



In this Together: Equity Through Theatre

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## **Inclusive Practices for Students with Disabilities**

Students with Visual impairments

Assistive technologies

Braille or audio scripts

High-contrast tape

Guides for entrances and exits

Highly specific blocking and set placement (spike early!)

Students with Down Syndrome or Cognitive Delay

Communication - Verbal? Nonverbal? Device?

Interests - type and size of role

Stamina

Expectations - yours and theirs!

## **Universal Design in Theatre**

Advertise your program, auditions, or activities well in advance, with explicit offers of accessibility and/or accommodations, if possible.

Flexible casting options in script (physical demands, size of parts, memorization requirements)

Audition in groups or partners; video submission; private

- Offer a variety of audition forms (large print, oral option, video, or have available before the audition itself)
- Mentors and guides
- Invite students to disclose any concerns or relevant issues in person or on the audition form itself

## **Casting**

Look for parts that have obvious cues, work in tandem, or meet the students' needs in terms of stamina and focus

## **Rehearsal Process**

- Start blocking immediately and do it in order; for younger students, this helps build in continuity of the story and the process
- Tell the story - build understanding /comprehension

- Repeated reading strategy - mirrors rehearsal strategies
- Clarify! (Idioms, double meanings, cultural references)
- Build in sensory activities and movement; this should be part of every warm-up, but also make it part of the mid-rehearsal break as well. Do some controlled breathing to bring everyone back to the process.
- Don't underestimate your students!

## **Resources**

Penguin Project at Northern Starz Children's Theatre (MN)

<https://northernstarz.org/>

The Penguin Project

<https://penguinproject.org/>



PrairieCare  
*Child & Family Fund*