Fourth Grade Stars’ “Newark Pride”-Inspired Song
A Huge Hit At Kelley School
After the December 23rd through January 3rd holiday break, Kelley School fourth grade teachers Lacie Urban and Sarah Consentino wanted to refresh students they co-teach with the tenets of "Newark Pride," the new behavioral expectations instituted for all Newark Central School District students in September. Since then, the new expectations that all students' behavior will be safe, responsible, respectful and will foster a sense of community in their schools have been consistently integrated into school life and reinforced district-wide in age-appropriate signage and displays, classroom instruction and various activities including school assemblies.

Urban and Consentino had their students work on "Newark Pride" projects to reinforce the expectations after their two-week vacation.

"The project was very open ended and kids had free choice on what to do," Urban said. "They created posters, videos, books, and songs about "Newark Pride."

Three of their students, Maggie Cornwell, Ava Herrington and Aidan Jarzynka-Le created a song together after Cornwell came up with the idea.

At one point during their work, the trio asked to practice "Show Your Newark Pride" in front of the class. "They started singing it and everyone in the room went silent and listened to the three perform. The class was in awe and chanted "Again! Again!" At that moment we knew we had something special," Urban continued.

With such positive reaction from their classmates, Consentino said everyone thought it would be a great idea to have background music for the song.

With permission and lots of encouragement from their teachers and Kelley School Assistant Principal Kerri Levine, they practiced and practiced their song and Libby Brozik, who had been the vocal music teacher at Kelley until recently beginning teaching music at Lincoln School, developed and recorded the background music using Apple's GarageBand application.

The trio was asked by Levine to perform the song at the end of the monthly "Newark Pride" assembly at Kelley February 14th. Unfortunately Jarzynka-Le was unable to participate because of illness.

But Cornwell and Herrington went on anyway, performing the spirited tune to the delight of the enthusiastic school audience who surprised the novice young performers when they began rhythmically clapping to the beat early in the song.

Afterward, Cornwell and Herrington reveled in their newfound fame among their Kelley School peers.

Cornwell hopes the trio can write more songs that inspire continuous adherence to the "Newark Pride" tenets and hope to work with the school’s new vocal music teacher, Dominic Vassallo, to produce background music for them.

Urban, Consentino, Brozik and Levine are pleased with the young songwriters’ tenacity in working on their song to the point that they could perform it with background music at the assembly and will likely perform it again at others.

"The kids worked on the song during free time and prepared for their performance. They practiced at snack time, lunch, and recess. Aidan, Maggie and Ava did everything for this song. They get all the credit!”, Urban said.

"Kelley’s vision is to create lasting connections and work hard to be the best version of ourselves,” Levine said. “This is one example of how our vision lives within our building. I am so proud of these students and all our students who have set goals and collaborating to create while taking pride in where they are going.”

Listen to the students’ perform the song here: https://web.microsoftstream.com/video/0fd8a25-65f2-4077-b682-f31dc20f26f6