January 9, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

FROM: Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

RE: 2019 Alabama Thespian Festival

The Alabama Educational Theatre Association will host the 2019 Alabama Thespian Festival (ATF) on February 15-16, 2019, at Vestavia Hills High School in Vestavia Hills, Alabama. The ATF will offer workshops for theatre teachers and English Language Arts educators responsible for theatre courses including acting technique, lesson planning, and technical theatre. Nationally recognized artists in acting, technical theatre, musical theatre, and dance will lead instructional workshops for teachers and students. Artists will also offer workshops on the impact of integrating theatre across the curriculum.

The ATF is a weekend of workshops, plays, and competition for students and teachers and creates a venue to network as well as enhance the knowledge and appreciation of theatre as part of a well-rounded student. The Alabama Thespians is a chapter of the national Educational Theatre Association (EdTA), an organization that provides support and advocacy for theatre educators and students across the country. This state conference is an opportunity for theatre educators in the state to refine skills, connect to colleges and universities in the area, and share ideas with fellow educators. Please visit the Alabama Thespian website for additional information at http://www.alabamathespians.org. You may also visit the Alabama Thespians website at www.alabamathespians.com to sign up.

I encourage you to review your budget and professional development procedures to ascertain if your classroom teachers and arts specialists may attend. This statewide professional development opportunity will enhance the arts education programs in your system for students and teachers. The ATF state conference allows the sharing of ideas and networking for arts educators that will benefit them in learning and implementing new strategies to improve student achievement. The entire weekend is $65 per teacher and includes meals. Attached is a summary of the incredible workshops that will be offered at the ATF this year.

If you need further information, please contact Mr. Andy Meadows, Arts Education Specialist, Instructional Services Section, at telephone number (334) 694-4768 or via email at ameadows@alsde.edu or Ms. Jamie Stephenson at althespianfestival@gmail.com.

EGM:AM:SMR

Attachment

cc: Curriculum Coordinators

FY19-2036
2019 Alabama Thespian Festival
Workshops

Erin Carr – During this workshop you will explore the Viewpoints theory and its influence on characterization. You will start with the basics of Viewpoints—specifically kinesthetic response, spatial relationship, and tempo—to discover the body's natural impulses, both internal and external. You will combine Viewpoints with the exploration of levels and body centers while working on an open scene.

John Fredricksen – This workshop will explore the radical acting technique of the 1960’s—“Sound and Movement.” It will challenge you to explore what your body and voice can do to totally express itself. By the end of the class you will learn to act scenes completely through your gut.

Mama Yeye – Just fresh from Jamaica, MaYe will share dancing combinations from cultural places like Jamaica, Cuba, Haiti, and Brazil. This workshop is great for intensive dance students. All are WELCOME. Women are asked to wear A-line wide skirts or sarongs.

Ashley Ware – Learn how to flip, lift, and spin safely all in a fun and fast paced environment! This workshop, a staple at the Georgia, Texas, and International festivals, will show you how to make the most of your partner dancing with jazzy flips, incredible lifts and MORE! You will learn lifts such as Trust Fall to Spin, Leap Frog, Mermaid, and the Crank and Roll! Wear comfortable clothes and BRING A PARTNER! Get ready to work hard, make memories, and have fun in this high-energy class!

Aretta Baumgartner – Puppets have been used to tell stories since theatre began and can be found everywhere from stage to screen. Puppetry celebrates all aspects of our craft and is a “must-have” skill on every resume! Learn about puppets from all over the world, dive into actor-to-puppeteer exercises, and have a blast in an “Avenue Q” puppet skills boot camp!

Shirlee Idzakovich – This is a very popular workshop for costume shops. You will take a man's button-down shirt and turn it into 30 different costume pieces you can use on stage. This class is for everyone, beginner and advanced. You will also do actual hands on cutting and sewing of pieces to show you how it is done.

Devon Glover – Let’s put Shakespeare into our own words. In the Sonnet Man workshop, we will be introduced to the Bard’s sonnets in a modern innovative way—through hip-hop. We will study the structure and make up of a Shakespearean (Elizabethan) sonnet, its components, values, and meaning, as well as write our own. The workshop will conclude with presentations of original sonnets written and performed by the attendees.

Betsy Huggins – Taking the Leap: A Playwriting Crash Course. Are you an established playwright fishing for new ideas, or a beginner dipping your toes for the first time? Take the leap in this playwriting masterclass and explore the generative process from multiple perspectives. Prepping for Success: Directing from Concept to First Rehearsal. Directing is like an iceberg, most of the work is under the surface. In this interactive workshop, we will explore how a director prepares for a successful production before the first rehearsal even begins.