

On with the show! Disney expands musical theatre support to more Central Florida schools in 2018-2019 school year

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla., May 23, 2018—Hundreds of Central Florida students filled the stage and stepped into the spotlight as they took a final bow from the Walt Disney Theater stage at Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts—the grand finale of their Disney Musicals in Schools program journey.

The students recently completed the 17-week immersive program designed by Disney Theatrical Group to encourage youth to explore their artistic abilities. Disney Musicals in Schools offers free performance materials and professional theatre development to under-resourced public schools, allowing teachers and students to experience the arts with an extra special touch of Disney magic.

During the recent Student Share Celebration at Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts, the hundreds of students participated in their final act: performing one number from their school's production in front of fellow students, their friends, family and other community members.

The special celebration was followed by the news that Walt Disney World Resort is investing an additional \$50,000 in Disney Musicals in Schools, funding its expansion into four more schools during the 2018-2019 school year.

Locally, Disney Theatrical Group has worked with the Dr. Phillips Center School of the Arts in the past year to coordinate the program at four schools in Orange, Osceola, and Seminole counties. Each participating school is assigned teaching artists who work with the administrators, teachers and students to aid in the development of a 30-minute Disney musical performance, followed by the Student Share Celebration. To date, Disney Musicals in Schools has reached more than 20,000 students and 600 teachers at 175 schools in the United States, including eight Central Florida schools. The \$50,000 investment will bring the local count to 12 participating schools.

As a company that started with a drawing of a small mouse, dedication to creativity and artistic expression is at the core of Disney storytelling. For over four decades, Walt Disney World Resort has helped foster the local arts community through supporting various organizations that embody those same ideals.