



# BECAUSE OF WINN DIXIE

## A NEW MUSICAL

# ESSAY CONTEST

## TEACHER INFORMATION GUIDE

This summer, Goodspeed Musicals, a two-time Tony Award-winning theatre company dedicated to the development, advancement, and preservation of musical theatre, is thrilled to produce a joyful, uplifting new musical: *Because of Winn Dixie*. Based on Kate DiCamillo's award-winning novel and featuring one of literature's most beloved four-legged friends, *Because of Winn Dixie* follows a young girl and her father, a preacher, as they take in a stray dog they found in their small town's supermarket. Featuring music by Duncan Sheik (*Spring Awakening*) and lyrics by Nell Benjamin (*Mean Girls*, *Legally Blonde: The Musical*), this new musical explores how a small Southern town full of lost souls finds connection and compassion within each other.

For this production, Goodspeed is excited to be partnering with the Connecticut Library Consortium to introduce a brand new opportunity for students: a statewide essay writing contest! In the spirit of community engagement and *Because of Winn Dixie*'s message of joy and positivity, we are asking students to write a five paragraph essay answering the question: "Who is your Winn Dixie?"

### ABOUT THE CONTEST:

**Who can enter the contest?** This contest is open to 4th and 5th grade students in the state of Connecticut.

**What should the essay be about?** The essay should answer the question, "Who is your Winn Dixie?" Some ideas might be: Is there a person or pet in your life who has helped you make friends? Or fit in at a new school? Or helped you through a sad time?

**Does my essay have to be about a pet or animal?** No, your essay can be about anyone—animal or person—who has helped you the way Winn Dixie helps Opal in the story.

**What kind of essay should I write?** Essays must be five paragraphs in length.

**Does the winner of the contest get a prize?** The winner of the contest will be awarded 4 tickets to see *Because of Winn Dixie* at The Goodspeed, as well as a special meet-and-greet with the actors playing Opal and Winn Dixie! In addition, the winner's classmates, teacher and school librarian will each receive 2 complimentary tickets to the show!

**How do I enter the contest?** To enter, visit [goodspeed.org](http://goodspeed.org) and fill out the contest form, where you will upload your essay. You may also print out an Entry Form from the website and mail it to Goodspeed Musicals with your essay.

**When should I submit my essay?** You can submit your essay any time between April 15th and May 15th.

**When will the winner be announced?** The winner of the contest will be announced on May 30th!

*Because of Winn Dixie* will be performed at Goodspeed Musicals in East Haddam, CT from June 28 - Sept 1.

Visit [goodspeed.org](http://goodspeed.org) for complete rules and details.



