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**Starlight and Disney to Offer
Free Streaming Performance of
Disney’s *NEWSIES: The Broadway Musical*
to Kansas City School Districts as Part of Disney’s
Investment in the Next Generation of Storytellers**



KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Starlight and Disney are teaming up to offer Kansas City metro schools with students in grades 6-12 free access to a pre-recorded streaming performance of the Disney’s *Newsies: The Broadway Musical*. With the impact of the pandemic on theaters and schools, Disney is committed to innovating new ways for students to remain engaged with the performing arts. By providing this Newsies Virtual Field Trip, Disney is investing in the next generation of storytellers and inspiring them to create the futures they imagine. March is Theater in Our Schools Month, and now more than ever students and teachers will benefit from the connection and engagement offered by events like this.

“The *NEWSIES* virtual field trip provides a truly unique arts experience as many students continue to learn from home,” said Alex Jones, Starlight’s Vice President of Community Engagement. “At no cost to participating schools or students, we hope it will provide a meaningful connection to the arts and a bit of joy during a year in which Kansas City school communities have seen many challenges.”

“Since the onset of the pandemic, we have been working to find creative and accessible ways to provide our content free to students and educators,” said Lisa Mitchell, Disney Theatrical Group’s Director of Education & Audience Engagement. “Earlier this year, we offered a virtually

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accessible version of The Lion King Experience, a unique holistic arts education program that provides students and educators an immersive introduction to theater-making through the lens of the Broadway production of *The Lion King*. We are now thrilled to offer *NEWSIES: The Broadway Musical* as a virtual field trip to 20 markets across the country in partnership with non-profit performing arts centers, including Starlight. They have an excellent reputation for delivering quality education programs, and we are excited to have them introduce this energetic and inspirational production to their students.”

Disney’s *NEWSIES: The Broadway Musical* will be available to Kansas City metro classrooms from April 5-30. Access is free to grades 6-12 but registration is required. Eligible schools must also have a student population in which 50% qualify for free and reduced lunch. Starlight is distributing registration information to eligible classrooms. Kansas City metro educators may email education@kcstarlight.com with questions.

Follow Starlight on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @kcstarlight.

About Disney’s *NEWSIES: The Broadway Musical*

NEWSIES, the new American musical, features a Tony Award-winning score with music by eight-time Academy Award®-winner Alan Menken and lyrics by Jack Feldman, a book by four-time Tony Award-winner Harvey Fierstein and is produced by Disney Theatrical Productions. *NEWSIES* is directed by Tony nominee Jeff Calhoun and choreographed by Christopher Gattelli, who won a 2012 Tony Award for his work on the show. Since opening on Broadway in 2011, *NEWSIES* has played 1,711 performances between Broadway and the North American tour, to more than 2.5 million audience members in 65 cities across the country.

In 2017, “Disney’s *Newsies: The Broadway Musical!*” made its premiere in-cinemas nationwide. Captured live at the Hollywood Pantages Theatre, the film features original Broadway cast members, Jeremy Jordan, as Jack Kelly, Kara Lindsay as Katherine, Ben Fankhauser as Davey and Andrew Keenan-Bolger as Crutchie, and *NEWSIES* North American Tour stars Steve Blanchard as Joseph Pulitzer, Aisha de Haas as Medda Larkin, and Ethan Steiner as Les.

“Disney’s *Newsies: The Broadway Musical!*” is currently streaming on Disney +.

Set in New York City at the turn of the century, *NEWSIES* is the rousing tale of Jack Kelly, a charismatic newsboy and leader of a ragged band of teenaged ‘newsies,’ who dreams only of a better life far from the hardship of the streets. But when publishing titans Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst raise distribution prices at the newsboys’ expense, Jack finds a cause to fight for and rallies newsies from across the city to strike for what’s right.

DISNEY THEATRICAL GROUP (DTG) operates under the direction of Thomas Schumacher and is among the world’s most successful commercial theatre producers, bringing live entertainment events to a global audience of more than 20 million people a year in more than 50 countries. Under the Disney Theatrical Group banner, the group produces and licenses Broadway productions 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*, *Aladdin* and *Frozen*. Other successful stage musical ventures have included the Olivier-nominated London hit *Shakespeare in Love*, stage productions of Disney’s *High School*

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Musical, Der Glöckner Von Notre Dame in Berlin, and *King David* in concert. DTG has collaborated with the nation's preeminent theatres to develop new stage titles including *The Jungle Book*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Freaky Friday* and *Hercules*. As a part of the recent acquisition of 21st Century Fox, DTP also heads the Buena Vista Theatrical banner which licenses Fox titles for stage adaptations including *Anastasia*, *Moulin Rouge! The Musical*, *Mrs. Doubtfire* and *The Devil Wears Prada*.

Disney Theatrical Group also delivers live shows globally through its license to Feld Entertainment, producer of Disney on Ice and Marvel Universe Live!, bringing beloved Disney stories and characters annually to over 12 million guests in nearly 50 countries worldwide. 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 Disney Corporate Social Responsibility

At Disney, corporate social responsibility refers to our commitment to operate our businesses in an honorable and ethical manner along with our philanthropic efforts to bring comfort, inspiration and opportunity to families around the world. As part of these efforts, Disney is also committed to supporting the next generation of innovators and storytellers. Through a diverse suite of programs and investments, Disney is bridging opportunity gaps for youth and providing inspiration and opportunity for them to reach their full potential and create the future they imagine. To learn more about how Disney supports the next generation, visit <https://thewaltdisneycompany.com/investments-in-youth/>.

About Starlight

Opened as a theatre in 1950 and a nonprofit organization in 1951, Starlight is the largest and oldest performing arts institution in Kansas City and provides inspiring, one-of-a-kind experiences to its patrons. Starlight presents and produces Broadway musicals, concerts and Indoors shows in addition to offering extensive community outreach and educational programming, including classes, scholarships and Starlight's Blue Star Awards, one of the largest high school musical theatre award programs in the nation.

Located on 16 acres in Swope Park, Starlight's historic, city-owned venue is the second-largest outdoor producing theatre in the country and includes rehearsal halls, a museum, club area for dining, concessions, gardens, fountains and a 10-story, climate-controlled stage. For more information, visit kcstarlight.com.

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