

Perpich Center for Arts Education

Theater Director and Educator Mentoring Program - Program Overview

As a part of a comprehensive theater education landscape in the state of Minnesota, the Perpich Center Theater Director and Educator Mentoring Program aims to support K-12 directors and educators in all aspects of their work, both curricular and extracurricular. Through the guidance of experienced theater directors and educators (who are also licensed in Theater Arts, English/Language Arts, Speech, and/or related fields), mentees are able to strengthen their skills, abilities, and knowledge in one or more of the following areas:

- **The entire process of directing a production** (including script selection, casting, blocking and movement, technical/design elements, and more)
- **Creating and running a theater program** (planning and scheduling, fundraising, budgeting, marketing, recruitment and retention, audience engagement, advocacy)
- **Developing curriculum and assessment** (in alignment with the latest state and national standards)
- **Developing an equity lens** in all aspects of their work in order to increase diversity, inclusion, access, and ensure nuanced, culturally sustaining representations

The Mentoring Program aims to increase K-12 theater educator and director confidence, improve student engagement and outcomes, and increase teacher retention through the support of a statewide network. The program is open to early career directors and educators, those who have been teaching for some time but are new to theater directing, those who may have directing experience but are new to the K-12 system, or anyone in K-12 theater education who feels like they could benefit from the support and guidance of a mentor in their productions and/or their curriculum.

Program schedule/steps for 2024-2025:

- **STEP 1 (August-October):** Interested mentees and mentors complete a pre-program inventory to assess their general and specific needs, expertise, and availability for the upcoming academic year, and their goals for involvement in the program. Mentees can also identify which of the following options best suit their needs:
 - Option A - 1-3 consultations with a Mentor
 - Option B - Short-term - support for one production or one class
 - Option C - Full-year - support throughout the year on multiple productions and/or classes
- **STEP 2 (September-December):** From this data, the Theater Education Specialist will work to match mentees with mentors who can support them in their goals, and who may be in the same geographic region if possible.
- **STEP 3 (ASAP after e-introduction):** Mentors and mentees meet virtually for the first time as pairs to learn about each other's experience and interests, to discuss the mentee's needs for the upcoming school year, to identify key goals for the mentee's first production or class (using the Goals Worksheet), and to map out a plan for their work. If new, they will also meet with the program director. Mentor support may include:
 - Regular phone and email correspondence throughout the year
 - Direct assistance, observation, and feedback on production rehearsal(s), class(es), curriculum, etc., either in person or virtually
 - Check-ins to assess progress on identified goals

(*More information and links to submit your interest form on the other side of this sheet!)

- **STEP 4 (October-May):** Mentors and mentees will meet virtually as an entire cohort four times throughout the year to build an emerging director network and to learn from each other's challenges and successes. This year, these virtual meetings will be from **7:00-8:30 pm on the following dates:**
 - **Monday, October 7th**
 - **Tuesday, December 3rd**
 - **Tuesday, February 25th**
 - **Tuesday, May 27th.**

While we understand that schedules are difficult, and attending every meeting may not be possible, we strongly encourage participants to put these dates on their calendars as soon as possible and plan to attend at least 1-2 meetings to build a strong cohort. This is your opportunity to connect with one another and to gather strategies, resources, and ideas for the challenges you (and likely others!) are facing.

**This program is FREE to mentees, and mentors are paid a stipend. It does require a COMMITMENT to communication with your partner, the program director, and the cohort. Please consider your capacity carefully when applying.*

To learn more contact Stephanie Lein Walseth at stephanie.walseth@pcae.k12.mn.us

Ready to sign up? Click on the appropriate QR code below! If you have already completed a form in the past year or so and do not have any major changes, you do not need to do this again. Just email Stephanie and let her know that you would like to participate! Mentees are welcome to participate for up to 3 years. There is no limit on the number of years for Mentors.



To complete a **MENTEE** Inventory Interest Form, use this QR code



To complete a **MENTOR** Inventory Interest Form, use this QR code:

