



## Bridgeport Public Schools

*For Immediate Release*

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### **Harding High School to Perform “The Wiz”**

**Bridgeport, CT – May 17, 2007** – Harding High School students will perform their rendition of “The Wiz,” May 18-20. Tomorrow’s performance is for Bridgeport’s elementary school children. On Sat., May 19 at 7 p.m. and Sun., May 20 at 4:00 p.m. the performance is open to the general public on a first come, first serve basis. Due to the revival of “The Wiz” in New York, the school is unable to sell tickets. However, donations will be gratefully accepted.

This year’s production will be performed in Harding’s newly renovated theatre as a result of a two-year interdistrict grant involving Harding and Monroe’s Masuk High School. The grant, which is in its second year, is a Musical Theatre Collaborative. Grant funding allowed for upgrades to Harding’s theatre, providing much needed equipment and making lighting equipment repairs.

The purpose of the grant is to integrate students from both high schools through musical theatre. During the school year, the schools meet once a month for a workshop, to attend each other's productions or to go on a field trip. During the summer, the schools participate in a two week intensive program, which culminates in a production. For Harding’s production of “The Wiz,” Masuk students will be helping behind the scenes, running the stage and working on lights and sound.

“The Wiz” is an adaptation of L. Frank Baum’s book *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. The production was written by William F. Brown, with music and lyrics by Charlie Smalls. The school production is directed by performing arts teacher Sheena Graham-Owens.

“I chose this production because the moral of this story is pertinent to all, my students and the audience alike,” Graham-Owens said. “We all have the ability to learn from each other despite our obvious outer differences, benefit from discovering and making use of our different strengths to achieve one goal, and benefit from learning that the ability to achieve and succeed lies within each and every one of us. We just need to tap into it.”

The lead characters will be as follows:

#### **LEADS**

Dorothy - Antanette Myers, Grade 12  
Scarecrow - Elisha Richards, Grade 9  
Tinman - Anthony Whitaker, Grade 11  
Lion - Jaiyson Lowery, Grade 12

#### **WITCHES**

Addaperle - Jodian Thomas, Grade 12  
Evillene - Halimat Somotan, Grade 11  
Glinda - Roberta Hardin, Grade 11

Mrs. Graham-Owens is excited to bring “The Wiz” to the new stage with her students. “I am especially proud of the students who have sacrificed their time and talent to make this production possible,” she said, “and even more grateful to the parents who have allowed them to do it.”

*The mission of the Bridgeport Public Schools and its supporting community is to graduate all students college ready and prepared to succeed in life. For more information about Bridgeport Public Schools visit the website at [www.bridgeportedu.com](http://www.bridgeportedu.com).*