

Joseph production combines cast from six schools

Sophomore Ashley Davis and junior Beth Amann spent their school day Nov. 16 in silence. Winter scarves wrapped around their necks, they wrote periodically on dry erase boards to communicate. The girls were “saving their voices.”

Playing lead roles of “Joseph” and the narrator, respectively, the actresses were cranked up for opening night of “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat,” a lively interpretation of the biblical story of Joseph of Canaan, presented Nov. 16-18 at The Seton Keough High School, Baltimore.

“A little overdramatic,” joked theater director and English teacher Jessica Vitrano, found in the back of the auditorium during the preview performance of the play for the student body. “It’s out of my hands now; they’re quite capable,” she said, which was evident by simply looking onstage at the student-made sets, listening to the voices and watching the lithe dancers. The students have been in rehearsal since September, two hours every day after school and four hours on Saturdays.

The 25-year-old teacher said she is “so proud” of the entire cast, crew and pit band for the show which included 76 students from Seton Keough, Mount St. Joseph High School, Baltimore; The Cardinal Gibbons School, Baltimore; Our Lady of Victory School, Arbutus; St. Agnes School, Catonsville; and Ascension School, Halethorpe.

“I’m so lucky. I’m enjoying it,” she said of her first career move two years ago.

The predicament of an all-girls school full of ninth- through 12th-graders, however, is that when a production calls for the opposite gender or young kids – no one fits the part. Thus the reason for combining six schools into one production.

The following Monday after “Joseph,” the Seton Keough girls began rehearsals for “Robin Hood,” on the playbill at the all-boys Gibbons; they had already auditioned. Mande Ferrier, theater director at Gibbons, was the musical director for “Joseph.” Young actors who had starred in last year’s production of “Annie” were brought back as extras to portray the children’s chorus, according to Ms. Vitrano.

With a 750-person auditorium, Seton Keough pre-sold 300 tickets for three shows with many more at the door, in all 1,000 tickets.

“It was great!” said Ms. Vitrano. “We had an amazing turnout.”

She announced that the school’s next performance will be “Alice in Wonderland” in the spring.

Students – save your voices.