

Dear Teachers and Administrators,

It is Shakespeare Festival time again. We are excited to announce the Fall 2026 biennial Grand Valley Shakespeare Festival educational offerings for regional secondary schools and home school groups. We offer to schools and educators two great opportunities for students to see live performances of Shakespeare's works.

First, we will have matinee performances for our Mainstage production of the beloved comedy, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The comedy features two sets of young lovers, the fairy king and queen, and the group of crafts workers who are rehearsing their own play. For more information about this Shakespeare favorite, we recommend [The Folger Shakespeare Library](#). We are very happy to announce that this fall's production will feature a special Actor's Equity Association guest professional actor in the role of Nick Bottom. Professional Equity Actors were a regular feature of festival productions through 2018; this year, we are able to do so again. The production will also feature a strong cast of student actors along with a mix of faculty, guest professionals, and student artistic staff.

As in past years, we will be mounting three weekday matinee performances: **Tuesday, October 6th, Wednesday, October 7th, and Thursday, October 8th**. Performances begin at 10:00 AM and end at approximately 12:30 PM, with a 10-minute intermission. We ask schools to arrive between 9AM and 9:30 AM. As was the case in 2024, we are not able to provide lunches this as we had in past seasons, but we are able to provide our regular space as a lunch area. Schools that wish to remain for lunch are welcome to bring lunches with you from your schools. Schools can give us packed up lunches upon arrival, and we will take them to the lunch area for after the performance. Our cast and crew will still join students in the lunch area in our Kirkhof Center building and be able to interact with your students, as in years past. We do not have refrigeration in the lunch area, but schools can bring lunches in coolers if needed. We hope to provide iced water and a small treat for students to go with their lunch. We will also have a Grand Valley State University Admissions Representative with information about Grand Valley at the lunch area. Any students who are interested in what Grand Valley offers may wish to speak with the Admissions Officer. Additionally, tours of the campus for schools can be arranged.

Second, *Bard to Go*, our touring production that visits West Michigan schools during the fall semester, features an all new production, *Bard to Go: Excellent Falsehood* is a 50-minute long touring production that will visit middle and high schools in West Michigan this fall. The performance can be adapted to a variety of spaces and will introduce students to Shakespearean performance with a variety of scenes from several plays. Shakespeare's plots often feature elements of disguise, deceit, and trickery, with the characters sharing their plans with the audience while turning false faces to the others on stage. Join the actors for a wild ride to find the truth behind these layers of deception. This program features scenes from such plays as *Twelfth Night*, *Hamlet*, *Henry IV*, and *Much Ado About Nothing*. *Bard to Go* is especially relevant to Michigan high school performing arts standards 3, 4, and 5, which set the goals of students describing, analyzing, and evaluating works of art in their historical context, as well as analyzing the connections between the arts and everyday life.

Bard to Go is available to come to your school on October 9, or 16, 23, or 30. Schedule slots will be available each day in either the morning or the afternoon. *Bard to Go* is flexible in its use of performance spaces, and can adapt to theatres, cafeterias, gyms, or large classroom spaces. The production will require a space approximately 20 feet wide by 25 feet deep, with ceiling clearance of at least 9 feet. We will also need access to electrical outlets and a separate dressing area for the actors. The cost to bring *Bard to Go* to your school is \$250.00.

Registration for either the Grand Valley Allendale Campus performances of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or for a performance of *Bard to Go* at your school is available online at <https://www.gvsu.edu/shakes/education-and-outreach-82.htm>. For both productions, schools register now for the date and for *Bard to Go*, for the time of performance. Schools will be contacted for final arrangements. We hope you and your students will join us for our fall festival activities. Please contact me with any questions.

Best wishes and Good Will,



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Grand Valley

Shakespeare Festival