

## **Charlotte Performing Arts Center Provides Unique Opportunities for Students**

With a full to the brim calendar, the Charlotte Performing Arts Center is experiencing record breaking usage again this school year and school district officials couldn't be happier. From first grade music concerts to middle school performances to the annual high school musical, almost every Charlotte Public School student will benefit from the outstanding facility. Over 150 days of usage, out of the 172 day school calendar, have already been scheduled in support of school district activities. Encompassing seventy performance days, seventy rehearsal days and ten training days for student stage crew members, the performing arts center rarely sits idle. "This is exactly what we planned," explained High School Principal Lee Wheaton. School district usage of the auditorium represents the vast majority of the 45,000 guests who attend performances each season.

Gavin Smith, Performing Arts Center Director, commented, "Although I spend a considerable amount of time working with community groups and planning for the six or seven professional touring performances we present each season, the school district events are our primary mission. Giving all of our students the unique opportunity to perform on our stage or attend a



curriculum based performance is our main goal." National research reveals a multitude of benefits for engaging students in the performing arts. Students engaged in the arts perform better scholastically, achieve higher test scores, and are more likely to be recognized for academic achievement. Arts education exposes students to a broad range of perspectives giving them the ability to work with people who are different from themselves and it nurtures the imagination that fuels innovation in today's competitive workforce. U.S. employers rate creativity/innovation among the top five skills that will increase in importance over the next five years

In addition to CPS rehearsals and performances, over 5,000 local elementary students have enjoyed one or more of the four professional touring performances presented by the Arts For Youth program over the past two school years. During this school year, the Arts For Youth program will present *Junie B Jones*, and *Anne of Green Gables*. In addition, two additional special touring performances produced by the MSU Federal Credit Union Institute for Arts & Creativity at the Wharton Center



for Performing Arts will be presented this year: *The Jack Sprat Low Fat World Tour* and *Theory of Mind*. All of the Arts For Youth performances reinforce one or more curriculums being taught in the classroom.

The Charlotte Performing Arts Center, considered one of the jewels of the community, is also used by numerous community organizations and businesses. From fund-raising events for SIREN Eaton Shelter to the annual Musical Madness event presented by the Eaton Area Senior Center, community usage adds another 49 days to the Center's calendar. The two week long summer musical theatre camp in July completes the annual schedule. This past summer the camp was expanded to offer hands-on training and instruction to middle school and high school students.

All of these events keep the student stage crew hopping from one setup to the next with an evening show in between. From juggling the many, many details of each school group, Amy Jo Kinyon, performing arts center technical director and stage crew supervisor, has her hands full determining the number of stage crew required. Care is taken to spread the work evenly among stage crew members to prevent students from becoming overly involved and affecting their coursework. The student stage crew also works all of the professional shows and rental events.

To see what is coming up next at the Charlotte Performing Arts Center visit their web site at [www.CPAPpresents.com](http://www.CPAPpresents.com) or call the box office at 541-5690.

