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Overture Center announces new school selected for Disney Musicals in Schools program

Eight area public schools to produce a Disney Musical

Madison, Wis. (Feb. 17, 2025) A new Madison-area middle school has been selected to participate in the 2025 [Disney Musicals in Schools](#) program at Overture Center—**Ray F. Sennett Middle School**. The

program is an initiative developed by Disney Theatrical Group to create sustainable theater programs in under-resources schools. Two years ago, Overture expanded its elementary-level program, creating a middle school theater program to ensure students can sing, dance, act and work backstage on musicals from elementary school all the way through high school (in [The Jerrys](#) program) and beyond.

Previous participating schools, all part of the Madison Metropolitan School District, are continuing to produce musicals in their schools this year.

Elementary Schools:

- Hawthorne Elementary School
- Henderson Elementary School
- Leopold Community School
- Nuestro Mundo Community School
- Mendota Elementary School

Middle Schools:

- **Sennett Middle School – New participant!**
- Akira Toki Middle School
- Whitehorse Middle School

Sennett Middle School will begin a **musical theater residency this month**. Each first-year school receives performance rights, educational support materials and guidance from two teaching artists. The program features a professional development focus, through which participating schoolteachers partner with Overture Center teaching artists to learn how to produce, direct, choreograph and music direct, culminating in their first 60-minute Disney JR musical at their school. As a capstone to the experience, Overture Center hosts a Middle School Showcase in which each school performs one number from their show on Capitol Theater stage for an audience of students, teachers, family and community members.

Last year, five elementary schools and two middle schools successfully participated in the program, with 432 students and several schoolteachers working together to create a culture of musical theater at their schools. Overture Center is among 18 arts organizations in the world collaborating with Disney Musicals in Schools.

Using the unique world of musical theater, **Disney Musicals in Schools** helps to foster positive relationships between students, faculty, staff, parents and the community. Students and teachers work in teams, developing the wide spectrum of skills needed when producing a piece of musical theater, including critical thinking, problem solving, ensemble building, communication, self-confidence and interpersonal skills.

Disney Musicals in Schools was launched in 2010 in response to Disney Theatrical Group's concern that under-resourced public elementary schools were not afforded equitable access to the arts. After successfully offering the program in New York City schools, Disney Theatrical Group began partnering with organizations in other communities across the United States.

DISNEY THEATRICAL GROUP, a division of The Walt Disney Studios, operates under the direction of Andrew Flatt, Anne Quart and Thomas Schumacher. The group produces and licenses Broadway productions around the world, including *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Lion King*, Elton John & Tim Rice's *Aida*, *TARZAN*®, *Mary Poppins*, a co-production with Cameron Mackintosh, *The Little Mermaid*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Newsies*, *Aladdin*, and *Frozen*, winning 20 Tony® Awards and 62 nominations for their Broadway productions. Other stage ventures include the Olivier-nominated London hit *Shakespeare in Love*, stage productions of *Disney's High School Musical*, *Der Glöckner Von Notre Dame* in Berlin and *King David* in concert on Broadway. Disney

Theatrical Group has collaborated with the nation's preeminent theatres to develop new stage musicals including *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Freaky Friday* and *Hercules*. As a part of the recent acquisition of 21st Century Fox, Disney Theatrical Group also heads the Buena Vista Theatrical banner, which licenses Fox titles for stage adaptations including *Anastasia*, *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* and *Mrs. Doubtfire*. Next on the Disney Theatrical schedule: the world-premiere of *Hercules* in Hamburg, Germany and the North American tour of a reimagined production of *Beauty and The Beast* in 2025.

Music Theatre International (MTI) is one of the world's leading theatrical licensing agencies, granting theatres from around the world the rights to perform the greatest selection of musicals from Broadway and beyond. Founded in 1952 by composer Frank Loesser and orchestrator Don Walker, MTI is a driving force in advancing musical theatre as a vibrant and engaging art form. MTI works directly with the composers, lyricists and book writers of these musicals to provide official scripts, musical materials and dynamic theatrical resources to over 100,000 professional, community and school theatres in the US and in over 150 countries worldwide. MTI is particularly dedicated to educational theatre, and has created special collections to meet the needs of various types of performers and audiences. MTI's Broadway Junior® shows are 30- and 60-minute musicals for performance by elementary and middle school-aged performers, while MTI's School Editions are musicals annotated for performance by high school students. MTI maintains its global headquarters in New York City with additional offices in London (MTI Europe) and Melbourne (MTI Australasia).

Overture Center's Disney Musicals in Schools program is sponsored by The Cap Times Kids Fund and Starion Bank.

Celebrating 20 years in Madison, Wis., OVERTURE CENTER FOR THE ARTS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit arts organization that features seven state-of-the-art performance spaces and five galleries where national and international touring artists, nine resident companies and hundreds of local artists engage people in nearly 500,000 educational and artistic experiences each year. Overture's mission is to support and elevate our community's creative culture, economy and quality of life through the arts. overture.org

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