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**FOUR BOSTON PUBLIC ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS
CHOSEN TO PARTICIPATE IN
BOSTON CHILDREN'S THEATRE'S
DISNEY MUSICALS IN SCHOOLS PROGRAM**

**Program funded by \$100,000 Grant from Disney to Boston
Children's Theatre**

For Release (October 11, 2016): Boston Children's Theatre (BCT) has announced that four Boston Public Elementary schools have been chosen to participate in the **Disney Musicals in Schools** program this fall. Funded by a \$100,000 grant from Disney to Boston Children's Theatre, the two-year program is an outreach initiative developed by Disney Theatrical Group to support and build sustainable theater programs in elementary schools.

Schools participating in the first year of the program are:

McKay K – 8 School in East Boston
Curley K – 8 School in Jamaica Plain
James F. Condon K – 8 School in South Boston
Martin Luther King K – 8 School in Dorchester

At no cost to them, the selected schools will participate in a 17-week musical theater residency, led by a team of BCT teaching artists. Each school will receive performance rights, education support materials and guidance from the teaching artists. The program features a professional development focus, through which

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participating school teachers partner with BCT teaching artists to learn how to produce, direct, choreograph, and music direct their first school show. The program will culminate in a 30-minute Disney KIDS musical at each school site. As a capstone to the experience, BCT will host a Student Share Celebration in which each school performs one number from their show on a professional stage for an audience of students, teachers, family, and community members.

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.

"Our students are beyond excited to start this program! They love to perform and we try to give them many opportunities to do so, however a fully staged musical has not yet been possible," said Maurice Parent, Performing Arts Specialist at Dr. Marking Luther King Jr. K-8 Inclusion School. "The Boston Children's Theatre partnership with the Disney Musicals in Schools program is a truly special opportunity that we are honored to be a part of. "

"We are honored to work with **Disney Musicals in Schools** to provide a valuable experience to the Boston Public schools that may otherwise not be possible," said BCT Executive Director Toby Schine. "By introducing performance and production opportunities to students, and providing training to the faculty, we are able to create a new way for teachers to connect with their students. The program is a wonderful way to build a strong sense of community within the faculty, the students and the city."

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 KIDS musicals, created in partnership with Music Theater International (MTI), are 30-minute musicals designed for elementary school performers and have been adapted from the classic Disney films *101 Dalmatians*, *Aladdin*, *The Aristocats*, *Cinderella*, *The Jungle Book*, *The Lion King*, and *Winnie the Pooh*.

BOSTON CHILDREN'S THEATRE

For over 60 years, Boston Children's Theatre has served as one of the region's premier not-for-profit theaters. An Elliot Norton Award winning theatre, BCT has twice been named Best of Boston® by *Boston Magazine* for Best Children's

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Theatre. BCT's mission is to provide access to exceptional theatrical experiences dedicated to fostering the artistic and personal development of diverse youth, with a focus on professional training and the development of new works. Programs at Boston Children's Theatre provide a unique chance for self-discovery and individual expression in a supportive and productive environment. At BCT, talented and motivated students gather from across traditional boundaries and nationalities to learn about themselves, each other and the world, as they create some of the finest theatrical productions in New England.

www.bostonchildrenstheatre.org

DISNEY THEATRICAL GROUP (DTG) operates under the direction of Thomas Schumacher and is among the world's most successful commercial theatre enterprises, bringing live entertainment events to a global annual audience of more than 19 million people in more than 50 countries. Under the Disney Theatrical Productions banner, the group produces and licenses Broadway musicals 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*, and *Aladdin*. *Frozen*, based on the Academy Award®-winning film, is slated to open on Broadway in 2018. Other successful stage musical ventures have included 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. DTP has collaborated with the country's leading regional theatres to develop new stage titles including *The Jungle Book* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.

Disney Theatrical Group also delivers live shows globally through its license to Feld Entertainment, producer of *Disney on Ice* and *Disney Live!* For over 30 years, *Disney on Ice* and *Disney Live!* have brought beloved Disney stories and characters annually to over 12 million guests in nearly 50 countries worldwide, through productions such as *Marvel Universe Live!* and *Frozen*, the most well attended and highest grossing *Disney on Ice* production to date. In addition, DTG licenses musical titles for local, school and community theatre productions through Music Theatre International, including *The Lion King Experience*, a unique holistic arts education program wherein accredited elementary and middle schools produce condensed, age-appropriate JR. and KIDS adaptations of *The Lion King*.

ABOUT MUSIC THEATRE INTERNATIONAL

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

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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 70,000 professional, community and school theatres in the US and in over 60 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 elementary and middle school-aged performers, while MTI's School Editions are musicals annotated for performance by high school students.

www.mtishows.com

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