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Songwriter backs students playing character compositions

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Simone Joseph, Staff Writer - [More from this author](#)

Gregg Lawless and some members of his band have performed with such big-name entertainers as Holly Cole, Shania Twain and the Who's Pete Townsend.

But they are playing with a considerably less experienced group Wednesday when they back up students from 10 schools as part of a special literacy through music partnership with the York Region District School Board.

Each school has written a song based on one of the region's 10 character attributes: respect, responsibility, honesty, empathy, fairness, initiative, courage, integrity, perseverance and optimism.

Students will share their songs with an audience during the 7 p.m. performance at Markham Theatre for Performing Arts on Town Centre Boulevard.

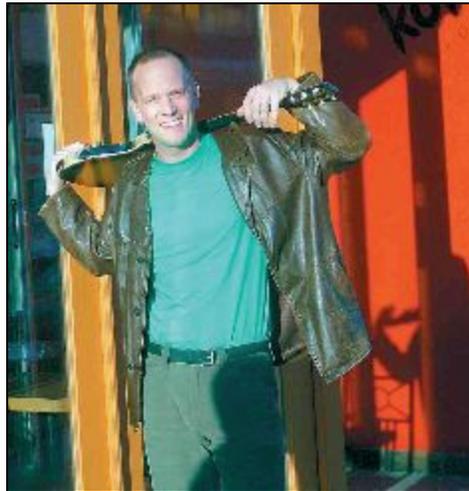
"All of the songs are amazing. I'm a perfectionist. I worked the kids really hard," said Mr. Lawless, a singer, songwriter and former Aurora resident. This is the second year of the program, which involves students from grades 4 to 8.

While the children believe they are just having fun, they are actually learning, Mr. Lawless said.

"To them, it doesn't feel like school but they are learning, writing and editing and brainstorming ideas. They are learning musical terms and they are applying them to songs they wrote together."

The concert is open to the public with parents of participating students having first pick of tickets. Any remaining can be bought (for \$12 each) on the day of the performance at the theatre box office.

For more information about the concert or program, contact project co-ordinator Yana Ioffe at



GREGG LAWLESS

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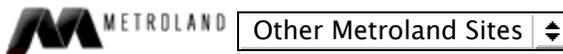
yana.ioffe@yrdsb.edu.on.ca or 905-727-0022, ext. 3437. For more information on Mr. Lawless, go to www.gregglawless.com

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