

**When is the deadline to apply for the 2019 Rising Star Awards?**

Applications are due by 5:00 pm on **Wednesday, January 9, 2019.**

**When must our show be presented in order to enter the Rising Star Awards?**

Entered productions must be presented between **Thursday, January 17 and Sunday, April 14, 2019.**

**Can we still enter if we do not yet know our performance dates or which show we are doing?**

Yes. List the performance dates and show title as "TBA" on the application. Update Paper Mill Playhouse as soon as you have this information confirmed. Do not delay in sending the application.

**How many schools are accepted into the program?**

We accept a maximum of 100 schools.

**What does the 20 schools per weekend cap mean?**

We have a rule which places a cap on the number of schools we can accommodate in a single weekend. We will not exceed 20 schools producing on any weekend during the Production Round. Once we have reached 20 schools in a single weekend, that weekend will be closed and no further applications will be accepted on those dates, **even if the total number of schools has not reached 100.** This new rule makes it even more important that your school submit an application early to secure a spot on your desired weekend. If your school is locked out of your selected weekend, you may opt to reschedule and resubmit your application for another weekend with open spots. Schools presenting on multiple weekends will be assigned to a specific weekend to be evaluated. This will be determined by the needs of the master show schedule.

**How will we know if our application was accepted?**

Paper Mill Playhouse will email a confirmation if your school's application was accepted within 24 hours of submission.

**What if we don't receive a confirmation email?**

Please call us at (973) 315-1668 if you do not receive a confirmation within 24 hours.

**We have double cast our show, can we still participate?**

Yes, but you must choose one cast, the Designated Cast, to represent your school. That cast should appear in at least two separate performances.

**Will Paper Mill Playhouse accept a school purchase order or voucher for the application fee?**

Yes, provided the forms arrive at Paper Mill Playhouse within ten business days of the application.

**When will Paper Mill Playhouse contact us to reserve tickets for the Evaluators?**

Education Program Manager, Jason Gillis, will contact your designated representative at least a week prior to your first show to reserve tickets for the Evaluators assigned to your school. Jason will send an email with the reservation instructions and will call only if there are changes to the initial reservation. We prefer to email the information so that both parties have a written record of the reservation.

**How many Evaluators do you send to the see our show?**

We will send four Evaluators to each school.

**How many tickets should I be holding until I receive specific reservations from Paper Mill Playhouse?**

We will ask for a maximum of eight tickets over the course of your entire run. To be conservative, hold eight per performance, but if that is not feasible holding four tickets per performance should be sufficient because we will rarely send more than two Evaluators (and their guests) to the same performance. When possible, we strive to send Evaluators to various performance throughout the run of your show (schedules permitting).

**Where do we seat the Evaluators?**

Seating should be in pairs of two per reservation (for the Evaluator and their guest); however, seating locations are at the sole discretion of the participating school. Evaluators are not required to be seated together should more than one attend the same performance. If your school has general admission seating and you choose to hold particular seats for the evaluators (not required), please note that roping off a section by placing signs reading "Paper Mill Playhouse Evaluators" on the seats is strongly discouraged. The Paper Mill Playhouse Education Department strongly recommends that participating schools allow the Evaluators to attend performances anonymously, so that they can fairly evaluate the production without lobbying from cast members' families and friends. *Please note that evaluators may change their seat locations during the show, especially a show that has general admission seating. Please do not assume that the evaluator has left the show.*

**But our shows sell out quickly, what should we do?**

Hold Rising Star tickets as described above.

**What do we do if it seems that all or a portion of a reservation was not picked up as Paper Mill Playhouse indicated they would be?**

Although we pay our Evaluators a small stipend, they are essentially dedicated volunteers with other family and work commitments. On occasion they may be suddenly unable to attend a scheduled show for valid reasons. They are trained to keep us informed of any delays or problems they may experience in fulfilling their commitment to the Rising Stars program. If we get the news beforehand that an Evaluator cannot make a scheduled show, we will attempt to contact the school representative to make other arrangements. If we are unable to get a hold of someone over the weekend, we will send an alternate Evaluator and ask that person to buy tickets and Paper Mill Playhouse will reimburse them.

It may be possible that an Evaluator did indeed attend the show without bringing a guest, thus picking up only one ticket of the held pair. Evaluators are trained to inform the box office upon arrival if any unused tickets may be released for sale, however in the frenzy of the moment they may have neglected to do so.

Do not hesitate to leave a message for Education Program Manager, Jason Gillis, at (973) 315-1668 if you are unsure that an Evaluator attended the show. After business hours or on the weekend, Jason carries an emergency cell that can be reached at (973) 896-8299. Please indicate in your message if one or two tickets remain unclaimed. Jason will contact the assigned Evaluator and confirm if they did in fact attend. He will then report back to the school as soon as possible and make new arrangements if necessary.

**How do the Evaluator's adjudicate the show?**

Evaluators use a form called the Performance Response Form to assess your production. They are asked to recommend for nomination the elements of the production that meet certain criteria for excellence in 17 performance and production categories. Categories are listed on the back cover of the enclosed application folder. Evaluators also provide insightful comments on the high points of your production as well as identifying areas for improvement. A copy of the Performance Response Form with the nomination criteria will be sent to you during the week of January 15, 2018 along with a list of participating schools.

**How does a school receive a final nomination in consideration for an award?**

Of the four Evaluators who see your school's production during the Production Round, a majority of the panel (at least 3 out of 4) must recommend the nomination of a performance or production aspect in the appropriate category. If this occurs, those eligible schools are considered by the Nomination Committee for the slate of Final Nominations after a thorough review of Evaluator comments and scores, and support material submitted by the schools themselves. Support material (DVD and photos) is required for any school in the Nomination Round.

**When will we know if we've been nominated?**

A list of Final Nominations is posted on the Paper Mill Playhouse website, [www.papermill.org](http://www.papermill.org), on Monday, May 6, 2019.

**When will our feedback arrive?**

Paper Mill Playhouse strives to send copies of the Evaluators' Performance Response Forms as soon as possible following your show. Forms are emailed on a rolling basis. Please note some factors when considering the timeliness of your school's report:

- ★ Evaluators have ten days to submit their Performance Response Forms following a show.
- ★ Comments cannot be sent until all Evaluators in attendance have submitted their reports.
- ★ Over 80% of participating schools hold their musical in March. Because of the sheer volume of schools producing during that month, schools producing in March should expect a delay of at least one month. Our small staff continually strives to minimize the backlog of comments in March as we process almost 350 reports submitted by Evaluators in that month alone.

**Will our support material be returned?**

Yes, all support material will be returned after the Awards Ceremony on June 4, 2019. Make sure to enclose the *Support Material Packing Slip* with your items to ensure their safe and complete return, including a summer shipping address and phone number if necessary.