

South Carolina Theatre Association

Teacher Mentor Network

The South Carolina Theatre Association (SCTA) Teacher Mentor Network is a program that connects experienced theatre teacher mentors and novice theatre teachers. A corps of mentors will be made available to novice theatre teachers who choose to participate. Just as good teachers learn from their students, the program acknowledges that the relationship between mentors and novices will be a partnership in supporting and promoting quality theatre education.

Mentor teachers selected for the program are accomplished professionals who have worked for at least five (5) years in theatre education. These mentors volunteer their time and expertise to support other teachers in the field. Mentor teachers communicate by e-mail to offer advice, share experiences, identify resources, and listen to the concerns of the novice teachers.

The program is not limited to novice teachers but any theatre teacher who would like to participate. These teachers may choose to contact one mentor or more mentors as needed. The corps of mentors will be classified by specialty and grade level. For example, a teacher may choose to contact a mentor whose expertise lies in working with special needs students. In another circumstance, the teacher may contact a mentor whose expertise lies in creating rubrics, weighted check lists or assessments, writing curricula, developing teaching units, and other aspects of teaching theatre.

Mentor teachers will be available to answer questions about standards implementation, planning, assessment and resources. Novice teachers may want to share classroom experiences and get feedback from mentors. Participants may discuss how to deal with parents, administrators, other teachers, and students. Novice teachers may ask how to set up a production calendar, possible fundraising ideas, how to get publicity for an event, how to find resources in the community, and advice on specific activities for instruction. Drama clubs, recertification, professional development, and student discipline issues would be topics for mentors and novices.

Mentors and novices must read the established guidelines for participation and sign a letter of agreement. Those who do not follow the guidelines will be prohibited from participation. All participants may opt out of the program at any time as needed.

Guidelines for Mentors

If you accept the role of mentor in the SCTA Theatre Teacher Mentor Network, you make the commitment to make your contact information available to teachers who seek your input. Mentors should read the guidelines for participants as well so that they understand the expectations and restrictions for both groups.

Most communication will be through e-mail, but in some circumstances it will be necessary to communicate over the phone or in person. The mentor should use his/her judgment to determine if a face-to-face meeting is necessary and should consider a participant's request for a meeting carefully.

All communication should be conducted in a cordial yet professional manner. Even though friendships may develop through this mentor relationship, communication as part of the program should be limited to professional concerns. Sarcasm and humor do not translate well through email and may cause unwarranted problems and misunderstandings. Profanity should not be used by either mentors or participants.

Information shared between mentors and participants is confidential. Mentors should not share personal information or details of participant problems with others. An exception would be if the mentor needed to consult with another professional to solve a problem or find resources. The mentor should have the participant's permission to share information in such a case. In the rare circumstance that a participant relates information of a criminal or potentially dangerous situation, the mentor would need to share the information with the participant's administration and proper authorities.

Email communications are not secure and email from school networks is considered public information. Mentors and participants should be aware that email may be viewed by outside parties and can be used as evidence in legal proceedings.

Mentors have no responsibility for contacting participants on a specific schedule; however, all participants' emails should be responded to even if the mentor chooses not to work with a particular participant. Participant emails should not be ignored, and mentors should redirect requests to others if they feel that they cannot assist the participant. If a mentor chooses to withdraw from the program, he/she should notify the SCTA Teacher Mentor Network Committee in writing.

Guidelines for Participants

If you choose to become a participant in the SCTA Teacher Mentor Network, you agree to follow the guidelines as outlined by the SCTA Teacher Mentor Network committee, an *ad hoc* committee of the South Carolina Theatre Association Board of Directors.

Participants should read the guidelines for mentors as well so that they understand the expectations and restrictions for both groups.

Participants may choose to contact and communicate with only one mentor or they may choose to contact various mentors as needed. Mentors will be identified by grade level and area of expertise. Initial contact and most communication will be through email. If a participant feels the need to meet in person or talk with a mentor over the phone, they should email that request to the mentor first. Participants should not call or visit mentors without prior permission.

Communication should be professional and participants should seek advice for educational concerns only. This program is not the forum for personal problems. Sarcasm and humor do not translate well through email and may cause unwarranted problems and misunderstandings. Profanity should not be used by either mentors or participants.

Participants are assured that all communication with mentors is confidential and mentors will not share details of that communication with others without participant permission. For example, a mentor may need to consult with another professional to provide the best advice. Mentors should ask permission first.

Participants should be aware that e-mail is not secure and email from school networks is considered public information. Mentors and participants should be aware that emails may be viewed by other parties and can be used in legal proceedings. In the rare case that a participant communicates a situation that is illegal or potentially dangerous, the mentor will contact that participant's administration and the proper authorities.

Participants should understand that communication from mentors is offered as advice and should not be taken as requirements. Participants should consider all mentor advice carefully before following the advice. If any advice seems questionable, participants may consider contacting another mentor for a second opinion.

A mentor may choose not to work with a participant if they feel that they cannot offer the support needed due to time restrictions, lack of experience, or personal reasons. All mentors will respond to any communication from participants even though they may decline to work with a participant. Participants will be sent an updated mentor list on a regular basis so that they are aware of mentors who opt out of the program and may not respond to participant contact.

SCTA Teacher Mentor Network

Mentor Agreement

I, _____, agree to serve as a mentor
in the South Carolina Theatre Association Teacher Mentor Network.

As a mentor, I agree to

- Make my current contact information available to network participants.
- Update that contact information as needed.
- Respond to all participant email contact.
- Keep information provided by participants confidential.
- Obtain permission from participants before sharing with others except in the case of a criminal or potentially dangerous situation.
- Remain professional in my communication with participants.
- Offer only advice within my area of expertise and refer participants to other sources if the situation exceeds my knowledge or experience.

I understand that I may opt out of the network at any time and that I must do so in writing to the SCTA Teacher Mentor Network Committee.

I agree not to hold the South Carolina Theatre Association liable for any personal or professional damage as a result of my participation in this network.

Signed _____ Date _____

SCTA Theatre Teacher Mentor Network

Participant Agreement

I, _____, agree to follow the guidelines as outlined by the South Carolina Theatre Association.

As a participant, I agree to

- Contact mentors with serious questions or concerns about theatre education.
- Not use mentor contact information for nonprofessional purposes such as chain letters, jokes or sales.
- Obtain permission from mentors prior to contacting them by phone or in person.
- Not share mentor contact information with others not in the SCTA Teacher Mentor Network.
- Keep information provided by mentors confidential.
- Remain professional in my communication with mentors.

I agree not to hold the South Carolina Theatre Association liable for any personal or professional damages as a result of my participation in this network.

Signed _____ Date _____

Full Name _____ Prefer to be Called _____

Email Address _____ Phone: _____

Total Years Teaching Theatre _____ Actively Teaching _____

Actively teaching (County, School District and Grade Levels) _____

SCTA Theatre Teacher Mentor Network

Mentor Profile

Full Name _____ Prefer to be Called _____

Email Address _____

Total Years Teaching Theatre _____ Actively Teaching _____ Retired _____

Actively teaching (County, School District and Grade Levels) _____

Degree(s) and Teacher Training _____

Teaching Experience (Please include grade levels, course titles, curricular and co-curricular activities, and other information you deem significant.)

Related Experience (Please include any relevant community or professional theatre training or experience.) _____

Areas of Theatre Teaching Interest and Expertise _____

Mail Completed Form to: SCTA
PMB 350
100 Old Cherokee Rd., Suite F
Lexington, SC 29072

Questions: scta@collabefforts.com

Thank you very much for your interest in the SCTA Teacher Mentor Network.

You will receive written and email notice of your acceptance into the Teacher Mentor Network as soon as the SCTA Teacher Mentor Network Committee has reviewed your profile.