

DRAMA FESTIVAL INFORMATION SHEET

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Are you and your students thinking of participating in Pennsylvania High School Speech League's (PHSSL) Drama Festival? We hope so; and here is some info that will hopefully help you to understand the advantages and make your first time at participation a little easier...

- Sets are minimal, so the focus of competition is on strong acting, script interpretation, and character development.
- Schools perform at different venues so participants gain experience in adapting to other stages, receive feedback and encouraging critiques from qualified judges, and have the opportunity to participate in live theatre at its finest.
- Productions are entirely run by students during the competitions, so student actors and crews have an opportunity to develop strong leadership, as well as, critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Competition maintains a high quality of achievement, including promoting and fostering creativity, with the inclusion of original plays being permissible in competition.
- Students are recognized for individual, and group, achievements. All-State Cast plaques are awarded to outstanding performers at the State Drama Festival.

So, how do I get started:

1. PHSSL is divided into Regions (Western, Central, and Eastern) for drama—unlike the district breakdown that is used for speech and debate events. Each region has a Regional Coordinator. Schools are assigned to regions based on participation and proximity. Once all registration forms are received, the State Office will contact each drama coach and Regional Coordinator and notify them of their assigned region. Once your region is identified, you can always obtain your Regional Coordinator's contact info at: <http://www.phssl.org/contact.html>
2. Each region has a Regional Drama Festival that takes place no later than 12 days prior to the State Drama Festival. Dates for the drama tournaments can be found in the Communicator or on the PHSSL Calendar: <http://www.phssl.org/events.html>.
3. Each school may have 1 entry in the Regional Drama Festival, which must consist of a drama coach and at least 3 characters. (Character substitutions are not permitted—students competing in the regional festival, if advancing, must be the same students who participate at state.)
4. The 1st and 2nd place schools in each region will advance to the State Drama Festival. (If a region has more than 8 schools participating in the Regional Festival they will advance 3rd place as well. If more than 24 schools participate total, a fourth regional will be created.)

5. Plays are to be a minimum of 20 minutes and a maximum of 40 minutes. Plays used in competition may be a one-act play, a cutting from a longer play, or an original play. Musicals may not be used. (Each school is responsible for royalty obligations.)
6. Each school must complete the Regional Drama Festival Registration and Tech form, and send it in to the State Office by the date designated on the PHSSL Calendar. The form can be found on the PHSSL website, on the Documents/Forms page, or directly at: <http://www.phssl.org/pdf/Regional%20Drama%20Reg%20&%20Tech%20Form.pdf>
Registration fees are to be provided at the
7. Full information regarding PHSSL's Drama competition can be found in the Drama Handbook on the PHSSL website under the Documents/Forms page, or directly at: <http://www.phssl.org/pdf/DramaHandbook.pdf>
8. Schools may not use the previous year's winning play in the current year's tournaments. To identify the previous year's winning play, it can be located in the January Communicator or by contacting the State Office or your Regional Coordinator.
9. Schools participating in PHSSL drama competition MUST be PHSSL member schools, and must have proof of insurance requirements submitted to the PHSSL State Office prior to competition. The registration form and insurance information can be found on the PHSSL website under the Documents/Forms page: <http://www.phssl.org/docCenter.html>
10. There is a cap of \$50.00 for regional and state drama festivals.

If advancing to the State Drama Festival:

1. See the PHSSL Calendar detailing when registration forms (for both regional and state) are due to the State Office.
2. Schools are assigned a rehearsal time for Friday afternoon/evening (starting at 4:00 pm). The assigned time will be provided to drama coaches once the State Office receives the list of participating schools. Each school is given 40 minutes to rehearse on-stage in preparation for Saturday's tournament. Participants are not allowed on-stage outside of their scheduled rehearsal time to ensure fairness to each participating school, nor are they allowed to enter the theater during another school's rehearsal.
3. There is a listing of available lodging in the area for schools that are traveling too far to return home between rehearsal and the tournament. This list can be found on the PHSSL website under the Documents/Forms page or in the September Communicator.
4. The festival usually concludes around 4 pm on Saturday to allow for participating schools to return home the same day.

A short list of what is required for drama festival participation, for administrators:

- Each school must be a PHSSL member school and provide a Certificate of Insurance prior to participation in PHSSL competition. Membership is \$50.00 or \$65.00.
- Registration for Regional Festivals are discretionary based upon each region's needs.
- The State Drama Festival happens over 2 days (Friday afternoon/evening & Saturday).
- Schools that advance to the State Drama Festival pay a \$50.00 registration fee per school.
- Schools are responsible for their own props to be used in plays. Lighting and sound is provided.
- Each school is responsible for their own lodging; we have a listing of local amenities that often offer a discount to schools participating in PHSSL events.