



NEW JERSEY
JUNIOR THESPIANS™

AN EDUCATIONAL THEATRE ASSOCIATION AFFILIATE

2026

FESTIVAL INFORMATION

NJ Junior Thespians 2026 Festival Information
Packet



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Included in this packet you will find all of the information to use as your personal reference for the NJ Jr. Thespian Festival.

ABOUT US



About the

New Jersey Junior Thespians

New Jersey Thespians is a non-profit organization. It is a chapter of the Educational Theatre Association which sponsors the International Thespian Society (ITS). It is NJ Junior Thespian's mission to promote, strengthen, and advocate for theatre arts education in New Jersey middle schools. We offer a community for middle school theatre educators and student Thespians to learn, share, and celebrate theatre.

www.njrrthespians.org

About the

NJ Junior Thespian Festival

We want you to be a part of this experience! This is our annual Junior Thespian Festival. Bring a few or bring many of your students for a truly memorable time with other talented middle schools from our state. The best part...if you do not have a Thespian troupe, you can still attend. Theatre students from all over the state will be coming together to participate in workshops, meet other theatre students from around the state and perform in a Showcase and Individual Events. The NJ Junior Thespian Festival is a marvelous opportunity for students of all backgrounds and experiences to learn and celebrate theatre.

About the

International Thespian Society

The International Thespian Society is an honorary organization for high school and middle school theatre students located at more than 4,600 secondary schools across the United States, Canada, and abroad. The mission of ITS is to honor student achievement in the theatre arts, and since its founding in 1929, more than 2.2 million students have been inducted as Thespians. High school inductees are known as Thespians and Junior High Middle school inductees are known as "Junior Thespians."



FESTIVAL INFO



IMPORTANT

FOOD

- 2 slices of pizza and a water bottle will be provided for each attendee and chaperone.
- If participants have any dietary needs, please bring a bagged lunch.
- There will be additional chips and snacks to buy during lunchtime and breaks.
- If any student or adult has a specific food allergy, please indicate on registration.
- No food deliveries from outside restaurants will be permitted.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

- NJ Thespians is constantly striving to accommodate the needs of all students and teachers.
- The festival is held on the bottom and upper floors of the high school and there are no barriers. The seating in the auditorium is accessible to individuals with mobility concerns as well.
- If an attendee is visually impaired, hearing impaired, or has any learning or developmental disability, it is the responsibility of the school to notify Thespians on registration so suitable accommodations may be made.

SAFETY

- Please hand out the Security Rules and Regulations to all attendees to ensure maximum safety.
- The Consent and Acceptance Forms (pg 10) must be printed (2 copies each) and signed by all attendees.
- One copy will be handed in at Check-In on the day of festival, and the other copy will be folded and placed in the attendee's badge.

REGISTRATION

REGISTER TODAY

- Registration is done completely online and will open on **January 12th**
- Please submit your registration by **March 27th**.
- Please fill out the online registration and drop a printed invoice and a check and/or purchase order in the mail postmarked by **March 27th**

SCHOOL/TROUPE PICTURES

- You are invited to submit pictures of your Thespian students.
- Send pictures representing your school's drama club, musical, play, or other event to our festival director at lfisher@njthespians.org.
- A slideshow will be made with the submitted pictures for Opening Ceremony.

FESTIVAL OPPORTUNITIES

WORKSHOPS

- Each student attendee will participate in a variety of workshops throughout the day.
 - Students participating in Thespys will compete during workshop time and may be pulled from workshops for their performance times.
 - Students not participating in Thespys will remain in the workshops throughout the day.
- Students will learn all different aspects of theatre, and gain a well-rounded theatre education.
- Professional Teaching Artists and Theatre Practitioners teach these workshops.
- Past workshop types include Musical Theatre, Movement, Tech, Improv, Stage Combat, Physical Theatre, and Speech/Voice.

INTERNATIONAL THESPIAN EXCELLENCE AWARDS

- Formerly known as "Individual Events", International Thespian Excellence Awards (Thespys™ for short) are critiqued performances for students.
 - It is optional to participate in Thespys™. Students will be able to perform in an audition type setting, and get written feedback for their individual performances.
- Students may compete in one of the following events: Solo Song, Solo Acting, Duet Song, Duet Acting, Group Song, Group Acting
- No student substitutions are permitted.
- There will be a \$5 charge if a student drops before or day of the festival.
- Any given student may participate in only one Thespys™.
- There is a \$10 fee per event entered for Thespys™.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Professional Development Credits (PDC's)
 - Directors/Assistants will earn PDC's for bringing students to festival.

LOCATION

This year's festival will be on **May 9th, 2025** from **9am-3:30pm** at:

OCVTS Grunin Performing Arts Academy
1 College Drive, Building 12
Toms River, NJ 08754

QUESTIONS

- Email lfisher@njthespians.org with any questions you may have.
- Also, please explore our website @ www.njthespians.org
- If you have questions any time during the festival, please find a member of the NJ Jr. Thespian State Board.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

ATTENDEES: An attendee may be a student or an adult. **Each student attendee** is provided with the ability to attend workshops, participate in a showcase, meet other Thespians, enjoy a provided lunch, and get a festival theme t-shirt. Each adult attendee is provided with the ability to audit workshops, watch International Thespian Awards, enjoy a provided lunch, and get a festival themed t-shirt.

DIRECTORS/ ASSISTANT: A Director is the person who completes registration and is responsible for supervising all attendees from their school. Directors have the option of bringing an Assistant to the festival. Directors/Assistants are required to check in the morning of the festival, and have the ability to audit workshops, watch students perform in International Thespian Awards, enjoy an included pizza lunch, and receive a festival themed t-shirt. Both Directors and Assistants will earn 6.5 hours of Professional Development Credits, and attend free of charge.

CHAPERONES: Directors must register chaperones to monitor student groups during the festival. One chaperone is required for every ten students. (ex. 35 students requires four chaperones). All chaperones have a responsibility to help ensure that students have a safe and educational experience at the festival. Chaperones will be required to stay with their assigned student group, and may not be with students from their school. Chaperones do not receive a festival themed t-shirt, but will enjoy a provided lunch with their group. A teacher or parent may be a chaperone, and chaperones attend free of charge.

STUDENT GROUPS: Student attendees will be mixed randomly into a workshop group for the duration of the festival. Student groups attend workshops, eat lunch, and participate in activities together. Students will be with their school during the Opening Ceremony, lunch, and Closing Ceremony. Students are broken into mixed groups as a cohort to help students collaborate, learn, and expand their horizons by meeting Thespians from all across New Jersey.

ROSTER: For insurance purposes, we are required to have the names of ALL festival participants: (Attendees, Directors/Assistants, and Chaperones) as a roster on the online registration. All participants will receive a name badge at Check-In, day of the festival. No one will be admitted to any areas of the festival without a name badge.

SUBSTITUTIONS: Participant substitutions for the festival are not permitted. Additional participants may not be added, and participants who drop from attending the festival without a substitution are non-refundable. After completing and submitting registration, all participant names are final.

Together, we will be able to provide students the very best opportunity for learning!

COST & FEES

School Fee (Required)

\$100

This covers the cost of insurance for all participants.

Required Chaperones

FREE

Chaperones will receive an attendee lunch.

Attendees

\$30 per attendee

This includes a prepared lunch and festival themed t-shirt. Student attendees participate in workshops and festival activities. Adult attendees have the ability to audit workshops and watch International Thespian Excellence Awards.

International Thespian Excellence Awards (Optional)

\$10 per entry

The attendee fee includes the ability for a student to register for Thespys™, but there is a 16 student maximum for Thespys™ Participation. See Thespys™ Guide for more info.

Director/Assistant

FREE

Directors have the ability to audit workshops, watch students perform in Thespys™, enjoy a prepared lunch in The Green Room, receive a festival themed t-shirt, and earn PDCs.

Make checks and/or purchase order payable to "NJ Thespians" and mail no later than **March 26th** to:

Carolyn Little (NJ Chapter Director)
700 Beachwood Boulevard
Beachwood NJ 08722

If the check is not postmarked by **March 26th**, there will be a \$25 late charge. Also, if there are any student drops to International Thespian Excellence Awards, there will be a \$5 charge per student drop.

SECURITY RULES & REGULATIONS

1. ALCOHOL/TOBACCO/DRUGS/E-CIGARETTE/VAPORS

Students consuming drugs, tobacco or alcohol, or found to be under the influence of these substances at any time during the festival will be sent home and disqualified, on the FIRST violation.

2. DRESS CODE

Proper attire, including shoes, must be worn at all times during the festival. Delegates are encouraged to wear comfortable clothes for workshop activities and to dress appropriately for theatre attendance. If participating in Showcase, students must wear black clothing or school t-shirts. If participating in Individual Events, students must wear black attire.

3. RESPECT

Students must respect OCTVS Grunin Performing Arts Academy. Defacing, damaging, or leaving an area in disarray is strictly forbidden. If anything is damaged, please notify a festival official immediately. Any student(s) who break these rules will be disqualified from ALL events and the troupe may be fined for damages.

4. HOST PROVISIONS

Food/drinks are prohibited in the theatre at all times! Beverage/food containers must be placed in proper trash receptacles. No food ordered from outside restaurants is permitted.

5. BEHAVIOR

Students are expected to behave properly at all times. Rudeness in gesture and/or language will not be tolerated. Be a great audience at all times. Do not walk in or out of a performance or workshop. No whispering or catcalls during performances. Treat those onstage with the same respect you would want if you were in their place.

6. NAME BADGES

Badges will be distributed at the Check-In table, and will be required to be worn to enter any area of the festival. You will not be allowed to go to any workshops without your name badge. If you lose your badge during the festival, report to the registration table.

7. HIB

Harassment, intimidation, and bullying will not be tolerated and is strictly prohibited by law. Any Thespian who engages in this behavior will be asked to leave immediately, forfeit any medal and will be reported to their school district and possibly local law enforcement depending on the severity of the incident.

8. DO NOT LEAVE CAMPUS

Do not leave the school or wander to campus areas that are not being used for the festival. Do not enter empty, unsupervised rooms that are not being used for the festival.

International Thespian Excellence Awards (Thespys™) is an educational program that offers Thespians the opportunity to receive constructive feedback on prepared theatrical material. Students are able to perform in an audition type setting, and get written feedback for their individual performances. It is designed for students to be able to perform in front of an audience, learn how to receive constructive feedback, and grow as a theatre student.

PERFORMANCE RULES FOR ALL EVENTS

REGISTRATION

Students from each school may register to participate in International Thespian Excellence Awards. The categories they can choose from are

- Musical Theatre Solo Performance (1 student)
 - Solo Monologue (1 student)
 - 2 Person Scene (2 students)
- Musical Theatre Duet Performance (2 students)
 - Ensemble Acting (3 or more students)
 - Musical Theatre Ensemble Performance (3 or more students)

SLATING

- Slating is essentially introducing yourself and your song/scene before performing
- After the introduction (slating), time begins with the first word, musical note, or acting action (if it proceeds the first word or note).
- If the student exceeds the time limit by 10 seconds, the time-keeper will stop.
- View our "How To Slate" guide at www.njrtthespians.org/thespys

TIME LIMITS

- Solo performances (song or monologue): 5 minutes
- Duet performances (song or scene): 5 minutes
- Large or small groups: 10 minutes

PARTICIPATION

- Each student is permitted to participate in only ONE solo or duet event. They may still participate in the ensemble event in addition to a solo or duet.
- Substitutions are not allowed.
- A student who drops out of the event before or at the festival is subject to \$5 fee.

ATTIRE/COSTUMES/PROPS

- Props (including hand-held props), costumes, or theatrical makeup are not allowed.
- Entrants must wear all black clothing and shoes. Clothing should be professional yet allow easy movement for the actor to accommodate the action of the performance. Entrants may wear their school show shirt in addition to the all black attire.
- Entrants should refrain from wearing anything that might distract the adjudicators.

MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT

- Performers MUST use pre-recorded, non-vocal musical accompaniment
- NO live music is permitted
- Accompanists are not permitted
- Acappella performances are not permitted
- Students are responsible for bringing their own music. A Bluetooth speaker will be provided.

GENDER

Students may play a role of any gender regardless of the gender with which they identify. However, it is important to note that all copyright rules are to be enforced. For example, the student cannot change anything in the script-pronouns or otherwise- without the written consent from the publisher.

ADJUDICATION

SCORING/RUBRICS

- A performance-based assessment rubric is used for all Thespys™
- The ratings are (4) Superior, (3) Excellent, (2) Good, and (1) Fair.

SKILLS MEASURED

- Use of transitions into and out of character
- Ability to create a believable character
- Communication of objective, tactics, and relationships
- Use of focus and concentration
- Integration of voice, body, movement, and staging

GENERAL

- It's difficult to address every situation in this document.
- Fundamentally, the guide is that the piece must either have publisher permission (NOT author-only permission) or available for sale in a libretto, play, vocal selection, or musical score.

PUBLISHED SCRIPTS

- Published scripts written for the theatre.
- If the participant is using a piece that is also a movie, the performance must be from the play or musical, not the movie script.

MUSICAL SONGS

- Songs from a published musical that have been written for the theatre (*regardless of its previous publication as a classical or popular song – e.g., Forever Plaid, Mamma Mia, etc.*).

RESOURCES

- Visit njrtthespians.org for resources on material for Thespys™.

QUESTIONS

All questions or clarifications can be directed to lfisher@njrtthespians.org

Student Form 2026

Chapter Consent and Acceptance



Make 2 copies of the 2--page form for EVERY student attending the NJ Thespian Festival. Completed forms MUST be turned in when your troupe arrives at registration. (Do not send them in advance.) You must bring TWO copies of each form. One copy will be turned in at the Check-In Table. The other copy must be folded and inserted into the student's name badge holder in case of an immediate emergency.

The New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival requires that this form be completed in full for each student delegate attending the New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival and signed by a parent or legal guardian. Type or print legibly. Enter Student's name exactly as it appears on registration form. *Return by day of festival!*

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	GENDER
STREET ADDRESS (Home)			TELEPHONE (Home)	
CITY	STATE		ZIP	
SCHOOL			TROUPE NUMBER	
NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN/NEXT OF KIN		RELATIONSHIP	PHONE NUMBER	
NAME OF EMERGENCY CONTACT (1)		RELATIONSHIP	PHONE NUMBER	
NAME OF EMERGENCY CONTACT (2)		RELATIONSHIP	PHONE NUMBER	
NAME OF TROUPE DIRECTOR OR CHAPERONE ATTENDING EVENT				

ALLERGIES TO FOOD AND/OR MEDICATIONS	(IF NONE, please indicate)
MEDICATIONS CURRENTLY BEING TAKEN	(IF NONE, please indicate)
PAST ILLNESSES OR INFORMATION NECESSARY IN AN EMERGENCY	(IF NONE, please indicate)

FAMILY PHYSICIAN	HEALTH INSURANCE COMPANY		
NAME	INSURANCE COMPANY NAME		
PHYSICIAN PHONE NUMBER	POLICY HOLDER NAME		
STREET ADDRESS	POLICY ID#	GROUP/PLAN #	
CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE	INSURANCE COMPANY STREET ADDRESS		
	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE

PRESCRIPTION INSURANCE	PROVIDER NAME	PROVIDER PHONE NUMBER
Rx GROUP #	Rx BIN #	ID #
I CONSENT TO MEDICAL TREATMENT		
<p>The undersigned hereby gives permission and consents to the New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival and its Organizers to provide routine first aid, supervise the self-administration of over-the-counter and prescription medications and to seek medical assistance and/or treatment on behalf of the Delegate in the event that an illness or injury requiring such medical assistance and/or treatment occurs while the Delegate is attending or participating in the New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival. In the event that reasonable attempts to contact the individuals listed above are unsuccessful, the undersigned hereby authorizes and consents to (1) the administration of any treatment deemed necessary by the physician listed below or, if unavailable, such other licensed physician or other healthcare provider as may be available and (2) the transfer of the Delegate to the nearest hospital or other medical facility for emergency medical evaluation, care and treatment. The indemnification in Section I below shall expressly cover any claims related to the actions the New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival and its Organizers providing any information reasonably requested by such emergency medical providers for purposes of providing or billing for in (1) providing such routine first aid or supervision and (2) seeking such medical evaluation, care and treatment, and in providing any information reasonably requested by such emergency medical providers for purposes of providing or billing for insurance.</p>		
SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN		DATE

I. RELEASE & INDEMNIFICATION

The undersigned hereby releases and agrees to indemnify, save and hold harmless the New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival, New Jersey Thespians, the Educational Theatre Association, its programs, Chapter and other Group Affiliates, and all respective officers, employees, agents and representatives of the aforementioned entities (each an "Organizer" and collectively the "Organizers") from and against any and all claims, demands, causes of actions, losses, liabilities, judgments, damages, costs and expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees) resulting from the Delegate listed above participating in the New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival. The undersigned shall give each Organizer prompt written notice of any claim or facts or circumstances that might give rise to any claim for indemnification. The undersigned further agrees to be responsible for Delegate while traveling to and from the New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival including any expenses incurred by the Delegate, caused by the Delegate and/or any personal injuries which may occur to the Delegate. The undersigned authorizes the Delegate to be released to the Troupe Director or Chaperone listed on Page 1 of this form.

II. RULES AND REGULATIONS

The undersigned agrees that the Delegate shall abide by New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival security rules and regulations. The undersigned understands that, if the Delegate violates security rules and regulations, the Delegate may be returned home, and the undersigned (or parents and/or legal guardians) may be financially responsible for all necessary costs incurred while sending Delegate home and no refunds will be granted.

III. PHOTO/VIDEO RELEASE

The undersigned irrevocably consents to being photographed or being recorded by means of video or audio tape recording by the Organizers, or a designated representative of the Organizers. These photographs and/or recordings can be used, without compensation to undersigned and/or the Delegate, in any public display, publication or media, or website, or in any manner or form, and at any time by the Organizers in promotion of the mission to promote the theatrical arts and have theatre arts recognized in all phases of education. The undersigned releases the Organizers, and their employees, agents, representatives, associates, Board of Director members, and consultants from any liability in connection with the use of such photographic, video and/or audio materials.

IV. AUTHORIZATION

I consent to the use or disclosure of protected health information by the New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival or its Organizers, or any third party health care provider, for the purpose of analyzing, diagnosing, and providing treatment to the above stated Delegate, obtaining payment for health care services rendered or to be rendered, or to conduct health care operations. A copy of this consent is as valid as the original. I authorize my insurance benefits to be paid directly to the New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival or its Organizers, or any third party health care provider. I assume full responsibility for and agree to pay for all services rendered or to be rendered. I understand I have a right to receive a copy of this consent upon request, and to revoke this consent in writing at any time except to the extent that the Organizers, or another third party health care provider, has taken action in reliance on this consent. This authorization is valid one year from the date signed or through the term of coverage of the policy, and during the required period to process the claims.

V. YOUTH ACTIVITY SAFETY POLICY

The New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival has implemented a Youth Activity Safety Policy to provide a safe environment for youths participating in activities, clinics, and conferences. This policy will help to protect participating youths from potential misconduct incidents and help provide a safe, educational, and enjoyable activity/program experience.

The Delegate and the Delegates' parent and/or legal guardian have read, understand and agree to be bound by the above provisions, as evidenced by their signatures below:

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

DATE



Adult Form 2026

Chapter Consent and Acceptance form

Make a copy of the 2--page form for EVERY adult attending the NJ Jr. Thespian Festival. Completed forms MUST be turned in when your troupe arrives at Check-In. (Do not send them in advance.)

The New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival requires that this form be completed in full for each adult delegate attending New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival Type or print legibly. Enter Delegate's name exactly as it appears on registration form. Return by day of festival.

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE NAME	DATE OF BIRTH	GENDER
STREET ADDRESS (Home)			TELEPHONE (Home)	
CITY	STATE		ZIP	
SCHOOL			TROUPE NUMBER	
NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN/NEXT OF KIN		RELATIONSHIP	PHONE NUMBER	
NAME OF EMERGENCY CONTACT (1)		RELATIONSHIP	PHONE NUMBER	
NAME OF EMERGENCY CONTACT (2)		RELATIONSHIP	PHONE NUMBER	
NAME OF TROUPE DIRECTOR OR CHAPERONE ATTENDING EVENT				

I CONSENT TO A BACKGROUND CHECK (NON--STUDENTS)

I understand my ability to participate in any program involving children as an Educational Theatre Association (EdTA) employee or volunteer may be contingent on the receipt and evaluation of my Background Check.

Failure to provide consent will result in the denial of or termination of my participation in any program involving children.

I understand that EdTA may obtain follow--up Background Checks at any time during my participation in such programs, to the extent permitted by law, unless I revoke this consent in writing. I understand that revocation of this consent may result in the immediate termination of my participation.

I understand that any information obtained from a Background Check may be considered in the course of any current or future engagement, including employment, with EdTA.

I understand that if the Background Check indicates that an outstanding warrant has been issued against me, EdTA will share that information with appropriate law enforcement agencies. I have read and understand all of the information above, and by my signature below, consent to and hereby grant authorization to obtain and release of the background check reports described above to EdTA within the terms of this Statement.

SIGNATURE	DATE
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I. RELEASE & INDEMNIFICATION

The undersigned hereby releases and agrees to indemnify, save and hold harmless the New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival, New Jersey Junior Thespians, the Educational Theatre Association, its programs, Chapter and other Group Affiliates, and all respective officers, employees, agents and representatives of the aforementioned entities (each an "Organizer" and collectively the "Organizers") from and against any and all claims, demands, causes of actions, losses, liabilities, judgments, damages, costs and expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees) resulting from the Delegate listed above participating in the New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival. The undersigned shall give each Organizer prompt written notice of any claim or facts or circumstances that might give rise to any claim for indemnification. The undersigned further agrees to be responsible for Delegate while traveling to and from the New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival including any expenses incurred by the Delegate, caused by the Delegate and/or any personal injuries which may occur to the Delegate. The undersigned authorizes the Delegate to be released to the Troupe Director or Chaperone listed on Page 1 of this form.

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III. PHOTO/VIDEO RELEASE

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V. YOUTH ACTIVITY SAFETY POLICY

The New Jersey Junior Thespian Festival has implemented a Youth Activity Safety Policy to provide a safe environment for youths participating in activities, clinics, and conferences. This policy will help to protect participating youths from potential misconduct incidents and help provide a safe, educational, and enjoyable activity/program experience.

The Adult Delegate has read, understands and agrees to be bound by the above provisions, as evidenced by his/her signature below:

SIGNATURE OF DELEGATE

DATE