

THE DEMING HEADLIGHT

NATIONAL DANCE INSTRUCTORS PUT TORRES STUDENTS THROUGH PACES

By Kevin Buey Headlight Staff

Posted: 01/14/2009



Students from Torres Elementary School fourth-grade teacher Maribel.
.. (Kevin Buey/Headlight Photo)

Fourth-graders perform for the school at 1 p.m. At 6 p.m. that night, parents and other community members are invited. Admission is free.

The youngsters, by Friday, will have been practicing all week with Catherine Oppenheimer, Kirsten Allard and Bert Dalton, from Santa Fe's National Dance Institute of New Mexico. Dress rehearsal is Friday morning.

An estimated 100 Torres School students will perform, dancing to "This is It," a song described by instructors as "about the show."

"Overture, curtain, lights,

This is it, the night of nights!" the eight-line songs begins.

The show is more about direction "for

a successful life," says Oppenheimer, a New York native who has danced in the New York City Ballet, with the Twyla Tharp Dancers and active in choreography. "It really comes down to the Core 4.

Students list those as "Work hard. Never give up. Be healthy and Personal best."

Monday, they met in individual class groups with Oppenheimer, Allard (a teacher in training) and Dalton (music director), learning tempo, rhythm, exercise, balance, flexibility and endurance.

"We use music and dance," Oppenheimer says of teaching steps to a successful life, "talking and dancing."

It engages the youngsters even as they

learn something new.

More dancing was scheduled Tuesday, leading to Friday's performances.

Alexandria Weinreich, in Sandy Hyatt's class, enjoyed "The dancing." For Katelyn Ramsey, it was "The music." Lizette Villegas liked "The singing."

Some of the students were involved in a similar program last school year, when attending Smith Elementary School.

Alexis Gallosa, Joshua Richardson, Marcos Diaz and Joslyn Valenzuela stepped on each other's sentences, Monday afternoon, after they had spent an hour in the Torres gym, their first meeting with Oppenheimer and her team. They spoke of being learning about diet, rhythm, how to move, how to listen.

"The piano guy — Bert — if you ask him how to play anything, he'll do it," Lucas Holm said of Dalton's keyboard repertoire.

Other students are from the classes of Mary Ortiz, Maribel Rincon and Socorro Gonzales.

Kevin Buey can be reached at kbuey@demingheadlight.com.

"This Is It!"

Overture, curtain, lights,
This is it, the night of nights!
No more rehearsing and nursing a part,
We know every part by heart.
Overture, curtain, lights,
This is it, we'll hit the heights!
And oh what heights we'll hit,
On with the show — this is it!