

DAILY NEWS

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Cast members of the new Panther Playhouse Players sing in their recent production of "Annie Jr." at the Alfred De B. Mason School. Students learned a host of theatrical skills for the musical. Photos by Jesse Ward

Panther Playhouse scores with 'Annie'

BY GAYLE DE WEES

THE newly-formed Panther Playhouse Players reported a successful run of their production of "Annie Jr." at the Alfred De B. Mason School in Bensonhurst.

School principal Sherry Tanenbaum, said she was very proud of the high quality of the performance, and the remarkable job and efforts by the teachers and students to produce the May 21 and 22 shows.

Anglea Saccaro, the school's literacy coach, librarian Alisa Halpern and middle school music teacher Sarah Prusasky served as choreographer, director and music director, respectively.

The 36 student cast members

are all from grades 5 through 8 at the school, which is also known as Public School/Intermediate School 226, at 6006 23rd Ave. The production, funded through grants, was the fulfillment of a goal to bring musical theater to the school, whose motto is, "Together We Make Our School a Success." The funding also allowed for renovations to the auditorium's lighting, curtains

and sound system.

"It's our first established theater program — culminating in performances of Annie Jr.," said Saccaro.

"We had a mission we wanted to fulfill to infuse theater and musical study into the student

academic plan with the expectation to stimulate and enrich learning and creativity," Saccaro said. "And it really did work."

The students received personal guidance from professional actors and were educated in acting, choreography, set design and theatrical techniques. The students also performed a musical number at the Majestic Theater in Manhattan as part of the Broadway Jr. Share Program.

And of course, parents, family members and fans experienced the pride of watching the students perform.

Grant from the Shubert Foundation, MTI Broadway Jr. program, ITheatrics, Arts Connection and the New York City Department of Education's Office of Arts and Special Projects helped fund the production.

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Actors Patricia Plaskowski (Annie) and Elijah White (Oliver) took center stage in this scene from the musical "Annie Jr."

FACES & PLACES

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