



## **STATESMEN THEATRE BOOSTER MEETING**

**January 11, 2022**

### **Booster Board**

President – Jenn Brunner

Vice President – Bonnie Campagnuolo

Treasurer – Kristen Hollenbeck

Secretary – Dixie Welch

**Director of the Theatre Department - Bernie DeLeo**

### ***President's Welcome***

Jenn Brunner kicked off and welcomed everyone, called the meeting to order and turned it over to Mr. DeLeo for the Director's Report.

### ***Director's Report from Mr. DeLeo***

- Update on VHSL One Act planning:
  - VHSL One-Acts are like playoffs for theatre. Marshall hosts the District (7 teams) and Regional rounds (4 teams). One team from Regional goes to the State.
  - Normally, the VHSL One-Act Festival runs from 9 AM - 4 PM with performances running one after the other. Morning performances start at 9AM. Performing teams stay through the morning and remove stage pieces at the lunch break. This year, teams will leave after their performance.
  - Due to current COVID restrictions, only family members of the school play that's in the Festival can come in to the auditorium. For Marshall's show, it's Luke Batarseh plus about 25 kids in the congregation.
  - Marshall's slot is 11:15 AM, which is the last performance before the break.
  - Judges get an hour break, then afternoon shows start at 12:15 PM.
  - We will need a couple of student ambassadors from ITHS.
  - Judges will email scores to participants and announce which teams go on to Regional.
  - Normally, kids have a dance party in the cafeteria during the judging process which takes a couple of hours. There will be no dance party for the kids.
  - There will be no concessions.
  - Performers will be allowed, as of now, to be on stage without a mask.
  - There will be one preview performance for family members on Friday 1/21 at 7:30 PM.
- Update on Actin' Out Festival (aka Student One-Acts)

- 5 short,15-minute plays
- One director is out with COVID.
- Process appears to be going well
- Parents, please encourage students to be safe. Consider limiting social contact for a couple of weeks. If kids get sick, we may have to cancel shows or put someone on stage with a script.
- We are told kids can be maskless on stage, for now.
- We will sell Theatregrams for the One-Acts.
- We will sell tickets so will need box office support from parents.
- Programs will be a simple fold-over with bios for the writers along with a cast list.
- Kids wants buttons, which is an old tradition ITHS is trying to revive. The buttons are great publicity, and the kids really like them.
- One-Acts are the first weekend in February with snow dates the second weekend of February. District Choir is the snow date weekend, but kids will be able to get to One Acts in time.
- We will not need meals for performers.
- Publicity will focus on social media and in-school advertising including posters, PTSA Blast and GCMNow. We will hold on advertising until 1/21 to see what happens with audience restrictions. Rainn developing a poster.
- Encouraging teachers to attend will be up to Mr. Litz.
- Theatre trip(s) and spring planning
  - New York isn't going to happen this year. COVID is rampant in NYC. Shows close literally same day leaving ticket holders in the lurch. We wouldn't be able to run to another theatre and get a group rate, which normally requires a 2-month planning process. He will wait until the Fall, when he normally does it, to look at another opportunity to go to NYC.
  - In lieu of that, he wants to do some local field trips. He has been in touch with the Capital One Center which is showing Fiddler on the Roof, specifically the matinee on Sunday, March 13th. Mr. Litz gave the ok to start planning. Mr. DeLeo needs to determine the cancellation policy/process.
  - He might also do some field trips with classes. For example, he's planning to take the IB Theatre class to see Merchant in Venice at Shakespeare Theatre.
- Middle School Open House Party
  - It was planned for the 15<sup>th</sup> but that's cancelled.

### ***International Thespian Honor Society Board Report***

- Abby Brunner, Co-President, briefed out.
- They are keeping track of points outside of Statesmen Theatre. All points are up to date.
- Kids will get points for One Acts and VHSL.
- Rainn is creating artwork for a t-shirt and pins, which will hopefully be completed by end of week.
- Pins used to be a tradition that they're trying to revive. Great publicity in classes. They are making separate posters for each of the one-acts.

- For publicity, they will do spotlights on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

### ***Fundraising Report***

- 99 Pledges, raised approximately \$2,500.
- Kendra Scott - \$740. We can only do that fundraiser once per calendar year.
- General donations: We have a budget of \$7,500 for general donations and \$2,500 for corporate matching donations. So far, 99 Pledges and general donations total \$9,297.
- Donation letters will be sent out in the next week.
- Corporate giving/matching. We would appreciate people checking with their companies to see if they would be willing to give or match a donation to the program. The Board can help with any paperwork that might be required.

### ***Mid-Year Budget Review***

- We are in good shape to do what we want to do this year.
- We downgraded the revenue by \$1,200 (not selling concessions for example). This is not a concern. We have enough money to do what we want to do this year.
- We looked at expenses and decided to allocate \$300 per show for the one-acts if they need costumes, props, etc. We carved out \$1,800 for one-acts without increasing the overall expense total. The carve-out came from reduced concessions, show shirt money, and spirit wear (haven't purchased more).
- The One-Act budgets are a reimbursement for students and will run through ITHS to the Board.
- We have \$10k in reserve.
- We will keep funds in the budget for Bernie to buy equipment at the end of the year. We have a capital grant for equipment that can be used as well.
- The Board will have a discussion regarding the appropriate level of reserves going forward.

### ***Discussion Items***

- Raising Theatregram pricing
  - Prices have never been raised.
  - Cake pops are popular. They are \$3 and we sell a Theatregram for \$3 or 2 for \$5 so we don't make money on cake pops.
  - The Booster Board makes sure every cast and crew member receives a Theatregram on opening night.
  - Sometimes fellow students purchase Theatregrams so consider a range of price options to keep it affordable.
  - The general feedback is that scaled pricing is a good idea.
  - A \$1, \$3, \$5 scale could work and will be considered going forward.
  - For One-Acts, Bernie wants to do the show as one show without having intermission(s). The total run time would be 1.5 hours. Theatregrams would only be sold before and after the show.

- If VHSL makes it to Regionals, we will add that show to the One-Acts, which would make the total run time longer. If this happens, we will have an intermission and be able to sell Theatregrams at intermission.
- Feedback is to be ready to sell earlier.
- Can you reserve your Theatregram with your ticket? We would need to check with Maureen.
- Concessions and COVID restrictions
  - Frog & Toad. If we cannot sell concessions indoors, we could put concessions outside at picnic area.
  - Choir experience selling concessions outdoors at end of show did not work out.
  - We also need to consider how much food makes its way back into the theatre. House manager and Ushers need a better support system to enforce the no food in the theatre rule.
- Parent volunteering need for Frog & Toad
  - We need to start thinking about how we connect with the elementary schools, specifically teachers, reading specialists, music, librarians. These are field trip opportunities where the kids could be transported to Marshall. We need help developing a contact list for the schools. This will involve outreach to the schools to gather names and email addresses.
  - We also need to understand what etix can do for group sales.
  - Mr. DeLeo did a children's show at West Springfield. Teachers showed up with an envelope of cash, kids watched the show and left. It was super simple. We will wait for Omicron to subside before distributing information about the show to teachers at elementary schools – maybe around 2/1.
  - The parent volunteer would look at feeder schools like Lemon Road, Westbriar, etc, go through rosters and collect emails for K-3 teachers etc so we can blast out a letter.
  - The show is April 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>. \$5/head. Chaperones will be comped.
  - This may be the first theater show for some of these young kids, instilling a love for theatre and becoming a future student.
- Other
  - We need a photographer for One-Acts. Kristin Heath's husband might be able to do it. The person needs to have low light experience. Mr. Heath is welcome to come to tech-in's and give it a try.
  - We need a videographer for the One-Act festival. We can record the show because they are student written and produced so the students own the rights. This decision is ultimately up to the student directors. If recorded, we can put it up on our youtube page. It's also great for portfolio generation.

### ***Meeting Adjourned***

- The next meeting is TBD. The Board will get with Bernie and publish the next date(s).