



Theatre

A Resource Guide for
Standards-Based Instruction



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Preface

With the passage of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (2001), the arts are included as core subjects in the curriculum, along with other academic subjects. This designation supports the inclusion of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts at all levels of education in the nation and in New York State. New York's development of the *Learning Standards for The Arts* and a theatre teacher certification are powerful recognition that theatre education is being offered in more schools than ever before.

The State Education Department (SED) has worked collaboratively with the New York State Theatre Education Association (NYSTEA) to promote theatre education statewide. This work includes the development of the learning standards for the arts in theatre, and the creation of this theatre resource guide.

The guide represents the culmination of a four-year process of theatre curriculum development initiated by NYSTEA to provide standards-based instructional support to prekindergarten to grade 12 (PreK–12) educators. The project grew out of a grassroots local initiative begun by the Jordan-Elbridge School District in 1999. Developed further by the NYSTEA Curriculum Committee, this initiative culminated in a collaboration with SED in 2002–04. Publication of this guide is designed to coincide with the advent of New York State teacher certification in theatre (all grades) in February 2004.

The guide represents NYSTEA's and SED's shared vision of suggested instructional practices, tools, and techniques for implementing the theatre standards. The guide is not intended to stand alone, but to be used in conjunction with teacher education, in-service professional development, theatre publications, and other resources.

This document has been developed in recognition that theatre is a distinct art form important to the development of the whole child. Theatre education is a powerful tool for understanding human differences and celebrating diversity. It enables students to acquire personal resources and life skills through intellectual, physical, emotional, aesthetic, and creative development. Theatre also fosters a disciplined approach to critical thinking and problem solving, strengthens self-discipline, emphasizes individuality, provides opportunities for group endeavors, and builds on individual strengths of students.

The intended audiences for this document are teachers committed to using theatre within their curriculum area or grade level, administrators interested in establishing or expanding the theatre program in their schools, experienced theatre teachers who are continuing development of their professional practice, and beginning theatre teachers in need of new ideas and guidelines.

Ultimately, this guide provides the theatre educator with essential materials to bring theatre education to children

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