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Primrose School students to stage musical, ?Newsies Jr.?

Written By **Paula Brown**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Extra! Extra! Read all about it!

Primrose Elementary School is proud to present the musical production of Disney's Newsies Jr., coming to stage on May 7, 8 and 9.

?We're feeling very excited because the kids have been working so hard. We're seeing lots of growth in their ability to act, sing and dance and it really is beginning to feel like it's coming together,? said Sandra Hawkins, co-director of the musical. ?They're going to have an opportunity to shine.?

Newsies Jr. is inspired by the real-life story of the 1899 kids' strike in New York, which saw child workers come together to stand up against big business owners, sharing their voices and fighting for what was right.

The musical follows the tale of the charismatic Jack Kelly, who rallies newsies from across the city to strike against unfair working conditions after powerful newspaper publishers raise prices at the newsboys' expense.

?We love the storyline and the fact it's about kids who stood together for what was right and were successful against the powers that be,? said Jen Robertson, co-director of Newsies Jr. ?We love that we've seen that our kids have come together to make something amazing happen.?

Robertson and Hawkins began the process of producing the musical last year with auditions held in December and casting completed in January.

The cast of the musical consists of 108 students from Grades 4 to 8 as well as students, family members, and staff who have been a part of the behind-the-scenes crew. Students in the musical have been rehearsing together during their 25-minute breaks at school as well as at after-school sessions.

?We get goosebumps at every rehearsal. The kids have worked so hard, supporting and cheering each other on. It's really rewarding as educators to see all the elements that come together; public speaking, teamwork, problem solving, and moral support. It's something that kids often experience through sports, and this is a chance for kids to experience it through the arts,? said Robertson.

Taking on the lead role of Jack Kelly is Grade 8 student, Leif L., who will be making his debut as a lead performer in Newsies Jr.

?I do a lot of sports, but this has been really different, in a good way,? said Leif, about the role of Jack Kelly. ?I enjoy singing and getting into character, but I was a little skeptical at first. I hadn't sung or danced in a long time, but I am getting more confident with the lessons and lots of practice.?

Grade 8 student Abigail A., will also be taking on a main character role; as Jack Kelly's best friend, Crutchie.

?Crutchie is supposed to be a funny, kind, hard-working, loyal character,? explained Abigail.

The cast will be performing four shows for the public, starting with their opening night showcase on May 7 at 7 p.m. Following shows take place on May 8 at 7 p.m., May 9 at 11:45 a.m. and their closing night on May 9 at 7 p.m.

The students will also be performing two shows for their fellow classmates during school hours on May 6 and May 7.

While the majority of the shows are already sold out, tickets are still available for the public matinee on May 9. Those interested in purchasing tickets for the show can do so by contacting the Primrose Elementary School front office at 519-925-3939.