junior theater

Celebration Charlotte

© Junior Theater Group

2027 HANDBOOK

March 16–18, 2027 | Belk Theater | Charlotte, NC

A guide to participation, requirements, logistics, and key dates for school groups.

AT A GLANCE

- 48 schools maximum · 16 schools per festival day
- Five-minute selection from a licensed student-adapted musical
- Full-day attendance required · 8:30 AM–4:30 PM
- No application or participation fee

BLUMENTHAL ARTS MISSION

To present the best in the performing arts and, in partnership with others, share and employ the arts as a major catalyst to strengthen education, build community cohesiveness, and advance economic growth.

JUNIOR THEATER CELEBRATION

Junior Theater Celebration Charlotte offers an enthusiastic, educational field trip experience for area students and teachers to interact with hundreds who share a similar passion for musical theatre in schools. The program was created and directed by iTheatrics, a premiere creative consultant in education-focused musical theater based in New York City, in association with the leading theatrical licensor Music Theatre International (MTI) and Blumenthal Arts' Education Department.

During the culminating spring celebration, each school group performs a short selection from their student-adapted musical production before a panel of guest artists who provide constructive feedback and suggestions to help the students expand on theater skills such as diction, projection, acting through song, blocking and physicality, or finding a connection to the piece.

Additionally, students participate in immersive workshops while teachers can opt into professional development training alongside iTheatrics teaching artists. Most importantly, Junior Theater Celebration Charlotte is the culminating event that brings together enthusiasts from different backgrounds and skill levels – from area students, teachers, and volunteers to experienced Broadway professionals – under one roof to spotlight and amplify the work that's been accomplished inside the classroom across many months. Thanks to generous support, this program has remained free to participating school groups.

SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

Blumenthal Arts invites public, private, and charter elementary and middle schools within the Greater Charlotte Region to apply for participation in the 2026 Junior Theater Celebration Charlotte program. Space is filled on a first-come, first-served basis to the first 48 eligible schools to apply.

- Registration is open to Elementary and Middle Schools.
- Registration is first-come, first-served with a capacity of 48 schools; 16 schools per festival day.
- Participating schools will present a student performance of a 5-minute selection for a musical; large ensemble numbers preferred.
- Schools must provide a digital instrumental track for their performance selection.
- A 5-minute song mash-up from a show is permitted; schools are responsible for curating and providing the final instrumental track before the festival.
- Schools must have valid show licensing for the musical presented.
- Only student-adapted versions of musicals qualify for participation (Jr., Kids, Young at Part, G2K, etc...).
- Registered schools will receive notice with their assigned participation day. Blumenthal Arts cannot accommodate date change requests once confirmed.
- Schools must arrange transportation and be available for the duration of the festival day from 8:30am-4:30pm.

ABOUT THE CELEBRATION

The annual Junior Theater Celebration Charlotte will be held at the Belk Theater March 16-18, 2027. Schools will be assigned to one day of the three-day festival. A detailed daily schedule will be provided in advance of the festival. Each school will be assigned liaisons to guide them to different festival activities according to the schedule. The festival includes:

- A high-energy field trip in a supportive, student-centered environment that brings together students, educators, and industry professionals in a celebration of musical theater.
- An opportunity for students to perform on a Broadway touring stage.
- Feedback from the New York based iTheatrics team, comprised of Broadway industry professionals.
- Student workshops with industry professionals.
- Teacher workshops with industry professionals.

AWARDS

Schools receive ribbons for every student, all-star student awards, and school participation certificates & trophies.

FEES / TICKETS

There is no participation or application fee for Junior Theater Celebration Charlotte.

SCHOOL CONTACT PERSON / COMMUNICATION

The school contact person is the individual to whom all Junior Theater Celebration correspondence will be addressed. This individual is required to have access to e-mail and phone calls between the time of registration and the festival.

The contact person must meet all deadlines including form completion and communication response times.

SHOW KIT REIMBURSEMENT

Blumenthal Arts is proud to support elementary and middle school musicals and plays that participate in the Junior Theatre Celebration (JTC). Production Licensing Subsidies help offset costs so more young people can access high-quality theatre experiences.

- Who can apply: CMS and regional K–12 public, charter, or private schools participating in the current JTC cycle. Note: These awards are needs based and typically private schools are not awarded.
- Award Amount: Amounts vary based on funding pool, demonstrated need and project scope.
- Use of funds: Reimbursement for approved show licensing fees only. A copy of the licensing agreement and proof of payment are required.
- A link to the Show Kit Subsidy Application will be provided to schools after they have submitted their application to participate.
- Application deadline: December 7, 2026. Notifications sent by December 14, 2026.

PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

Participating schools are REQUIRED to provide quality, high resolution, digital, color photos in JPEG format that represent their production. Please include the school name in the file name. The following photos are due Monday, March 1, 2027

- Full cast photo
- 10-15 production photos including process photos of rehearsal, crew working/building, final dress rehearsals, etc.

MUSIC REQUIREMENTS

Schools must provide a digital instrumental track. When submitting music, include the song title, track length, and any unusual pauses or cues. Music track deadline: February 16, 2027.

FESTIVAL PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY POLICY

Photos: Allowed (no flash, no distractions).

Videos: Allowed for personal/non-distribution use only.

Permissions: If students/staff cannot be photographed for internal/social media purposes, notify the Blumenthal Arts School Impact Manager at least 5 business days before the festival.

TRANSPORTATION, PARKING & ARRIVAL

Check-In: 8:00–8:30 AM at the Belk Theater (130 N. Tryon Street).

Drop-Off: Buses, vans, or cars may drop off students at the theater entrance but cannot park there.

Bus Parking:

Hal Marshall Annex lot (618 N College St.) – offsite parking will be provided for buses and vans only. Please note parking is 9 blocks away.

Car Parking:

Must find own parking (Bank of America garage or nearby surface lots).

WHAT TO BRING

- Lunch:
  - Option 1: Students/chaperones bring packed lunches.
  - Option 2: Arrange group delivery.
  - Outdoor courtyard dining if weather permits; otherwise, lobby spaces.
- Music:
  - Bring your track on a phone or tablet for warm-up.
  - Recommended: backup copy on flash drive or second device.
- Attire:
  - Sneakers/closed-toed shoes for movement.
  - Show shirts or school T-shirts encouraged.

PARENT VIEWING

Due to security concerns, parents are unable to attend the festival moving forward. Only JTC students and chaperones will be permitted to attend.

2027 JUNIOR THEATER CELEBRATION — IMPORTANT DATES

DATE	TIME	MILESTONE
Tuesday, November 3, 2026	6:00–7:00 PM	JTC Information Session – Stage Door Theater
Tuesday, November 3, 2026	7:00 pm	Early Registration for Information Session Attendees
Wednesday, November 4, 2026	10:00 am	General Registration Opens – First Come, First Served
Monday, December 7, 2026	5:00 pm	Show Kit Subsidy Application
Monday, December 14, 2026.	5:00 pm	Subsidy Award Notifications
Tuesday, February 16, 2027	10:00 am	Final Head Count Due
Tuesday, February 16, 2027	10:00 am	Music Track Deadline
Tuesday, February 16, 2027	10:00 am	Transportation Confirmation Deadline
Tuesday, March 1, 2027	10:00 am	Cast Photo Deadline
March 16-18, 2027	8:30 am-4:30 pm	Junior Theater Celebration Charlotte