

**QUICK START GUIDE FOR THEATRE BOOSTER PARENTS**

**Cherry Hill East Theatre Boosters** is a non-profit organization of Cherry Hill High School East parents. We provide monetary support to East theatre with donations toward scholarships, equipment purchases, and student activities. In addition, we volunteer our time to plan and run a number events for the theatre department through the school year. Parents are encouraged to become involved in their student’s theatre education by joining Theatre Boosters and participating in the activities to support East theatre.

This guide has two purposes. It gives an overview of the opportunities and expectations for East theatre students. It also explains the purpose of Theatre Boosters and how parents can help.

# THEATRE ACTIVITIES AT EAST

Theatre activities at East are practically non-stop. It starts with an after school meeting for all interested students during the first week of classes and culminates with year-end celebrations in May and June.

# Shows

After the initial theatre meeting, the year cycles through auditions, rehearsals, behind-the-scenes preparation, and show nights for each of five annual productions.

Crimson Theatre

Fall Mainstage Show

Studio 2

Spring Musical

One Act Play & Film Festival

*Cast Members:*Students must audition for parts in the plays. Major roles in the Mainstage productions are usually double cast (two students share the role, performing on alternate nights). The final cast list will be posted on the theatre bulletin board at school. Cast members and their parents must sign and return a contract. Rehearsals are held at least once a week and increase in frequency and intensity as opening night approaches. Rehearsal schedules are published by the stage manager on Sunday night for the coming week. Costumes are part of the show budget, but cast members may sometimes need to purchase a few pieces, such as character shoes or hosiery, to complete their costumes.

*Student Production Staff & Crew*: Students are involved in all aspects of offstage production including stage management, technical direction, scenery, sound, carpentry, lighting, prop management, costuming, make-up/hair, vocal and dance direction, publicity, and general crew. Crew members are required to attend crew calls, most of which occur in the evening.

# Mime Company

Cherry Hill East has a mime troupe! Auditions are held in September and the troupe has weekly rehearsals. Students do not have to participate in the plays to be the company. Mime Company performs at various community events through the year, including the Mime Ice Cream Social fundraiser held in the cafeteria in April.

# International Thespian Society Troupe 213

The Thespian Society is the theatre honor society. Students who have met certain requirements may apply for membership as early as spring of sophomore year. The induction ceremony for new members is held in early June. Thespian Society members help decide which shows are produced, plan and host the annual Halloween dance, and organize field trips to local and Broadway shows.

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# ABOUT THEATRE BOOSTERS

Cherry Hill East Theatre Boosters provides financial and volunteer support to Cherry Hill High School East’s theatre department. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Memberships are valid from September through August. All or part of the membership cost is deductible for federal tax purposes. To join Theatre Boosters, complete the information form and mail it with membership dues to the address on the form. Membership can be completed and paid by credit card through our website at www.chetb.weebly.com. Merchant fees are included in the prices listed online.

# Financial Support

We contribute to three Cherry Hill East theatre-related scholarships and also fund our own scholarship. Booster donations have helped the theatre department purchase sewing machines, lighting equipment, sound equipment, and more. And the Thespian Society depends on us for the Halloween Dance DJ and cakes for the end of year theatre banquet and Thespian induction ceremony.

Our funds come from a number of sources. Membership dollars and snack bar proceeds are generally our biggest sources of income. Additional funding comes from mug and flower sales at the Mainstage shows, our annual apparel sale, the Mime Ice Cream Social, and restaurant dining nights.

# Volunteer Support

Parent participation is essential to the success of Theatre Boosters. We cannot provide the services the students and staff count on without parent volunteers. These are our major volunteer efforts for the year:

*Pasta lunch:* Twice a year, on the Saturday before the opening night of each Mainstage show, the cast and crew come together for “cue to cue” - a full-day rehearsal where the acting and technical aspects of the production come together for the first time in a complete run of the show. Since the students and staff are at the school all day, Theatre Boosters members provide them with lunch. Booster parents donate pre-prepared entrées, side dishes, and desserts. We set up the buffet line, serve the cast, crew, and staff (and orchestra for the spring musical), then clean everything up at the end.

*Tech week meals:* Dress rehearsals are held on the two nights before each Mainstage opening. On these nights, we have sandwiches or pizza delivered to the school for the cast and crew. Theatre Boosters members arrange for the delivery, set up, serve, and clean up.

*Box office:* Tickets for Mainstage shows are available to families of the cast and crew the Saturday before opening – the same day as the pasta lunch. Tickets are available to the public from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on weekdays of show weeks and for one hour prior to each show time. The box office at Cherry Hill East is staffed with parent volunteers.

*Memento sales:* For each Mainstage show, a mug is designed and made available for sale to the cast, crew, and general public. A committee of Booster members orders the mugs, assembles bags of candy to place in them, then oversees sales on show nights. We also sell flower bouquets for parents, family members, and friends to give to the cast and crew.

*Snack bar:* The snack bar is open at all five of the annual play productions. We provide a full snack bar at One Acts and the Mainstage productions, including hot dogs, popcorn, cupcakes, and coffee. A mini snack bar, offering candy and water, is open for Lab Theatre and Studio 2. All snack bars are overseen and staffed by Theatre Boosters.

*Mime Ice Cream Social:* The Mime Company performs at the Social, but Booster parents plan it, provide the toppings, and scoop the ice cream.

**Cherry Hill East Theatre Boosters Board Positions**

President

Vice President – Fundraising

Vice President – Operations

Treasurer

Corresponding Secretary

Recording Secretary

Parliamentarian

# For more information on Theatre Booster meetings, events and happenings, please visit our website at <http://chetb.weebly.com/>

All Theatre Booster meetings are on Tuesdays, begin at 7:30 p.m. and will be held in the Teachers’ Dining Room, unless otherwise noted.

 **Welcome Message from the Director, Tom Weaver**

Welcome to where painted trees and flowers grow!

Your student has chosen to participate in the Cherry Hill High School East Theatre program.

To begin with, we are an educational high school theatre program designed to teach the basics of theatre both in the classroom and on stage in our after school program. Unlike professional theatre programs where actors and staff are paid and often work within a union, students in an educational theatre setting are in the learning stages of the theatre world. As your son or daughter travels through the program over the next few years, they will learn how to act, direct, stage-manage, build, paint, sew, light, and so much more. They will also learn why work ethic, commitment, and leadership are so important. Best of all, they will learn to be confident in so many ways. These are character traits they will all use in life no matter what career they choose.

Here at East, we have very high expectations and expect our theatre students to “reach for the stars.” We are an award winning program year in and year out. Our very rich tradition goes back to 1970. We have won Best Play, Best Director, Best Actor and Actress, and Technical Theatre awards at many local, state and even tri-state levels. This all comes from hard work and a love of theatre.

**Common question**: ***How can I support my child?***  Help them manage their conflicts. Get them to and from rehearsals. Help them manage their time so they can do their school work and theatre without stress. Be there for them at the shows. Join the Boosters to help out. Most of all, love and support their love for the theatre even when they don’t get the part they wanted. Your child may be very talented in many ways but simply isn’t right for a part because they are still developing their theatre skills. This is a very competitive program, so it may take some time before your child gets “that special part or position”. Also, you may be asked to find a costume or two as well as a prop.

Remember, the value of a theatre program pays off in the real world. Towson University reports that 75% of the Fortune 500 companies love to hire people with theatre backgrounds simply because they understand teamwork, work ethic, leadership, communication skills, and are confident. In short, they have “people skills.”

**Please remember:** Rehearsals are closed to all guests unless invited by the staff. That also goes for green rooms and other backstage areas. We need to minimize distractions.

Let’s have a GREAT year and remember, if you have a concern or question, please call me at 856-424-2222 ext. 2025 or email me at tweaver@chclc.org.

Sincerely,

Tom Weaver