



Rouse High School

Theatre Department

Handbook

For Students and Parents



Introduction

The Theatre program is an integral part of the total school experience and participation is considered a privilege. The policies, procedures and regulations in this handbook are in compliance with school board policies and administrative procedures. They are designed to provide for successful experiences for students and the efficient operation of the Theatre programs. This handbook supersedes all prior publications governing LISD Theatre programs and shall be used by all principals, directors and members in grades 9-12. Its purpose is to help answer student/parent questions and be a guide for defining the procedures of the organization. You, the member, are accountable and responsible for all guidelines contained within this handbook and for any additions that your respective director might add.

Table of Contents

Purpose	3
Mission	3
Contact Information	3
Diversity Statement	4
Fees	4
Fundraising	5
Statement of Financial Policy	6
Classroom Expectations	6
Sexual Harassment	7
Digital Citizenship	7
Due Process	8
Extracurricular Guidelines	9
Grading Guidelines	10
Eligibility	10
Auditions	11
Rehearsal Expectations	12
Conflicts	13
Performance Expectations	13
Field Trips	14
Letter Jackets	16
Thespian Society	16
Booster Club	16
Parent Volunteers	16
Forms	17
Off Campus Medication Procedures	17
COVID-19 Addendum	18
Signature Page	19

Purpose

The purpose of the Rouse High School Theatre Handbook is to provide parents and students with a resource to which they may refer regarding theatre procedures and policies. The handbook provides students with guidance and information to help them have a positive experience in the RHS theatre program.

Mission

Our mission is to create and maintain a quality student-based program that provides opportunities in both acting and technical theatre. The theatre department's main goals are:

- To reach the Leander ISD objectives
- To provide acting and technical theatre experience for all abilities by producing both inside and outside of the classroom
- To develop an appreciation for the performing arts as a discipline
- To create a positive fun atmosphere while instilling a strong work ethic
- To develop the ability to accept critical evaluations and critique others constructively

Contact Information

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The RHS Theatre website is a primary source of theatre information

www.rousetheatre.com

Diversity Statement

Following the death of George Floyd in 2020, Leander ISD released the following statement:

In Leander ISD, we unequivocally condemn racism, discrimination, and exclusion of all kinds. Our hearts are broken. The killing of George Floyd and others has profoundly impacted our nation and reminded us we live in a world where racism undeniably exists. We acknowledge that racism exists in Leander ISD. Our students matter, each and every one of them. We know it is time for action. As we cope with uncertainty, we must partner with our community to create equitable and inclusive environments for our entire population. We create a better future for our students when we stand against racism and value the diverse culture of our community. Hope is not enough. As Leander ISD, we demand equity.

The Rouse Theatre Department completely agrees with Leander ISD's statement on diversity and would like to further state that we are taking ongoing steps to ensure that we are fostering an environment that embraces and supports the diversity within our department. We value every student and therefore will enforce an equitable environment for them. We are aware that the arts are not immune from racism and that Theatre in general has been a place where systemic racism has been able to infiltrate. We will make sure that our actions do not allow the discrimination that has been a part of our world into the Rouse Theatre Department. Productions and class placements will continue to be cast based on merit and skill level, and extra efforts will be taken to ensure that there is no bias present in decision making and that the value of all students is considered. When possible, productions and class placement decisions will involve a minimum of two diverse directors. Because we care deeply for the students of Rouse High School, we too, along with all of Leander ISD, will demand equity.

Fees

Theatre I/II/III/IV, Technical Theatre, JV and Varsity Advanced Production

- All theatre students will be encouraged to purchase a Theatre T-shirt for \$15. JVAP, Advanced Productions and Advanced Technical Theatre students **MUST** purchase this t-shirt and it is included in their class fee below.
- Class Fees
 - Varsity Technical Theatre = \$50
 - JV/Varsity Advanced Productions = \$75
- Extracurricular Fees
 - The Musical Cast and Crew = \$50
 - The UIL One-Act Play Cast and Crew = \$50

All fees/dues are due no later than 2 weeks after casting or the start of participation in theatre classes.

Preferred method of payment is via the RHS Theatre Website www.rousetheatre.com. If you must pay via check, then checks should be made out to **RHS Theatre Boosters**. Please include a driver's license and a phone number on all checks.

The Theatre Department will provide several field trip opportunities that will require a fee to cover costs. These trips are OPTIONAL. Check the website for more information on these trips as they are scheduled.

*****SPECIAL NOTE: Scholarship funds are available for students whose families are in financial hardship so that they may still participate in theatre activities. NO STUDENT will be turned away because they are unable to pay a fee. Speak with Mrs. Smith for more information.**

Fundraising

All fundraisers are optional; however, students are encouraged to participate. The money raised is used to improve the theatre department and for student activities.

Fundraising Guidelines

- All money raised belongs to the RHS Theatre Boosters and cannot be refunded for any reason.
- Students are responsible for the product being sold once it has left the theatre room.
- Problems with a fundraiser must be reported to the theatre director within 24 hours.
- Students are responsible for delivering products to the ordering customer.
- All fundraising money must be collected when the order is taken or product is given. Fundraising money must be turned in by the pre-determined due date.
- If a student takes a product to sell and something happens to the product (lost, stolen, damaged, etc.) the student IS financially responsible for the value of the product.
- Receipts will be issued for all monies turned in. Students should keep this as their record of payment.
- Students are responsible for money that they carry and should turn in cash as soon as possible. DO NOT carry cash around campus if at all possible.

Fundraisers in which students check out a product to sell, must be paid for within one week of the conclusion of the fundraiser. Failure to do so will result in an office referral for theft.

Insufficient Funds - District policy states that RHS organizations are not allowed to accept

checks from any individual who has had at least one check to LISD that was returned for insufficient funds. Cash or money orders can be accepted in this instance.

Insufficient Funds for Booster Club – If a check given to the Rouse HS Theatre Booster club comes back insufficient funds you will be notified and given 30 days to provide payment as well as any pay fees that may have accrued. The booster club may decide to no longer accept checks from this individual. Cash or money orders would be accepted in this instance.

Statement of Financial Policy

It is the philosophy of the Rouse High School Theatre Department that no student should be denied the privilege of participation due to financial hardship. For options in meeting financial obligations, parents should contact the directors.

Classroom Expectations

- **BE PREPARED** at the **BEGINNING OF CLASS!!**
- Acting classes will follow the **THEATRE PACT**, and Technical Theatre will follow their classroom expectations at all times to ensure a good learning environment.
- No **HORSEPLAY** at any time.
- Listen to directions the **FIRST TIME**.
- **DO NOT TOUCH PROPS/CURTAINS/ETC.!**
- **NO FOOD OR DRINK** in the Auditorium **OR** Black Box. **WATER** is permitted with a sealable lid. (Meal eating during off periods/rehearsals must take place in the green room only.)
- **CLEAN UP!**
- **RESPECT YOURSELF, RESPECT OTHERS, AND RESPECT THE SPACE!!**

If you choose to **NOT** follow the rules:

- Warning from teacher
- Loss of daily participation points
- Parent Contact
- Office referral

GENERAL CLASSROOM PROCEDURES: When class starts:

- Pick up binders/portfolio and stow backpacks in the designated area.
- Students **WILL** be seated by the time the last bell has rung.

- Business Meeting.
- Warm-ups.
- Main activity (lesson, rehearsal, game, etc.)

When class ends:

- Before the class bell rings, depending on the activity, all students will assist in cleaning and returning the room to its original order.
- Closing Activity (i.e. journaling, goals, lessons learned, vocab. Etc.) This must be done before they are allowed to leave the room.

Sexual Harassment

Inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature at school is prohibited by school board policy. Sexual harassment is prohibited against members of the same sex as well as against members of the opposite sex. Any student who experiences a sexually offensive comment or action by another student or adult at school or school-sponsored function is strongly encouraged to tell a parent, teacher, counselor, or principal. Parents/guardians who have reason to believe that their child has been subjected to sexual harassment should report this behavior to the principal. Students in violation may be removed from the extra-curricular portions of the program for a time period established between the directors and the administration. Reinstatement will be evaluated after the end of the school year.

Digital Citizenship

Maintaining a higher standard of conduct will also include ensuring that theatre student member websites are appropriate. The internet is a worldwide, publicly accessible form of communication. Any communication appearing on the internet is public domain, even if it is marked private. Members are responsible for their personal websites and postings, as well as posting from or on other students' websites. The areas of appropriateness will include but are not limited to profane, foul, or disrespectful language (abbreviated or alluding to), pictures, suggestive poses, clothing, references to alcohol, drugs, and/or tobacco, and postings (either verbal or photos) that could be interpreted as being negative or threatening towards other LISD teaching staff or theatre students, or that demonstrate poor sportsmanship or a disrespectful attitude towards other theatre groups. Any such incident will result in review by the principal (or designee) and may lead to probation or dismissal from theatre.

Theatre students who violate the above guidelines shall be subject to the following:

- Upon confirmation of a violation, the member will be directed to remove any offensive items from the website(s) and to collaborate with the director to provide an action plan to deter future instances of similar behavior, which will be presented to the principal, directors, and theatre students. Items in the action plan may include but are not limited to an apology to the students and directors, training in the proper use of social media, or other actions deemed appropriate by directors or campus administration. Parents/guardians will be contacted and made aware of the offensive behavior.
- If a violation occurs that is deemed to be of a more serious nature, including but not limited to a threat, bullying, inappropriate and/or foul language, or a series of violations, the student may be subject to a higher level of discipline as determined by the director and school administration, such as suspension, probation, or dismissal from theatre.

Due Process

All Leander ISD students are entitled to due process in accordance with LISD guidelines. Our goal as a staff is to ensure that all students are treated fairly. Please contact one of the directors if you have any concerns. We will work with you to resolve problems.

Extracurricular Guidelines

Theatre I, II, III, IV Classes

Participation in extracurricular activities is optional for Theatre I-IV students. Even though they are optional, they are strongly encouraged for any student in these classes wishing to audition/apply for advanced theatre courses in the future.

Theatre Production I, II, III, IV Classes

Participation in extracurricular activities is required in the Production Classes. Students audition to earn a spot in these classes. Therefore, it is assumed that they desire to take part in extracurricular theatre. All varsity production students must audition for all extracurricular theatre productions. All JV production students must audition for at least one extracurricular theatre production. However, it is stressed that participation in extracurricular theatre is a privilege, not a right. You, the theatre student, are accountable and responsible for all policies contained within this handbook and for any additional ones that your respective directors might add.

Technical Theatre I Classes

Participation in extracurricular activities is optional for Technical Theatre I students. Even though they are optional, they are strongly encouraged for any student in these classes

wishing to audition/apply for an advanced theatre course in the future.

Technical Theatre II-IV Classes

Participation in extracurricular activities is encouraged in Technical Theatre Class. Students in the Technical Theatre II-IV class are required to fill out a crew application if they are interested in extracurricular activities. However, it is stressed that participation in extracurricular productions is a privilege, not a right. You, the student, are accountable and responsible for all policies contained within this handbook and for any additional ones that your respective directors might add.

Varsity Technical Theatre

Participation in extracurricular activities is required in the Advanced Technical Theatre Class. Students had to apply to be in this course; therefore, it is assumed that they desire to take part in extracurricular theatre. Students in this class are required to crew the Spring Show production. In addition, students are also encouraged to apply to work additional extracurricular productions (theatre, dance, choir, etc.). Students in this course are still required to fill out a crew application for all productions. However, it is stressed that participation in extracurricular theatre is a privilege, not a right. You, the theatre student, are accountable and responsible for all policies contained within this handbook and for any additional ones that your respective directors might add.

Grading Guidelines

****Please note:** In addition to its own grading policy, Rouse High School Theatre Department follows the grading guidelines outlined by Rouse High School and Leander ISD. ******

Daily Participation/work/homework: (50%)

Participation:

- All required materials each day
- Classroom behavior
- Positive contribution to the classroom activities and environment

Daily work/Homework:

Any work done in class that is not part of a performance, script reading, or performance critique. Homework is given in this class **sparingly**. Most homework will be memorizing lines and preparing for performances/auditions.

Binders/Portfolios (10%):

This will be the student's record of all grades and work returned to them. The students will be receiving hand-outs, and other information. They will place all notes, vocabulary, play scripts, journal entries and design projects within their binder/portfolio.

Having all of the corresponding materials together in one section will help the student be better organized.

Binders/Portfolios will be LEFT IN THE BLACK BOX and NEVER TAKEN HOME!!!

Performances/Projects (40%):

All theatre classes will have multiple performance/project grades throughout the grading period. These will serve as assessment tools for all students.

Eligibility

All LISD Theatre programs adhere to the eligibility rules and regulations as stated by TEA and LISD. Some theatre activities are designated as extra-curricular. Students participating in these activities are governed by eligibility requirements. A student shall be suspended from participation in all extra-curricular activities sponsored or sanctioned by the school district during the six-week period following a grade reporting period in which the student received a grade lower than seventy in any class. Loss of eligibility does not take effect until seven days after the end of the reporting period. Ineligible students are not suspended from practice or rehearsal of extra-curricular activities. The student is not suspended from participation during the period in which school is recessed for the summer or any other vacation time.

Students may regain eligibility under certain circumstances. If a student has been suspended as a result of failing, he/she may regain eligibility by passing ALL courses in the third week of the affected grading period. Reinstatement of eligibility would occur seven days after the three-week progress report period (see TEA/UIIL Side by Side).

Activities that are considered curricular components of any course are not affected by the eligibility law. Examples of these activities are all rehearsals and performances that take place as a regular extension of classroom instruction. Any performance that is competitive in nature or for which admission is charged is deemed extra-curricular.

ALL Varsity Advanced Productions and Varsity Technical Students must maintain their eligibility to continue in this course due to the amount of extra-curricular endeavors this course involves. Therefore, any student who becomes ineligible for more than one grading period will be removed from the advanced course and placed in a Tech or Theatre 2/3/4 class.

Auditions

Auditions for involvement in extracurricular activities are announced at least two to three weeks before the beginning of the production schedule. All auditions will be watched and judged by a minimum of two directors. Some auditions may include a panel of directors.

Audition opportunities include

- Main stage musical – school wide eligibility
- UIL one act play – school wide eligibility
- Fall Show – JV/AP Classes Only
- Spring Show – JV/AP Classes Only
- Other Extracurricular Shows – Must be enrolled in a theatre class to be eligible

Audition Criteria

- Grade eligibility for performance (see eligibility page)
- Attendance and participation at auditions and callbacks
- Appropriateness of student to the role and ability to perform the role
- Student fits in the ensemble of the cast
- **Cooperation and preparation** in the audition
- Student ability to attend rehearsals and performances

*Students must list **ALL** CONFLICTS ON THE AUDITION SHEET. This includes doctor appointments, family trips, other school activities, church etc. **ANYTHING THAT PREVENTS THE STUDENT FROM ATTENDING REHEARSAL.**

Rehearsal Expectations

Rehearsal Guidelines

- Attend **ALL** rehearsals for the **ENTIRE** time unless stated on the conflict sheet at the time of auditions or discussed with a director or stage manager at least 24 hours in advance.
- The only excused absences are, illness, injury, family emergency, ***PRE-APPROVED*** other extra-curricular or athletic conflict, or circumstances that were out of your control (i.e. your car breaks down).
- **BE ON TIME** and ready to work at every rehearsal
 - Crew be ready to work 10 min. before rehearsal starts.
- Stay in the designated area for rehearsals and watch or work quietly

- **NO ONE** is allowed in a RHS Theatre rehearsal other than the cast, crew, and directors. Exceptions can be made by the director but must be requested with **AT LEAST** 24 hours-notice.
- Be prepared at each rehearsal
- Have a script and pencil when necessary
- Lines memorized on due dates
- **Be in appropriate rehearsal attire** (i.e. DANCE CLOTHES WHEN NECESSARY, REHEARSAL SKIRTS AND/OR SHOES, etc.)
- Unexcused absences will result in demerits, and unexcused absences in excess of two may result in expulsion from the cast.
- Students **MUST NOT** leave the rehearsal at any time without permission or they may be removed from the cast or crew

Conflicts

When a student is involved in more than one school activity that occurs outside of school time, conflicts may occur. Students must check event calendars for all of their scheduled RHS activities for conflicts as soon as dates are available. The student must notify all affected parties (Theatre director, parents, coaches, employers, sponsors) when there is a conflict so that there is time to determine how to handle the conflict (compromise, miss one or the other activity, work out a ride, etc.). Work is NOT an excuse to miss rehearsal, you must schedule work AROUND rehearsals. **The student MUST give the director at least 24 hours-notice in order for it to be considered an excused absence (with the exception of emergencies/sudden illnesses (See above reasons for excused absences).**

Performance Expectations

Performance Guidelines

- Cast and Crew are required to report on time for dress rehearsals and performances for make-up calls and warm ups and in costume at the time posted.
- Students are **NEVER** to leave the backstage areas of the theater or the campus in makeup and/or costume.
- Students will not invite persons outside the cast and crew to any backstage areas, in dressing rooms or the green room.
- Stage etiquette should always be followed including courtesy and consideration for cast, crew, and directors
- **Students are expected to attend and work strike on the designated day. This is a part of the theatrical process.**

Field Trips

Guidelines for RHS Theatre Trips

In addition to those policies set forth by LISD and RHS, theatre members will adhere to the following policies:

- Everyone travels with the group and returns with the group. Special permission to travel in some other manner may be granted if a parent gives the director a request for another arrangement at least 24 hours prior to the trip in written form with a signature and a date.
- Students will not be released to anyone unless a permission note, signed by the parent, has been turned in and the student has checked out with the director or designated chaperone.
- Students may not ride with other students or other students' parents unless they bring written permission in advance from their parent/guardian.
- Only portable radios, mp3, or CD players *with earphones* are allowed on the bus. The RHS Theatre Department assumes no responsibility for personal items lost or damaged on theatre trips.
- Follow the instructions of the theatre director, staff, bus drivers, and parent chaperones at all times. They are your legal guardians in the absence of your parents.
- For the safety and security of all of our students, the director and chaperones reserve the right to check all luggage prior to departing on any theatre trip.
- Drug, alcohol and tobacco policy: The use of these items will not be tolerated during any theatre activity at RHS or away from school. School and local authorities will deal with any student found with these items with the same penalties as if the offense occurred during the school day. In addition, the students will be sent home immediately at the parent's expense. Students in violation of the policy will face the penalties set forth by the school, up to and including removal from the Rouse High School Theatre Program and all auxiliary theatre activities.
- Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on Rouse High School and LISD. Students must follow all Theatre and LISD school rules as well as legal, ethical, and moral requests from the director or chaperones while on the trip.
- Students must dress appropriately for the location of the trip as designated in advance by the Theatre Directors. Any student dressed inappropriately will not be allowed to attend the trip and funds will not be reimbursed. In addition, students must follow the LISD dress code at all times.

Attendance Policy for Trips

All theatre trips are optional unless otherwise specified. Only RHS Theatre members and their parent chaperones are allowed to participate in RHS Theatre trips. The following additional criteria may apply to theatre students attending any theatre trip:

- No unexcused theatre performance absences during the school year.
- No more than one unexcused theatre rehearsal absence during the school year.
- No LEO assignments at any time during the school year.
- No ISS assignments at any time during the semester in which the trip occurs.
- No office referrals from a theatre director.

Trip Pick Up

Parents must be prompt when picking up their children from theatre trips. Students are encouraged to bring cell phones on theatre trips to call parents regarding our arrival time on our way home.

- District policy does not allow the director to leave students unattended on the RHS campus after school hours.

After Hours Drop-Off and Pick-Up

- The parent pickup/drop off location in the front of the school should be used as the drop off and pickup location for theatre activities that occur outside of the regular school day. For safety reasons students should not use the bus lanes or any area behind the fine arts building.

Letter Jackets

Guidelines for lettering in Theatre at Rouse High School

- If a student is enrolled and earns credit in a theatre course all four years of high school, they will earn their letter at the beginning of their senior year.
- If a student is a member of the UIL One-Act Play cast or crew and that show advances past District.
- If a student is a member of the RHS Thespian Society.

Thespian Society

Rouse High School is home to International Thespian Troupe #7679. Students will be inducted into this theatre honorary organization based on points earned through participation in theatre activities at RHS. The point system can be found on the RHS Theatre webpage.

RHS Theatre Booster Club

The Booster Club provides support for the theatre program through volunteer support and fund-raising. All theatre parents are eligible to be members if they have a child in theatre at Rouse High School. All parents are invited to attend Booster Club meetings, although participation is voluntary. Contact Amie McLachlan or Lori Ingram at Rousehstheatre@gmail.com (2020/2021 RHS Theatre Booster Club President) for more information.

Parent Volunteers

Anyone interested in volunteering with RHS Theatre in a capacity where they will be around students will be required to complete the online application and criminal record check (per LISD policy). This must be updated annually. To apply go to the district website at www.leanderisd.org and click on the “Community Involvement” heading, then click on “Volunteers” and finally click on “On-Line Volunteer Application”. Volunteers will need to register before they can fill out the application. Once the volunteer has been cleared the volunteer coordinators for RHS will be notified as well as the RHS Theatre Director.

Forms

All Theatre students and parents must sign the Handbook verifying that these policies are understood by going to their appropriate Google Classroom and completing the class forms. An electronic copy of your signature will be sent to the directors and kept on file.

All Theatre students and parents must sign a travel permission form for the current school year. This form is also located in the appropriate Google Classroom in the class forms and can be completely filled out online.

All Theatre Students and parents will be asked to sign a photo release form allowing us to place photos of students in classes on the web site.



Off Campus Medication Procedures

Medication may be administered during off-campus event:

1. A parent or guardian's written request that there is a need for medication during the school day and the parent/guardian brings the medication to the designated drop-off site. This includes both prescription and over-the-counter medications.
2. All medication must be kept in a secured location and administered by trained LISD employee or trained chaperone. The only exception being any diabetic or emergency medications that have an LISD signed self-carry form (may copy/use signed form from campus clinic).
3. No medication can be dropped off or picked up/sent home by a student. Parents/Guardians must pick up all medications whether prescription or over-the-counter.
4. Over-the-counter medication must be in the original bottle or box with the label intact and non-expired. Dispensing directions regarding age, dose and frequency will be strictly adhered to. Request to alter the standard dosage or frequency on over-the-counter medication must be accompanied by a physician's written note and signature.
5. Prescription medication must be in the original container and non-expired. It must be properly labeled in a prescription bottle/box with the student's name, medication name, directions for dispensing the drug and written by a physician licensed to practice in Texas. A physician's signature is required for any dosage or medication change on prescription medication. All PRN (as needed) prescription medications will need a physician's signature.
6. Short-term prescription medication can be administered for up to 10 consecutive days without a physician's signature. The prescription label can be no more than 7 days old upon receipt by the school clinic. A written request/signature from a physician must be obtained if the medication needs to be administered for more than 10 days.
7. Medications (controlled substances) will be counted by either a trained LISD employee or trained chaperone upon arrival at drop-off site and documented as to the number of pills received. Narcotic pain medications prescribed for temporary medical conditions will not be stored or administered. Medications must be delivered by the parents/guardians.
8. A student may be allowed to self-administer inhaled asthma medication, an Epi-pen, or diabetes treatment ONLY if the following conditions have been complied with: a. Written permission from the physician allowing the student to self-medicate or treat b. The nurse has counseled the parent and the student on the school's inability to monitor the student's health condition during the school day while self-medicating or treating c. The student complies with all campus safety policies
9. No district employee or trained chaperone will administer herbal substances, anabolic steroids or dietary supplements except as prescribed by a physician if it is required by the IEP or Section 504 plan of a student with a disability. Medication must be provided by student's parent or guardian. Reliable information must be given by the physician regarding the safe use of the product including side effects, toxicity, drug interactions and adverse effects.
10. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure all health/medical and medication information is current as of the day of the off-campus event.
11. All private health information (PHI) will be stored in a secure location when not at an off-campus event. When information leaves the housing campus for an off-campus event it will be signed out by a LISD staff member or trained chaperone. That person is responsible to keep PHI secure & confidential during the event, then sign-in & return information to housing campus when event is over.

COVID-19 Addendum

The information contained in this handbook will be invaluable to students and parents as you participate in one of our outstanding LISD Fine Arts programs. Much of the information you will read and to which you will acknowledge an understanding of is based on a normal academic year.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic has created a situation that makes it difficult for teachers to prepare for and communicate precisely how certain aspects of the program will operate. Flexibility will be a key component to the success of our students during the 2020-21 school year. As a result, it may be necessary for adjustments and updates to be made to the information in this handbook, at which time our teachers/directors will do their utmost to communicate these adjustments as quickly and clearly as possible. Should you have a question or concern about the changes to the enclosed guidelines, I encourage you to contact the appropriate director at your earliest opportunity.

Signature Page

At this time please refer to and completely fill out the CLASS FORMS which are available in the students appropriate Google Classroom. If you would prefer a hard copy, one can be emailed to you if you contact the Theatre Director at Stephanie.smith@leanderisd.org

