

**Cast Information for *Beauty and the Beast*  
The 2024 Grade 3-6 Pierce School Musical  
Phil Schroeder, Artistic Director  
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Welcome to the Cast Information document! It's a LOT of stuff, but I believe it's all very important. At registration, you'll be asked to affirm that you've read and understand this information.

**EMAIL CONTACTS**

I can be reached with any questions, concerns or comments at [phil@pierceschoolmusical.com](mailto:phil@pierceschoolmusical.com).

**OUR WEBSITES**

We run two websites. They are quite different and it doesn't really work to combine them.

**pierceschoolmusical.com** is where we host info about our upcoming shows and have registration links. (It's where you just downloaded this document.) Once rehearsals are in progress, you won't need to check in with this site much at all.

**piercemusictracks.com** is where digital assets are located, including MP3 files of songs, PDF files of scenes or changes, and links to choreography videos we shoot during rehearsals. Please make sure the kids have easy access to this website before auditions and during the rehearsal period.

Please bookmark them both.

**CASTS AND ATTENDANCE**

We will have two casts for *Beast*, the Castle Cast and the Village Cast. Castle Cast will meet Mondays and Wednesdays, Village Cast will meet Tuesdays and Fridays. These days will be consistent throughout the production run with only two exceptions, one per cast, described below.

When registering, you will be asked to affirm your child's availability for one or both casts. This allows you to consider your other known obligations and plan accordingly.

The very best thing is if your child is available for both casts as it provides us the greatest flexibility in casting. One thing I humbly ask is that you not game the system to keep friends

together. We're all friends – or soon will be – so please reserve your availability selection to real needs.

Based on what you tell us at registration, you will accept your child's cast assignment and clear the decks of non-essential appointments during the rehearsal schedule. Dentists are the hardest, we know...but please do what you can.

Attendance is mandatory unless your child is sick. Putting a play together is all about interaction, timing, and trust. To lose an actor on any day is difficult for the actors who are there, so please respect everyone's need to have your child present.

## **REHEARSAL AND SHOW SCHEDULES**

**Castle Cast:** Mondays and Wednesdays, January 8 – April 3. Castle Cast meets after school for check in and snacks, then proceeds to rehearsal in the Pierce Auditorium. Rehearsals run 2:30 to 5:30pm. Please see the website for the complete schedule, including locations.

*There is a rehearsal for Castle Cast on Thursday, January 18, 2:30 to 5:30pm, a makeup for MLK day earlier that week.*

Shows for Castle Cast are Friday, April 5 at 6:30pm, and Saturday, April 6 at 1:30pm.

**Village Cast:** Tuesdays and Fridays, January 9 – April 4. Village Cast meets after school for check in and snacks, then proceeds to rehearsal either at the VFW facility (all Tuesdays) or the Pierce Auditorium (Fridays). On Tuesdays, rehearsals run 2:30 to 5:30pm. On Fridays, rehearsals run 1:40 – 4:30pm.

Village Cast will have one Thursday rehearsal, its final dress rehearsal before the show, on April 4, after school until 6:30pm.

Shows for Village Cast are Saturday, April 6, 6:30pm and Sunday, April 7, 1:30pm.

## **REGISTRATION**

Registration opens on December 2 at 8:00am. Please mark your calendars, set reminders, etc., as we register on a first-come-first-served basis. We will sell 44 spots only to accommodate two casts of 22.

We do NOT make cuts! Each registered child is in the play. We do make casting decisions, but all are given speaking roles. We do NOT have kids only in the ensemble.

## AUDITIONS

There will be an audition prep session after school on January 3 for all registered cast. Auditions will be held on January 4 and 5 after school. In mid-December, your child can select an audition time, via Google Sheet, on either of those days. Auditions are in 25-minute slots throughout each afternoon, and kids will audition in groups of 5. We encourage them to join with friends for these audition slots and practice together.

Audition materials will become available in mid-December, and we'll make sure you have links to those materials. There will be 6 "sides," which are small scenes, usually involving 4-6 characters. Your child should learn them all, being able to read any character for the audition. They don't need to be memorized but should be well-rehearsed.

In addition, each child should learn one song from the show. MP3s, lyric sheets and sheet music will be available for practice. They may choose their song from the available choices. Other songs are not allowed – we want them to put some effort into this. Again, memorization is not required.

Audition criteria, in a word: preparation. We don't expect superstars and we have no favorites. Little things like nerves or shyness are common. Mostly, we want to be convinced that your actor has spent time with the material and has created a sense for how to play the roles. We love creativity, risk-taking and bringing physicality to the audition. They may dress up if they want!

## CASTING AND ROLES

We will announce casts by noon on Saturday, January 6, via email. This also gives you, the parents, a chance to navigate emotions and set expectations before rehearsals begin the next week.

We work very hard to make this an equitable and important experience for every child. There's nothing we like more than to coach a nervous child to confidence and to coach a gifted child to greater heights. We take 'em all! But please know that some roles are bigger and some are smaller, that's the way of story. I spend a ridiculous amount of time with the script to make sure there's something good for everyone in there. Help us help them to trust the process – it always works out.

## REFUNDS

There are no refunds after auditions! Refunds can be given before auditions or if your family is suddenly relocated overseas, but because we make big financial commitments to our staff, we ask that once you're in, you're really in. I'm sorry to say that we've had people leave the show after casting, and nothing is more frustrating. (Please don't be that family.) We do not give refunds because you disagree with our casting decisions.

## **MATERIALS, SCRIPTS, SONGS, piercemusictracks.com**

Each child will receive a script in a binder. Get a pencil pocket for the binder and put in pencils! We do ask them to mark up their scripts and take notes.

## **CHECK-IN, SNACKS, OTHER POLICIES**

Students will meet in the cafeteria after school on their rehearsal days.

Please send your kids with snacks! They're hungry after school and need to eat something. Please make it healthy and clean. We don't have a lot of capacity to clean up tables and the custodians have already cleaned the cafeteria and moved on to other locations. Thanks for understanding.

I will publish a rehearsal schedule each week and there will be times when actors may leave early. There may be days when we don't need them, and I will let you know.

Students should NOT leave campus for any reason after school before rehearsals. No one should be going to Walgreens for candy or Starbucks for...*whatever!*

Recently, we've seen students coming to watch the other cast's rehearsals. We welcome them, but they cannot use it as social/talking time while we're working. We will ask them to go home if it gets out of hand. Also, if they choose to attend a rehearsal on a day not theirs, we are not looking after them and we are not obliged to report to you. You'll need to work this out with them.

Students are NOT allowed to stay at Pierce after hours without adult supervision. We often release students early and they may either stay with us in rehearsal (quietly!) or they must go home. At 5:30, everyone must leave, no one should be hanging out in the cafeteria beyond that.

Cell phones are NOT to be on during rehearsals. If you need to get a message to your child, you'll have the cast supervisor's contact info.

We do not check students out at the end of rehearsals, they are free to leave campus as they would after school.

1. Kids in PSED (5th grade only), Mon, Wed and Fri, must check in to PSED before coming to us and must return to PSED afterwards, *even if* the parent is there, ready to take them home.
2. On Tuesdays or any day we hold our rehearsal at the VFW (next section), we are *not* able to return your child to PSED, as we have no building access. You should let PSED know your child will not attend those days so they don't need to check in and out.

3. They are always welcome to stay with us until the end of rehearsal or until you can meet them.

## **REHEARSALS AT VFW**

Because space at Pierce is limited, we rent rehearsal space at the American Legion/Veterans of Foreign Wars ("the VFW") building at 386 Washington Street, next to the preschool and across from the Civil War Memorial by the library. The space is clean and secure and approximates the size of our stage. On VFW rehearsal days, we walk the kids as a group, cross Washington Street while the crossing guard is there, and enter the building. At the end of rehearsal or when they're finished, your child may leave the VFW and go home, as they would from Pierce. This year, we only expect the Village Cast to travel to VFW, but there have been odd makeup days and every family will need to agree that their child can travel there.

## **CAST SUPERVISORS**

In addition to the director, there will be a Cast Supervisor present at each rehearsal to check in actors and manage behavior and emergency responses if necessary. Our Cast Supervisors are CPR-Certified, have a first aid kit, and are trained in threat response in these specific spaces. They are all young adults. Their primary job is to have an eye on students' whereabouts and help maintain a productive environment while the director works.

## **BEHAVIOR AND MEDICAL CONCERNS**

**Behavior and discipline:** Sometimes, kids have a bad day and act out. When this happens, our first response is to pull the student aside for reminders and redirection. Our second response will be to remove the student from the room for a "time out." If the situation warrants, the cast supervisor or director will dismiss the child immediately and contact the parent to discuss the situation, and the child may be released for the day. We have a zero-tolerance policy for verbal or physical abuse that violates anyone's safety; should those occur, your child will be sent home immediately, and we'll discuss the situation with you. If the behavior continues, your child may be asked to leave the program without refund. As this is a PTO program, any extreme behavior will be reported to the Pierce Vice Principals.

**Medical issues:** We receive no information from the school about your child's health. You'll be asked at registration to disclose any medical or non-medical issues that may impact your child's participation as well as your instructions for treatment, if any. It is crucial that you provide us with any relevant information so that we can make appropriate decisions for your child's care. Any disclosures and instructions will be shared with the director and cast supervisors so that we can recognize a problem before it escalates and respond according to your instructions.

Our emergency response protocols are as follows:

- In the event of a real medical emergency, our first response is to call 911, then the parent.

- In the event of a minor emergency (stomachache, onset of illness), we'll contact the parent and/or send the child home.
- Of course, if a child demonstrates any Covid symptoms, we'll call you and they'll need to go home.

**Non-medical considerations:** If your child has a special circumstance such as ADHD, which needs more attention than is typically offered in this setting, please notify us in advance and we'll work with you to create a plan for successful participation. If your child is prone to less-manageable outbursts, including physical altercations, we do not have the resources (and the school will not provide them) to create a successful and safe experience for everyone.

You will be asked to check a waiver absolving us of liability in the event of medical emergencies, as is typical for programs like ours, Town sports, Art Barn and more.

### **FEES, REFUNDS and SCHOLARSHIPS**

Pierce School Musical is a PTO program taught by paid, non-parent instructors who are qualified to teach drama, music, and work with children. Because we make a financial commitment to them, we cannot extend refunds after the start of auditions on January 4.

The registration fee for the musical is \$350. The registration fees will cover directors, technical personnel, assistants, printing, set materials and more.

Fees are collected via credit card at time of registration. If you prefer to pay by check, need scholarship support or structured payments, please contact Phil at [phil@pierceschoolmusical.com](mailto:phil@pierceschoolmusical.com).

Refunds are offered for the fee paid less a 7% merchant fee that is non-refundable to us.

We have a few scholarships on a first-come-first-served basis, upon request. Two full scholarships and two half scholarships. I wish we had more but we don't, so please only ask if you are in need. There is no requirement to submit fee reduction letters, we have no financial connection to the Town or school district.

Pierce School Musical/PTO offers these programs to any child who requires financial support on a "no questions asked" basis. We want your kids, regardless of your ability to pay.

### **COVID STUFF**

Refund policy: In 2020, as many of you know, we lost our shows to the immediate shut down of the schools. We were not able to issue refunds, as staff still needed to be paid. Our priority is to provide a complete educational and fun experience for children, regardless of outcomes, while honoring our agreements with our staff. While performances are one expected outcome, they

are not guaranteed. If our program is shut down early, owing to situations beyond our control, we will refund money as we are able, and after all staff have been paid for work to date. After March 10, however, we'll not be able to offer refunds for program or show cancellations.

Masks: we welcome masks at all rehearsals and for the shows but as of this writing, they are not required. We will follow any mandates issued by the Town or the principal in this regard and expect the kids to do the same. We prefer that your child have a mask available in case we suspect a Covid exposure.

Registration is your choice and you register at your own risk (words we never thought we'd have to write). If this endeavor sounds risky or makes you uncomfortable, you should not register.

### **VACCINATED, PLEASE**

We strongly encourage you to get your child vaccinated.