



California
Thespians

2024 CA Thespian Play Festival Info Sheet

California State Thespians (CST) invites all California Middle and High Schools to bring a 30 minute play or cutting of a play to the annual California Thespian Play Festival (TPF).

ELIGIBLE PERFORMANCES

Performances may be one-acts, cuttings from full-length productions, reader's theatre, dance, mime, comedy, drama, etc. Performances are encouraged to be: entertaining, audience-appropriate, and timely. Student-written and student-directed pieces are encouraged.

Content: The Play Festival audience may include middle school students as young as 10 years old. Performances should include

- **No expletives:** a profane or obscene word or phrase that is used to express strong emotions, often anger, frustration, or emphasis. These words are considered socially or culturally inappropriate in many contexts due to their offensive nature.
- **No mature themes:** subject matter, content, or concepts that are intended for, or suitable for, mature audiences due to their complexity, sensitivity, or potentially explicit nature.

CA Thespians reserve the right to turn the lights off for any inappropriate material.

Groups interested in performing at the CA State Thespian Festival, or representing CA at the International Thespian Festival must adhere to the content guidelines listed later in this document.

ADJUDICATIONS

Adjudications: Using the [appropriate ITF Chapter Select Rubric](#), plays will be adjudicated by a diverse panel of theatre professionals who will share their notes with the cast and crew immediately after each performance in a casual, educational atmosphere. The judges will equally critique both adults and students. The judges are encouraged to be open, honest, and direct with their feedback to the cast and the director regardless of the director's age.

Awards: Judges will privately select their top three pieces and rank them. Judges may also award Honorable Mention Certificates for performances, student direction, or other outstanding work. Schools must be present at the end of the festival to receive these honors.

LOCATIONS, DATES, and RATES

In the interest of access and equity, we offer the TPF virtually and in three in-person locations across the state. Each troupe or performing group may register for *one* Play Festival.

In-Person Locations:

Northern: Westmont High School, 4805 Westmont Ave., Campbell, CA 95008 (see page 8)

Central: Arroyo Grande High School, 495 Valley Rd, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420 (see page 9)

Southern: Upland High School, 565 W 11th St, Upland, CA 91786 (see page 10)

Any California performing group may enter any of the CA Thespian Play Festivals (Northern, Central, Southern, or Virtual), regardless of their location.

Dates:

In-person is on Jan 20, 2024. Registration is due Jan 10.

Virtual submissions are due on Jan 31, 2024 (see page 3).

Rates:

\$165 per Thespian troupe.

\$265 per non-Thespian group.

Registration does not include lunch.

Non-Thespian schools and organizations are welcome to participate in the TPF. Schools that have not chartered a Thespian Troupe are subject to an additional \$100.00 fee. We highly recommend chartering a troupe through schooltheatre.org before registering for this event.

HOW TO REGISTER

[Access the registration form here.](#) You will need to be logged in to your schooltheatre.org account; non-members may sign up for a free account. Each school may submit *one* registration form. Only complete applications will be given a performance slot.

Please access the [registration form](#) early for a list of registration requirements.

Payment in full must be postmarked by Jan 10. Registration fees may be paid by credit card, PO, or school/organization check.

Make checks/POs payable to: California State Thespians

Mail to: California State Thespians, 2058 N. Mills Ave #650, Claremont CA 91711

Registration Deadline: In-Person Registration closes on Jan 10, or when the event sells out, whichever is earlier. Virtual submissions are due Jan 31.

Waiting List: There are 10 slots available for each in-person event. If an event sells out, groups will be able to register for the virtual event and/or add themselves to the waiting list of their preferred in-person location. Waitlist priority will be given to chartered Thespian Troupes.

Performance Rights: Performance rights are required for in-person events. If you cannot secure performance rights for Jan 20, we recommend that you register for the Virtual Play Festival.

REQUIRED VIRTUAL MATERIALS

Virtual entries should be no more than 30 minutes from lights up to lights down. Curtain call is not included in the 30 minute time limit.

Virtual Play Festival entrants must include a video of the performance taken with a single, stationary camera, with no edits. Virtual entries do not need performance rights to be adjudicated, but they do need performance rights to perform at CSTF or ITF.

Videos may be uploaded as video files or a url link. If sharing a url, ensure that it is unlocked and viewable; if we can't see it, we can't adjudicate it.

REQUIRED IN-PERSON MATERIALS

Bring the following with you on Jan 20:

Performance Programs: All schools must bring 15 copies of a simple, single-page program (half sheets are preferred) DO NOT include your school's name on the program – only your Troupe #, the Play Title, Logo (optional), Author, Royalty Company (and any information required by your performance rights therewith), Play Director, Cast and Crew.

Attendee List: A list of all of your attendees, alphabetized by last name. Please note which are under 18.

Photo Releases: Performances being considered for Mainstage at the CA State Thespian Festival or for Chapter Select at the International Thespian Festival will be filmed for additional adjudication purposes. Therefore, all Play Festival attendees under the age of 18 must submit a [Photo Release signed by a guardian](#) on arrival.

Attendees under 18 who do not have a signed photo release will not be allowed in the auditorium. Attendees under 18 who do not have a signed photo release will not be allowed to perform.

IN-PERSON EVENT EXPECTATIONS

Timing: Each school has the following time for their performance:

- 5 minutes to set up while the previous school is striking
- Up to 50-word introduction by the director, a student from the school, or a State Thespian Officer.
- **30 minutes to perform (timed)**
- 1 minute for curtain call (included in 30 minute limit)
- 5 minutes for judges' feedback
- 5 minutes to strike while the next school is setting up

Filming: CA Thespians will film all performances which are being considered for mainstage at State Festival or ITF, to ensure that the final decisions are made by adjudicators who have seen all eligible performances. Otherwise, filming is prohibited.

Attendance: All groups are expected to be present the entire day. A sample schedule with ten schools present is:

- 7:30 Registration - Only the Troupe Director needs to check in.
- 8:00 Judges arrive / Introductions / Tour of Space / Warm Ups on your own
- 8:15 Welcome
- 8:30 **Performances**
- 12:15 LUNCH
- 1:00 **Performances**
- 4:45 Short break for judges' deliberation - this is a great time to load your cars!
- 5:00 Winners Announced - schools must be present to win.
- 5:15 Happy travels! *Campus cleared.*

Troupe Director Attendance: A troupe's Director must attend TPF with their troupe, or have an Affiliate Member of that troupe travel in their place. An Affiliate Member is someone who is approved by the school or district to serve as Chaperone, and who is a member of the Educational Theatre Association. A letter from the school or district naming the Affiliate Member as responsible for the attending students must be filed with the Event Coordinator by Jan 10, or in the case of emergency, the day before the event.

Chaperones: Each troupe should bring the number of adult chaperones that meets their school / district chaperone requirements. An adult chaperone must be in the auditorium whenever their troupe's students are there.

Audience Etiquette: Every Thespian works very hard on their performances and presentations, from Improvs to Thespys to Mainstage. It is important to create a supportive atmosphere that respects the hard work of all State Festival attendees. In order to support performers and presenters, and to ensure that *everyone* can enjoy performances, we offer the following audience etiquette guidelines:

- Don't talk once events have started. Talking to your friends and troupe members during performances disrupts the viewing of others.
- Remind your troupe that screaming for their friends prevents others from hearing their own friends.
- Applause should be during blackouts and at the end of performances. When in doubt, follow the lead of the rest of the audience and your troupe director.
- Keep comments to yourself. Everyone has worked really hard on their performances and we want to keep the atmosphere safe, respectful, and positive.
- Unless invited by the performers, don't sing along to musical pieces.
- Filming performances is a violation of copyright laws. Recording devices (including cell phones) will be confiscated from audience members who violate those laws. Devices will be

returned after a conversation between the House Manager or Event Coordinator and the Troupe Director.

- We understand that emergencies happen. If you need to take a phone call, step outside. Cell phones will be confiscated from audience members who violate this guideline. Devices will be returned after a conversation between the House Manager or Chapter Director and the Troupe Director.
- Don't send text messages during performances. Troupe directors and chaperones are allowed to do so in case of an emergency.
- Please turn off or put cell phones on vibrate during performances. Let's all be present and have fun.
- Use the restroom between performances. If you must use the restroom during a performance, quietly leave the house and go to the restroom in the auditorium lobby. You will be allowed to re-enter the auditorium at the discretion of the House Manager.
- No food or drink is allowed in the auditorium.
- Please stay awake. Everyone has worked really hard on their performances and we want to respect their hard work.

Invitation Policy: Groups who do not respect event expectations will not be invited back to TPF the following year. Groups with multiple violations over multiple years will not be invited back until 5 years after the date of the most recent violation.

GOAL OF PERFORMANCE

We recognize that every group has different goals when attending the TPF. Therefore, the online registration form asks which of the following you are interested in: Feedback only, Mainstage at State Festival, or to represent CA as the Chapter Select at the International Thespian Festival. You may select both Mainstage at State Festival *and* Chapter Select.

Middle Schools and Jr. Highs may select Feedback Only.

GOAL A: Feedback only

This is for schools who wish to attend, perform, receive feedback, and enjoy the other performances, and are not interested in performing at the CA State Thespian Festival or International Thespian Festival. All schools will receive written feedback using the appropriate [EdTA Chapter Select Rubrics](#).

GOAL B: Mainstage at the CA State Thespian Festival (CSTF)

Outstanding Play Festival entries may be invited to perform on the Mainstage at CSTF. To perform at the CSTF, the invited school needs to have a chartered Thespian troupe, and register for the CSTF on time and before registration closes due to capacity. CSTF registration spots will not be held.

The CA State Thespian Festival is April 5-7, 2024 at Upland High School.

Content for State Festival Mainstage: Creating content that's appropriate for a specific audience involves careful consideration. Below is a checklist to help ensure that your content aligns with our diverse audience.

- **Age Group:** Determine the age range of your target audience. Different age groups have varying sensitivities and comprehension levels. Your show should be appropriate for attendees ages 13 and up.
- **Themes and Topics:** Your show should be suitable for the entire State Festival delegation, including students from across the political spectrum and religious schools.
- **Complexity and Depth:** We encourage you to bring pieces that are accessible to, while also challenging, our teenaged attendees.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** The State Festival audience is diverse. Avoid stereotypes or offensive content that could alienate specific groups in our delegation.

GOAL C: Represent CA as the Chapter Select at International Thespian Festival (ITF)

One performance may be selected to represent CA at ITF. This decision will be made by adjudicators at the CA State Thespian Festival (CSTF).

Up to 6 Play Festival entries may be invited to the Chapter Select Final Round at CSTF. To perform in the final round of Chapter Select adjudication, the invited school needs to have a chartered Thespian troupe, and register for the CSTF on time and before registration closes due to capacity. CSTF registration spots will not be held.

International Thespian Festival is June 24-28, 2024 in Bloomington, IN.

Content for ITF: Troupes interested in representing California at the International Thespian Festival should adhere to [EdTA's Chapter Select guidelines](#).

NORTHERN PLAY FESTIVAL

Location: Westmont High School, 4805 Westmont Ave., Campbell, CA 95008.

Registration opens at 7:30 a.m. on Jan 20. Plan to arrive no later than 8:00 a.m. Registration is limited to a max of 20 people per school.

Parking: There is plenty of free parking in the main parking lot at Westmont High School in front of the tennis courts next to the theater.

Lunch: Registration does NOT include lunch. You are welcome to bring a lunch or drive to our local Safeway (5 minutes away) or drive to one of the local quick service restaurants.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS

- **SCENERY:** Four “band” chairs and a 3’X6’ table will be available for use. Other scenery or property items may be brought to the Play Festival if desired.
- **PROPS & COSTUMES:** Schools may provide their own hand props and costumes.
- **LIGHTING:** Each play will be given 5 light cues in this order: blackout, lights up, lights down, bows, blackout. If additional light cues are needed, contact Jeff Bengford via email: jbengford@cuhsd.org
- **SOUND:** Microphones are not needed in this intimate space.
- **PLAYBACK:** Schools may bring their own device (cellphone, ipod, ipad, laptop, tablet, MP3 player, boom box) for playback of sound effects and/or music. This device must have an open 3.5mm headphone jack or audio port or AUX-in port. NOTE: if you are using an iphone 7 or higher, please bring your own headphone adapter or “dongle.”
- **POWER:** There are several Edison plug outlets near the stage - simply ask the backstage manager when you arrive to show you where the nearest one is.
- **NOTE:** Although production elements may be critiqued, the quality of student **performances** will be the focus of the evaluation.
- **WARNING:** Any school wishing to use a starter pistol or other stage appropriate weapon must clear the item with the host school. The use of any props with an open flame will not be permitted under any circumstances. The use of water on stage must be cleared by the host school.

Contact: Jeff Bengford, Westmont High School

Telephone: (408) 483-2088

Email: jeff.bengford@cathesprians.org

CENTRAL PLAY FESTIVAL

Location: Arroyo Grande High School, 495 Valley Rd, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Registration opens at 7:30 a.m. on Jan 20. Plan to arrive no later than 8:00 a.m.

Registration is limited to a max of 50 people per school.

Parking: There is plenty of free parking in the main parking lot at Arroyo Grande High School in front of the Clark Center for the Performing Arts.

Lunch: Registration does NOT include lunch. You are welcome to bring a lunch or drive to one of the local food options which include McDonald's, In-n-Out, Panera, Chipotle, Five Guys, Subway, Panda Express.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS

- **SCENERY:** Four "band" chairs, four small "cabaret" tables, four acting cubes, and a 30"x72" folding table will be available for use. Other scenery or property items may be brought to the Play Festival if desired.
- **PROPS & COSTUMES:** Schools may provide their own hand props and costumes.
- **LIGHTING:** Each play will be given 5 light cues in this order: blackout, lights up, lights down, bows, blackout. If additional lighting is needed, contact the Event Coordinator listed below.
- **SOUND:** A max of eight body mics are provided. A student technician will assist with putting the mics on and removing them.
- **PLAYBACK:** Schools may bring their own device (cellphone, ipod, ipad, laptop, tablet, MP3 player, boom box) for playback of sound effects and/or music. This device must have an open 3.5mm headphone jack or audio port or AUX-in port. NOTE: if you are using an iPhone 7 or higher, please bring your own headphone adapter or "dongle."
- **POWER:** There are several Edison plug outlets near the stage - simply ask the backstage manager when you arrive to show you where the nearest one is.
- **NOTE:** Although production elements may be critiqued, the quality of student **performances** will be the focus of the evaluation.
- **WARNING:** Any school wishing to use a starter pistol or other stage appropriate weapon must clear the item with the host school. The use of any props with an open flame will not be permitted under any circumstances. The use of water on stage must be cleared by the host school.

Contact: Sean Blauvelt, Arroyo Grande High School

Telephone: (805) 748-4265

Email: sean.blauvelt@cathespians.org

SOUTHERN PLAY FESTIVAL

Location: Upland High School, 565 W 11th St, Upland, CA 91786

Registration opens at 7:30 on Jan 20. Plan to arrive no later than 8:00 a.m.

Registration is limited to a max of 50 people per school.

Parking: There is a lot on San Antonio Avenue directly behind the Highlander Auditorium for parking and loading/unloading.

Lunch: Registration does NOT include lunch. You are welcome to bring lunch. There are also many food options nearby, including Starbucks, Jack in the Box, Little Caesars, Jim's Burgers, Taco Bell, Waba Grill, Sprouts, and more within close driving distance.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS

- **SCENERY:** Four chairs and a sturdy table will be available for use. Keep scenery to benches, boxes, chairs, and a table as backstage storage space is limited.
- **PROPS & COSTUMES:** Schools may provide their own hand props and costumes.
- **LIGHTING:** Each play will be given 5 light cues in this order: blackout, lights up, lights down, bows, blackout. If color washes are needed, contact the Event Coordinator listed below.
- **SOUND:** A max of ten body mics are allowed. A max of 4 handheld mics are allowed as well.
- **PLAYBACK:** Schools must bring a flash drive for playback of sound effects and/or music. We cannot play music from a phone or an outside computer.
- **NOTE:** Although production elements may be critiqued, the quality of student **performances** will be the focus of the evaluation.
- **WARNING:** Any school wishing to use a starter pistol or other stage appropriate weapon must clear the item with the host school. The use of any props with an open flame will not be permitted under any circumstances. The use of water on stage must be cleared by the host school.

Contact: Michele Richardson, Upland High School

Email: michele.richardson@cathespians.org

IN-PERSON SUPPLEMENTAL TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Upload this completed form with your registration, or submit a document with the same information.

School Name: _____

If a cyclorama is available, what color would suit your show best: _____

Or would you prefer: a black traveler curtain as your background? YES NO

Draw a bird's eye view of the stage set up for your play.



AUDIENCE

See pages 8-10 for the scenery that will be provided.
You may bring additional props & scenery if desired.

What are you bringing? List all hand props & costumes on the lines below.

NOTE: Any school wishing to use a starter pistol or other stage appropriate weapon must clear the item with the host school. The use of any props with an open flame will not be permitted under any circumstances. The use of water on stage must be cleared by the host school.

After the introduction, do your actors start: (*circle*) onstage or off?

Describe the ending of the play: Does the final blackout happen right after the last line? Does the final blackout happen after a moment? Do you want a quick blackout or a fade to black?
