



HACIENDA LA PUENTE

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hacienda La Puente Unified Produces First Districtwide Musical with Broadway Bound Summer Conservatory Program

CITY OF INDUSTRY, CA – Hacienda La Puente Unified students are tapping into new passions for singing, acting, and dancing while strengthening confidence and leadership skills as they perform together in the District's first-ever musical performance through the new Broadway Bound Summer Musical Theatre Conservatory.

More than 130 elementary, middle, and high school students will showcase Roald Dahl's "Matilda" with three performances on Saturday, June 28, and Sunday, June 29 at Citrus College's Haugh Performing Arts Center.

Naya Sanchez, a rising Graziade Elementary School fifth-grader, said she always wanted to act and perform, and when her mom saw the flyer announcing the District's Conservatory and summer production, she seized the opportunity.

"I have a passion for acting. I practice and act in front of my mirror," Sanchez said, who is playing the title role of Matilda, advancing her performances in front of her bedroom mirror to the stage in front of an audience. "Once they called me back to audition for Matilda, it was nerve-racking but I was also excited. There were a lot of people but I challenged myself and I just put myself to work."

The Musical Theatre Conservatory program, launched this year, is a collaboration between the Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) and Career Technical Education departments. Students can access hands-on, professional arts experiences and engage with multimedia disciplines working on stage, backstage, and in the orchestra pit. HLPUSD arts teachers, mentors, and industry professionals guide students to successfully complete three performances.

The District's VAPA Coordinator Dr. Benita Scheckel launched the program for students and staff, bringing together like-minded, passionate, and talented learners, educators, and creators.

"Students are not only excited to be here, but they are also receiving Conservatory training in dance, theatre, and music," Scheckel said.

MORE

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"We are extending the expertise of our own VAPA teachers across the District to provide an industry-level experience to our students at each grade level, providing them an environment to discover their passions and collaborate to bring a show to life."

Following a Broadway-level audition in May, complete with Polaroid headshots and standout performances, selected students rehearsed Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Students worked on staging and choreography; some learned in the music studio; others practiced scene work; student musicians practiced with the orchestra; and backstage technicians worked on sound design, lighting, and costuming.

Incoming La Puente High School senior Haley Rojas has performed in her school's marching band since freshmen year, and when she heard about the Conservatory and the chance to learn about percussion instruments in a different way, she said knew she had to be involved.

"Learning how to play new instruments has been my favorite part of the process," Rojas said. "This is a whole new experience and I'm gaining more knowledge on how to play and getting better."

[Tickets are \\$10](#), with all proceeds going toward the Conservatory to support students and next year's production. Performances will be on Saturday, June 28 at 1:30 p.m. and 7 p.m., with a finale on Sunday, June 29 at 1:30 p.m.

"To see all of our students, teachers, and staff collaborate together across the District is the definition of a Hacienda La Puente Unified experience," Superintendent Dr. Alfonso Jiménez said. "Not only are our students experiencing a Broadway production from acting and performing music to stage and costume design, they are delving into their passions to give their best show to the audience."

PHOTO CAPTIONS

HLPUSD_PHOTO1: More than 130 Hacienda La Puente Unified students spanning elementary to high school grades are working together to perform in the District's inaugural Broadway musical performance of Roald Dahl's "Matilda," a completely student-run production with learners on stage, backstage, and in the orchestra.

HLPUSD_PHOTO2: Following a Broadway-level audition in May, complete with Polaroid headshots and standout performances, selected students rehearsed Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., including student musicians practicing in the orchestra.

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