

# The Framework for Theatre Endorsement Guidelines

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**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

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## **DEFINITION OF AN ENDORSEMENT CERTIFICATE**

Following approval by the Department, baccalaureate or graduate degree granting institutions, alone or in cooperation with other institutions, community colleges or school entities, may offer short programs (12 credits maximum) that lead to the Program Endorsement. The Program Endorsement documents knowledge in new and emerging areas where formal certification does not exist. The Program Endorsement is intended to improve a teacher's skills in dealing with complex classroom settings. These endorsements would be added to existing Level I or Level II Certificates but are not required to perform service in these areas.

## **INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE ENDORSEMENT GUIDELINES**

This document describes the professional knowledge, skills, and competencies that candidates will learn by completing a prescribed sequence of courses (including field placements). In addition to specific requirements and competencies, these guidelines discuss the Theatre Endorsement program design, candidate competencies, field experiences, and any prerequisite certificates needed by the candidate.

The endorsement would be added to an existing Level I or Level II certificate but is not required to perform service in this area. The intention of the Theatre Endorsement is to articulate guidelines and competencies to help classroom teachers who are asked to provide instruction in theatre, drama and creative dramatics or guided drama experiences. The Theatre Endorsement will also provide teachers with a research based continuum of strategies to address the learning needs of students involved in collaborative performance opportunities in Theatre. The Theatre Endorsement program design is limited to no more than 12 credits per regulation.

## **THEATRE FIELD EXPERIENCE PRACTICUM**

All endorsement programs may include some components of field experiences. Field experiences are defined as a range of formal, required school and community activities participated in by candidates who are enrolled in educator preparation programs. These activities generally include supervision and mentorship of a teacher with expertise in the endorsement area. Effective field experiences provide candidates with increasing exposure to learning situations and school settings under the guidance of program faculty and trained mentors, throughout the preparation program.

Institutions must explain:

1. How they implement field experiences.
2. The duration of candidate field experiences.
3. How these experiences are closely integrated with coursework, assessment practices, and program goals.

At least one experience must include students in inclusive settings. An inclusive setting is defined as an educational setting which includes students with and without special needs. An inclusive setting includes at least one child with an IFSP/IEP. At least one experience must be in a public school setting.

The Theatre Practicum Field Experience should include field experience in a theatre intensive setting. Suggested experiences may include programming within college or university course work, participation in a community, regional, professional theatre, or in-school or after-school theatre programs, theatre arts programming in a summer camp, arts center, or community organization or other supervised theatre setting.

The practicum should include:

1. Working with children and youth in the dramatic arts such as assisting in the directing of a play, assisting in the teaching of acting, drama in the classroom, directing, or script writing. Field hours would include process based creative expression through creative dramatics or other forms of guided collaborative drama work.
2. Assisting in the creation and application of inclusive standards-based theatre instruction or standards based theatre arts integrated instruction.
3. Production experience including backstage and behind the scenes exploration and participation in some of the following areas - Public Relations, Box Office, Crew Management, Assisting Directors, Scenery, Properties, Make-up, Costumes, Lighting, and Sound.

## **PROGRAM DESIGN**

The professional core courses, competencies and experiences for the Theatre endorsement program should be designed to address the specific set of issues, knowledge and competencies that are relevant to theatre teaching and learning. The program must prepare educators who will be able to support students' mastery of academic standards and the content assessment anchors. The program consists of required competencies and includes field experiences.

The program design must describe clearly how the relevant set of theatre knowledge, skills and competencies inform the program design, and the application must also indicate how the institution will assess whether candidates have acquired the required knowledge, skills and competencies.

The Theatre Endorsement program design included here can readily be employed as a springboard for coursework and curriculum design to support the Theatre Endorsement. The program has been written with both drama processes and theatre products in mind. While many secondary theatre programs in Pennsylvania's schools focus on performance and design in staged productions as evidence of a student's understanding and achievement in the art, ongoing student engagement in theatre *without* an end product in mind is also becoming an increasing element of theatre and drama curriculum; especially in working with elementary and middle school aged children. Therefore, this program design addresses those drama processes as well as traditional theatre. Drama processes encompass envisioned worlds, improvised scripts as well as exploration through unscripted activities designed to engage students in a wide range of real and imagined issues. These drama processes work hand in hand with traditional theatre instruction which includes the broader and more traditional conventions of the craft that have been developed over the centuries—scripted plays, acting, public performance, and stagecraft.

## **CANDIDATE COMPETENCIES**

Similar to the requirements of Chapter 354 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania School Code, this section outlines the competencies required for the Theatre Endorsement, which ensure that candidates complete a well-planned sequence of courses and field experiences to develop an understanding of the structure, skills, core concepts, facts, methods of inquiry and application of technology related to the endorsement area. See 22 Pa.Code §354.25 (a) (3).

Aligned resources and tools to support the acquisition of these competencies can be found on the [Standards Aligned Systems \(SAS\)](#) portal.

### **Competencies**

1. Candidates will understand and demonstrate their abilities in and understanding of Acting, Directing and Production.
2. Candidates will demonstrate their abilities in and understanding of Play Creation and Analysis.
3. Candidates will demonstrate their abilities in and understanding of Technical Theatre and Design.

4. Candidates will demonstrate their abilities and understanding of Theatre History and Cultural Context.

## **I. Acting, Directing and Production**

- A. Candidates will understand and demonstrate the basic theories and processes of acting and directing.
  1. Character development through script analysis, **improvisational and collaborative work** and the application of acting techniques and methods.
  2. Making directorial and/or performance choices including staging and blocking for multiple forms and genres of theatre and in a variety of styles.
  3. Understanding rehearsal processes and protocols including actor safety.
  4. Basic knowledge/exposure to process centered drama experiences such as creative dramatics or other forms of drama as creative expression.
- B. Candidates will understand and demonstrate the basic processes and practice of production.
  1. Conducting auditions and casting.
  2. Organizing production teams, schedules, budgeting and marketing.
  3. Reflecting on and evaluating the production process.
  4. Knowledge of legal and professional obligations, responsibilities and liabilities.
- C. Candidates will understand and demonstrate K-12 theatre pedagogy based on established standards.
  1. Designing inclusive theatre specific curriculum, instruction and competency-based assessments to determine and communicate student achievement for all learners.
  2. Understanding and applying inclusive developmentally appropriate content and instruction.

## **II. Play Creation and Analysis**

- A. Candidates will understand and demonstrate basic theories and processes of play creation, including:
  1. Creating dramatic texts (script writing) through exploration of script structures.

2. Devising a script through exploration of improvisation, ensemble building and collaboration.
- B. Candidates will understand and demonstrate basic theories and processes of play analysis.
1. Evaluating dramatic text for artistic intent.
  2. Analyzing dramatic structures (character, plot, dialogue, theme, atmosphere, music, and spectacle).

### **III. Technical Theatre and Design**

- A. Candidates will have an understanding of Technical Theatre and Design developed both in the classroom and through practical Production Experience including:
1. Production Concept & Design.
    - a. Creating a design that reflects the overarching theme, locale, period and atmosphere through:
      - Scenery,
      - Properties,
      - Make-up,
      - Costumes,
      - Lighting, and
      - Sound.
- B. Basic processes and practices of technical production
1. Understanding of skills in:
    - a. Scenic design and construction,
    - b. Properties,
    - c. Make-up,
    - d. Costuming,
    - e. Lighting,
    - f. Sound, and
    - g. Production management.
- C. Guiding students in the safe use of materials and resources.



#### **IV. Theatre History, Culture and Context**

- A. Analyzing dramatic texts from a variety of different cultural and historical perspectives.
- B. Analyzing and critiquing dramatic texts and staged productions.
- C. Identifying and analyzing cultural, historic and social meaning in dramatic texts and staged productions.
- D. Analyzing and evaluating the evolution of theatre arts throughout history and across cultures.

#### **FACULTY**

Endorsement programs submitted for review to the Department will include the qualifications of faculty assigned to teach each course within the program. Faculty who teach in the Theatre endorsement program must have demonstrated expertise and education methods appropriate to engaging the mind of learners in the content they are teaching.

Evidence of qualification includes related academic degrees, public-school certifications, and professional experience in basic pre-K-12 and/or higher education and professional development pertaining to the competencies.

#### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

The institution's certification officer will recommend a candidate for the endorsement after successful completion of the Theatre Endorsement program. The candidate must complete the required PDE application for endorsement and pay the appropriate fee to add the endorsement to their instructional certificate. The application may be found on the [Certifications page](#).

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