

CASTING PHILOSOPHY



At HITS, the casting process is fun and non-threatening!

We cast our shows within the first few classes of each semester and strive to make the process as nurturing and non-threatening as possible. We want each and every one of our performers to be able to confidently put their best foot forward when they audition, so we start by teaching our students the skills they need to succeed.

In the first few classes of the semester, we teach the students a number from the show in a group setting. Our young performers learn a dance alongside each other – which we find reduces the jitters and, of course, makes it more fun for everyone involved. Later, auditions take place in a supportive group setting as well. For vocal auditions, students can sing with a partner or as part of a group if they're not yet comfortable singing solo.

Our goal is to make the audition process both challenging – in terms of learning new skills – and supportive. During the casting process, we have the opportunity to assess each student's talent, ability, comfort level, etc. Be assured that every child gets a part in the show, and every child participates in rehearsals, classes, costuming, dress rehearsals, and our showcase performances.

HITS Theatre works very hard to create casting avenues for all students. Although individual talents and abilities are always taken into account, our overall goal is to help all students have an immersive, positive, HITS experience. On behalf of the staff, casting can be likened to fitting together the pieces of an enormous puzzle – with a similar goal of creating the most cohesive, beautiful artwork possible. Our intention is always to build self-esteem and provide the skills needed for success.

Not every child is right for every role. As we fit the puzzle together, and taking a wide variety of factors into account, it can become evident occasionally that a child with a beautiful singing voice and natural acting ability isn't suited for a particular role. There are a myriad of reasons why that may be the case. It's our job to look at the big picture and make sure all of the pieces fit and the cast works as a whole.

Double Casting. Lead roles are frequently double-cast so that more children have the opportunity to take on larger roles. When this happens, each child will perform as the lead in one performance, and then assume a smaller role during the alternate performance of that show. Many factors are considered before these decisions are made.

Learning and Growing. We work with young actors from ages 6 to 18. In our Beginner and Junior classes (ages 6-12), we are more likely to cast a principal role with an eye toward providing opportunities for a performer to grow. For older students in our Rising Stars and Main Stage classes, musical theatre abilities are more carefully considered during casting parts for principal characters.

Theatre is a team sport. You may have heard it a million times, and it still rings true: “There are no small roles, only small actors.” In many instances, ensemble members play several different roles and have quite a bit of stage time. We work hard to create a spirit of ensemble in the HITS casting process, as well as rehearsals, and performances. We strive to make every child feel included and important.

Expectations and Disappointment. It’s natural for students (and parents) to pin their hopes on one particular role. And we recognize that when any cast list is posted, there will inevitably be squeals of delight and at least a few tears of disappointment. We want you to know that our teachers are trained to address disappointments – remember, as performers they’ve won and lost roles too! As a parent, you can build resilience in your child by urging him or her not to put too much emphasis on a single role ahead of time. Be supportive and enthusiastic whatever the outcome! Easier said than done, we know, but your child will often follow your lead: *Be positive and there’s a good chance they will be too.*

Over the years, we have gained a certain perspective. When our students come back to visit, some from top-tier theatre schools, as well as those who pursue other interests, the thing they remember is not one particular show or even a single moment of glory at Miller Outdoor Theatre. It’s the offstage time that means the most to them – the ordinary moments during rehearsal when two or three finally get a dance step or belting out a song together in carpool. Because of this, our focus is on the larger experience of making our students feel that they are part of a small, talented community where they were welcomed and provided with an opportunity to thrive.