

Our Commitment to an Anti-Racist Theatre & Dance Education at Roosevelt High School:

As we examine the various ways systemic racism is at work in our department, we hope to implement tangible steps now & in the future to create a more equitable environment for our students and staff. We believe that Black Lives Matter, that students of color deserve to see themselves reflected on our stages and in the stories we tell, and that every student has the right to and benefits from an Anti-Racist education.

While we acknowledge and understand the demographic of our school is largely white and therefore not fully reflective of our city or nation, we still consider it our job to expose all of our students to stories, music, and movement that is reflective of America's diversity. We also understand this is a lifelong process and that confronting the legacy of the Roosevelt Theatre Dept. will take time as we unravel the various ways theatre has excluded some students while rewarding others who enter the program with resources, opportunities and training afforded to them by privilege.

Practices we've adopted during our time at RHS Theatre:

1. Hiring guest teachers & directors of color to work with our students in class and productions
2. Color Conscious Casting. Examples include Tevye and Golde's blended family in "Fiddler on the Roof", "A Chorus Line" with line of talented leads more diverse than traditional productions, continuing to cast our plays in ways that question "type" while asking audiences to reconsider who can play what types of roles
3. Intentionally reaching out to affinity groups for students of color in the school, welcoming them to audition, take classes and join our community
4. Decolonizing our curriculum by having students read and engage with plays and musicals written by artists of color in our classes and study the contributions of designers, directors, choreographers, technicians etc. of color to theatre
5. Engaging in active conversation with our students about race, privilege and our program
6. Appointing Diversity and Equity Inclusion (DEI) Advocates to our Thespian Board that collaborate with the board/directors to address & dismantle systems that create and maintain racial inequities, support POC's within our theatre community and host once a month meetings for students of color

What we're implementing going forward:

1. Removing all prerequisites to enroll in theatre classes or audition for any productions. (Freshmen will still be expected to start in Theatre Beginning as it will still be a requirement to direct for Dramafest Senior year)
2. Anonymous (if desired) digital survey of past and present students of color inviting feedback on experiences in the program related to issues of racism, microaggressions, & casting. Survey will be sent out at the end of each school year.
3. The anonymous digital survey will also be available on rhstheatre.net throughout the year for students to share feedback/report incidents. Once reported, we will privately connect with anyone mentioned in the report for follow up, in addition to involving admin/parents when necessary. The directors will facilitate a conversation between everyone involved with a focus on restorative justice and preventing future harm. If the student continues behaving in a harmful way, possible consequences include revoking Thespian status as per our troupe bylaws, removal from the production, or a reconsideration of leadership positions. If the report is anonymous and no grouping

of students impacted or involved can be identified, we will investigate what systemic practices allowed for the incident to take place, make changes accordingly and bring the report to the attention of students during a DEI meeting for discussion.

4. "Theatre for Social Justice" course will be offered starting 2021-2022 pending admin approval. This will be co-taught with a guest director of color and will focus on devised work and student voice.

5. Choose our season with an anti-racist lens and prioritize telling diverse stories by diverse playwrights keeping in mind the demographics of our school.

6. Annual Symposium on our season to discuss how our productions examine topics about culture, gender, race, and power.

7. Demonstrate a commitment to anti-racism to our community by building a welcoming and anti-racist space while also using our program to help increase equity in the field.

8. "Improv for Wellness" free workshops for students of color (theatre or not!) offered by guest teacher Teague Parker. Workshop Description: Using Improv mindsets to give students the tools for active self reflection & creative recovery to cultivate self worth.

9. Advocate to Roosevelt building leadership and Seattle Public Schools to fund a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Specialist to advise Theatre department leadership as well as all other clubs and programs at Roosevelt.

-Ms. Greve and Mr. Stuart