

West Sound Academy

# Thespian Society

Troupe #8175

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# Drama Club Handbook

2024-25

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# Mission Statement

We the officers, thespians, and students of the West Sound Theatre Company who have dedicated ourselves to the dramatic arts, take it upon ourselves to uphold the following tenants in our efforts to entertain, create, and function as a whole.

- Ensure a high level of professionalism and organization in all that we do to achieve our goals, while simultaneously maintaining a positive, and intimate environment for all members to feel welcome and productive in.
- Provide a safe, welcoming, and inclusive community within the school that promotes creativity, education, and self-expression for any and all who wish to explore the theatrical arts.
- Foster a positive outreach presence with the larger local community characterized by service, education, and company promotion.

These aforementioned tenants shall be recognized by each of the company's major bodies including but not limited to the production-focused afterschool club, the thespian society, and the board of officers.

# International Thespian Society Constitution

## Thespian Troupe #8175 Constitution

### Article I. Name and Purpose

**Section 1.** The organization shall be called Troupe #8175 of the International Thespian Society, a branch of the Educational Theatre Association.

**Section 2.** The purpose of this troupe shall be the advancement of standards of excellence in the theatre. More specifically, the troupe shall encourage students to attain a better mastery of the theatre arts.

**Section 3.** The organization forbids secrecy; membership is given as recognition for meritorious work in the theatre arts.

### Article II. Membership

**Section 1.** All nominees for active membership shall be regularly enrolled as students of West Sound Academy.

**Section 2.** All active members must have participated in at least two (2) full-length plays/productions for the current calendar school year and have earned a minimum of ten (10) points, i.e., 100 hours of superior work in the Theatre Department for the current calendar school year. Also, active members must be enrolled in grades 9 – 12 in a theatre arts class and/or participate in West Sound Theatre Company productions for the current calendar school year, all of which support the West Sound Theatre Company. If any of these requirements are not met, students will be considered inactive members.

**Section 2a.** Inactive members may retain their status on the roll of Thespian Troupe #8175. However, their participation in, attendance at, and the conferring of any and all awards/honors at any Thespian activities is dependent on Section 2 above. The Theatre Banquet is a Thespian activity.

**Section 3.** Final authority concerning membership requirements shall be vested in the troupe sponsor/director.

**Section 4.** Honorary membership may be granted to adults for extraordinary and worthy assistance in the promotion of the theatre in the school and the community.

## Article III. Officers

**Section 1.** West Sound Academy Troupe #8175 shall elect officers once a year in the first full month of the school term at a regular business meeting.

**Section 2.** Requirements for all elected officers are as follows: Each student, must be an active member of the troupe for at least one school year, and at the time of election must be enrolled in grades 9 - 12 in a Theatre Arts class.

**Section 3.** The elected officers and appointed Liaisons are to have the following duties: Officer Positions

- **President**—this student presides at all meetings, appoints all standing and special committees, and directs and supervises troupe activities.
- **Vice President**—this student presides in the absence of the president and is responsible for the induction of new members.
- **Secretary**—this student keeps the records of the meetings and attends to troupe correspondence.
- **Treasurer**—this student keeps the troupe's books and pays bills and may act as business manager of Thespian Productions. This student also coordinates fundraising for the Troupe and serves as an aesthetic authority for any show-based projects.
- **Dramaturg**—this student works directly with the directors to help promote productions by designing and distributing posters, flyers, programs, postcards, video/film commercial announcements, etc. This student also helps research the historical, social, and cultural context of the play script to assist the director and design team.
- **Historian**—this student keeps a record of troupe activities for posterity. This may include maintaining photo albums, maintaining a video library, collecting news clippings and reviews, or other activities.

Liaison Position(s) to the Board (note: these positions are non-essential to officer meetings)

- **Technical Manager** — this student is a liaison to the Technical Theatre students and reports to the board about technical progress and needs in a current production. They may offer insight to the Dramaturge about technical elements in a production that may be used for press releases and publicity purposes. Position appointed by the president and approved by the board.

• **Theatre Costume/Prop Manager**— this student is a liaison to the Theatre Costume/Prop Closet, the West Sound Theatre Company, and the West Sound Academy community and reports to the board about needs in a current production and uses by the community-at-large of costumes and props. They may offer insight to the Director and Design team about elements in a production that may be available or needed for a show. Position appointed by the president and approved by the board.

**Section 4.** The duties of the sponsor/director will be to oversee all troupe activities, to be the final authority in the selection of new members and to be the guide and inspiration of the group.

**Section 5.** The Board of Directors shall be composed of the sponsor/director, all elected officers, and any honorary members appointed by the sponsor.

## **Article IV. Meetings, Department Participation, and Attendance**

**Section 1.** Meetings shall be held for the Thespian Board to plan activities for the year. These meetings will be as follows: First Friday of each month will be the Officers meetings. The third Friday of each month will be the Drama Club meeting - all are welcome.

**Section 2.** Officer meetings are chaired by the President, or Vice President in the President's absence.

The agenda for each officer meeting should be as follows:

### **A. Come to Order**

President starts meeting. Secretary takes roll. Missing members noted.

### **B. Announcements from the Sponsor**

### **C. Other Announcements**

### **D. Introduce Guests**

Any special guests should be introduced and given a chance to speak.

### **E. Old Business**

Conclude any business from previous meetings

### **F. New Business**

New items that need attention

### **G. Set Agenda for Membership Meeting**

Determine agenda items for the next full membership meeting.

### **H. Adjourn**

**Section 3.** Special meetings may be called by the sponsor/director, any officer, or by a quorum.

**Section 4.** A quorum shall be fifty percent of the active membership and must include two officers and the sponsor/director.

**Section 5.** Any Thespian Board officer who is absent two meetings per school year or any Thespian member who is absent more than the allotted number of rehearsals during a current production (please refer to audition information per show), unless they have an excuse considered valid by the sponsor/director, or who does not participate in at least 2 current calendar year productions, which would earn ten or more points, shall be dropped from active membership, or replaced on the current year's Thespian Board, or be removed from the designated production, depending on the level of the offense as determined by the sponsor/director. Prompt communication regarding attendance is mandatory, either by emailing the director and/or the Thespian Board Secretary or leaving a message on the Theatre Department bulletin board.

Any member who causes deliberate dissension (quitting productions, dropping out of a Theatre Department Class, discrediting/negating West Sound Theatre Company students, directors, and the West Sound Theatre Company, etc.), as determined by the sponsor/director, that would disrupt the workings of any production, business meetings, and/or the West Sound Theatre Company shall be dropped from active membership by the consent of the sponsor/director. Students who are forced to leave productions due to grade ineligibility are exempt from losing their active status.

Any member requesting re-admittance to active status, based on the criteria noted in the above paragraphs, must have the consent of the sponsor/director. However, if the member is re-admitted to active status, he/she will be ineligible for any and all awards/honors for the current calendar year.

## **Article V. Dues, etc.**

**Section 1.** There shall be dues for the troupe for troupe members that are \$35 per person per year. The dues shall be charged to the WSA student account. This fee covers ITO membership and Thespian Troupe yearly dues.

## **Article VI. Amendments**

**Section 1.** All amendments to this constitution must have the vote of two-thirds of the active troupe membership and the consent of the sponsor/director. This constitution and its amendments shall be subject to change according to any or all requirements of the International Thespian Society.

# **BYLAWS**

## **Article 1. Attendance**

**Section 1.** Late arrival to or leaving early from meetings or rehearsals without a reason considered valid by the theatre director/sponsor will be noted on attendance records. Three such offenses will be counted as an absence from a meeting/rehearsal without excuse.

**Section 2.** Regular after-school meetings will begin at the time scheduled by the sponsor/director. If there is a change of time and/or date, the sponsor/director will post a special notice on the theatre call board/website.

**Section 3.** Irregular attendance indicates a lack of interest; therefore any Thespian Board member who is absent from two (2) Thespian Board meetings per school year will forfeit their position on that year's Board. Also, any member who is absent more than the allotted number of rehearsals during a production (please refer to audition information per show) without a valid, written excuse/phone message submitted to the sponsor/director the day of, after the scheduled rehearsal shall be automatically dropped from that particular show.

**Section 4.** Attendance shall be considered in the hour requirements to join Thespians.

**Section 5.** Absences shall accumulate for only one school year at a time.

## **Article II. Inductions**

**Section 1.** Inductions shall be held once each year, or as often as deemed necessary by the sponsor/director.

**Section 2.** The time and place of induction as well as the form will be determined by the sponsor and board of officers.

**Section 3.** The Vice-President will be held responsible for the training of the speakers of the induction ceremony, must schedule and rehearse said speakers, as well as take care of the preparation of the stage and induction properties.

**Section 4.** The troupe shall cooperate with all other departments and clubs in the school in helping them with their programs in any way it can.

## **Article III. Hour Requirement System**

**Section 1.** The theatre director/sponsor will determine the exact number of hours to be awarded in all theatrical and non-theatrical participation.



**Section 2.** Hours will be awarded as suggested by the point system of the International Thespian Society. Exceptional hours and level of commitment may be rewarded to active Thespian members by the sponsor/director.

## **Article IV. Elections**

**Section 1.** Officers shall be elected at a business meeting in the month of May for the coming fall term. All officers for the coming school year shall be elected within five school days of the end of the previous school year. If there are under 20 current members in the Drama Club and or Thespian Troupe then officers will be agreed upon based on the seniority of the current members.

**Section 2.** Nominations for officers are to be made by filling out a Thespian Board Interest form (See attachment) and approved by the sponsor/director. The officer candidate who has the most votes will be elected to office. In the case of a tie, the sponsor/director may choose to either elect both candidates to a Co-office or break the tie with his/her vote. The following constitutes the main points of these documents:

The mission of the International Thespian Society, founded in 1929 as the National Thespian Society, is to promote and strengthen theatre in education. The ITS provides benefits and services for high school and middle school students and their educators through Junior Thespian and High School Thespian troupes.

The Thespian troupe at a school is designed to be an honorary organization that recognizes and rewards excellence among the participants in the theatre arts program.

A formal troupe organization with officers gives students opportunities for leadership and responsibility, and active student officers can assist the Troupe Directors in numerous ways:

- 1) Establishing and administering a code of conduct to govern all students participating in a production/retaining active membership at West Sound Academy
- 2) Planning cast parties and social activities, planning and helping to decorate induction ceremony activities, planning, and fundraising for trips, productions, and scholarships
- 3) The officers may also set goals for establishing scholarships for graduating seniors.
- 4) Troupes must elect student officers who are capable of and willing to carry out specific duties on their own initiative. It is expected that all student officers act in consultation and agreement with the Troupe Directors.

**Section 3.** Voting will be done by secret written ballot.

**Section 4.** Three members, including one officer, may request in writing to the sponsor, a recall election of all or any elected officers. This written request must state the need for such an election. The only acceptable need for a recall election would be a community event/natural disaster that hindered a large majority of the membership from being able to attend to vote for the respective officers. Upon approval of the sponsor/director, a special meeting will be scheduled within five school days of receipt of the

request, for the purpose of voting on whether or not a recall election is necessary. Two-thirds of the membership is required to mandate a recall election. If a recall election is necessary, the election of officers will follow the procedure set in Article 5, Section 1.

## **Article V. Installations**

**Section 1.** Officers shall be installed at the first social or program meeting of the school term.

## **Article VI. Adoption**

**Section 1.** The current Thespian Board will vote during the school year to adopt this constitution. The constitution from the previous school year is in effect until this vote is taken.

## **Article VII. Conflict Resolution**

**Section 1.** In the event that issues/conflicts arise between a Thespian and a Sponsor/Director which cannot be solved through communication between the two parties, the issue should be resolved by the school administration.

## West Sound Theatre Company Standards

1. Show up on time and ready to work. Often rehearsal cannot begin without all members present. Your punctuality is required. If you are going to be late clear this with the Director IN ADVANCE. If you are late, you will be asked to perform additional warm up activities and/or additional company duties by the Director. Repeated late arrivals are disrespectful to the cast and crew. After consultation with the Director, it may result in your dismissal from the Company.
2. Unless it is on your conflict sheet, there is no excuse for missing a scheduled rehearsal. Missing rehearsal may result in your removal from the production. No Exceptions. If there is an unforeseen medical/dental appointment the director/stage manager must have 24 hours notice prior to the rehearsal that will be missed.
3. Warm-ups are required. Your body and voice are two of the instruments you use as an actor. You must participate in warm ups so that you don't hurt yourself in rehearsal or performance. If you have a medical condition that limits your participation, you must have a note from a doctor. Realize that a serious illness or condition may prohibit your participation in the production. Those late to warm-ups will be required to perform additional warm-up duties.
4. Wear comfortable clothing that allows freedom of movement for all practices. Closed-toe shoes must be worn at all times unless instructed otherwise.
5. Food and Drink are not allowed in the rehearsal areas. The ONLY exception is water in an unbreakable, sealable container. PICK-UP after yourself!!! When needed, lunch or dinner breaks will be provided, but these meals must be eaten outside the rehearsal area unless specifically allowed by the Director. If you are found eating or drinking in the rented auditorium during Tech Week, you will not be put on probation and if the infraction continues it may impact your eligibility to audition for West Sound Theatre Company productions in the coming term.
6. No gum. On stage or off stage. There is no discussion on this. The end.
7. Please conduct yourself appropriately. ALL school rules are in force during show and rehearsal times. This means that language and actions must be appropriate to the school setting.
8. Please treat the rehearsal space and performance space with respect.
9. This is a non-smoking company. If you are underage and caught smoking this (and all illegal activities) will be reported to your parents, and will result in your removal from the company. Please be sure your clothes do not smell of smoke, it is offensive to others. If you are at all interested in pursuing theatre as a career, it is ridiculous to smoke anyway as it ruins your body and voice.
10. Respect others and their property. Don't touch other people's props, costumes, or personal property.

- 11.** Cell phones are not to be turned on during rehearsal. If you must keep one you will leave it on the Stage Manager table. It may not interfere with the creative process.
- 12.** Visitors are not allowed at rehearsals. In special cases, a visitor may be allowed to attend with the approval of the Director.
- 13.** Your primary focus is education, not performance. Students who have grades that slip below 2.0 GPA will be put on probation. We will make arrangements for study time for you when you are not needed in rehearsal. You may be asked to provide periodic drag sheets to the Director during the run of rehearsals. Keep your grades up! If your grades fall consistently below a 2.0 over the course of a production your eligibility to audition for the next production will be in jeopardy.
- 14.** Finally, come ready to work hard and play hard. We aren't curing cancer here, we are doing a play. It should be fun and enjoyable for everyone. This requires everyone to give all their effort, so it's hard work. But it is all about entertaining our audiences with fun, thought-provoking or dramatic theatre.
- 15.** Attitude is job one! If your attitude is awesome, it goes a long way with everyone. This play is not about you, it is about all of us. Remember, discipline is not the enemy of enthusiasm!!! Attitude is all important. If your attitude begins to become poisonous to others, you had better get over yourself pretty quick, or you will be asked to leave the company and you will have to take a break before auditioning for the next show.

# West Sound Theatre Company Ethics

## Adapted from The Circle Theatre Code of Ethics (1945)

“A part of the great tradition of the theatre is the code of ethics which belongs to every worker in the theatre. This code is not a superstition, a dogma, or a ritual that is enforced by tribunals; it is an attitude toward your vocation, your fellow workers, your audiences, and yourself. It is a kind of self-discipline that does not rob you of your invaluable individualism.

“Those of you who have been in show business know the full connotation of these precepts. Those of you who are new to show business will soon learn. The Circle Players, since its founding in 1945, has always striven to stand for the finest in theatre, and it will continue to do so. Therefore, it is with the sincere purpose of continued dedication to the great traditions of the theatre that these items are here presented.”

### The “rules” follow:

1. I shall never miss a performance.
2. I shall play every performance with energy, and enthusiasm and to the best of my ability regardless of the size of the audience, personal illness, bad weather, accident, or even death in my family.
3. I shall forego all social activities that interfere with rehearsals or any other scheduled work at the theatre, and I shall always be on time.
4. I shall never make a curtain late by my failure to be ready on time.
5. I shall never miss an entrance.
6. I shall never leave the theatre building or the stage area until I have completed my performance unless I am specifically excused by the stage manager; curtain calls are a part of the show.
7. I shall not let the comments of friends, relatives, or critics change any phase of my work without proper consultation; I shall not change lines, business, lights, properties, settings costumes, or any phase of the production without consultation with and permission of my director or producer or their agents, and I shall inform all people concerned.
8. I shall forego the gratification of my ego for the demands of the play.
9. I shall remember my business is to create illusion; therefore, I shall not break the illusion by appearing in costume and makeup off-stage or outside the theatre.

10. I shall accept my director's and producer's advice and counsel in the spirit in which it is given, for they can see the production as a whole and my work from the front.
11. I shall never "put on an act" while viewing other artists' work as a member of an audience, nor shall I make caustic criticism from jealousy or for the sake of being smart.
12. I shall respect the play and the playwright and, remembering that "a work of art is not a work of art until it is finished," I shall not condemn a play while it is in rehearsal.
13. I shall not spread rumors or gossip that is malicious and tends to reflect discredit on my show, the theatre, or any personnel connected with them—either to people inside or outside the group.
14. Since I respect the theatre in which I work, I shall do my best to keep it looking clean, orderly, and attractive regardless of whether I am specifically assigned to such work or not.
15. I shall handle stage properties and costumes with care for I know they are part of the tools of my trade and are a vital part of the physical production.
16. I shall follow rules of courtesy, deportment, and common decency applicable in all walks of life (and especially in a business in close contact with the public) when I am in the theatre, and I shall observe the rules and regulations of any specific theatre where I work.
17. I shall never lose my enthusiasm for theatre because of disappointments.

# West Sound Academy Theatre Program

## Job Descriptions

### Audience Services Manager

**Description:** The Audience Service Manager provides managerial support for the performance.

**Duties:**

- Assists in the selection and/or creation of promotional materials, including but not limited to the production poster, tickets, and program
- Assists with communication with local businesses about the production
- Assists with advertising campaign for production
- Arranges for Box Office Manager for each production
- Counts Cash Box and keeps running profit/loss information with the Board Treasurer
- Assists with community outreach program (free tickets to organizations, etc.)
- Communicate with Director frequently
- Attend all Production Staff meetings
- Follow all company rules
- Acts as House Manager for performances

### Stage Manager

**Description:** The Stage Manager conducts all the day-to-day coordination of the performance from a management perspective.

**Duties:**

- Manages production schedule
- Copies and distributes script
- Maintains daily attendance record
- Maintains conflict sheets
- Calls all unexcused cast and crew
- Posts cast and crew information
- Maintains contact sheet and distributes to all Production Staff
- Coordinates with tech Manager to meet technical deadlines
- Determines master cue sheet for all production cues
- Creates scene breakdowns and distributes to Production Staff and Cast
- Maintains master script (cuts, changes, etc.)
- Records all cues in Stage Manager Script
- Coordinates with Sound and Light operators to correctly execute all cues
- Calls performance
- Records all blocking in Stage Manager Script
- Keeps Stage Manager Script in production/rehearsal space
- Is "on book" during run-throughs
- Directs Assistant Stage Managers as needed
- Coordinates access to rehearsal, performance, and technical spaces
- Maintain discipline within the cast and crew by communicating in a polite and positive manner.
- Communicate with Director frequently
- Attend all Production Staff meetings
- Act as a leader for the cast and crew
- Maintain and follow all company rules
- Maintain security within the production/rehearsal space

## **Assistant and or Student Director**

**Description:** The Assistant Director aids the Director in the artistic creation of the performance. They act as the Director in the event that the Director is absent. They carry out the Director's artistic vision for the performance.

### **Duties:**

- Help the Director maintain artistic consistency throughout the rehearsal process
- Act as the Director in the event the Director is absent
- Direct scenes or specific action at the discretion of the Director
- Work with individual performers at the discretion of the Director
- Conduct script readings
- Conduct Run throughs of previously blocked scenes
- Manage questions about the artistic goals of the performance
- Fill in other production roles as needed or at the behest of the Director
- Assist the Director in artistic decision-making where needed
- Maintain discipline within the cast by communicating in a polite and positive manner.
- Communicate with Director frequently
- Attend all Production Staff meetings
- Act as a leader for the cast and crew
- Maintain and follow all company rules
- Maintain security within the production/rehearsal space

## **Sound Board Operator**

**Description:** The Sound Technician designs and manages all aspects of sound for the production.

### **Duties:**

- Maintain safety in and around the performance/rehearsal space
- Locate and record all sound effects, production music, and pre-show/post-show music
- Create a sound CD with all sound effects and music
- Maintain, test, and operate all microphones (batteries are renewed prior to each performance)
- Maintain, test, and operate the soundboard
- Set and record sound levels in accordance with the Director
- Perform sound checks prior to every show (test levels on each cue and mics)
- Perform cue-to-cue prior to every performance
- Communicate with the Stage Manager to set sound cues which are recorded in the script
- Communicate with any theatre staff Technicians
- Make pre-show announcements
- Properly store equipment and recordings for strike
- Maintain discipline within the crew
- Communicate with Director frequently
- Attend all Production Staff meetings
- Act as a leader for the cast and crew
- Maintain and follow all company rules
- Maintain security within the production/rehearsal space



## **Lighting Board Operator**

**Description:** The Lighting Tech designs and manages all aspects of lighting for the production.

### **Duties:**

- Maintain safety in and around the performance/rehearsal space
- Design lighting in accordance with the Director's vision
- Creating lighting drawings
- Hang, focus, and patch lighting instruments as instructed by the Director and OC Techs
- Set lighting levels in accordance with the Director
- Maintain, test, and operate light board
- Maintain, test, and coordinate the operation of spotlights
- Perform lighting check prior to every performance
- Run cue-to-cue prior to every performance
- Communicate with the Stage Manager to set sound cues which are recorded in the script
- Communicate with OC Technicians
- Properly store equipment and lighting information during the strike
- Maintain discipline within the crew
- Communicate with Director frequently
- Attend all Production Staff meetings
- Act as a leader for the cast and crew
- Maintain and follow all company rules
- Maintain security within the production/rehearsal space

### **Crew**

**Description:** The Crew performs all labor for the production including the creation of scenery, costumes, props, lighting, and sound.

### **Duties:**

- Maintain safety in and around the performance/rehearsal space
- Dress appropriately for tasks- all blacks required
- Perform tasks as directed by Stage Manager
- Complete tasks properly and in a timely manner
- Maintain a positive attitude and professional work relationship with all members of the company • Communicate with Production Staff as appropriate
- Maintain cleanliness and organization of rehearsal/performance space
- Attend all work calls
- Participate in strike as directed by Stage Manager
- Maintain self-discipline
- Maintain and follow all company rules
- Maintain security within the production/rehearsal space

## **Cast Member**

**Description:** Cast Members perform on stage as instructed by the Director.

### **Duties:**

- Read the entire script
- Learn lines in a timely manner
- Record blocking in script
- Maintain updated script
- Record, accept, and implement notes without offense
- Treat costumes, sets, and props with care
- Manage personal schedule so interference with rehearsal is minimized
- Communicate with the Stage Manager or Director where needed
- Attend all work calls
- Participate in strike as directed by the Director
- Maintain self-discipline
- Maintain and follow all company rules
- Maintain security within the production/rehearsal space