

Diversity Statement

Joshua Trotter

As an educator, I am dedicated to the academic and personal growth of every student who enters my school's learning community. More specifically, as a theatre educator, I view diversity as an essential piece of our art form and student development. Theatre is built on storytelling, and meaningful storytelling requires the inclusion of many voices, perspectives, and lived experiences. My role as a teacher is to not only deliver a well-rounded education but also to create the foundation of an inclusive environment where all students feel seen, respected, and empowered to learn and do their best. This means recognizing that my students may come from a wide range of cultural, linguistic, social, political, economic, and personal backgrounds.

I have had the privilege of graduating from high school and later working at the School for Creative and Performing Arts (SCPA), the nation's first K-12 public school for the arts in Cincinnati, OH. SCPA was founded through a civil rights lawsuit against Cincinnati Public Schools in the 1970's to integrate the public school system. SCPA was the first school in Cincinnati to provide racially integrated education in the area, and instills the importance of diversity in the arts within its students to this day.

Standing on SCPA's legacy of equality and equity, I am committed to fostering equity by designing lessons that are accessible to learners, including multiple perspectives, and using culturally responsive teaching strategies. This could look like pushing students to take creative risks, through acting, design, direction, or technical theatre. I want to ensure that every student can contribute meaningful input to the creative process and to the creative ensemble we are creating within our class.

Through my education at ISU, I have been well-versed in trauma-informed practices and will lead first with empathy and understanding. I also want to equip students with the Leader in Me Principles or the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. The seven habits are: Be Proactive, Begin with the End in Mind, Put First Things First, Think Win-Win, Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood, Synergize, and Sharpen the Saw (renewal).

Using these skills, I strive for my goal to prepare students not only as performers or creatives, but as thoughtful, empathetic individuals who understand the power of theatre to connect people and inspire change. By centering diversity, equity, and inclusion in my classroom, I will be setting my students up with ways to be successful with expression, authentic storytelling, and identifying cultural differences.