

**Strickland Middle School**

**Theatre  
Handbook**



*2011-2012*

*Susie Norton Director*

940-369-4262

[snorton@dentonisd.org](mailto:snorton@dentonisd.org)

# My Bio

My name is Susie Norton and this is my fifth year at Strickland!!! I am very excited for this upcoming school year. I grew up in Round Rock, TX and moved to Kansas while I was in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. I graduated from MidAmerica Nazarene University, located in Olathe, KS, in 2004 with a BA in Business Communications. Very soon after enter the "business world" I realized that was not were my heart was. I've known since the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade that I wanted to be a teacher; I just had to figure out what it was that I was going to teach. Lucky for me I ended up here at Strickland where I have absolutely the best job in the whole wide world! I truly believe that it is my purpose in life to be a teacher and don't want to be doing anything else.

Here are some interesting facts about me that might not come up in conversation:

I graduated from Seaman High School & our mascot was the Vikings

I love pigs. I collect them and have had a couple pet pigs

I really love NASCAR - my favorite racer is #99 Carl Edwards

Spending time with family and friends is one of my favorite things to do

I'm really afraid of ladders - climbing up a ladder makes my heart race.

If there are any questions you have for me please feel free to ask.

I am really looking forward the year ahead. I truly believe it will be a fabulous year for all in the Theatre department.

**Thank you so much for your support.**

Susie Norton  
Theatre Arts Teacher  
Strickland Middle School  
940-369-4262  
snorton@dentonisd.org

# Strickland Middle School

*Theatre Arts Department*

Susie Norton, Director

Phone: 940-369-4262

Email: [snorton@dentonisd.org](mailto:snorton@dentonisd.org)

Within these pages you will find information that will be helpful in planning your child's participation in SMS Theatre activities. Included in this packet is a fee schedule, student expectations, information for participating in tournaments and plays. I will be putting the calendar of events on my webpage so please check the webpage often. The calendar is an invaluable tool for managing those ever-present scheduling conflicts that always seem to accompany participation in a Theatre Arts Event.

Some of the wonderful opportunities we have planned for your student this year include a Fall Show, One-Act Play Competition. There will be a tournament team chosen to compete against other middle school students in a variety of areas.

In the past I have had great intentions on using parent volunteers but end up doing most of the work myself because it's hard for me to ask for help. So when I do ask for help please know that I really need it. I will need parents to volunteer to help with costumes, sets, and tournament transportation. I will be better at asking for help this year because I believe that you and your skills can improve the quality of the work we do. **If you have the skills, we have the tasks!** There is a volunteer form in this booklet for you to list your skills, talents, abilities, and availability for the school year. *We can't do it without you!*

Please be sure to check out our website periodically so you can stay up to date on all our SMS Theatre activities.

# SMS Theatre Department 2011-2012

## Fees and Notices

Production Fee: \$20 per show (which includes a script and a show shirt)

Tournament Entry Fees: \$10 per tournament to help offset entries fees

Tournament Drop Fees: \$5-\$25 depending on the Tournament Host

Tournament Squad: \$10 (includes tournament binder, and slicks)

Thespian Banquet: \$10 per person (includes meal and fabulous awards ceremony)  
Only Thespians and family members of Thespians are invited.

Department & Show Shirts: \$10-\$12 for dept. shirt or extra show shirts

**All students involved in Theatre Arts productions, tournaments, and events MUST maintain a passing grade in all classes to remain eligible for competition.**

### **Performance Etiquette Note:**

All students involved in a performance are required to be at call 1 ½ hours before curtain to get in costume & make-up. In order for our cast & crew to be physically and mentally focused for the performance, we ask that parents refrain from visiting their children backstage or in the Theatre room before the show. *Students will be expected to be in the theatre room and not running in the hallways before the show starts.* I've been a little more lenient with this in the past but plan to change that this year. All actors can visit family and friends after the show and students will need to have eaten before they come to get dressed.

### **Parent Volunteers Needed!**

If you are a talented mom, dad, grandpa, or aunt... who has time, resources, or energy (always needed in the drama dept) we would love to have your assistance at SMS! Please check the Activities & Events page for ideas of how you can contribute to the Theatre Department at SMS and fill out the parent volunteer form in this handbook. There will be many opportunities throughout the year to bring snacks, provide props, sew costumes, build sets, and play cheerleader for our Theatre students. I hope to see you often this year getting involved in our program and the wonderful things we have planned! If you have questions about our needs or upcoming activities be sure to check out our webpage which can be found by selecting Academics and then Electives on the SMS website.

# SMS Theatre Wish List

Each year we are in need of many items for class projects and theatre shows. I am including a "Theatre Wish List" of items are always a need for theatre activities. Many of these are consumable items and disappear quickly in our fabulous world of Theatrics. Please feel free to send any of these items at the beginning of the school year, or as you discover them throughout the year. Thank you so much for your support!

Baby Wipes & Clorox Cleaning Wipes

LOTS AND LOTS OF Masking Tape, Scotch Tape, Duct Tape,  
Clear Packing Tape,

Paper towels, Kleenex, disposable shop towels  
Glue Sticks

Blue or black pens, pencils

Colored map pencils, markers, highlighters, crayons

Scissors, rulers, measuring tape

Paint brushes & rollers (all sizes) & Drop cloths

3X5 & 4X6 lined note cards (white or colored)

Thread (any color), sewing notions (elastic, safety pins, trim etc.)

"Interesting" clothing items (prom dresses, vintage clothing etc.)

"Unique" left over paint or fabric for sets and costumes

Random Craft Items (buttons, ribbon, pipe cleaners, beads, etc.)

Most of our fundraisers will be related to Theatre activities such as

*selling carnations and balloons for actors\**,

*concessions during intermission\**.

If you have any other ideas that you would like to include please fill me in.

*\*I need parent volunteers to help head this up  
starting with the fall show!!!*

# SMS Theatre Activities & Events

## Tournament Squad

Strickland Middle School Theatre is going to compete in team tournament style contests in Duet Acting, DI (Dramatic Interpretation), HI (Humorous Interpretation), Prose, Poetry, Storytelling, Pantomime, TV Commercial, Lip Sync, Vocal, and Poster Design throughout the school year. These tournaments are always held on Saturdays and students usually travel by district transportation (The Yellow Dog) school bus. In order to offset cost to the department, occasionally we will travel with another Denton middle school. Support is appreciated in the way of snacks, send-offs, good luck wishes, and attendance in our tournament showcase held at Strickland Middle School.

*Due to the elimination of Advisory, Practices for the Tournament Squad will be held after school and tournaments are to be announced. At this time I am aware of 2 tournaments for Denton ISD, one in the fall and another in the spring. It's our goal to attend both.*

## Plays

SMS Theatre produces several productions each school year with the intent of providing optimum opportunities for actors and technicians to master the craft in various genres of Theatre. Support is sought for virtually every aspect of the production process including costumes, props, set building, snacks, and front of house.

Play rehearsal: students are expected to be in the auditorium by 3:45 helping to set up the stage, rehearsal will be done by 6:15. *Please Please Please* pick your student up on-time. I will do my best to make sure the rehearsal is done on time and am asking that you will do the same.

## One Act Festival

One Act Play Contest provides an opportunity for our middle school students to compete against other area middle schools and receive a critique from a judge. Auditions for OAP are very competitive and numbers for cast and crew are limited due to the rules of the contest. SMS has received countless individual acting and technical awards from past contests as well as Superior Ratings for many years. This is a unique experience for our highly dedicated young thespians to prepare for high school UIL OAP.

This year's OAP contest is February 2, 2011 from 9am - 6pm, parent and student supporters are welcomed to attend. Students will be informed on what time to be there when we're told what performance slot we get. The dress code is always the show shirt and jeans. No pajama pants or sloppy clothes. School dress code applies.

## UIL Prose/Poetry

SMS Theatre students have the opportunity to be selected for UIL competition in Prose and Poetry interpretation. UIL has many other events in which our SMS students may participate. Be advised that students are limited to three UIL competition events.

## Class Play Requirements

All Full Year and some semester classes do a class play. These plays are the student's final grade - and it's a huge one. There will be a day time performance during their period, followed by an after school performance that same day. Students must be at both. Due to the fact that class plays don't allow for understudies all class members are extremely important and need to be there the night of their performance.

**PLEASE COME TO YOUR STUDENT'S CLASS PLAY PERFORMANCE IN THE EVENING.**

You can come during the day also but we do the evening performance specifically for you. This is one of the only play productions we don't charge admission!!! Please support your student in their final performance.

**\*please note page 4 of the student handbook located in your students agenda co-curricular activities**

*"These are extensions of classroom activities that relate directly to the essential elements through participation, demonstrate, illustration, and observation. Certain state-approved courses require performance before an audience as part of the instructional process. This includes courses such as theatre arts, band, orchestra, choir, and athletics. These activities are considered in the students' grade."*

## Friday Nite Live (takes place in April)

This is our version of Saturday Night Live. Students perform short skits recreated from SNL or Mad TV or have the opportunity to come up with their own. Students can also record commercials to be played during our live performances.

## Mock Rock

New this year, we're going to try out a new event.... MOCK ROCK... our first Lip Sync contest. Students will be judged on performance, costume and creativity. Lip Sync is always a very popular unit in class so this year I've decided to take it to the next level and make a school wide event. More details will be coming soon.

## Thesplan Meetings

One Friday of the month students are invited to attend our Thesplan meetings. We usually do some theatre activities or work on something that needs to be done for upcoming shows.

If you want to become a member or stay an active member it is important that you come to the meetings. Active members need to earn at least 7 points to stay an active member. If you want to be an officer it is important that you first become a Thesplan.

To become a member you have to have earned 10 points thru-out the year. You earn points by being in plays, helping with plays, coming to meetings, going to tournament, seeing plays etc. We keep track of all the Thesplan points at the meetings.

At the end of the year we will have our Thesplan Banquet to honor all the new inductees as well as the ones that stayed involved with Theatre during the year. After we eat and have our awards ceremony the kids stay until 12 am for the after party - planned by the Thesplan Officers.

# SMS Theatre Student Expectations

Members of the SMS Theatre Department are expected to behave in an exemplary manner, both on campus and when traveling. Your behavior reflects not only upon you, but our Theatre department, Strickland Middle School, and Denton ISD.

## Classroom Etiquette

Failure to adhere to the classroom guidelines will affect your class grade, and lead to disciplinary action.

**Be on Time with your supplies** -this means in your seat ready to start class when the tardy bell rings. Not dilly dallying around visiting and taking your time getting your journal and eventually walking to your seat.

**Never Talk or Disrupt During Any Presentation**

**Be Respectful of Others & their Property**

**Don't Disturb Others While They Are Working**

**Stay on Task & Use Your Time Wisely**

**No Personal Hygiene During Class**

I have a very sensitive allergy to smells - even if it smells good it could still give me a migraine and then the class will be fun for nobody. **DON'T SPRAY ANYTHING IN CLASS** or even right before you get to my class. If you wear too much perfume I might ask you to step outside or leave because I don't want to get sick.

**No Inappropriate Language, Content, or Innuendos**

- *Innuendo - an indirect remark about somebody or something, usually suggesting something bad or rude... basically saying something in a type of code - so that some people know what you mean.*

**No Fighting or Horseplay ever NEVER**

**No Gum, Food, Candy or Drinks in Class**

***Never Say or think "I Can't"***



# **Miss Norton's Classroom Expectations:**

## **Classroom Materials:**

Pen, pencil and composition notebook for journal ALWAYS

## **Homework:**

Due on assigned date - late work will be 20 points off.

- If you're absent the day the homework is due it's due the day of your return. If you're absent the day before it's due it's still due the same day.
- Make up work for long term assignments will be due when you return to school.

## **Attendance: BE HERE!!!!**

It is extremely important for you to be in class. Most of what we do is an in class activity that cannot be made up. Please ask parents to schedule appointments for another time. Especially when you're working with a group, the group tends to work so much better with all members present.

## **Dismissal:**

- The teacher dismisses the class NOT THE BELL.
- And she does so when the room is cleaned up and all chairs are pushed in.

## **Teamwork:**

It is very important to me that we all work as a team no matter what we're working on. From preparing for a performance to cleaning up the room the selfish mentality doesn't work with me. A helpful person is what I like to see.

## **Grades:**

Participation (Attitude & Group work) = 50%

Written Work/Journals = 20 %

Performances = 30%

**Rewards:** Positive note card or call home & Special Activities

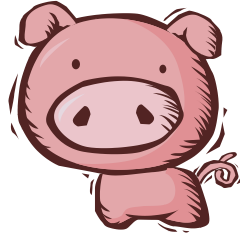
**Consequences:** 1 of 3 types of detention (lunch detention, morning detention, writing detention) signed by parent, Parent conference, Office referral, Thursday night detention

**Signal:** "May I have your attention please." Stop, Look, and Listen.

**Extra Credit Points:\*Bring at least 3 items from our Theatre Wish List and receive a FREE 100!\* please pay attention to the highlighted ones.... 😊**

# AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

proper and acceptable behavior  
of audience (class) members during a  
presentation/performance



As one performs, the actor deserves respect from all members of the audience. The young actor has a heavy burden. Questions in his mind and concerns constantly interfere with his performance. "Can I remember my lines? Everyone is looking at me. Are they talking about me? What did I do wrong? I feel sick! I'm not ready. Will I ever survive this?"

Therefore, it's very important for the audience to quietly pay attention during each performance to show support for the student on stage.

The following are a few rules of audience etiquette that all will be expected to practice both during class as well as during a play performance in the auditorium or where ever we might be watching a play.

1. Pay attention to all performances; watch and listen.
2. Stay quiet; absolutely no talking.
3. Never make fun of another person's performance.
4. Refrain from shouting comments to or intentionally distracting the actor during his presentation.
5. Avoid practicing your scene during other performances.
6. Applaud every presentation.
7. Never get out of your seat, move around the room, sit restless at your seat, or distract the teacher during a performance.
8. The teacher-director is the one to offer suggestions or critiques after final performances. During the rehearsal process you will often provide peer evaluations to help enhance the final presentation. Please refrain from making **negative** remarks to your classmates after they have completed a final performance.

## *Theatre Student Oath*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, promise to give my best. I want to have fun in Theatre and the way I will do that is by having a positive attitude.

I will work collaborate with my fellow classmates in a positive manner.

I will be on task during the period whether working with a group or individually.

I will at no time be mean, rude, or hurtful to any member of the Theatre classroom.  
No idea is a bad idea.

I will at all times be respectful to everyone in the theatre classroom.

**Doing all of the above will guarantee my success and a fun year in Theatre!!!**

**I have read, discussed, understand and promise to abide by the Theatre classroom expectations and look forward to having a fabulous year!!!**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Parent Volunteer Form Strickland Theatre

I am a talented person with some great abilities, or an energetic parent who has free time to donate to the Strickland Middle School Theatre Department.

My talents include:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Building or Painting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sewing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Making cookies or bringing snacks to rehearsals
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contacting parents or businesses for donations or volunteers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Helping with fundraisers (Good Show Carnations & Balloon Sales, Theatre Buttons, Intermission Sales, Silent Auction Donations)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Taking money at performances
- \_\_\_\_\_ Gathering props and costumes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Transporting students to events
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hair and make-up

Other talents not listed above:

---

\_\_\_\_\_

Name

\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number

**E-mail is the easiest and quickest way for me to contact you but if you don't have an e-mail address please put your phone number.**

**Thanks in advance for helping make this year a great one.**