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Kevin Kline Advocates for Theatre in Our Schools Campaign in March

Students and Teachers across the Nation to Stage Activities

National Arts Advocacy Day is March 20-21

(CINCINNATI, OH and WASHINGTON, D.C.) - February 22, 2017 — Theatre in Our Schools Month (TIOS) is a grassroots effort to draw attention to the benefits of having theatre in the schools, as well as the need for more access to quality programs for all students. For 2017, the national spokesperson is Kevin Kline, who, in a [video](#) in support of the campaign, points out that in this digital age, the lessons that theatre provides for communications skills are more critical than ever.

Kline is an actor of tremendous range and versatility who first performed in high school. Beginning March 17th he can be seen in the film version of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, and in April he will be on Broadway in Noel Coward's *Present Laughter*. He is the Oscar-winning star of the movie *A Fish Called Wanda*, and winner of two Tony awards and five Golden Globe nominations. He has been involved for 30 years with The Public Theater in New York, where he has played many of Shakespeare's leading roles.

The TIOS campaign is jointly sponsored nationally by the [American Alliance for Theatre & Education](#) (AATE), the [Educational Theatre Association](#) (EdTA), and the [International Thespian Society](#) (ITS). Hundreds of schools and thousands of students and theatre educators are taking the message to their communities, school boards, and elected officials, as well as spreading the word online, of how their school theatre experience is giving them [21st century skills](#).

EdTA Executive Director, Julie Cohen Theobald, points to research showing that students in all academic areas benefit from participation in school theatre but that there is a troubling gap in opportunities for access. "That is why," she adds, "raising awareness and support is important."

A study from The College Board shows, in 2015, students who took four years of arts classes in high school scored an average of 92 points higher on their SATs than students who took only one half year or less. But, according to the U. S. Department of Education, only 28 percent of public high schools in high poverty areas offer theatre instruction.





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President of the AATE Board of Directors, Gary Minyard, says there is also data showing the general public's support for arts education.

According to a [2016 poll](#) "Americans Speak Out about the Arts: An In-Depth Look at Perceptions and Attitudes about the Arts in America," conducted by Americans for the Arts:

- 9 in 10 American adults agree that the arts are part of a well-rounded K-12 education.
- 90 percent believe students should receive an education in the arts in elementary school, middle school, and high school.

Organized by Americans for the Arts, the 30th annual national [Arts Advocacy Day](#) is taking place in Washington, D. C. on March 20-21.

For more information about TIOS visit schooltheatre.org/programs/tios and follow #TIOS17 and #TheatreinOurSchools on social media.

[About the American Alliance for Theatre & Education](#)

[About the Educational Theatre Association](#)

[About the International Thespian Society](#)

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