

# THESPIAN TROUPE HANDBOOK

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Act well your part; there all the honor lies.



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INTERNATIONAL<sup>SM</sup>  
THESPIAN SOCIETY

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HONORING STUDENT  
ACHIEVEMENT IN THEATRE

Thespian Troupe Handbook  
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Revised August 2015

Some forms and documents referenced in this handbook are only available via download from the [ITS documents](#) library or [Codes and policies](#) library. A list is provided in Appendix 5.

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## **Introduction and general information**

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### ***What is the International Thespian Society?***

The International Thespian Society (ITS), founded in 1929, is an honorary organization for high school and middle school theatre students located at more than 4,200 affiliated secondary schools across America, Canada, and abroad. The mission of ITS is to honor student achievement in the theatre arts. High school inductees are known as Thespians and junior high/middle school inductees are known as *Junior Thespians*. ITS is a division of the Educational Theatre Association (EdTA).

### ***What is the Educational Theatre Association?***

The Educational Theatre Association (EdTA) is a national nonprofit organization with more than 100,000 student and professional members. EdTA's mission is *shaping lives through theatre education* by: honoring student achievement in theatre and enriching their theatre education experience; supporting teachers by providing professional development, networking opportunities, resources, and recognition; and influencing public opinion that theatre education is essential and builds life skills. EdTA operates the International Thespian Society (ITS), an honorary organization that has inducted more than two million theatre students since its founding in 1929. EdTA also publishes *Dramatics*, a monthly magazine for high school theatre students, and *Teaching Theatre*, a quarterly journal for theatre education professionals.

### ***Hierarchy of troupe governance documents***

This handbook is one part of a hierarchy of documents that govern troupe operation. See [schooltheatre.org/codesandpolicies](http://schooltheatre.org/codesandpolicies). Everyone involved with your troupe should have access to all governance information and be familiar with the troupe handbook, constitution, and bylaws. These documents will help the troupe operate smoothly and prevent confusion or conflict. It is essential that troupes consult and adhere to all documents in the following order of importance:

**Code of regulations.** The code of regulations is EdTA's primary governing document. It creates the framework that defines the Association and shapes the policies of the organization and its membership.

**Membership policy.** The membership policy consists of EdTA's rules and regulations. It defines the types of Association memberships, troupe and individual membership eligibility, and the process for becoming a member.

**Troupe handbooks.** The *Thespian Troupe Handbook* and *Junior Thespian Troupe Handbook* explain how troupes are expected to operate.

**Troupe constitution.** The troupe constitution is the document that details how an individual troupe will operate. See *Troupe constitution and bylaws* below.

**Troupe bylaws.** At the end of the troupe constitution is a section for bylaws. These are easier to add, delete, or change than articles of the troupe constitution, which makes them more flexible for day-to-day troupe operations. See *Troupe constitution and bylaws* below.

### ***EdTA chapters***

Chapters are officially recognized entities that represent troupes within a geographical area, most often American states or Canadian provinces. Each active chapter has a director and board who oversee area activities. Most chapters conduct annual festival/conferences and offer scholarships, performance

opportunities, and educational workshops. Some chapters also conduct competitive events. The *State Chapter* web page provides links to chapters and their directors. See [schooltheatre.org/statechapters](http://schooltheatre.org/statechapters).

## **The ITS/school relationship**

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### ***The difference between the school's Thespian troupe and the theatre program***

The Thespian troupe is a subset of the theatre arts program. It is the student honor society, a separate student organization, and membership is earned. Any student may be a member of the theatre program, but only students who have been officially inducted and registered with the EdTA national office are members of the theatre program *and* the International Thespian Society.

### ***Chartering a troupe***

Chartering a Thespian troupe establishes a school's affiliation with ITS. The school administration appoints the troupe director to be the single, official representative of the school and troupe to EdTA. The school is legally and financially responsible for troupe and troupe director activity. By chartering a troupe and renewing the troupe's membership annually, the troupe director and administration agree to the terms in the code of regulations and membership policy. See [schooltheatre.org/charterthespian](http://schooltheatre.org/charterthespian).

### ***The term of troupe membership***

The troupe membership term is August 1 through the following July 31, the ITS school year. Troupes chartered or reinstated August 1 through June 30 become active through the end of the current school year (July 31). Fees are not prorated for partial years. Troupes chartering late in the school year are still required to pay renewal dues for the following school year by October 15. Troupes chartered or reinstated in July have their memberships extended through July 31 of the following school year.

### ***Annual troupe renewal dues***

Each troupe must submit its annual troupe renewal dues between August 1 and October 15 of each school year to maintain its active status. Renewal reminders are sent in early August. See [schooltheatre.org/renewtroupe](http://schooltheatre.org/renewtroupe) for details.

### ***Troupe membership status***

The troupe's membership status reflects the school's relationship with the International Thespian Society. Troupe status does not affect individual Thespian benefits that come directly from the National Office but may affect benefits that require a troupe director's authorization, including scholarship and grant eligibility, induction, and the purchase of graduation and honor items.

**Active status.** Active troupes have met all membership requirements and enjoy full benefits.

**Inactive or suspended status.** Inactive troupes have not met one or more membership requirements and their membership benefits are suspended temporarily until these requirements are met. These troupes are informed of this status and the term of the grace period, the date by which the requirements must be met. Inactive troupes that meet the requirements before the end of the grace period are returned to active status without an additional reinstatement fee.

**Withdrawn status.** Inactive troupes that do not meet membership requirements by the end of the grace period are withdrawn from active status. Withdrawn troupes have their benefits removed indefinitely and must pay an additional reinstatement fee to be returned to active status. Troupes that remain withdrawn past the end of the current school year must also submit a reinstatement form complete with troupe director and administrator's signatures.

## **The role of the troupe director**

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The troupe director is the official representative of the school's Thespian troupe to our organization. The troupe director is responsible for overseeing all troupe activities and operations, subject to the authority of the school's administration and EdTA's code of regulations and policies. The success of a Thespian troupe rests largely on the leadership, skill, and enthusiasm of its troupe director.

This troupe director is a professional member of EdTA as long as the troupe maintains active membership status. See the *Services and benefits for Thespian troupes and directors* section below.

### ***Troupe director eligibility***

Most often the troupe director is the theatre teacher or drama director; however, any adult appointed by the school's administration may serve as the official troupe director, i.e., another teacher, a parent, or a Thespian alum.

### ***Troupe co-directors and assistant directors***

Although the troupe may have more than one person who helps fulfill troupe director duties (sometimes called a *troupe co-director* or *troupe assistant director*), only one person may be designated the official troupe director and have troupe leadership authority. This gives him or her the ability to do such things as signing forms and applications, awarding Thespian points, inducting students into ITS, ordering Thespian honor items, accessing troupe account information, etc. EdTA invites other adults assisting in troupe operations to become *EdTA affiliate professional members*, so that they will receive professional benefits for themselves. See [schooltheatre.org/join](http://schooltheatre.org/join).

### ***Troupe director log-in access***

Each troupe director receives a log-in ID and password from the National Office. The same log in provides access to their:

1. School's troupe homepage, which is used for troupe business such as induction
2. Personal member homepage, which is used for personal business and profile or log-in changes
3. Personal Theatre Education Community profile
4. Digital editions of *Dramatics* magazine and *Teaching Theatre* journal

Logging in provides access to online EdTA member benefits such as, the member directory, members-only communities, and special member pricing in the EdTA Store. In addition, troupe directors must log in to purchase troupe-only items such as Thespian honor items, graduation materials, and troupe supplies. We strongly advise troupe directors not to share codes with others. The troupe is responsible for any online activity involving its log-in ID and password.

### ***Using your school's troupe homepage to manage troupe records and business***

The school-specific troupe homepage is an essential tool that provides troupe directors access to online resources and services that include: inducting new Thespians, viewing the troupe roster, ordering troupe director-only items from the EdTA store, editing troupe and student profiles, printing or paying troupe invoices, submitting new Honorary Thespians, updating student honor ranks and scholar distinctions, and transferring Thespians. The troupe director can access his or her troupe homepage by logging in to [schooltheatre.org](http://schooltheatre.org) and clicking the *Troupe Business* link when it appears at the top right of the page.

### ***Annual troupe director tasks***

**Keep the troupe's membership active and in good standing.** Troupes must pay their annual dues between August 1 and October 15 each school year to remain active. Troupes must also pay outstanding balances promptly and adhere to EdTA/ITS guidelines to remain active and in good standing. If a

troupe's membership lapses, reinstatement is as simple as submitting a reinstatement form and the appropriate fees.

**Verify/update troupe contact information with the National Office.** Troupe directors should maintain accurate troupe and personal contact information through their online troupe homepage. Review/update reminders are sent to all active troupes at the beginning of each school year.

**Review the troupe's constitution.** Every troupe should adopt a constitution that includes troupe operation and organization information specific to that troupe. The constitution should be reviewed each year and updated if necessary. See the *Troupe Constitution and Bylaws* below.

### ***Ongoing troupe director activities***

**Thespian inductions.** Troupe directors recognize student achievement by assessing student work and inducting eligible students into the International Thespian Society. Active troupes may induct new members at any time of year. See sections *Determining Thespian induction eligibility* and *Inducting new Thespian members* below.

**Maintaining the minimum number of active Thespians.** Each troupe must maintain an active base of at least six officially inducted Thespians. See *Minimum active student member requirement* below.

**Thespian rank advancement.** Following induction (ten Thespian points earned), troupe directors encourage and reward achievement by continuing to award Thespian points, advancing students through Thespian honor ranks, and updating ranks on their Thespians' online member profiles. See *Thespian stars and honor ranks* below.

**Awarding Thespian scholar distinctions.** Troupe directors recognize their Thespians' success in overall academic coursework by awarding Thespian scholar distinctions and recording them on their students' online member profiles. See *Thespian scholar distinctions* below.

**Troupe officer elections.** Each year most troupes conduct officer elections. This establishes a team of student leaders who will support the troupe director and troupe activities throughout the year. See *Troupe officers* below.

**Information management.** The troupe director is the primary conduit of information between the school, the National Office, and their students. Correspondence from EdTA is sent to the troupe director's attention. It is the troupe director's responsibility to share appropriate information with students and forward all invoices and statements for processing as required by the school's payment policies. The troupe director authorizes transactions, orders, inductions, and membership queries on behalf of the troupe. EdTA cannot release sensitive troupe information to students or parents. Whenever possible, troupe directors, not students, should contact the National Office.

### ***Changing troupe directors***

**New troupe directors.** Transitions between troupe directors are particularly important times for Thespian troupes. It is crucial that EdTA/ITS be informed of troupe director changes as quickly as possible to ensure that professional membership is transferred to the new troupe director and that accurate contact information is available. To make the change official, submit a Change of Troupe Director form to the National Office. The form is available through [schooltheatre.org/changetroupedirector](http://schooltheatre.org/changetroupedirector).

**Outgoing troupe directors.** If staff changes such as retirement are known in advance, the outgoing troupe director can help to facilitate a smooth transition by:

1. Communicating to the new troupe director the value of Thespian affiliation, including:
  - a. The honorary nature of induction
  - b. Professional member and Thespian benefits and services
  - c. Chapter and international event and program opportunities, etc.
2. Providing the new troupe director a packet of up-to-date EdTA/ITS information, including:
  - a. The change of troupe director form
  - b. A troupe handbook and FAQs
  - c. Copies of all ITS forms
3. Passing on to the new troupe director all troupe-specific materials, including:
  - a. The current troupe constitution, complete with any membership eligibility amendments
  - b. Thespian membership rolls and induction history
  - c. Student point record, rank, and scholar distinction information
  - d. Troupe leadership information
  - e. Copies of important correspondence with the National Office
4. Do not pass on troupe director log-in codes or edit the existing troupe director profile with the new person's information. He or she will need their own member record and log-in codes, which will be set up when the change of troupe director form is processed by the National Office.

## **Troupe organization**

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A Thespian troupe is an honor society that recognizes and rewards excellence among the participants in the theatre arts program. Induction into the International Thespian Society is an honorable achievement, which the troupe director should promote to their students. The troupe is not a club, fraternity/sorority, or secret society within the school. Meetings, induction ceremonies, and other activities should be open to interested students, parents, and administrators to emphasize the honorary nature of the troupe.

Activities of the Thespian troupe and the school's theatre program are most beneficial when they are coordinated to complement and reinforce each other. Additionally, many schools find that cooperation with other departments results in a more rewarding program. Many schools use the art department for set painting, business classes for assistance in publicity and marketing, and home economics classes for help with costume design and construction. This cooperation helps promote the theatre arts within the school community as well as introduce new students to the pride in putting on a full-scale production.

### ***Troupe funds***

Control of the troupe's funds is vested exclusively with the troupe director and the school officials. The troupe director submits official records, transactions, and payment of fees to the National Office.

We recommend that new troupe directors familiarize themselves with their school's payment procedures by meeting with a business officer at the beginning of the school year. School purchasing procedures vary greatly. Knowing the school's purchasing procedures and payment schedule in advance and coordinating them with EdTA's procedures, deadlines, and turnaround times will make it easier to pay annual troupe dues and other bills on time and to induct students and receive merchandise in time for ceremonies and awards banquets. See *Appendix 4: Paying by purchase order and collection procedures*.

All payments to EdTA must be made in U.S. funds. We highly recommend that troupes outside the United States pay by credit card. This automatically converts payment to U.S. funds and locks in the correct conversion rate.

### ***Troupe constitution and bylaws***

Each Thespian troupe is expected to adopt a constitution, which should contain basic information about how the troupe operates. This includes any local additions to induction eligibility and the recommended point system. A troupe constitution template is available on the EdTA website and includes the process for approving changes. If the troupe has not adopted a modified version, the ITS troupe constitution template is the governing document.

At the end of the template is a section for troupe bylaws. These cover the day-to-day details of troupe operation, which vary greatly from troupe to troupe and may need to be updated more frequently than articles of the troupe constitution. Bylaws often include such things as rules of order for troupe meetings, elections, and induction ceremonies. Good, up-to-date bylaws help the troupe document and communicate these important details to everyone involved and provide continuity from year to year as officers and troupe directors change. The troupe constitution and bylaws must be made available to all theatre students, their parents, and the school administration.

### ***Troupe officers***

All Thespian troupe officers must be officially inducted members of the International Thespian Society and their troupe. Non-member students may serve as officers on a temporary basis as long as they are inducted into ITS by the end of that school year. Most often this is done to accommodate officers in a new theatre program or school. We recommend that student officers be appointed or elected immediately after a troupe has been chartered. Regular elections near the close of the school year (for the following year) will ensure that officers are ready to serve when students return in the fall.

Serving as a troupe officer gives inductees additional opportunities to develop leadership skills and grow as a person. Troupe officers can assist the busy troupe director in numerous ways with troupe and theatre program activities. Officer positions include president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and historian. Other offices such as webmaster, theatre advocacy chair, publicity chair, and TOTS-EAT chair may be added to the troupe's constitution at the troupe's discretion. They're a great way to increase student involvement and recognition.

### ***Troupe meetings***

The troupe director and new officers should schedule at least one meeting at the beginning of the school year. This should focus on the contributions that the troupe plans to make to the theatre arts program and the school. Plans should include troupe-only activities and those in which all theatre students may participate. Suggestions for the year's calendar of activities, including community service projects such as TOTS-EAT, may be considered at this first meeting as well. We recommend that Thespian troupes meet monthly throughout the school year. Inductions may be incorporated into troupe meetings.

## **Troupe membership**

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### ***Who is a member of the Thespian troupe?***

**Troupe directors.** The troupe director, while not an official member of the troupe, administers the troupe on behalf of the school. He or she is a professional member of the Educational Theatre Association, and the status of that membership automatically matches the status of the troupe.



**Affiliate professional members.** Affiliate professional members are not members of the troupe, though some may be Thespian Alums if they were inducted into the troupe as students. They must be affiliated with the troupe to maintain their affiliate member status, but they are not active, voting members.

**Thespians.** Only students who have completed all eligibility requirements and had their induction fees and information submitted to the National Office by the troupe director are members of the Thespian troupe and the International Thespian Society. It is not possible to induct or maintain Thespian membership locally without registering through the National Office. Participation in an induction ceremony alone does not constitute induction. The induction ceremony is the local celebration of induction into ITS. A student's failure to maintain satisfactory standards of membership may result in removal of local troupe benefits but not national membership. See *Revoking Thespian member benefits* below.

**Thespian alums.** Thespian inductees receive a lifetime membership, the active benefits of which last through high school graduation. Thespians who have graduated from high school become Thespian alums. They are members of the troupe and ITS, but don't receive many of the benefits of active members still enrolled in the theatre program, such as the ability to vote or run for troupe office.

**Honorary Thespians.** Honorary Thespian membership is granted to adults who perform outstanding service for the Thespian troupe. They are typically parents or other volunteers from the community, school employees, or generous patrons. Honorary Thespians are affiliated with the troupe and ITS, but they are not active, voting members.

**Thespian apprentices.** The process of induction should be explained as soon as a student begins secondary school theatre. Students who are still earning their induction points are sometimes referred to as *Thespian apprentices*. Apprentices may be invited to attend Thespian troupe meetings and social events and even vote for troupe officers at the troupe's discretion. Although they are not official troupe members yet, Thespian apprentices are *affiliated* with the troupe for the purpose of chapter and other event participation. See *Appendix 3: Guidelines for determining student troupe affiliation* below.

### ***Determining Thespian induction eligibility***

Mandatory school and student eligibility requirements are defined in the EdTA membership policy. Schools and students must meet all of these plus those listed below for inductions to be granted.

ITS provides a Thespian point system to help determine induction eligibility along with Thespian point record sheets to help track each student's points. Only the troupe director may award points. The troupe secretary is often responsible for maintaining point records and making them available for each student's personal review. Point records are kept at the troupe level. They are not sent to the National Office.

Troupe directors are to notify students that records of their activities will be maintained and that honor society induction will be available when all criteria have been met. All induction requirements must be in writing and provided to all students involved in the school's theatre program.

### **Induction criteria.**

**Grade at time of induction.** Only students in grades nine through twelve (or the international equivalent) may be inducted into the high school Thespian troupe. Students in grades six through eight must be inducted into a Junior Thespian troupe. We recommend that programs that serve students in both grade ranges charter a high school troupe *and* a Junior Thespian troupe.

School enrollment. If a student receives primary academic coursework from a school with an active troupe, he or she may only be inducted into and receive benefits through that troupe. Troupes may induct students who attend other schools only when those schools do not have their own active troupes. See *Appendix 3: Guidelines for determining student troupe affiliation* below.

Thespian points. The *high school Thespian point system* provides the recommended number of points awarded for a specific assignment. Troupe directors may use their discretion in awarding points according to the student's quality of work and cooperation. Quality may include the caliber of the work done and the educational value of the experience. The troupe director makes the final decision regarding the awarding of Thespian points. The point system is available at [schooltheatre.org/thespianpointssystem](http://schooltheatre.org/thespianpointssystem).

Troupes may adopt changes to the point system to meet the unique needs of their theatre programs and students. Approved changes must be documented in the troupe constitution and shared with all theatre students.

Thespian point system summary.

- Inducted Junior Thespians automatically begin their high school careers with half of the points needed for high school Thespian induction.
- One point represents approximately ten hours of excellent work. Use this formula in awarding points for items not specifically listed in the point system.
- To become a Thespian, a student must earn ten points, the equivalent of one hundred hours of work. Five of those points should be acquired at the school where he or she is to be inducted.
- Induction points should be earned through participation in at least two full-length productions, or one full-length and two one-acts, or four one-acts.
- Induction points should be earned in at least two of the listed categories, for example, acting and production.
- At the troupe director's discretion, students may earn up to five points toward induction through participation in community, children's, middle school, or professional theatre.
- Thespian membership is offered to all students who qualify. No student can be elected into the troupe, and no student can be denied membership if he or she has fulfilled all membership requirements.

Additional criteria. The school or troupe director may adopt additional requirements for induction into ITS. Attendance, academic performance, behavioral expectations, and community service projects are examples of criteria that may be considered when determining induction eligibility. Any changes must be documented in the troupe constitution. Criteria may not include recommendation or approval by other students.

Anti-hazing policy. As stated in the EdTA Membership Policy and Hazing Policy at [schooltheatre.org/codesandpolicies](http://schooltheatre.org/codesandpolicies): *Students who have met all requirements must be issued invitations to be inducted into ITS. Under no circumstances are students elected to become ITS inductees. Induction is awarded in recognition of meritorious work in the theatre arts and achievement of academic requirements. In accordance with the Anti-Hazing Policy, as approved by the Board of Directors...hazing is forbidden.*

### ***Inducting new Thespian members***

Troupes with active membership status may induct new members as often as they choose. The steps for inducting new Thespians are:

**Present membership invitation cards.** In this optional step, the troupe director presents each eligible student with a personalized invitation to join ITS and the troupe. Membership invitation cards are provided free from the National Office. To request invitation cards, email a request to [members@schooltheatre.org](mailto:members@schooltheatre.org), check the box on a merchandise order form, or order them free of charge from the online EdTA Store by using the item code *HSINVITE*. If time is limited, a downloadable invitation sheet is also available at [schooltheatre.org/troupedocs](http://schooltheatre.org/troupedocs).

**Gather student induction acceptance cards (RSVPs).** Students receiving invitation cards must confirm their desire to be inducted by returning their RSVPs to the troupe director, ideally three weeks before the induction ceremony. This card will help verify each inductee's current contact information. If students pay their own induction fees, they should submit payment with the RSVP. The troupe director uses information on the cards to induct students online. Do not send RSVP cards to the National Office.

**Induct students online.** At least three weeks prior to any induction ceremony, troupe directors should log in to their troupe homepage at [schooltheatre.org](http://schooltheatre.org) and use the information they've collected to submit eligible students for induction. To induct online, the troupe director will:

1. Log-in to [schooltheatre.org](http://schooltheatre.org).
2. Click the *Troupe Business* link when it appears at the top right of the page.
3. Click the *Induct Thespians* link on the troupe homepage.
4. Click *Add eligible student record* to create a new profile record for each new inductee. Only include new inductees; the one-time induction fee pays for a lifetime membership. You can also create records for any new, adult Honorary Thespians you wish to recognize. Clicking *Save* will save the individual's record on your troupe roster with the status *eligible* until you have a chance to complete the induction.
5. Click *Add* next to each individual's listing to add them to your shopping cart for induction.
6. Open your cart and review your inductee list. If you'd like to order Thespian honors or other items from the store on the same invoice, follow the store link on the website's main navigation bar. All transactions included in one cart and one checkout will be invoiced and shipped together.
7. Click *Continue to checkout*. Be sure to flag the transaction as *ITS troupe business* when prompted.
8. During checkout, choose standard or rush shipping service and your payment type: credit card, purchase order (P.O.), or check.
9. Click *Submit order / transactions* when ready.
10. On the confirmation page, the troupe director can print an invoice and send it to the National Office along with a check or official school purchase order (P.O.). EdTA only ships membership credentials and store items once we've received full payment or a P.O. Please arrange one payment or P.O. for the full amount of each invoice. If you use P.O.s, please see *Appendix 4: Paying by purchase order and collection procedures* below. If online induction is not possible, a paper roster form is available for download at [schooltheatre.org/troupedocs](http://schooltheatre.org/troupedocs).

Once the inductions are processed (two to three weeks), EdTA sends the troupe director one personalized membership card and certificate, an official ITS induction pin, and a bumper sticker that reads, *Proud parent of a theatre arts honor student* for each new inductee. Allow extra time for rosters or payment submitted by mail. If you need the membership credentials very quickly (under two to three weeks), we recommend paying for rush service. See *Rush service for dues and merchandise processing* below.

**Hold an induction ceremony.** Most troupes choose to welcome and celebrate the accomplishments of their new Thespian members through an induction ceremony. Conducting a ceremony alone does not constitute induction. Induction ceremony ideas are available at [schooltheatre.org/ceremonies](http://schooltheatre.org/ceremonies).

**Process payment of purchase orders.** If the troupe paid with a P.O., we will send the troupe director a new, numbered invoice for the amount of the fees. It is the troupe director's responsibility to forward all invoices and statements for processing and prompt payment as required by the school's payment policies and procedures. See *Appendix 4: Paying by purchase order and collection procedures* below.

### ***Benefits of Thespian induction***

- Membership in the only international honor society for high school theatre arts students—a recognized demonstration of achievement and a valuable addition to college and employment applications
- An official Thespian induction pin
- A personalized membership certificate and membership card
- Log-in access to his or her member homepage and a variety of online benefits
- A one-year (nine issues) subscription to the print edition of *Dramatics* magazine (a \$30 value). The first issue arrives within six to eight weeks for students inducted August through March. Students inducted April through July will receive their first issue in September. They may also renew at a special member rate. (\$15 as of 8/1/15).
- Log-in access to *Dramatics Digital* from induction through the year *following* graduation
- A bumper sticker that reads: *Proud parent of a theatre arts honor student*
- Special member pricing on theatre books and digital media through the online EdTA Store
- Thespian-level access to the Theatre Education Community
- Leadership opportunities at the troupe, chapter, and national levels
- Eligibility for scholarships, grants, and awards through EdTA and its chapters. See [schooltheatre.org/ags](http://schooltheatre.org/ags).
- Eligibility to audition at the Thespian Festival for admission to college theatre programs, submit original plays to the Thespian Playworks program, audition for chapter Individual Events programs and qualify for the National Individual Events Showcase (NIES). See [schooltheatre.org/festival](http://schooltheatre.org/festival).
- Eligibility to receive additional Thespian honors, including graduation and honor items, advancement through Thespian honor ranks, and Thespian scholar distinction. See *Recognizing exceptional Thespian achievement* below.

### ***Thespian credentials***

Thespian credentials are documents used to verify affiliation with ITS. There are two types:

**Membership certificate.** The National Office sends one personalized certificate to the troupe director for each new inductee. The troupe director and president sign the membership certificate and present it to the inductee, traditionally as part of an induction ceremony. Paper stars and honor bars, added to the membership certificate, symbolize point levels and ranks earned after initial induction.

**Membership card.** The personalized membership card is proof that students have been inducted. Thespian cards are usually mailed along with membership certificates. Some chapters require proof of induction to participate in auditions and other activities at their chapter conferences. Some member schools extend special deals and privileges (discounted tickets, free preview performances, special seating, etc.) to cardholding Thespians as part of a good neighbor program. Some local theatres and businesses may also extend similar deals to cardholders. Many companies jump at the opportunity to build a steady clientele of easily identifiable honor students. We encourage troupe directors to ask local businesses about offering Thespian perks to enhance the benefits of Thespian membership.

**Replacement of lost, damaged, or incorrect Thespian credentials.** Troupe directors can order replacements from the National Office by filling out and submitting the *Student membership card and*

*certificate replacement* form at [schooltheatre.org/replacingcardsandcertificates](http://schooltheatre.org/replacingcardsandcertificates). Be sure to clearly identify any errors and the correct information. There is no fee for the service as long as the number of requests per troupe is reasonable.

### ***Recognizing exceptional Thespian achievement***

**Thespian stars and honor ranks.** All Thespians are theatre arts honor students, and induction as a Thespian is the first of many honors that troupes may bestow on a student. However, ITS recognizes three achievement ranks beyond induction. Troupe directors should continue tracking Thespian points after induction and use these points to recognize ongoing Thespian achievements.

Thespian stars are presented to acknowledge each additional ten points earned. Star ratings may be designated on the student's membership certificate under *Thespian Stars Earned*. We also encourage the troupe to indicate star ratings and honor ranks after student names on playbills, membership rolls, and in other printed materials.

Below are brief descriptions of Thespian honor ranks and the point totals associated with each. See *Thespian and graduation honors program* below.

1. **Honor Thespian.** 60 total points earned or the equivalent of 5 stars. For outstanding contributions to the ideals of the Society and meritorious work in the field of theatre.
2. **National Honor Thespian.** 120 total points earned or the equivalent of 11 stars. For exceptional commitment to the ideals of the Society and distinguished work in the field of theatre.
3. **International Honor Thespian.** 180 or more total points earned or the equivalent of 17 or more stars. For extraordinary dedication to the ideals of the Society and exemplary work in the field of theatre.

Troupe directors should update the *Honor rank* field on their Thespians' online profiles regularly by using the *Student member and contacts list* link on their troupe homepage.

**Thespian scholar distinction.** Thespians who demonstrate high academic success in overall coursework earn the distinction *scholar*. The scholar distinction always follows the student's ITS rank to create his or her full *designation: Thespian Scholar, Honor Thespian President's List Scholar, National Honor Thespian Scholar*, etc. Upon completion of eighth grade, Junior Thespian Scholars retain that designation, but they must earn new Thespian scholar distinctions for their academic work in high school. Thespian troupe directors may award the Thespian scholar distinction if the student:

1. Has been inducted officially into ITS through the National Office
2. Is currently enrolled in the school and a member in good standing of the troupe
3. Has earned a *minimum*, cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or its local equivalent for all academic coursework as determined upon completion of tenth grade or any official grading period thereafter. Students with a 3.5 GPA become Vice President's List Scholars, and students with a 4.0 GPA are awarded the President's List Scholar distinction
4. Has fulfilled any additional local criteria required by the troupe

Troupes may require additional criteria that are *higher* than those established by ITS. Examples might include a higher GPA, an additional minimum GPA for theatre arts coursework, etc. Those criteria must meet the minimum EdTA criteria and may not conflict with the letter or spirit of the EdTA guidelines.

Troupe directors should update the *Academic distinction* field on their Thespians' online profiles regularly by using the *Student member and contacts list* link on their troupe homepage.

**Thespian and graduation honors program.** ITS offers a wide variety of items for recognizing Thespian achievement. Graduation and honor items may only be purchased by official troupe directors of active Thespian troupes for presentation to inducted Thespians. Troupe directors may log in to [schooltheatre.org/store](http://schooltheatre.org/store) to order honor items. See *Website log-in IDs and passwords* above.

Presentation of induction pins and other honor items is a Thespian tradition, but it is not mandatory. Actual use varies from troupe to troupe, often based on local economic factors and school policy. Work closely with your school administration to determine which honor items are appropriate.

**Thespian honor and graduation items and their use.** Gold foil seals and trim on ITS certificates are heat-resistant and compatible any high-quality laser printer.

1. **Thespian membership certificates.** A benefit of membership that is personalized and sent to troupe directors along with membership cards for presentation to new inductees. See *Thespian credentials* above.
2. **Honor rank certificates.** Specific certificates are available for all three Thespian honor ranks.
3. **Graduation honor cords, stoles, and tassels.** Any Thespian is eligible to receive these items. Cords, stoles, and collars are worn around the neck over the graduation gown. Special stoles are available for presentation to Thespian scholars only. Tassels are attached to the graduation cap. Troupe directors should work closely with their administrators to determine guidelines for display of graduation items.
4. **Thespian letters.** Any inducted Thespian is eligible to receive a felt or chenille letter patch. Letters are also available for Best Thespian recipients and all Thespian honor ranks. Thespian pin and ribbon items are often displayed on Thespian letters applied to the front of a school jacket.
5. **Best Thespian certificates.** According to ITS tradition, one male and one female Thespian are awarded the title of *Best Thespian* each year. Troupe directors set standards for this distinction at the troupe level.
6. **Thespian recognition, achievement, and honor medallions.** Medallions may be presented to any Thespian and may represent any achievement a troupe or EdTA chapter director deems appropriate. Some schools permit display of medallions with, or in place of, graduation honor cords or stoles.
7. **Thespian seals.** These self-adhesive, embossed, gold-foil seals are commonly used to create official troupe documents, seal induction invitations, or seal envelopes for official troupe correspondence.
8. **Thespian paper stars and honor bars.** These self-adhesive foil stickers are usually placed at the bottom of the Thespian membership certificate under the heading, *Thespian Stars Earned*. Each paper star represents an additional ten points earned. Honor bars indicate Honor Thespian rank.
9. **Thespian certificates of recognition.** Certificates of recognition are presented for many reasons at the troupe and chapter level. They may be presented to Thespians and non-Thespians (parents, sponsors, administrators, and volunteers, for example) at the troupe or chapter director's discretion.
10. **The Thespian pin and ribbon system.** As of August 2015, the *Thespian induction pin* is awarded to all Thespians and included in the induction fee. They are the foundation of the ITS system for recognizing point awards and honor ranks. The *ITS honors ribbon* is a combination of a metal pin and a fabric ribbon. Thespians can attach their induction pins and a variety of additional pins to their ribbons

to display Thespians honors and achievements. These include officer, Honor Thespian rank, and Thespian scholar distinction pins. In addition, each *Thespian point star pin* represents ten additional Thespian points earned. Pins and ribbons are traditionally displayed at induction ceremonies, the Thespian Festival, chapter conferences and festivals, and other formal troupe activities. They are often displayed on Thespian letter patches or worn as a lapel pin on shirts, sport coats/suit jackets, or dresses.

The following chart provides guidelines for the Thespian pin and ribbon system:

Points earned	Honor item awarded	Honor item signifies
10	Thespian induction pin.	Official Thespian induction achieved. First 10 points accumulated.
10+	ITS honors ribbon, scholar pin, and/or officer pin may be worn with the induction pin and in conjunction with other pins earned.	Scholar pins are presented to Thespian scholars. Officer pins are presented to troupe president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, and historian.
20	One Thespian point star attached to Thespian ribbon.	20 points accumulated. Induction pin = 10 points. 1 point star = 10 additional points (1-star Thespian).
30	Second star added to ribbon.	30 points accumulated (2-star Thespian).
40	Third star added to ribbon.	40 points accumulated (3-star Thespian).
50	Fourth star added to ribbon.	50 points accumulated (4-star Thespian).
60	All stars removed from ribbon. Honor Thespian pin added to ribbon.	Honor Thespian rank achieved. 60 points accumulated (5-star Thespian).
70–110	One point star added to ribbon for <i>each</i> additional 10 points earned.	70–110 points accumulated (6- to 10-star Thespian).
120	All stars removed from ribbon. National Honor Thespian pin replaces Honor Thespian pin.	National Honor Thespian rank achieved (11-star Thespian).
130–170	One point star added to ribbon for <i>each</i> additional 10 points earned.	130–170 points accumulated (12- to 16-star Thespian).
180	All stars removed from ribbon. International Honor Thespian pin replaces National Honor Thespian pin.	International Honor Thespian rank achieved. Highest ITS rank attainable (17-star Thespian).

11. Thespian beanies. These traditional caps harken back to the early days of ITS. They are sometimes worn at induction ceremonies and other troupe activities.

12. Thespian trophies, plaques, and awards. EdTA provides a full complement of outstanding personalized trophies, plaques, and presentation pieces to suit every need a troupe or chapter director has. Each item features the ITS icon, and troupes may present these items to anyone they choose. To order, troupe directors must register a separate account and log-in codes at [schooltheatre.org/trophystorelink](http://schooltheatre.org/trophystorelink).

### ***Recognizing adults as Honorary Thespians***

Honorary Thespians are adults who perform outstanding service for a Thespian troupe. They are typically parent or community volunteers, school employees, or generous patrons. They receive an Honorary Thespian membership card, certificate, and a one-year subscription to *Dramatics* magazine. Many troupes also add Honorary Thespians to their official membership rolls. Troupe directors submit

new Honorary Thespians online using the same process for inducting students. See *Induct students online* above.

### ***Transferring Thespians to a new school and troupe***

When a Thespian transfers to a school that has an active Thespian troupe, the troupe director at the new school must submit a Thespian membership transfer form to the National Office. They can do so using the link *Transfer a previously inducted Thespian to my troupe* on their troupe homepage. There is no fee for this transfer. Transferring Thespians should not be submitted as new members, and do not need to pay additional fees to the National Office. The troupe director may use the transfer form to order a new membership certificate and/or membership card that includes the student's new troupe information.

Once the transfer form is processed, the Thespian will be a member of the new troupe. Troupes must accept transferring Thespians with a minimum of ten points. The new troupe director and constitution determine whether or not points over the ten required for induction will be recognized at the new troupe. Similarly, all, some, or none of the points of Thespian apprentices may be accepted by the new troupe. Transferring Thespians may be required to fulfill certain additional expectations to receive local troupe benefits at their new school.

If a Thespian transfers to a school without an active Thespian troupe, he or she will remain a member of their original troupe. The student may or may not be eligible to earn additional points and receive local troupe benefits through that troupe at the discretion of its troupe director and the troupe constitution. We encourage Thespians transferring to unaffiliated schools to ask about chartering a new troupe there. Many successful troupes were founded by transferring Thespians. See *Appendix 3: Guidelines for determining student troupe affiliation* below.

### ***Troupe record requests***

Troupes should keep accurate records of all student inductions, including copies of all induction roster forms and online induction confirmations. Troupe directors may access lists of active and alum troupe members going back to mid-1998 through their online troupe homepage. To order records prior to that, troupe directors may order *troupe records research* for a fee through the online EdTA Store. This will provide the troupe director with copies of all rosters sent to us in the year range requested.

### ***Minimum active student member requirement***

Each troupe must maintain an active member base of at least six officially inducted Thespians. This is tabulated at the end of each ITS school year, July 31, before graduates are advanced to Thespian alum status. This provides a core group of students to conduct the activities of the troupe and fill officer positions. Active members are those inductees still attending the school for their primary academic coursework. Active members inducted in previous school years do count toward current year's requirements, so troupes are not necessarily required to induct six students each school year.

Troupes not having the minimum number of active inductees as of July 31 will have until the following July 31 to reestablish a minimum core of six active Thespians. If the troupe does not do so, the school's troupe membership will become suspended. Troupe benefits will be unavailable until the appropriate number of new Thespians is inducted. If there are fewer than six active Thespians in the troupe the following July 31, the troupe's membership will be withdrawn. An induction roster of at least six new students, the current year's troupe dues, and an additional reinstatement fee will be required to return to the withdrawn troupe active status.



### ***Revoking Thespian member benefits***

Official Thespian induction confers a lifetime membership. Thespians cannot be withdrawn from the national membership rolls and continue to receive subscriptions and other benefits that come directly from the National Office. However, troupe directors may suspend or withdraw a Thespian's status as a *member in good standing* of the local troupe for just cause, usually according to guidelines set in the troupe constitution and in consultation with the administration. Losing local good standing may affect major benefits that require a troupe director's authorization, including point awards, honor ranks, graduation recognition, troupe and chapter event participation, etc.

### ***Addressing Thespian or parent concerns about the troupe***

**Check the EdTA code of regulations and membership policy.** These documents define the mandatory components of membership and the Association. See [schooltheatre.org/codesandpolicies](http://schooltheatre.org/codesandpolicies).

**Check the troupe's constitution.** Every Thespian troupe is guided by a troupe constitution. See *Troupe constitution and bylaws* above.

**Meet with the troupe director, concerned parent, or student.** Often a meeting is all that's needed to address concerns by providing additional information and/or dispelling rumors. It's vital that all parties approach meetings in a professional and respectful manner. Troupe directors are often in the best position to see the big picture, so it's important for students and family to share concerns with them directly and give them the benefit of the doubt whenever possible. It's just as important for troupe directors to treat students equitably, communicate clearly and professionally, address and remediate concerns as appropriate, and ensure that there are no negative consequences for expressing concerns.

**Meet with the school administration.** If serious concerns remain, the next step is to meet with the principal, who appoints the troupe director and oversees his or her performance. The administration is in the best position to diagnose local problems and implement adequate solutions.

### ***Additional student opportunities***

**Chapter conferences.** Most EdTA/ITS chapters conduct an annual Thespian festival or conference. Most include performance opportunities for troupes and individuals, various workshops, college/university exhibitors, and scholarship auditions. The state chapter director will provide information about these events and any other chapter programs. See [schooltheatre.org/StateChapters](http://schooltheatre.org/StateChapters).

**Thespian Festival.** In late June, hundreds of Thespian troupes and thousands of students gather for a six-day Thespian Festival packed full of performances, workshops, scholarship and college auditions, Individual Events, and camaraderie. Registration begins in February. Festival showcases some of the best high school theatre in the world: fully-mounted, invitation-only, main stage productions; chapter-select shows; and short cuttings and one-acts by interested troupes. This ultimate high school theatre experience is an approved activity of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). See [schooltheatre.org/Festival](http://schooltheatre.org/Festival).

**Student scholarship opportunities.** EdTA provides a variety of scholarships at the state chapter and national levels. More than \$200,000 in scholarships is awarded annually. Details on state chapter scholarships are available on the chapter websites. See [schooltheatre.org/scholarships](http://schooltheatre.org/scholarships) and [schooltheatre.org/StateChapters](http://schooltheatre.org/StateChapters).

**College auditions.** The Thespian Festival also provides Thespians in eleventh grade the opportunity to audition for and meet with more than forty college and university representatives from across the

country. Enrollment and scholarship opportunities may be available directly through the representatives after Festival. See *Thespian Festival* above.

**State chapter and national student leadership.** In addition to the leadership opportunities available to Thespian students within their troupe, dedicated Thespians may seek office at the state chapter and national levels.

State Thespian Officers (STO). EdTA encourages each chapter to conduct leadership training and to hold an annual election for state Thespian officers. These students join their adult board members in planning and running chapter activities. Thespians interested in serving as student officers should contact their chapter directors for more information. See [schooltheatre.org/statechapters](http://schooltheatre.org/statechapters).

International Thespian Officers (ITO). Each year, six students are elected by their peers to serve as the voice of the ITS student membership. ITO candidates must be Thespians who have served as past or current officers at the troupe, chapter, or national level. They are required to attend the daily leadership training sessions and run for an office at the Thespian Festival, and they also commit to Festival responsibilities in the year following their election. The ITO serve as representatives to the EdTA Governing Board, play key roles in the leadership training program, and take an active role at advocacy functions, state chapter conferences, and other events. See [schooltheatre.org/ito](http://schooltheatre.org/ito).

## **Services and benefits for Thespian troupes and directors**

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### ***Professional member benefits of the troupe director and affiliate professional members***

Troupe directors and affiliate professional members are full professional members of the Educational Theatre Association. The troupe director's membership is active as long as the troupe is active and he or she remains the troupe director. Affiliate professional membership remains active for a full year from the start date and may be renewed as long as the individual remains affiliated with an active ITS troupe.

**Troupe director and affiliate member benefits.** A list of EdTA professional member benefits is available at [schooltheatre.org/memberbenefits](http://schooltheatre.org/memberbenefits). See details on some of those benefits below.

### **Publications and resources.**

Dramatics. Published in print and digital editions monthly September through May, *Dramatics* is the only magazine that is edited exclusively for students and teachers of theatre to use in the classroom as an educational resource. The magazine publishes at least six new plays each year and features articles on all aspects of theatre, profiles of theatre professionals, instructional pieces on technical theatre, and more.

#### Dramatics annual special issues.

- The *College Issue* provides valuable resources for college-bound theatre students. Check out our College Resource Center and searchable directory at [schooltheatre.org/collegeresourcecenter](http://schooltheatre.org/collegeresourcecenter).
- The *Summer Theatre Issue* lists and describes opportunities for students to study, perform, or find work in theatre over the summer break.

Teaching Theatre. Published quarterly in print and digital editions, *Teaching Theatre* is the journal of record for the field of theatre education and is written for theatre educators, college theatre ed. majors, and supporters of educational theatre. The journal features articles on theatre curricula, advocacy news, trends in theatre education, and hands-on, how-to pieces on everything from scenery to directing.

### **Professional development opportunities.**

EdTA National Conference. *The event for busy theatre education professionals, the EdTA National Conference features practical workshops designed to be integrated into the classroom. Attendees learn about the latest trends in theatre education, hear from some of the most respected voices in the field, explore new subjects and techniques, and discover the newest programs and products in our Theatre Educator's Expo area. Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and college credit are available. See [schooltheatre.org/edtanationalconference](http://schooltheatre.org/edtanationalconference).*

Professional Development Intensives (PDIs). These are one- or two-day opportunities for theatre educators to develop their arsenal of professional skills on a specific topic. They are in-depth crash courses taught by experts and thought-leaders in the theatre education field. Topics range from directing a musical to curriculum development to stage lighting. Participation allows attendees to advance a graduate degree or earn continuing education credits. See [schooltheatre.org/professionaldevelopment](http://schooltheatre.org/professionaldevelopment).

### ***Additional troupe benefits and services***

**Administrator awareness letter.** Each fall, the National Office sends a congratulatory letter to the principals of ITS affiliated schools that highlights the hard work of their theatre honor students and troupe director. Along with the letter, each principal receives a list of all Thespians that were active at the end of the previous school year and their Thespian honor ranks and scholar distinctions. To provide the best possible list, troupe directors must update the rank and distinction fields on each Thespian's online profile at the end of each school year and before July 31. They can do so using the *Student member and contacts list* link on their troupe homepage.

**Thespian spirit gear merchandise.** Thespians can show their theatre spirit with a variety of items available for purchase to members and the general public through the online EdTA Store. Thespian spirit gear includes magnets, buttons, key rings, stickers, and more. Thespian apparel and other items and services are available at special member rates through officially licensed vendors.

**Rush service for dues and merchandise processing.** The vast majority of inductions and orders are submitted between April 15 and June 15. We call this time period *rush season*. EdTA recommends that troupe directors plan for their inductions well in advance. Normal processing during rush season is two weeks. Troupe directors may purchase priority rush service at any time of year to receive their induction or merchandise materials within five business days after *receipt* of the forms and payment by the National Office. Details and fees are listed wherever the rush service option is available.

**Royalty reductions for productions.** The ITS royalty reduction program helps troupe directors to apply for discounted rates on royalties for upcoming productions through cooperating play publishers. The service is not available for musicals. Additional guidelines and restrictions apply. See [schooltheatre.org/royaltyadjustments](http://schooltheatre.org/royaltyadjustments).

**EdTA/ITS awards and recognition.** EdTA offers numerous national awards that recognize quality theatre programs, students, educators, and administrators for outstanding achievement in educational theatre. Awards information is sent to troupe directors each fall. See [schooltheatre.org/awards](http://schooltheatre.org/awards).

**TOTS-EAT community service initiative.** TOTS-EAT is the International Thespian Society's annual, nationwide, community service initiative to collect food for the hungry. This is the perfect project for students who want to help the less fortunate in their community. Participating troupes may earn ITS community service awards. See [schooltheatre.org/totseat](http://schooltheatre.org/totseat).

**Affiliate professional memberships.** Adults affiliated with an ITS member school are eligible to join their school's troupe director as a member of EdTA for the special rate of \$50 (\$25 off the standard professional dues of \$75). See [schooltheatre.org/join](http://schooltheatre.org/join). Any number of local troupe co-directors, assistant directors, faculty, administrators, advisers, and active troupe alumni may take advantage of this opportunity. Affiliate professional members enjoy the same basic benefits as troupe directors, but only the troupe director has official troupe leadership authority. See *The role of the troupe director* above.

**Advocacy information and resources.** EdTA is a major player in arts education advocacy, leveraging the power of our more than 100,000 members to influence public opinion and decision makers that theatre education is essential and builds vital, twenty-first century academic, career, and life skills. To that end, EdTA has created an advocacy webpage that provides a suite of advocacy tools and resources divided into local, state, and national categories. These are particularly helpful for schools at risk of losing funding and support. The web page includes a resource section that lists key organizations, reports, and research that can bolster advocacy efforts, including the 2012 *Survey of Theatre Education in U.S. High Schools* and the Core Theatre Standards. See [schooltheatre.org/advocacy](http://schooltheatre.org/advocacy).

EdTA has also created Student Advocacy Works (SAW), a grassroots student-led theatre education advocacy initiative. Its mission is to communicate the value of theatre education to school, district, state, and national decision makers and others committed to quality education through festival, state conferences, troupes, and social media. Students affiliated with ITS troupes may even earn points for advocacy work.

## Appendix 1: EdTA and ITS logos

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We encourage our members to promote their affiliation with EdTA and ITS. You may use the black and white versions of the logos below in theatre programs and promotional flyers. You may also order and use the official Thespian logo on cakes used for induction ceremonies and other troupe functions. These logos are registered service marks. You may proportionally resize logos, but you may not modify their design without written permission from the National Office, and you may use them only in the context of proclaiming your school's membership in EdTA and/or ITS. You may not use these logos in any way that implies that the EdTA/ITS chapter or national organizations are directly responsible for your troupe's activities or governance, financial or otherwise. For detailed information about the use of logos, including color options, editing/distorting, and use/placement, contact EdTA's marketing department.



**EDUCATIONAL<sup>SM</sup>  
THEATRE  
ASSOCIATION**

**SHAPING LIVES THROUGH THEATRE EDUCATION**



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**INTERNATIONAL  
THESPIAN SOCIETY**

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**HONORING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN THEATRE**



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**INTERNATIONAL  
THESPIAN SOCIETY**

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**HONORING STUDENT  
ACHIEVEMENT IN THEATRE**

## Appendix 2: Thespian tradition and style guidelines

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**Thespian motto.** *Act well your part; there all the honor lies.* -- Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man*

**Thespian pledge.** Used by both Thespians and Junior Thespians. The *t* in fellow *thespians* is purposely lower case to encompass the wide community of thespians inside and outside ITS.

*I promise to uphold the aims and ideals of the International Thespian Society. I am a student of theatre and excellence is my ideal. I promise to perform my part as well as I can; to accept praise and criticism with grace; to cooperate with my fellow thespians and work for the good of the troupe; and to share my love of theatre.*

**History.** A timeline of ITS/EdTA history is available at [schooltheatre.org/about/history](http://schooltheatre.org/about/history).

**Thespian colors.** Blue (PMS 286) and gold (PMS123)

**Thespian flowers.** Blue delphinium and yellow roses

**Distinguished Thespian Alums.** A list of accomplished Thespian Alums is available at [schooltheatre.org/distinguishedthespians](http://schooltheatre.org/distinguishedthespians).

**EdTA/ITS style guidelines.** To help promote consistency of style and branding across all chapters and troupes, here are basic guidelines for using common ITS terms:

- **Thespian(s).** High school members are *Thespians*. Capitalize when referring to ITS or members of ITS.
- **Thespian troupe(s).** Use *Thespian troupe(s)* to refer to high school troupes specifically.
- **Troupe(s).** Capitalize only when part of a proper noun: *Troupe 1234*, *Thespian Troupe 1234*, *Junior Thespian Troupe 88123*. Do not use #: *Troupe #12*.
- **Honorary Thespian(s).** *Honorary Thespian(s)* is capitalized when referring to those adult members.
- **Alum/alumni.** When referring to graduated ITS members, alum and its variants are not capitalized, e. g., *Thespian alum*, *Junior Thespian alums*. When referring to individuals or small groups, the general term *alum(s)* is preferred over gender specific *alumnus/alumni* (male) or *alumna/alumnae* (female). *Thespian alumni* and *Junior Thespian alumni* are acceptable when referring to whole groups.
- **Troupe director(s).** The preferred title is *troupe director* rather than *troupe sponsor*. Capitalize only when used with a person's name as a title: *Troupe Director Rosie Outlook*.
- **Junior Thespian(s).** Middle school members are *Junior Thespians*. Capitalize when referring to middle/junior high school members of ITS.
- **Junior Thespian troupe(s).** Use *Junior Thespian troupe(s)* to refer to middle school troupes.
- **Student members.** Use *Student members*, *ITS members*, or *ITS student members* to refer to all members of ITS, Thespian and Junior Thespian. *Inductee(s)* may be used in place of these terms, especially to refer to new members or students in the process of being inducted.
- **Induct vs. initiate.** Always use *induct* and its variants.
- **State chapter director(s).** Capitalize only when used with a person's name as a title: *State Chapter Director Rosie Outlook*.
- **Theatre Education Community.** Or simply *the Community*.
- **The.** The word *the* is not part of EdTA's or ITS' name. When using *the* before either name, do not capitalize it. *The* is also not part of the name of any organizational events: *the Thespian Festival*, *the International Thespian Society*, not *The Thespian Festival*, *The International Thespian Society*.
- **EdTA and ITS.** Pronounced *EE-dee-tee-AY* and *EYE-tee-ess*.

## **Appendix 3: Guidelines for determining student troupe affiliation**

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### **Guiding principles.**

- Maintain and grow viable school theatre programs
- Promote good relations between troupes and schools
- Avoid unfair advantage to students or troupes in ITS programs at every level
- Keep administration of programs efficient and manageable

### **Affiliation terms.**

- **Affiliated.** The student is actively participating in the troupe's program, i.e., a troupe member or actively earning points in the troupe. Troupe affiliation is often required for ITS program participation.
- **Troupe Member.** The student is affiliated with the troupe *and* has been officially inducted into ITS.
- **Member in good standing.** The inductee's local membership benefits have not been suspended or withdrawn by their troupe director. See *Revoking Thespian member benefits* above.

### **General guidelines.**

- Each student may only be affiliated with one ITS troupe. A Junior Thespian Alum maintains alumni affiliation with his or her Junior Thespian troupe *and* may be affiliated with one Thespian troupe.
- A student may only transfer troupe affiliation or membership once in any school year.
- Students may only participate in ITS programs with their troupe of affiliation unless troupe or event rules state otherwise. Participation with another school/troupe does *not* change troupe affiliation. Points may be awarded based on the guidelines of the student's official ITS troupe (troupe of affiliation).
- Participation in chapter events is governed by the guidelines of the chapter
- ITS reserves the right to determine any student's eligibility and affiliation in accordance with current regulations and policies.

**Specific guidelines for when there is an active troupe.** If there is a troupe at the school where the student receives his or her core academic education (language arts, math, science, social studies, etc.):

- The student may only be affiliated with and/or a member of that troupe
- An inductee transferring to the school must transfer to that school's troupe
- If a school's troupe reinstates, any of its students who are affiliated with other troupes must transfer their affiliations and memberships to the reinstated troupe

**Specific guidelines for when there is *not* an active troupe.** If there is no active troupe at the school where the student receives core academic education, and:

A. The student **has been inducted** into ITS:

- The student is still affiliated with and a member of the troupe at his or her original school. Whether or not he is a member in good standing is decided by the troupe director.
- The student may transfer ITS affiliation or membership to a nearby troupe with that troupe director's permission *provided* that the student participates in the regular activities of that school's theatre program and troupe (beyond any preparation for or participation in ITS district, chapter, region, or national events).

B. The student **has *not* been inducted** into ITS:

- The student may be affiliated with or inducted into an active troupe at another local school *provided* that the student actively participates in the activities of the troupe and its theatre program (beyond any preparation for or participation in ITS district, chapter, region, or national events).

## **Appendix 4: Paying by purchase order and collection procedures**

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Many schools prefer to arrange payment by purchase order (P.O.), which is a request for short-term credit that allows the school to pre-authorize payments requisitioned by their employees. For most transactions, EdTA will accept a copy of an official school purchase order complete with a P.O. number and an administrator's signature—a P.O. number alone will not suffice. Payment terms are net thirty days. Invoices for online transactions may be printed from the confirmation page immediately after submission. All invoices are available to print through the school's troupe homepage by clicking on the *Invoices and transaction history* link. Shortly after processing online or by paper form, EdTA mails an invoice for the amount of the P.O. to the troupe director. To ensure that the balance is paid on time, the troupe director must forward the invoice to the individual or department responsible for arranging payment as soon as possible. For questions regarding outstanding balances, the troupe director should contact the service center at the National Office.

Late payment will result in collection efforts that may include:

1. Credit hold. EdTA will decline purchase orders from the school and will not extend credit of any kind until *six months after* payment has been received in full. While on credit hold, the troupe must pay in full by check, money order, or credit card.
2. Contacting the school administration. If EdTA can't establish effective collection communication with the troupe director, it will contact the school business office, principal, and the superintendent at later stages of the collection process to arrange for payment.
3. Suspension of active status. In addition to a credit hold, the member benefits of the troupe and its troupe director will be suspended until payment is received in full.
4. Withdrawal of active status. In addition to a credit hold, the suspended troupe will be withdrawn from active status. To return to active status, the troupe director must pay the outstanding balance in full as well as a troupe reinstatement fee.
5. Permanent credit hold. EdTA may decline purchase orders from schools with a history of serious collection problems. Troupes on permanent credit hold must pay in full by check, money order, or credit card.

For questions regarding collection efforts, troupe directors should contact the service center at the National Office.



## **Appendix 5: ITS troupe forms and documents**

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Below is a list of ITS membership forms and resources used by Thespian troupes. They are available for download from [schooltheatre.org](http://schooltheatre.org).

### ITS documents library

- High school Thespian troupe membership application (*to charter a new high school Thespian troupe*)
- High school membership reinstatement form (*to reinstate a troupe whose membership has lapsed*)
- High school Thespian point record sheet (*to record students' points as they participate in theatre activities to determine Thespian induction and Thespian honor ranks*)
- Troupe constitution template (*formal codification of your troupe's rules and regulations*)

### Codes and policies

- EdTA code of professional standards
- EdTA code of regulations (*formerly known as the EdTA constitution*)
- EdTA conflicts of interest policy
- EdTA membership policy
- EdTA chapter governance policy
- EdTA governing board policy manual