

A letter to the editor in support of Theatre in Our Schools (TIOS) can get the attention of community members who aren't aware of school activities.

In some ways, these letters are the original form of 'user-generated' content. Letters to the editor can be sent to any media outlet including newspapers, radio stations, tv stations as well as digital news outlets and blogs.

Traditionally letters are tied to a topic being reported in the media. Following is a selection of prompts or thought-starters that connect TIOS to a variety of timely and newsworthy angles. Each example is less than 300 words, which is a typical limit for such a letter. If your letter is used by the media outlet, you can leverage it to spread the word even further:

- include a link to it in EdTA/ITS/AATE social media posts
- include a link in your own social media posts
- post it in Community

Option One—especially for students

As a graduating senior looking forward to the next chapter of my life, I want to take a moment and give credit to my theatre teacher for all she/he has taught me—creativity, collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and more.

After her first experience at the recent international Junior Thespian Festival for middle-schoolers, a first year drama teacher was inspired to share about her own experiences, and what she was witnessing now with her students. She wrote, "When I was 14, I played Anne Frank. When I performed it, I was noticed for the first time. The confidence I gained made a difference then and it's still making a difference now for me and for my students. Through theatre in my school I see 'invisible kids,' who can't do sports, finally being noticed by their peers, by their teachers, and sometimes, by their families."

My own experiences on and off stage at **SCHOOL** have had an impact on me that will benefit me whether I become a performer or not. So, in honor of [Theatre in our Schools Month](#), which is March, thanks to **TEACHER NAME**, and all my fellow Thespians in Troupe **NUMBER**. What we did together will be part of me for the rest of my life.

Share your school theatre thoughts with **#TIOS19** and **#TheatreInOurSchools**.

NAME

School, Year, Troupe or other title

Option Two

Conventional wisdom accepts that Star Wars and the Super Bowl attract an audience of millions. What's less well known is that a [recent survey](#) indicates almost 50 million people attend one of more than 37,000 school theatre performances annually in the United States.

[The Theatre in Our Schools \(TIOS\)](#) Month in March, is an opportunity to inform them, and millions more, that the pleasure they get from seeing a show on stage is just one of many benefits that school theatre

brings to all involved—from overcoming fears of public speaking to the development of collaboration and teamwork.

TIOS is timely in that its March celebration occurs the same month as the Americans for the Arts sponsored [Arts Action Summit](#) in Washington, D.C. March 4-5. Additionally, both Music in Our Schools and Youth Art Month are observed in March.

TIOS provides an opportunity for all of us here in **TOWN**—students, parents, school boards and elected officials—the entire community—to become familiar with the benefits of school theatre participation.

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NAME

AATE/EdTA/ITS Title, other title

Option Three

March is known less for bringing spring than it is for its 'madness' over basketball. It's a season when we come together to cheer on students for their efforts outside the classroom.

Now there's another way to recognize another group of students for similar achievements. March is [Theatre in Our Schools Month](#) and, just like basketball and other sports, putting on a play requires collaboration and communication. It teaches teamwork, and builds team spirit. It creates learning experiences that benefit the student for the rest of that person's life. Putting on a play creates opportunities for students to take initiative, demonstrate leadership, and more.

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A Thespian alum who heads an international business says when meeting sales and marketing candidates that he can instantly spot those who have theatre experience—it shows in their strength and self-confidence.

So this March, go to a game and cheer the team, and go to a school play and applaud the actors. Share your school theatre thoughts with **#TIOS19** and **#TheatreInOurSchools**.

NAME

AATE/EdTA/ITS Title, other title

Option Four

Among the current ongoing debates about education/school budgets are proposals to weight and reward the study of topics related to STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, math). These are undoubtedly important areas of knowledge.

While schools need to teach these, and teach them well, there are other equally essential sets of knowledge and skills that schools can—and must—teach: self-confidence, self-worth, creativity, collaboration, communication and critical thinking.

What subject naturally incorporates such a broad range? You may be surprised when I say the answer is—theatre! Participating in theatre requires teamwork, without requiring athletic ability, and it develops team spirit. Putting on a play creates opportunities for students to take initiative, demonstrate leadership, and more.

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