NEBRASKA SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

PLAY PRODUCTION

ACTIVITY MANUAL



2025-2026

WWW.NSAAHOME.ORG

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Nebraska School Activities Association

https://www.nsaahome.org

The NSAA Play Production Manual has been prepared and designed to provide general information in the administration of this activity. The sections of the Nebraska School Activities Association bylaws and approved rulings related to this activity are included in this manual.

All AD's and play production directors are urged to read this manual carefully and to save it for future reference.

Taryn Retzlaff, Assistant Director, is the NSAA staff member assigned to this activity. If schools have questions regarding play production, she can be reached via email - tretzlaff@nsaahome.org.

Key Dates

- Date for Schools to Register for Play Production: July 1
- Date of First Contest: Thursday, Week 9, September 4
- Date District Entries Due: Friday, Week 20, November 21
- Content Review Form Due: Friday, Week 10, November 21
- District Contest Dates: Week 22, December 1-6
- State Play Production Contest:
 - o Classes D1 & D2 Wednesday, December 10
 - o Classes C1 & C2 Thursday, December 11
 - Classes A & B Friday, December 12

Play Production Online Rules Meetings

August 1 to October 22 October 23 to October 24 No Charge to Head Coaches & Judges Late/Penalty \$50 Fee – Judges & Head Coaches

2025 Season Points of Emphasis

- Schools may opt up to any class. This was a 2024-25 proposal that passed and affects all NSAA sports and activities.
- District Hosts need to send stage dimensions to schools attending their site no less than one month prior to district competition.
- District Hosts are required to hold a director's meeting prior to the start of awards.
- Please note: In order to perform at districts and/or state, teams will need to upload their proof of performance rights. This can be a letter from the publisher, a statement from the director or AD indicating the play can be found in public domain, or, if the director is the playwright, a letter that takes credit for writing the play and gives the school permission to perform it. Page 9.
- All Play production directors are required to view 3 NFHS online courses, once every 3 years.
- 1st year coaches are required to view the 3 NFHS online courses prior to the season.
- District Play Production Entries are due on Friday, November 21.
- State Play Production will be at the Johnny Carson Theatre in Norfolk on December 10-12.

Optional Training Courses from the National Federation of High School Associations (NFHS)

The following free courses are available to directors and judges:

- Implicit Bias NFHS Course on Implicit Bias
- Understanding Copyright and Compliance NFHS Course on Understanding Copyright and Compliance
- Theatre Safety NFHS Course on Theatre Safety
- Sportsmanship NFHS Course on Sportsmanship
- Protecting Students from Abuse NFHS Course on Protecting Students from Abuse
- Directing Plays <u>NFHS Course on Directing Plays</u>
- Bullying, Hazing, and Inappropriate Behaviors <u>NFHS Course on Bullying, Hazing, and Inappropriate</u> Behaviors
- Social Media <u>NFHS Course on Social Media.</u>

If you are interested in taking these courses, please click on the link provided or go to www.nfhslearn.com, to sign up, and "order" the course.

NSAA Bylaws & Approved Rulings Governing Play Production

For a complete listing of NSAA Bylaws and Approved Rulings, please refer to the NSAA Constitution & Bylaws.

2.10 - Conduct

- **2.10.1 Conduct During Interscholastic Competition**. Students, participants, and staff members representing member schools in interscholastic competition are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner.
- **2.10.1.1** Unsportsmanlike conduct shall include physical or verbal assault upon any participant, game official, or spectator, or any acts that may endanger the personal safety of individuals involved, or acts that hinder the normal progress of a contest or lead to the restriction or discontinuance of a contest.
- **2.10.1.2** If a student, participant, and/or staff member representing a member school in interschool competition acts in a manner constituting unsportsmanlike behavior during such competition, the member school and/or individuals shall be subject to penalties as set out in Section 2.11.
- **2.10.1.3** If any participant or staff member while representing a member school in an Association-sponsored district tournament, playoff, or state contest acts in a manner constituting unsportsmanlike conduct, the individual is subject to penalties as set out in Section 2.11.

2.11 - Penalties

- **2.11.1 School Violations**. For violation by a member school of any of the provisions of the Constitution, Bylaws, or rules adopted by the Representative Assembly or approved by the member schools or the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors or Executive Director may impose, but not be limited to, one or more of the following penalties:
- **2.11.1.2** Issue a private or public reprimand to the school.
- **2.11.1.3** Recommend that the responsible school official receive a private or public reprimand.
- **2.11.1.4** Enforce the forfeiture of one or more contests in team or individual contests.
- **2.11.1.5** Enforce the forfeiture of points scored by students in individual competition.
- **2.11.1.6** A student or staff member may be reprimanded, placed on probation, or suspended from participation for one or more contests.
- **2.11.1.7** Recommend that the school declare the guilty student ineligible for up to ninety school days or the remainder of the school year.
- **2.11.1.8** Place the school on probation for a period not to exceed one calendar year.
- **2.11.1.9** Suspend a school for part or all of the season of an activity.
- 2.11.1.10 Expel the school from Association membership for a period not to exceed one calendar year

APPROVED RULING 2.1.2 - Medical Personnel at Regular Season Games

It is important for every school to have an emergency action plan (EAP) for administrators, faculty, coaches and staff members to follow should emergencies occur. Due to lack of universal availability of medical coverage and other logistical reasons, NSAA does not require that schools have a physician, trainer or ambulance on-site at regular season activities.

APPROVED RULING 2.12 – Required NFHS Courses for Coaches

All coaches, activity sponsors, and volunteers are required to complete the NFHS Concussion in Sports, Heat Illness Prevention, and Sudden Cardiac Arrest Training courses at least once every three years. These courses should be taken prior to any preseason or regular season physical workouts that the respective coach would be present for or involved in administering. Any course taken after May 1 would be considered valid for the following school year. All first-year coaches are required to complete all three courses prior to the start of the activity season which they are to coach.

CPR/AED Certification

All head coaches/sponsors and assistant coaches/sponsors are required to be CPR/AED certified once every two years. Certification should be completed prior to any pre-season or regular season physical workouts that the respective coach/sponsor would be present for or involved in administering. All first-year head coaches/sponsors and assistant coaches/sponsors are required to complete certification prior to the start of the activity season which they are to coach. Coaches aides and volunteer coaches are not required to be certified.

2.1.4 - Certificate of Eligibility

Prior to the first date permitted for interschool competition in each activity, each member school shall submit an online list of all students participating and eligible to participate in each activity.

2.12.2.2 – Rules Meetings

All head coaches are required to attend an NSAA Rules Meeting or complete an NSAA Rules Meeting online annually. Failure to do so will result in possible late fees and suspension penalties. Online rules meetings are initially offered at no cost to coaches or officials, followed by a period with a \$50 "Delinquent" Fee. The following sanctions and fees are applicable to those coaches who fail to complete the rules meeting by the expiration of the "Delinquent" Fee period. Absence from the required rules meeting OR FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE ONLINE RULES MEETING will result in the following sanctions:

First Offense in Three-Year Period

The head coach will be suspended from coaching in any competition in that activity until The head coach COMPLETES THE NSAA'S ONLINE RULES MEETING OFFERED AT THE LATE FEE of \$100; and

- (1) the head coach successfully completes the open book test for officials/judges of that activity (70% or higher); and the school's administration verifies that the coach has read all the supporting NSAA, National Federation, and safety information.
- (2) During this regular season suspension period, the head coach may continue to coach the team at practices.

Second and Subsequent Offenses in Three-Year Period

The head coach will be suspended from coaching in all NSAA end-of-season play (sub-districts, districts, playoffs, and state competition). The head coach COMPLETES THE NSAA'S ONLINE RULES MEETING OFFERED AT THE LATE FEE of \$200; and

- (1) the head coach successfully completes the open book test for officials/judges of that activity (70% or higher); and the school's administration verifies that the coach has read all the supporting NSAA, National Federation, and safety information.
- (2) During this regular season suspension period, the head coach may continue to coach the team at practices.

2.13 – Classification of Schools

Schools shall be divided into six classes, with classification based on the enrollment in grades 9-11 according to the enrollment figures submitted to the Department of Education on the fourth Friday of September of the preceding school year.

2.13.2.4 Unisex schools' enrollments will not be doubled to determine official NSAA enrollment figures for classification purposes in play production.

Eligibility of Students

Students who are enrolled in a member high school and have not graduated from any high school or its equivalent, which is a part of a member high school's system who compete or practice with a member high school's team may be permitted to participate in activities of the NSAA.

2.3.2

A student in grade seven or eight who reaches age 15 prior to August 1 may participate on a high school team. The term 'participates' means that student's performance through his/her physical talents plays an integral role in the production. This would include eligible cast members and live accompaniment. Technical crew personnel including individuals responsible for sound effects, lighting, props, costumes, and make up are exempt from this ruling.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Each state association may, in keeping with applicable laws, authorize exceptions to rules to provide reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as those individuals with unique and extenuating circumstances. In order to determine if the NSAA can authorize such an accommodation, the school administration shall complete the Accommodations Request Form which can be found on the NSAA homepage under About the NSAA tab, NSAA Member Schools Information.

5.2 - Eligibility

- **5.2.1** Student Eligibility. In order for students to participate in varsity competition, they must meet the eligibility requirements established for all activities. (Article 2) Exception: Participation for remuneration in non-school competition does not cause ineligibility.
- **5.2.1.1** The term "participates" means that a student's performance, through his/her physical talents, plays an integral role in the production. This would include cast members and live accompanist. Technical crew personnel, which would include individuals responsible for sound effects, lighting, costumes and makeup, are exempt from this ruling.
- **5.2.1.2** Certificate of Eligibility. Prior to the first date permitted for interschool competition in each activity, each member school shall submit an on-line list of all students participating and eligible to participate in each activity.
- **5.2.1.3** In order to participate in a sub-district, district or state contest in a particular activity, a student is required to have been a member of a school's team or group in that particular activity for at least twenty school days prior to the first day of the sub-district, district or state competition. An exception to this requirement would be if a student was unable to be a member of a school's team or group due to injury, illness or transfers from another school.
- **5.2.2** Participation Limited to School Group. During play production season, a student shall not participate in any play production competition other than as a representative of his/her school. Exception. A school and its students may participate in the National Speech Tournament as permitted by the NSAA Bylaws or individual students may participate in play production competition sponsored by governmental agencies or organizations such as civic or service clubs.
- **5.2.2.1** In determining if a school is in violation of permitting students to participate in unauthorized play production competition, the following factors will be considered:
 - a. Did the coach or sponsor of the play production team or organization enter the individuals in the competition?
 - b. Were school funds used to pay entry fees or any expenses for the individual students?
 - c. Were school-purchased equipment or materials used by the student?
 - d. Were the individual students under the supervision of the school while traveling to and from the site of such competition and/or during the competition?
 - e. Did the individual student actually perform in the play production contest?
 - f. If a school is not involved, the school name cannot be used nor a name which might be interpreted as a school.
 - g. A school in violation of the approved ruling shall be subject to a penalty as set forth in Article 2.11 NSAA Bylaws.
- **5.2.3 Supervision**. The sponsor, coach, or an authorized faculty member must accompany the group and be present during interschool competition.

5.4 - Season and Participation Limitations

- **5.4.1 Length of Season**. The play production season is defined as the period of time from Thursday of Week 9 of the Standardized Calendar to and including Saturday of Week 23 of the Standardized Calendar.
- **5.4.2 First Date of Competition**. No school may participate in any interscholastic play production competition held prior to Thursday of Week 9 of the Standardized Calendar.
- **5.4.3 Contests Per Week**. Participation in interscholastic play production by any high school student is limited to two contests per calendar week (Monday through Saturday). There shall be no interscholastic play production competition on Sunday.

5.5.1 - Play Selection

Schools may select any one-act play or cuttings from full-length plays of theatrical value, provided that it contains no fewer than three characters. *Note: Plays do not need to be published to be performed.*

5.5.1 – (AR) Selection of Material Review Form

Each school must complete a Material Review Form which reads, "Play Production content has been carefully examined, and the performances are approved for presentation by the students of our school. The school also takes responsibilities for royalty payments and permission granted from the author when required."

Standards. Directors shall review materials for content that may not be acceptable in a high school educational setting (i.e., graphic sexuality/violence; obscene language, actions or scenes; and plagiarism). The administration of the school in conjunction with the director shall ensure that the play and requirements are in compliance with the educational mission of the school. The signed Review Form serves to certify that the materials presented have been carefully examined and reviewed for presentation. Nothing in these standards is intended to permit or encourage censorship on the basis of a topic or viewpoint. The NSAA supports academic standards and academic freedom.

Please Note - This form must be submitted electronically prior to district competition. The form can be found on the AD Login page as a link directly below the Play Production District Entry Form.

5.5.2 - Time Limit

The play shall be performed within a 15-to-30-minute limit. The timing device is to start with the first sound, action, or stage lighting and is to end when the lights go out, the music fades, and/or the curtain closes.

Please Note - Taking the stage in minimal lighting or in the dark is not the beginning of the play; and the last sound can occur in the dark.

5.5.3 - Royalty

If the play is a royalty play, the school presenting the play shall pay the royalty. When adapting a play, the original author of an adaptation, as well as the person adapting the literature for the stage must be given credit.

Please note: In order to perform at districts and/or state, teams will need to upload their proof of performance rights. This can be a letter from the publisher, a statement from the director or AD indicating the play can be found in public domain, or, if the director is the playwright, a letter that takes credit for writing the play and gives the school permission to perform it.

5.5.4 – Stage Setting

The host school shall supply ordinary stage properties. If a set, extra lighting, or unusual stage properties are desired, the school presenting the play shall furnish them. The responsibility for the properties, sound effects, costumes, and make-up shall also be that of the school presenting the play.

5.5.4.1

In advance, the host school shall provide each participating school dimensions of the stage and lighting equipment available for use.

Please Note - If microphones are available, all performing schools must have the option to use microphones.

5.5.4.2

The participating schools shall provide the host school a diagram of the set, lighting plot, a program copy including the title of the play, the playwright and a list of the cast and crewmembers.

5.5.4.3

At the time of the contest, the host school: shall provide a stage crew to assist the director and cast in preparing the setting and stage for the production as well as rooms for dressing and make-up.

5.5.5 - Judging Standards

- a. The script shall be judged on the theatrical value of the play and its suitability to the cast.
- b. The acting of the individual actors shall be judged for such elements as characterization, stage movement and business. The acting of the group shall be judged for grouping, interaction of characters, tempo and climaxes.
- c. The staging shall be judged for such items as blocking, stage movement, set, lights, sound effects, properties, costuming and make-up, with primary consideration being given to those items which are within the ability of the participating school to control.
- d. The total effect shall be judged in terms of dramatic unity resulting from the combination of the acting, the script, and the staging as an integrated performance.
- e. The judge shall also designate those individuals whose performances are deserving of a superior rating. No other ratings for individual cast members shall be announced.
- f. The primary focus will be acting and will be reflected on the Play Production Ballot.

5.6 District and State Contest

- **5.6.1** The district and state contests shall be under the direction of the Board of Directors and Executive Director.
- **5.6.2 Classification for Competition.** The schools registering for play production shall be divided into six classes for competition. The number of schools in each class will be determined by the Board of Directors.
- **5.6.2.1** The schools in each class will be assigned to districts for competition to qualify for the state contest. In Class A, the district champion and runner-up shall advance to the State Contest. In Classes, B, C, C2, D1, D2 the play judged to be the top play in each district will qualify for the State Contest.
- **5.6.2.2 District Assignments**. District assignments, sites for competition, and rules and instructions for district competition will be published in the Play Production Manual. Sites for district play production contests will be determined first by request of the schools in the district. If more than one school requests to host, the determination will be based on a minimum standard of quality of the facility. Schools will need to submit dimension of the stage and a description of their facility. (Lighting, PA/sound system, capacity,

dressing rooms, etc.) If no school within the district submits a request for hosting the event, the NSAA shall decide who hosts the district regardless of facility.

- **5.6.3 District Entries.** A school may enter one group in district competition.
 - **5.6.3.1** The entries to the district contests are to be submitted no later than a fixed date to be determined annually by the NSAA and indicated on the NSAA calendar. This year's due date is Friday, November 21.
 - **5.6.4 State Contest.** District directors will notify the NSAA Office of the state qualifiers. No further registration by the schools is required.
 - **5.6.4.1** Schools that qualify for the state contest are expected to participate in the state contest. Unless excused by the Executive Director, failure to compete shall result in the school being penalized.
 - **5.6.5 Ratings**. All plays in the district and state contests will be rated according to the following scale:
 - a. Superior
 - b. Excellent
 - c. Good

General Regulations

A list of NSAA-registered play production judges will be made available to member schools during the first week of November.

District Contest Host Sites

District play production host sites will be selected based on the following process:

- Initial Consideration: Host sites will first be determined by request from schools within the district.
- **Multiple Requests**: If more than one school requests to host, selection will be based on a minimum standard of facility and overall quality and/or rotated among attending schools within a district.
- Required Information: Schools requesting to host must submit:
 - Stage dimensions
 - Description of the performance space, including:
 - Lighting capabilities
 - PA/sound system
 - Audience seating capacity
 - Dressing room availability

If no schools in the district submit a request to host, the NSAA will assign a host site at its discretion, regardless of facility specifications.

Respect & Conduct Expectations

Concerns have been raised regarding a lack of respect shown to performers, directors, judges, audience members, and host site staff. All participants must recognize that they represent not only their production but also their school and community.

As educators and students, we must foster a respectful and supportive environment for all. The following expectations apply:

- **Professionalism**: Directors and students are expected to uphold the values of sportsmanship and integrity in all interactions.
- **Sportsmanship**: Actions or language intended to distract or demean others, or manipulate the rules, are unacceptable.
- **Leadership**: Judges, directors, and student performers are all responsible for modeling respectful behavior and reinforcing positive conduct.
- Inclusion & Safety:
 Any behavior that intimidates, threatens, or harasses others—particularly on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation—will not be tolerated.

Let us work together to ensure that every production, at every site, reflects the highest standards of excellence, equity, and educational value.

NSAA Policy on Comments and Negative Actions Against Officials and Judges

The National Federation of State High School Associations has devised Code of Ethics guidelines for high school coaches. The function of a coach is to educate students through participation in interscholastic competition. The coach or sponsor shall respect and support contest officials and judges. The coach or sponsor shall not indulge in conduct that would incite players or spectators against the judges. Public criticism of officials, judges, or players is unethical.

The Nebraska School Activities Association has embraced that Coaches Code of Ethics and has established policies and standards that will cultivate the ideals of good sportsmanship, professionalism, and conduct. It shall be the responsibility of each member school to ensure that all individuals directly associated with the interscholastic program conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike and professional manner. The high school coach or director is a representative of the school at interscholastic activity events. It is the responsibility of all coaches and directors to serve as role models for students and the public.

It is the expectation that all coaches, directors, administrators, and student participants shall refrain from negative criticism of NSAA member institutions, officials, adjudicators, judges, etc. in public statements before, during or after interscholastic events. The appropriate public response to media questions at all venues regarding officiating/judging is, "per NSAA policy, I am unable to comment." Any other response is a violation of this board policy and is subject to penalty.

It would be considered a violation of this NSAA policy to include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Making degrading and/or critical remarks about officials or adjudicators or the officiating or judging before, during or after an event either on or off-site, via social media, or through any public means.
- b. Detaining the officials/adjudicators/judges during or following the event to request a ruling or explanation of actions or evaluation by the official(s)/adjudicator(s)/judge(s).

Negative actions by an individual directly associated with the program shall be reported to the NSAA office by the school and/or by the head contest official, adjudicator, judge, or manager. The school shall document the results of their investigation and actions taken, where necessary and appropriate. The NSAA Executive Director shall determine the appropriate penalties for violation of this board policy.

Emergency Action Plan

Severe injuries, sudden illnesses, and other critical incidents do not often occur during school activities, but it is important for every school to have an emergency action plan (EAP) for administrators, faculty, coaches, and staff members to follow should emergencies occur. Due to lack of universal availability of medical coverage and other logistical reasons, NSAA does not require that schools have a physician, trainer, or ambulance onsite at regular season activities; however, each school should have a plan in place should there be an emergency involving students, coaches, officials, or spectators requiring medical attention.

Selection of Judges for Post-Season Competition

Any judge interested in working district or state contests shall apply to the NSAA by submitting a completed online NSAA application. Judges for all district and state championships are selected by the NSAA. In general, the following selection criteria shall be used and in the following order:

- 1. The NSAA values active judges. NSAA judges for districts and state will, first and foremost, be determined from the amount of judging the judge has completed over the course of the current season, their attendance at NSAA judging workshops and/or Nebraska Speech Communications and Theatre Association (NSCTA) offerings, and NFHS training courses taken (and certificates uploaded to their judging page). For a complete list of available, free courses, please visit page 4.
- 2. Judge's ballot results submitted by directors and AD's on the online form. (Directors can access the ballot on their director's login page.)
- 3. A judge's prior judging experience.
- 4. A judge's geographical location.

Classifications & Districts

- 1. Only those schools submitting the play production registration fee and declaring participation to the NSAA are classified and assigned to a district.
- 2. The 24 largest registered/participating schools are placed in Class A, the next 48 in Class B, with the remaining schools divided as evenly as possible.
- 3. Opt-up a school may opt up one classification. The deadline for submitting a request to the NSAA is one week from when classifications are posted on the NSAA website. No team will move up to fill the void made by a school opting up.

Please Note - If schools are tied in enrollment for the last position(s) of a class, the below procedure will be applied to break the tie:

- a. The first tiebreaker will be a three-year average of enrollment which includes the year on which the current year's classification is based and the two previous years. The higher three-year average will be in the larger class.
- b. If the tie still exists, then the school with the higher immediate previous year's enrollment will be placed in the larger class.
- **c**. If a tie still exists, it will be decided by a coin flip in the NSAA office.
- 4. Class A schools will be divided into three districts.
- 5. Classes B, C1, C2, D1, and D2 schools will be divided into six districts.
- 6. In Class A, the district champion and district runner-up will qualify for the state championship.
- 7. Classes B, C1, C2, D1, and D2, the district champion will qualify for the state championship.

In Class A, schools will be divided into three districts. The 2024 district champions will be assigned to separate districts. The 2024 district runners-up will be assigned by random draw so that no district runner-up and champion from the previous year shall meet in the same district.

| District A1 District A2 2024 A1 Champion 2024 A2 Champion | | District A3 |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------|
| | | 2023 A4 Champion |
| Random Draw: | Random Draw: | Random Draw: |
| 2024 A2/A3 Runner-up | 2024 A1/A3 Runner-up | 2024 of A1/A2 Runner-up |

The remaining Class A schools will be randomly assigned.

In Classes B, C1, C2, D1, and D2, schools will be divided into six districts, based on geography. Assignments begin with the school located the farthest west; schools to the east are added until the pre-determined number of schools, which are to compose a district, is reached. Schools located to the north and south may be selected if total travel distance to a tournament site can be decreased. This sequence continues until all schools are assigned to a district. Available host site and facilities will also be considered.

The district champion and runner-up in a district from the previous year will not be assigned to the same district in the following year. If feasible, one district champion and one district runner-up from the previous year will be assigned to each district.

A maximum of one district champion from the previous year will be assigned to each district. A maximum of two schools that were either a district champion or runner-up from the previous year will be assigned to each district. Geography and available host sites will be considered if adjustments must be made to district assignments to ensure the above criteria. District champions and runners-up from the previous year that have changed classification will be excluded from this process.

If a school decides not to compete after district assignments are made, no change will be made in district assignments, however, that school is responsible for their share of the district expenses. If two or more schools decide not to compete, or two or more schools close, consolidate, or enter into a cooperative agreement, the districts may be adjusted to restore a near equal number of schools or to take advantage of a reduction in travel distance.

If a school(s) decides to participate after district assignments are completed, the school(s) will be assigned to a district with the fewest number of schools unless the travel distance is too great. In that case, school(s) will be assigned to the nearest district and the other district assignments will be adjusted.

If a school registers late for an activity after district assignments have been made and the number of schools assigned to a district is restricted to a specific number, the school which registered late will be assigned to a district which has fewer than the specified number of schools.

PLEASE NOTE - REGISTERED and CLASSIFIED schools that DO NOT participate in districts will be fined \$400.

Dates & Sites of District Contests

- 1. All district contests will be held during the period from December 2-7.
- 2. The NSAA shall assign all sites, contest directors, and judges for all NSAA-sponsored contests.

Time Schedule

Once the starting time of a contest has been set, the time shall not be changed unless mutual consent is received from all schools involved in that contest.

Entries

- 1. Due Friday, November 21, 2025.
- 2. Entry fees shall be established individually by each district by dividing the expenses of the contest equally between the schools assigned to that district.

District Director Responsibilities

- 1. Authority.
 - a. The director of the tournament is granted full authority for the conduct and management of the contest and is responsible for the administration of rules, regulations, and accounting of finances.

2. Reports.

- a. The state qualifier shall be reported to the NSAA immediately following the contest.
- b. A financial report should be completed immediately following the close of the contest and submitted to the participating schools and the NSAA.
- c. Results of the contest shall be provided to participating schools prior to leaving the contest.
- d. A copy of the financial report shall be provided to participating schools when finalized.

Expectations for District Directors

- 1. Upon notification from the NSAA of the judges assigned for your district contest, the director shall notify the judges with contest information and provide the names of the judges to the participating schools. Hosts can refer to their AD login page on the NSAA website for this information.
- 2. Judges shall be provided programs and ballots.
- 3. A doorkeeper shall be provided to keep people from entering while plays are in progress.
- 4. In advance of the contest, the district director shall send each participating school the following:
 - a. Times of the contest
 - b. Dimensions of the stage
 - c. Description of the set
 - d. Lighting equipment available for use
 - e. Any other pertinent information about the host facility
- 5. The participating schools should send the director a program copy including the title of the play, the playwright, and a list of characters and cast
- 6. At the time of the contest, the director shall provide rooms for dressing and make-up.
- 7. The host shall provide a stage crew to assist in preparing the setting and stage for the production.

Judges and Scoring

- 1. Plays will be judged once by three acting judges and one technical theatre judge.
- 2. Judges will be required to rank, as well as rate, all performances.
- 3. Judges shall not confer regarding performances prior to submitting ballots to the tab room. The judges shall conduct the oral critique at separate times and will not be present or stationed within hearing distance while the other judge engages in the oral critique process.
- 4. A student may be recognized for an outstanding performance. Ensemble performances will not be recognized for outstanding performance.
- 5. Ballots are to be provided to the directors of the participating schools prior to the awards ceremony. If a rule violation or a scoring error is discovered, it shall be rectified prior to the awards being presented.
- 6. Results shall be tabulated as follows:
 - a. Total the rank given by each judge for each play.
 - b. The play with the lowest cumulative rank is declared the winner; the play with the next lowest cumulative rank is the runner-up, and so on.
 - c. Ties in cumulative rank will be broken as follows:
 - 1. Judge's preference
 - 2. Reciprocals
 - 3. Highest cumulative rating points
 - 4. Judges brought back together to break the tie.

In the case of a three-way tie, the following procedure shall be used:

Rank reciprocals will be applied. The play with the highest reciprocal total shall receive the next highest placement. Once the three-way tie has been broken, the tabulation staff will break the remaining tie by starting over at the beginning of the procedures above.

Tie-Breaking Terminology

Judge's Preference: This method compares the judge's rank to determine which performance is preferred.

Example:

| | Judge 1 | Judge 2 | Judge 3 |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Play A | (3) | 4 | 2 |
| Play B | 6 | 2 | 1 |

In the example above, two plays have tied with a total rank of 9. To break the tie, we look at how each individual judge ranked the plays. Judge 1 rated Play A over Play B, so Play A wins Judge 1. Judge 2 rated Play B over Play A, so Play B wins Judge 3. Based on judge's preference, Play B wins the tie-breaker.

Reciprocals: Reciprocals require that each rank be assigned the decimal equivalent of its reciprocal. Hence, 1^{st} –1.0, 2^{nd} .5, 3^{rd} .33, 4^{th} .25, 5^{th} .20, etc. The reciprocals are then added, and the play with the highest cumulative reciprocal score wins.

Please Note - There can be no ties in final rank at the conclusion of the contest if a play is overtime (exceeding 30 seconds). A play that is overtime will be dropped one rank, with the rating points not being affected. When determining the awarding of superior certificates when multiple judges are used, the judge's ratings shall be averaged. If the average of the ratings is 50 points or greater, a superior certificate will be issued. The average shall not be rounded up to the nearest whole number.

District Judges Fee

The fee established for district play production judges is \$20.00 per judge per play judged, plus mileage at the established NSAA rate.

Supervision

The district contest shall be under the direction of the Board of Directors and Executive Director.

Inclement Weather

- 1. Snowstorms or other inclement weather conditions may force the postponement of a district.
- 2. The contest director has the sole authority for the postponement and rescheduling of such contest.
- 3. In determining whether to postpone or to hold the contest as scheduled, the director should consider the following factors:
 - a. The weather and road conditions at the site of the contest
 - b. Existing weather and road conditions at the location of the schools, which are to compete that day
 - c. Road conditions between contest site and the competing schools
 - d. The weather conditions immediately prior to, during, and following the contest as reported by the weather bureau
- 4. After considering the various factors, the contest director determines that competition is to go on as scheduled, all schools are to be notified early enough as to allow each team sufficient time to travel to the contest site.
- 5. Once the decision has been made to hold the event as scheduled and any team has begun to travel, the contest shall be held.
- 6. If the contest director feels a postponement is necessary, he/she shall obtain permission from the Executive Director before postponing the day's activities.
- 7. Once the contest has been postponed, the director shall be responsible for setting the new date, time, and site, if necessary, for the continuation of the contest.

- 8. The previously agreed upon schedule may be changed to complete the contest by the required dates.
- 9. Contest receipts are not to be used to reimburse any school for additional expenses incurred because of a postponed contest.

<u>Awards</u>

- At the conclusion of each performance, each judge shall turn in a list of outstanding performers. Each
 nominated performer will receive a certificate and name recognition during the awards ceremony.
 Ensemble performances shall not be recognized for outstanding performance, but individuals within the
 ensemble may be recognized.
- 2. Certificates are available for download on the NSAA website.
- 3. An outstanding technical crew will be recognized with a plaque.
- 4. Plaques for the top play, runner-up, and technical crew as well as medals for the two most outstanding performers will be shipped to the director of each district contest.
- 5. It shall be the expectation that both casts shall accept their medals, plaques, and trophies at districts and state contests in a sporting and willing manner.
- 6. The executive director or the NSAA Board of Directors shall determine the type and severity of sanctions to schools that do not comply with these expectations.

Notification of State Qualifiers

- 1. Schools qualifying will not have to register in advance of the state contest with the state contest director.
- 2. The district director will notify the NSAA of the state qualifier(s) immediately following the district contest.
- 3. The qualifying school need only to report 30 minutes prior to their scheduled performance time to check in their cast and crew.
- 4. If a school qualifies for the state championship through competing in a district contest, that school is expected to compete in the state contest.
- 5. Unless excused by the Executive Director for just cause, failure to compete in a state championship shall result in the school being penalized.

NSAA State Play Production Championships

Admission: Adults - \$8.00, Students \$6.00

Contest Site: Johnny Carson Theatre, 801 Riverside Blvd., Norfolk, Nebraska

<u>Contest Dates</u>: Wednesday, December 10 – Classes D1 & D2

Thursday, December 11 – Classes C1 & C2

Friday, December 12 - Classes A & B

<u>Contest Director</u>: Taryn Retzlaff - (402) 489-0386 - <u>tretzlaff@nsaahome.org</u> <u>Site Managers</u>: John Erwin - (402) 992-0289 - johnerwin@npsne.org

Entries:

In Class A, the champion and runner-up from each district will advance to the state championship. In Class B, C1, C2, D1, and D2, the top play from each district will advance to the state championship.

Registration

Schools must be checked in at the state championship by the school's supervisor upon arrival at the contest site. Students are not permitted in makeup rooms until schools are checked in by the supervisor. The group will then be escorted to the assigned rooms.

Contestant and Director's Admission

- 1. Cast members, directors, and technical crews from each qualifying school will check in at a registration area in which names that appear in the State Championship program will be cleared for admission. Each person identified will be hand stamped. The hand stamp is good for admission for all plays within that respective class.
- 2. The contest director has the right to limit technical crew passes if the size of the group seems excessive.
- 3. Admission is good for that session (class) ONLY.

Support Help

- 1. Judges will serve as timekeepers.
- 2. Timing devices will be provided.
- 3. A doorkeeper will be available. Signs will be posted stating, "PLAY IN PROGRESS--DO NOT ENTER".
- 4. Stage help will be identified if schools need any assistance.

Staging Area

A diagram is included in this Manual on page 23.

Props and Equipment

- 1. Schools are responsible for the set and props they will need.
- 2. Set and props are to be removed immediately following the performance.
- 3. The flying of live actors in any format will not be allowed.
- 4. Glitter and/or confetti will not be allowed in any facility.
- 5. Due to upgraded safety standards, no flying of scenery or props will be allowed at any facility.
- 6. A rigging technician will be provided.

Make-up Room

- 1. MAKE-UP SHALL BE CONFINED TO THE SMALL GYM AREA.
- 2. Schools will be assigned a room for their dressing/make-up room.
- 3. Shower facilities are available.
- 4. Schools are responsible for their own valuables.

Lighting Booth

- 1. If needed, schools will be assisted by a technician to run the lights.
- 2. Participating schools will be allowed to have **two** individuals in the booth.
- 3. That person is to report to the booth 15 minutes prior to the school's scheduled performance time--no earlier!
- 4. 2 Follow Spot Booths and communications from all booths to backstage will be available.

Sound Booth

- 1. If needed, schools will be assisted by a technician to run the sound.
- 2. Sound equipment available includes: (1) 5-Disc CD player, (1) mixing console, and the main PA speakers will be available.

<u>Judges</u>

State play production judges will be reimbursed according to the following schedule:

- 1. Judging fee of \$22.50 per play judged.
- 2. Lodging expense/mileage at the NSAA rate will be refunded to non-area personnel or non-high school judges.
- 3. All judges will be asked to complete an NSAA reimbursement form and will be sent an expense check from the NSAA office.

Protests

Protests regarding the decision of judges will not be heard.

- 1. When the finals have been completed, team points calculated, winners announced, and awards issued, the results are final and no changes can be made in individual placement unless a correctable error is discovered. A correctable error shall be defined as those that involve:
 - a. Mathematical computation errors in points affecting placement.
 - b. Mistakes made in calculation of judge's preference in the final round affecting the placement of the speaker involved.
- 2. If correctable errors are discovered, students or teams shall receive the appropriate medals or trophies. Trophies and medals awarded at the awards ceremony shall be returned by the individuals or teams to which they were presented.
- 3. The contest director or NSAA Executive Staff may correct clerical errors in team scoring when discovered.

Weapons

For the State Championships hosted at the Johnny Carson Theatre in Norfolk, you must email Taryn Retzlaff at tretzlaff@nsaahome.org in advance with a complete description of the simulated weapons to be used. Upon arrival at Carson Theatre, the simulated weapons first must be checked in to the NSAA table located in the small gym. The package must be clearly identified with the name of school and director's name legibly written on the package. The package will be taken backstage by contest staff. The school will request the package from the backstage crew prior to their performance. At the completion of the performance, the simulated weapon will be re-packaged and will exit the building with the school's tech crew, backstage, during the loading process. Please Note: The NSAA and Norfolk Public Schools have the right to deny any item in the form of a weapon.

Failure to properly register your weapons may result in your school not being able to use them in the State Championship.

Reimbursement to Schools

Mileage reimbursements will be based on the number of participants and one coach. (Note: Student managers will not be included.) A school's mileage reimbursement will be figured using the following formula: [(#miles one way x #trips)] x amount.

| Amount per mile | Number of participants/coaches | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|--|
| \$0.85 | 1-6 | |
| \$1.70 | 7-10 | |

Participant is defined as a member of the play cast. Stagehands, make-up helpers, etc. are not included for reimbursement.

If lodging is used, \$20 per participant and one coach will be paid based on the following criteria:

Please Note - Times listed are scheduled competition start times.

- *Night before competing:
 - Before 10:00 AM 76+ miles away
 - Between 10:00 AM and 3:00 PM 150+ miles away
 - At or after 3:00 PM 250+ miles away
 - Night of (still competing) 5:00 PM or later 200+ miles away

^{*}Final Night - 76+ miles away

<u>Awards</u>

- 1. A trophy will be given to the champion and the runner-up in each class.
- 2. Medals will be awarded to the two outstanding performers in each class.
 - a. Each judge shall nominate **up to five students** from each performance for an outstanding performer award.
 - b. At the conclusion of judging, and only after all ballots have been turned in, judges shall receive a list of all nominated performers and confer to determine the two most outstanding performers.
- Certificates will be awarded to each student recognized for outstanding performance. Ensemble
 performances will not be recognized for outstanding performance, but individuals within the ensemble
 may be recognized. Each nominated student will receive their certificate and have their name read
 during the awards ceremony.
- 4. The outstanding technical crew in each class will be recognized with a plaque.
- 5. A Coaches Award will be given to the coach of the school winning the contest in each class.
- 6. 25 medals will be awarded to those teams winning championship or runner-up honors at the State Play Production Contests. Schools will be given the opportunity to purchase additional medals.

Performance Schedule:

All assignments were done by random draw at the NSAA office and the performance order can be found below. Doors to the Johnny Carson Theatre will open at 7:30 AM each day. The times listed below are the performance start time, not set-up time. No one will be admitted into the theater once a performance begins.

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

| | Class D1 |
|----------|----------|
| 8:30 AM | D1-6 |
| 9:15 AM | D1-3 |
| 10:00 AM | D1-5 |
| 10:45 AM | BREAK |
| 11:00 AM | D1-1 |
| 11:45 AM | D1-4 |
| 12:30 PM | D1-2 |

| | Class DE |
|---------|----------|
| 2:30 PM | D2-2 |
| 3:15 PM | D2-6 |
| 4:00 PM | D2-3 |
| 4:45 PM | BREAK |
| 5:00 PM | D2-4 |
| 5:45 PM | D2-1 |
| 6:30 PM | D2-5 |
| | |

Class D2

Thursday, December 11, 2025

| | Class C1 |
|----------|----------|
| 8:30 AM | C1-2 |
| 9:15 AM | C1-5 |
| 10:00 AM | C1-1 |
| 10:45 AM | BREAK |
| 11:00 AM | C1-4 |
| 11:45 AM | C1-3 |
| 12:30 PM | C1-6 |

| | Class C2 |
|---------|----------|
| 2:30 PM | C2-1 |
| 3:15 PM | C2-6 |
| 4:00 PM | C2-3 |
| 4:45 PM | BREAK |
| 5:00 PM | C2-2 |
| 5:45 PM | C2-4 |
| 6:30 PM | C2-5 |

Friday, December 12, 2025

| | Class A | |
|-----------------------|---------------|--|
| 8:30 AM A-1 Runner-Up | | |
| 9:15 AM A-2 Runner-Up | | |
| 10:00 AM | A-3 Runner-Up | |
| 10:45 AM | BREAK | |
| 11:00 AM | A-2 Champion | |
| 11:45 AM | A-3 Champion | |
| 12:30 PM | A-1 Champion | |

| | Class B |
|---------|---------|
| 2:30 PM | B-4 |
| 3:15 PM | B-6 |
| 4:00 PM | B-1 |
| 4:45 PM | BREAK |
| 5:00 PM | B-2 |
| 5:45 PM | B-5 |
| 6:30 PM | B-3 |
| 5:45 PM | B-5 |

State Contest Procedure

- 1. Plays will be judged once by three acting judges and one technical theatre judge.
- 2. Judges will be required to rank and rate all performances.

Please Note - There will be no oral critiques at the State Play Production Championships.

- 3. Ties in cumulative rank will be broken as follows:
 - a. Judge's preference
 - b. Reciprocals
 - c. Highest cumulative rating points
 - d. Judges brought back together to break the tie.

In the case of a three-way tie, the following procedure shall be used:

Rank reciprocals will be applied. The play with the highest reciprocal total shall receive the next highest placement. Once the three-way tie has been broken, the tabulation staff will break the remaining tie by starting over at the beginning of the procedures listed above.

Definition of Terminology:

<u>Judge's Preference</u>: This method compares the judge's rank to determine which performance is preferred.

Example:

| | Judge 1 | Judge 2 | Judge 3 |
|--------|---------|----------|---------|
| Play A | (3) | 4 | 2 |
| Play B | 6 | ② | 1 |

In the example above, two plays have tied with a total rank of 9. To break the tie, we look at how each individual judge ranked the plays. Judge 1 rated Play A over Play B, so Play A wins Judge 1. Judge 2 rated Play B over Play A, so Play B wins Judge 3. Based on judge's preference, Play B wins the tie-breaker.

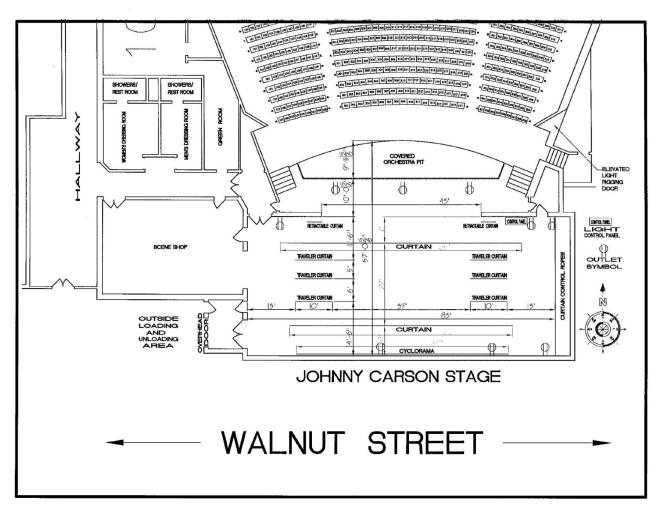
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Please Note - There can be no ties in final rank at the conclusion of the contest if a play is overtime (exceeding 30 seconds). A play that is overtime will be dropped one rank, with the rating points not being affected.

When determining the awarding of superior certificates when multiple judges are used, the judge's ratings shall be averaged. If the average of the ratings is 50 points or greater, a superior certificate will be issued. The average shall not be rounded up to the nearest whole number.

Schools will receive judges' ballots before leaving the contest. Contest results will be posted on the NSAA website shortly after the results are announced.

Johnny Carson Theater Diagram



Click <u>HERE</u> to access a larger image of the Johnny Carson Theater diagram.

TECHNICAL THEATRE

| CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION 1. TECHNICALITY Judge's Name: | Title: | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|-----------|------------|-----------|----------|---------|------------|----------|----------|
| I. TECHNICALITY Light's (when applied) Did the light cues flow with the show? Were they on time? Did they help to enhance the mood of the show? Was light used in transitions and, if so, did tenhance the flow of the performance? Were characters in the light? If a spollight was used, was it appropriately utilized? SOUND (when applied) Did the sound effects enhance the mood and drive the believability of the show? Were they balanced? Were they on time? Was sound used in transitions and, if so, did it enhance the flow of the performance? Was the volume appropriate? Did the sound affect the balance of the show? Were they be proposed to the show? Were they be proposed to the show? Were they be shown and affect the balance of the show? Were they to establish the setting and add to the belevability of the play? SET AND PROPS (when applied) | School Name: | | | | | Ju | ıdge's l | Name: | | | |
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| Are team members friendly and respectful during setup, production, and strike? Did the cast help the crew? Was the team respectful to the host facility? Did the team move set and props carefully? Did the team set up and clean up quickly and efficiently? Were there any "footprints" of the show left behind? ORGANIZATION Did every student team member on stage know their role in the set up and tear down? Did students demonstrate ownership and independence in their roles? Did they move with a purposeful and professional demeanor? Was there an intentional place for all props, costumes, and set pieces? CIRCLE the RANK for the rating for the quality of the play. THERE MAY BE NO TIES IN RANK 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th 9th 10th CIRCLE a RATING for the quality of the play production. CIRCLE a RATING for the quality of the play production. SET UP TIME | II. EFFICIENCY | | /20 | | | | | | | | |
| ORGANIZATION Did every student team member on stage know their role in the set up and tear down? Did students demonstrate ownership and independence in their roles? Did they move with a purposeful and professional demeanor? Was there an intentional place for all props, costumes, and set pleces? CIRCLE the RANK 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th 9th 10th CIRCLE a RATING for the quality of the play production. CIRCLE a RATING for the quality of the play production. SET UP TIME SET UP TIME | Are team members friendly and respect and strike? Did the cast help the crew? Was the to facility? Did the team move set and prup and clean up quickly and efficiently | eam respectful to pps carefully? Die | the host | | | | | | | | |
| 1 st 2 nd 3 rd 4 th 5 th 6 th 7 th 8 th 9 th 10 th CIRCLE a RATING for the quality of the play production. 60 59 58 57 56 55 54 53 52 51 50 49 48 47 46 45 44 43 42 41 40 39 38 37 36 35 34 33 32 31 EXCELLENT GOOD SET UP TIME | ORGANIZAD Did every student team member on si up and tear down? Did students demonstrate ownership roles? Did they move with a purposeful and Was there an intentional place for all | ATION age know their r and independen professional den | ce in their neanor? | t | | | | | | | |
| CIRCLE a RATING for the quality of the play production. 60 59 58 57 56 55 54 53 52 51 50 49 48 47 46 45 44 43 42 41 40 SUPERIOR SET UP TIME | CIRCLE the | RANK for the | e rating fo | or the qu | ality of t | he play. | THERE | MAYBE | NO TIES | IN RANK. | |
| 60 59 58 57 56 55 54 53 52 51 50 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 60 59 58 57 56 55 54 53 52 51 50 | | CIRC | IFaR∆T | ING for t | he guali | ty of the | nlav pro | duction | | | |
| | | | | 47 46 45 | 44 43 4 | 2 41 40 | | | 7 36 35 34 | | 28 27 26 |
| TEAD DOWN TIME | SET UP TIME | | | | | | | | | | |
| I EAR DOWN TIME | TEAR DOWN TIME | | | | | | | | | | |

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PLAY PRODUCTION

| Judge's Name: | | Performance Time: | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION | | | JUDGE'S REMARKS | | | | |
| I. ACTING | /50 | | | | | | |
| VOICE Could the actors be heard? Was the rate of speaking too fast or too slow? Was there variety in rate? Inflection? Intensity? Was pronunciation correct and articulation clear? Did the actors demonstrate emotional responsiveness? | | | | | | | |
| CHARACTERIZATION Were the characters believable? Did the actors sustain the characters? Were the actions/reactions of the characters effective? Were the lines and physical action delivered in a way that right for this play? | seemed | | | | | | |
| ENSEMBLE Did the actors establish and maintain the mood of this play? Was there the feeling of a polished performance that indicat cooperation, adequate rehearsal, creativity, and understand material? Were the actors focused? | es | | | | | | |
| TIMING Did the actors pick up cues property? Did they use variety in tempo, in rate, and in pacing to buil dramatic effects and climax of the play? | d the | | | | | | |
| OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS Do the actors convey the mood of the selection? Is there a feeling of completeness? Is the playwright's purpose accomplished? | | | | | | | |
| II. PRODUCTION | /10 | | | | | | |
| STAGING Did the production have unity of style in acting and design? Was the use of blocking creative and believable? Were stage pictures and groupings used to enhance blockin costumes, make-up, lights, sound, props and scenery used the production effectively? Note: The play must not be lowered in rating or ranking technical difficulties beyond the competing school's co | to enhance | | | | | | |
| OVERALL EFFECT Was the production effective theatre? Was the play appropriate for the event and the cast? Was there a sense of completeness in the production? Was there an emotionally invested response to the perform if used, did the chorus add to the effectiveness of the production. | | Reason for Dec | cision: | | | | |
| CIRCLE the RANK for the ra | iting for th | e quality of the play. <i>TH</i> | HERE MAY BE NO TIES IN RANK. | | | | |
| 1 st 2 nd | 3 rd 4 th | 5 th 6 th 7 th | 8 th 9 th 10 th | | | | |
| This entry is lowered one | rank fo | r overtime or unde | ertime exceeding 30 seconds. | | | | |
| CIRCLE | a RATING | for the quality of the pla | y production. | | | | |
| 60 59 58 57 56 55 54 53 52 51 50 SUPERIOR | 49 48 47 | 46 45 44 43 42 41 40 EXCELLENT | 39 38 37 36 35 34 33 32 31 30 GOOD | | | | |
| TIME | | This entry is <u>DISQUALIFIED</u> for: of fewer than three characters or use of a play with only two characters to h a walk-on part not essential to the play has been added. | | | | | |

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