



## Hamilton Middle School Theatre Program



The cast of *Peter Pan Jr.* is from Hamilton Middle School, a rural Title I school in NW Alabama. The arts program began four years ago with the assistance of an AAEI grant which changed the culture and dynamics of the school. When the program began, only 11% of HMS students were participating in the arts. Currently, over 85% of the students are involved in at least one art class!

Courses offered to students are Theatre, Music, Band, Journalism/Creative Writing, Visual Arts, and Dance. HMS has a robust theatre program that includes students in all grades.

During the past four years, HMS students have appeared in *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, *Oklahoma (Getting to Know You Version)*, *High School Musical*, *Annie Get Your Gun!*, *Annie Jr.*, *Grease: The High School Edition*, *Bad Auditions for Bad Actors*, *The Gift of the Magi*, and numerous community events. They have just completed a very successful run of *Peter Pan Jr.*! Sixty-seven students in grades 5-8 were part of the cast and crew. The group was led by Director Cindy Hastings, Assistant Director Mary Beth Hall, Choreographer Alysse Beasley, and Arts Coordinator Benja Jackson.

The current program is the direct by-product of the hard work, dedication, passion, and collaborative support of many individuals and groups including the Board of Education, Hamilton City Council, other elected officials, parents, and community partners. This is the key that has made this program a success.

A special thanks to Andy Meadows, the Alabama Arts Alliance, and the Alabama State Council on the Arts for all your assistance.

HMS Arts is honored and excited to be invited to the Summit to present portions of *Peter Pan Jr.* to attendees.

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