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Dear Schoolhouse Arts Community,

It is my absolute pleasure and honor to be writing this letter to you to formally introduce myself as the Artistic Director of Schoolhouse Arts Center. In addition, I also wanted to share with you some of my visions that I have for Schoolhouse and how we can continue to build within this strong and vibrant community that is Standish and The Greater Sebago Lake Region.

Originally from Maine, I have been actively involved in theatre and the performing arts for well over ten years. I studied theatre at the University of Southern Maine and went on to become the Arts Program Coordinator for a large non-profit organization based in Meriden, CT. I had the great pleasure of orchestrating the original start-up of the program where we specialized in bringing all forms of art and performance art to individuals with intellectual disabilities, and individuals in the foster care system. The organization is still running today and serving members of the community all through Connecticut.

I first discovered Schoolhouse Arts Center in the summer of 2016 when I was asked to audition for the production of *Beauty & The Beast*, and after being cast and working in this community, I knew I had stumbled upon something special. I went on to direct last year's summer production of *Peter Pan* and once again, the experience with this organization was spectacular.

Since coming to this community, I have been, time and time again, impressed with the caliber of talent and the love that people have for Schoolhouse. This is a unique arts community that has tremendous potential to grow into something very unique, while keeping the traditions and original philosophy that Hank and Nancy Beebe originally instilled in the community when they founded this theatre almost thirty years ago. That philosophy is: education first and the shows will follow.

Keeping true to that philosophy as Artistic Director, I will work hard to bring the “school” back to Schoolhouse. Already, we have a strong children’s Education Program that caters to young actors and teens in the region by building their skills in the craft of acting and also enjoying the arts through happy mediums such as Princess and Pirate Camp and Junior versions of well-known musicals.

It is my plan by the end of summer of 2018, to implement an Adult Education Program for actors over the age of 16 so that we can continue to grow and broaden the opportunities available to this age group in this area. Some of the classes that will be available this year are: Directing, Acting Technique (1, 2, 3 and an Advanced Course), Scene Study, Stand Up Comedy, Playwriting, and Improvisation. More information on these classes will be announced as the summer progresses.

My goal with Schoolhouse is to help guide us to the next level of professionalism and expand upon what we already have to offer. However, I cannot do it alone and would not want to. We need to do this as a community. A community that cares about the arts and wants to expand the opportunities available to this region. I know that with some hard work, maybe some blood, maybe some sweat, and possibly some tears, together, we will be able to guide Schoolhouse Arts Center on the path to be a gem of a theatre in this region, as well as a destination for actors to work, and for audiences to come and enjoy.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to hearing from you. If anyone has any questions, comments or concerns, I encourage you to reach out to me or any member of the Board of Directors so that we can address it promptly. Thank you for your support, love, and dedication to the arts.

Sincerely yours,

Zachariah Stearn

Artistic Director, Schoolhouse Arts Center