



Fagin, played by Emma Poston, directs her gang of thieves in a dance during a musical sequence in "Oliver!"

JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer



Nancy, played by Amelia Poston, dances while singing "Oom Pah Pah" in the second act of "Oliver!" The show runs Wednesday through Saturday at Dallas High School.

JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

# OLIVER!

Dallas middle, high schools team up for Dickens' musical production

By Jolene Guzman  
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Dallas High School's fall play "Oliver!" — a musical telling of Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist opening Wednesday (today) — is a product of teamwork between DHS and LaCreole Middle School.

Last school year, because of the lack of a choir program in years past, DHS couldn't stage a musical, said "Oliver!" co-director Blair Cromwell.

But some DHS students still wanted to perform in musicals.

To offer that opportunity this year, Cromwell asked if LaCreole Middle School choir and drama teacher Anna Jackson wanted to collaborate on the fall production, bringing her drama students and musical expertise

to the table.

"We didn't want to take away from her students, but also wanted to provide opportunities for high school students," Cromwell said.

So far, the partnership has worked beautifully — a few logistical speed bumps notwithstanding. LaCreole's school day ends later than DHS', so middle school actors had to rush to rehearsals and get in costume quickly.

As performers in a production at the high school, they are being held to the same standard as the older actors.

"They've risen to the challenge," Jackson said of her students.

She added they've been excited to learn from older performers.

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## College application week helps 70 students sign up

Itemizer-Observer staff report

INDEPENDENCE — More than 70 seniors at Central High School spent time last week filling out applications for college.

Students got 90 minutes outside class time working with help from college representatives and mentors.

The efforts were part of Gear Up, a nationwide effort to get kids to commit to their futures earlier in the school year.

"A lot of the college deadlines are in early spring," said Prindi Flug, career development coordinator.

Having kids apply earlier puts legs on their dreams of going to college, she said.

Many Oregon universities waived application fees for the event.

Students had access to computers and had an opportunity to complete a worksheet meant to help fill in the holes for the general questions on college applications.

A separate session was held by representatives from Western Oregon University because so many CHS students apply there.

Flug said it was a great success, but that some students needed more than the allotted 90 minutes to fill out applications.

"Overall, students were enthusiastic about having time to apply to schools," she said.

## More teams added to TMS sports

Itemizer-Observer staff report

INDEPENDENCE — Dale Cutsforth, athletic director at Talmadge Middle School, said this year, 241 students participated in athletics, up from 208 last year.

"We were nine off our goal," he said at the Nov. 2 Central School District board meeting. "We wanted 250."

With the increased numbers, a second boys soccer team was added. Cutsforth said the numbers put a strain on available facilities at Talmadge, but he and administrators were able to find room for all the teams to practice in fall.

TMS sports teams compete in the Mid-Valley Central Coast League, Cutsforth said, adding that he is working to eliminate competition between coastal teams, as that's "a long trip."

Sports has been a great experience for students, he said, but facilities are lacking.

"We just started girls basketball and wrestling," he said. "We just don't have a place to put them. We don't have space to have two large basketball teams and wrestling."

Board chairman Steve Love asked Cutsforth what the board could do to help him in his program.

"We need a gym," he replied. "Right now we have a game at the high school, Panther Stadium for football, Ash Creek (Elementary School) for soccer. We had three different locations with three different sports participating, and usually volleyball going on. Facilities is a big thing."

Love said the board would discuss facilities needs during its board retreat, of which the date was not set by press time.

"It's important you bring that up," Love said. "I don't know how we would compare to districts of our size. That's something we're looking at, a strategic facilities plan."



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