

40th ANNUAL ILLINOIS HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE FESTIVAL
“ignite the PASSION within”

Planning Committee Minutes
Maine East High School
Sunday, March 16, 2014

Planning Committee in Attendance:

Brian Alexander, Executive Director (2015)
Carmel DeStefano, Secretary/Executive Director (2016)
Tom Skobel, Assoc. Director of Exhibits
Adam Miller, Assoc. Director of Exhibits
Christopher Thomas, Assoc. Director of Workshops
Allan Kimball, Assoc. Director of Auditions
Sandra Smycz, Assoc. Director of Play Selection
Nathaniel Haywood, Assoc. Director of Play Selection
Julie Ann Robinson, Assoc. Director of Promotions
Michael Stevens, Assoc. Director of Promotions
Kurt Steinhauser, Historian /Documentarian
Karen Hall, All-State Director
Andy Sinclair, All-State Co-Producer
Laura Gilbert, All-State Co-Producer

Non-Voting Committee in Attendance:

Michelle Marquart, UIUC/Local Arrangements - Program Coordinator
Jonathan Meier, ITA Liaison
Marty Jean Goughnour, Assoc. Director of Development
Aimee-Lynn Newlan, ITA Executive Director

Voting Members Absent:

Demetrios Pappageorge, Executive Director Emeritus
Marty Lynch, Assoc. Director of Auditions
LaDonna Wilson, Assoc. Director of Workshops
Judy Swiger, Assoc. Director of Hospitality/Mentors

Non-Voting Members Absent:

Daniel Chaim Pozzebon, UIUC/Krannert Center
Sandra Zielinski, ISU School of Theatre Rep
Cyndee Brown, ISU Dept. of Theatre and Dance Rep
Tom Mitchell, UIUC Department of Theatre Rep
J.W. Morrisette, UIUC Department of Theatre Rep
Analiisa Ahlman, Assoc. Director of Box Office
Kristen Mackie, ITA President
Megan McCann, ISU Local Arrangements

- I. The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am by Brian Alexander at Maine East High School.
- II. Approval of Minutes from January 26, 2014, meeting
 - A. Minutes were sent to all Committee members on March 8th so that perusal and corrections could occur before this meeting.
 - B. Brian Alexander reminded all Committee members to check the contact information sheet, (also sent on March 8), and send any changes or updates to him.
 - C. Christopher Thomas moved to accept the minutes from the January 26 meeting. Marty Goughnour seconded. Minutes accepted.
- III. Discuss 2014 Festival Feedback
 - A. Feedback from participants of the 2014 Festival has been obtained through the software program, Constant Contact. Any proposed changes to be made for Festival 2015 are listed as "Talking Points" in an addendum to the March agenda.
 - B. Brian Alexander urged all Committee members to reference Festival Feedback for changes to be made in their perspective areas. Participant reviews were mixed.
 - C. Brian, after conferring with Kurt Steinhauer and Karen Hall, has decided that it would be difficult to have a closing ceremony.
 - D. Nathaniel Haywood questioned if the Festival should prepare a montage. He stated that it would be difficult to have the montage ready for an all-day Saturday presentation. Carmel DeStefano suggested having the montage ready after Festival for Facebook or the ITA website. Chris Thomas suggested having it sent to participating directors, and Aimee-Lynn Newlan said it would be legally possible to do this. No decision was made on the topic.
- IV. Committee Reports
 - A. Executive Director - Brian Alexander reported.
 1. We will limit the time the survey response will be collected to the week directly after Festival.
 2. It was suggested to use cloth bags instead of boxes for schools' material packets. Michelle Marquart suggested having the bags with a place for a label. Michelle brought samples for the Committee. Aimee-Lynn said that ITA will take care of them.
 3. The application deadline for the Extraordinary Contribution & Administrative Support Awards will be Sept 10th, so the Committee can make the decisions at the September meeting.
 - a. The information is now posted on the ITA website.
 - b. Aimee-Lynn suggested we use Facebook or add it into the *eFollowspot* and possibly an email blast.
 4. A committee met to establish guidelines for "The All-State Challenge." A handout of the guidelines was established by Demetrios Pappageorge, and Brian Alexander read it off to the Committee. Discussion on points # 9 and #5 ensued. Brian will let Demetrius know that #9 needs to be reworded and #5 needs to be deleted.

- a. Aimee-Lynn reported there was \$2,800 contributed last year and \$2400 was requested last year.
 - b. It was questioned if the money could go for more than just All-State. Karen Hall suggested that what is left over be used to cut down expenses for the next year.
 - c. Andy Sinclair suggested that a previous All-State company could sponsor a lunch or event and have a few members from that company attend.
 - d. Aimee-Lynn Newlan sent out the link to the Challenge page for the Committee members.
- 5. Brian suggested developing a Festival program app. It would help lower the printing and design expense by about \$1,000.00. Someone will be needed to set it up.
 - a. Michelle mentioned that there would also be a problem with the internet access in Krannert.
 - b. Aimee-Lynn asked if the advertisements would appear on the app.
 - c. Aimee-Lynn asked Michelle Marquart about the public engagement grant that Festival received a few years back.
 - d. Sandra Smycz suggested using Guidebook.com for the app.
 - e. Discussion was tabled until the next meeting.
- B. Workshops - Christopher Thomas reported.
 - 1. It was once again requested that Committee members call associates during the September meeting to acquire additional workshops rather than waiting until November meeting.
 - 2. Registration due date should be Oct. 24 to insure that Conferences and Institutes has time to finish before other due dates occur. This date was moved back twice last year.
 - 3. Michelle Marquart requested there be only one file used among all committees and to work on a Goggle.doc Excel program. Michelle will establish variations of the spreadsheet to hiding columns that are not needed for individual sub-committees.
 - 4. It was also suggested to reach out to alumni who are now working in theatre to come back for panel discussions on careers in theatre.
 - 5. The Workshop Committee would like to offer a few master classes that would be preregistered.
 - 6. There needs to be a clean up of the registration page for online registration for more than one workshop by a single presenter. Michelle said that if they use the same email, it will repopulate the mailing address, etc.
 - 7. The monitors need to be the "Face of the Festival," and the reporting of attendance, etc. needs to be accomplished.
- C. Promotions - Julie Ann Robinson and Michael Stevens reported.

1. The ITA will purchase inexpensive bags instead of boxes for school registration materials.
 2. Pricing for new items offered at Festival will follow the directives from last year, including the supply and reduced pricing.
 3. The shirts, etc. will probably be printed on black.
- D. All-State – Karen Hall, Laura Gilbert, and Andy Sinclair reported.
1. Audition songs will not be posted on YouTube.
 2. Karen gave a list of her design staff at this point. She is still in search of a sound designer and choreographer.
 3. In answer to a concern about transportation home after Festival for All-State company members, Karen stated that each member will have a safe ride home. There is also a clause in the All-State application stating that the parents are responsible for getting their children home.
 4. Andy stated that they have started discussions with the Champaign Park District about providing transportation.
 5. Actor's Gymnasium is very excited to work with the All-State Company for a class, rigging, equipment, etc.
 6. There has already been a meeting at U of I about the flying and other issues. Anything done in the air is to be static, and no open flame is allowed.
 7. Decisions on the specific style of the show will be finalized once the show is cast.
 8. Karen stated that she has decided to use her own costumer to build the show. To save on expense, she asked if the Committee could approach Bob Schramm or another costume house to buy the costumes after the Festival?
 9. Audition dates and times are set.
 10. Andy questioned if it would be cost efficient to acquire a space to keep some stock from year to year. The issue has been discussed in previous years, and the Committees have not found a viable solution.
- E. Exhibits - Adam Miller and Tom Skobel reported.
1. The two student monitors requested for Thursday registration were not provided during the 2014 Festival.
 2. On the question of space, double exhibit spaces were only offered to ITA corporate sponsors. Although ITA would like to continue that policy, it may have to decrease to one space, esp. in Krannert. Is there a way to split vendors and colleges into two separate rooms or areas?
 - a. Do we want to do this?
 - b. Do we keep colleges in the lobby and the others at another space?
 - c. There was a discussion about how do we fit all the exhibitors if we stay on one floor.
 - d. The limit for Krannert's lobby is 55.
 - e. We have to make sure the vendors must stay within their space.
 - f. The consensus of the Committee is that exhibits stay on one level.
 3. If the passport is used again this Festival, it needs to be retooled.
 4. There was an overwhelming support for the dry-erase boards.

5. "There was a couple of issues as to where boxes went that were mailed to the university for exhibitors." This has never been an issue at Krannert.
 6. It was stressed that the Committee must ensure that exhibitors pre-register ALL participants joining them at Festival.
 7. It is important to get information from new colleges registered for auditions/interviews on the programs they offer, so the information can be add to the current list of course work offered by each college.
 8. It has been decided not to provide goodie bags for the vendors and college representatives.
- F. Auditions - Allan Kimball reported.
1. Re-emphasis on calling the design and technical auditions "portfolio presentations" instead of interviews was made to cut back on colleges' self-promotion.
 2. There was a question about power needed for laptops.
 3. The audition fee will remain the same as last year.
 4. It was suggested that we include juniors, but it would double the number of students auditioning.
 5. Allan suggested a "Dos & Don'ts" list be compiled with suggestions from the colleges for those auditioning.
- G. Play selection – Sandra Smycz and Nathaniel Haywood reported.
1. Many directors commented on the "yes/no" response on the play response form.
 - a. Sandra suggested a response space be added for each answer.
 - b. Laura Gilbert suggested if a no is put, an explanation must be given.
 - c. Brian Alexander said that the overall recommendation also needs a required rationale.
 - d. A box should be embedded in the form to be checked noting that the director read the criteria.
 2. Sandra is going to develop an opening script for response sessions.
 3. Sandra asked if there is a letterhead to send responses to the principals of the chosen schools? Aimee-Lynn Newlan will supply this on the Committee webpage.
 4. Recruiting responders and offering Play Response 2.0 workshop at the ITA Convention worked really well last year, but the workshop will not be possible this year. Could a video be posted? Alan will check with Nathan about the video possibility.
- H. Opening Performance – Brian Alexander reported.
1. Brian stated that we are back to square one. He wants the performance to be exciting for the students, and pull them into the Festival.
 - a. Brian suggested possibly focusing on a musical review, including a montage of past All-State posters, but he is open to suggestions.
 - b. There will be two speeches at the opening: Brian and a representative from the host school.
 2. Performance times for Openings have not yet been finalized.

3. Since the sponsors' meeting was cut from last Festival, it was the consensus of the Committee to drop it.
- I. Local arrangements
1. The June meeting will be in the Krannert Center Orchestra Room. Tours of workshops and performance spaces will begin at 9:00 am, the full Committee will meet at noon.
 2. Housing will not be needed for Committee members in June since it will only be a one-day meeting.
 3. Brian Alexander stressed that we must stay consistent with cut-off dates for school registrations!
 4. All-State kids will register as a company.
- J. Student representatives / Friday Night Activities – No report
- K. Graduate Courses – No report
- L. Mentors / Hospitality – Coat racks needed.
- M. Development – No report
- N. Box Office
1. All-State parents will be assigned to the Thursday performance. There may also be an off-site performance at Maine East.
 2. Should tickets for All-State parents be limit to only one show? No decision made at this time.
- O. Historian / Documentarian – Kurt Steinhauser reported.
1. 40th Anniversary Ideas – Kurt reported the following ideas:
 - a. An invitation to all the past directors
 - b. The names of all those involved in Festival appear on the program
 - c. A special program on Channel 11
 - d. An article in the *Tribune*
 - c. A review of All-State performances
 - d. Designate a school's years at Festival by colored ribbons
 - e. A giant birthday cake
 - f. Panels of Festival alumni
 - g. A Friday reception for those who have been involved on Committee
 - h. Party decorations in the Krannert lobby
 - i. Recognition for the two schools that have attended Festival for all forty years
 - j. Hang the old Festival banners
 2. Brian Alexander brought up the question of alcohol at the reception.
 - a. Michelle Marquart commented on the fact the University has a hard time giving permission for sponsors drinking during a student activity.
 - b. Discussion tabled.
 3. Brian showed the 40-year logo. He would like to hand out lapel pins to the sponsors.
 4. It was suggested to invite past Committee members to attend the Sponsor Reception and an All-State performance.

- P. ITA Liaison
 - 1. Application for 2017 Executive Director is now on line.
 - 2. It was reminded that to be part of the IHSTF Committee one has to be an ITA member.
- Q. ITA Executive Director – Amiee-Lynn Newlan reported.
 - 1. If any committee members have contribution lead, he/she must go through the ITA office.
 - 2. Marty Jean Goughnour handed out a spreadsheet of those who advertised or donated in the past. She also handed a projected plan that included ideas and questions. Letters are being created for advertisers.
 - 3. Public Relation – Any information about Festival should be submitted to Aimee-Lynn Newlan.
 - 4. Committee members were reminded to use the tax letter for Festival purchases. If a Committee member itemizes expenses on his/her taxes and wishes to deduct expenses donated to the Festival, a written request should be sent to Aimee-Lynn.
- R. Brian Alexander suggested each Committee to focus on the following.
 - 1. How can we leave the Festival better than when we started?
 - 2. What new ideas do you have to improve/change our Committee for 2015?
 - 3. Look over last year's exit reports.
 - 4. Remember our "Guiding Principles:"
 - a. Go GREEN!
 - b. Attendance and Punctuality
 - c. Communication
- V. Preliminary Budget for Current Festival
 - A. Michelle Marquart distributed two proposed budgets, one with a \$45.00 registration fee, one with a \$50.00 fee. The last time the fee was raised was six years ago.
 - B. Brian Alexander went over the proposed budget.
Line 65 – Parking is increased from \$11.00 to \$12.00, and rental for lot E14. Michelle hasn't heard yet on the parking policy.
 - C. Line 96 – Even though the expense is being covered, the cost should be stated and added into Sponsorship Income #41.
 - D. Line 97 – The amount should be changed to \$600.00.
 - E. Kurt Steinhauser commented that there is a little wiggle room on this budget. It is going to the ITA Board for a vote at the April meeting.
 - F. Kurt moved that Brian and a small committee of his choosing with Michelle work through to finalize the budget for the April ITA meeting. Karen seconded. Motion approved.
 - G. Marty Jean Goughnour moved that we raise the registration fee to \$50.00. Carmel DeStefano seconded. Motion passed.
 - H. Michelle reported that All-State can use the Music Building for meals without using the university catering company.

- VI. Festival Logo
- A. The finalized logo was presented.
 - B. Brian Alexander offered to purchase shirts for Committee members. The shirt will be a quarter zipper fleece.
- VII. Discussion of April/May Web-Postings – items include:
- A. Michelle Marquart will send the postings to Aimee-Lynn Newlan who will put them on the Committee page.
 - B. Michelle and Aimee-Lynn will finalize the registration form. Aimee-Lynn asked Kurt to revise the important deadline for the mailing: May - workshops & play selection, for April - All-State.
 - C. Karen Hall will send the All-State packet to Aimee-Lynn by Wednesday. She will have everything ready except the applications won't be ready until April 3rd.
 - D. State-Wide Postcard Proof - The April mailing was reviewed, and the information on All-State auditions was reorganized.
 - E. Aimee-Lynn requested that if any Committee member is establishing his/her own form, email it to her at Illinoistheatretefest@gmail.com.
All text must be proofread because it is all going online April 1st.
- VIII. Fall "Web-Posting"
- A. Michelle has almost completed compiling a list of hotels. She stated that Eastland Hotel is very accommodating and suggested making it the Festival hotel.
 - B. Kurt Steinhauser asked if plans were being made for a All-State parent reception on Thursday night at the hotel. Discussion tabled.
 - C. Medical & Media release form suggestions.
 - 1. There was a question on media permission. Michelle stated that a media release component is already included on the medical form.
 - 2. It was suggested to add a place for the student's email address on the form for pre-registered workshop and audition confirmation.
- X. Adjournment – Nathaniel Haywood moved to adjourn the meeting. Karen Hall seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Carmel DeStefano
Recording Secretary, Festival 2015