdf file format.
- Scripts must be typed, with numbered pages. Numbering begins AFTER the title page.
- The title page must list the authors name, home address, e-mail, phone number, high school name and high school address.
- Each page of your play must contain the title of the show and the page number.
- Work must be submitted in 12-point Courier font or 12-point Times New Roman font.
- Page one of the play must include setting and character breakdown
- No AI content will be accepted.