



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 who feels like they could benefit from the support and guidance of a mentor in their productions and/or their curriculum.

Program schedule/scope for 2023-2024

Late August - Early October 2023: Interested mentees complete a pre-program inventory to assess their general and specific needs for the upcoming academic year, and their goals for involvement in the program. From this data, the Theater Education Specialist will work to match them with a mentor who can support them in their goals, and who may be in the same geographic region if possible. Mentees can also identify which of the following options best suit their needs:

- 1-3 consultations with a Mentor
- Short-term - support for one production or one class
- Full-year - support throughout an academic year on multiple productions and/or classes

September 2023 – June 2024:

- Fall - 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, and to map out a plan for the year (if applicable).
- Ongoing - Mentors and mentees seeking full-year support will meet virtually or in person as a pair at least two times throughout the year to set goals, check in, and assess progress.
- Mentors are available to mentees for phone and email correspondence throughout the year.
- Mentors provide direct assistance and feedback on production rehearsal session(s) and/or class(es), either in person or virtually.
- Mentors and mentees will meet virtually as an entire cohort 1-4 times throughout the year to build an emerging director network and to learn from each other's challenges and successes. These meetings typically occur in early October, early December, early March, and mid-June.

June 2024: Mentors and mentees will gather virtually as an entire cohort for a year-end celebration.

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