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# Willsboro Central School to hold Fifth Grade Theatre Summit



The [Common Core](#) has been a controversial topic for educators, parents, students, and political leaders. Willsboro's current 5th grade teacher, Derrick A. Hopkins, has created a unique and engaging approach to integrating the Common Core with the foundations of theatre.

On Friday, Oct. 10, over 100 fifth graders will descend on [Willsboro Central School](#) for the 5th Grade Theatre Summit.

Students attending are all currently engaged in New York State's Module 1: Civil Rights.

Within the curriculum, students study the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in Unit 1 and read the novel "Esperanza Rising" by Pam Munoz Ryan in Unit 2.

In the final unit, students are asked to make connections between the UDHR and the book by writing a play (integrating the UDHR) and perform it in the style of Reader's Theatre.

"Some of the best theatre educators will be working with fifth grade students from four local schools," said Hopkins.

Those include Kim Hartshorn, SUNY Plattsburgh Theatre Professor, his student Abigayle Ploetz, and theatre educator and actress, Annie-Laurie Lemieux, who will join Hopkins in teaching improvisational skills.

Mark Beatham, SUNY Plattsburgh Education Professor will also be on hand to assist during the event.

"The opportunity for students to study, work, play, and be immersed in theatre with other students who are all studying the same content is an amazing educational gift," said Hopkins. "Hopefully, this event will give students and teachers inspiration as they tackle the curriculum. I am so grateful to all the theatre artists who stepped forward to assist, Steve Broadwell, Willsboro Board of Education, all the teachers who jumped in and said, 'Yes!' and of course, the students for working hard and learning. It takes a lot of courage to perform, and I'm so proud of their efforts."

The summit will also feature a Reader's Theatre demonstration by the teaching artists and a Q & A session with Broadway legend, George Hearn.

The 5th Grade Theatre Summit takes place on Friday, Oct. 10, from 9-12:30 p.m. at Willsboro Central School. For the full schedule, visit [willsborocsd.org](https://willsborocsd.org).

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