

Nomination Responses to Questions

1. Power Academic and Performing Arts Complex, better known as Power APAC, is a Title I school nestled between the University Medical Center, the Veterans Administration and Belhaven University in Jackson, the urban, downtown, capitol city of Mississippi. A commitment to the arts and an arts education was made by the community and the Jackson Public School District over 30 years ago to birth the performing arts complex for students from all socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicities, and faiths. From its inception, the arts have flourished in the metropolitan capitol and the school has stood firm despite economic lulls and changes in education patterns. Thus, we can boast that arts education is not a component of the school curriculum; rather, arts education IS the curriculum at Power Academic and Performing Arts Complex. When you enter Power APAC, you immediately sense a difference in the concept of "school" through artwork, discussions between students, students and teachers, and visitors, as well as the Chopin waltz flowing from the piano keys to the sounds of toe shoes in the dance studios. Drawing pads are under the arms of students beside other students carrying in their theatre costumes and props. Students choose to audition to qualify for the 4-12th grade sequential, comprehensive arts program at Power APAC. Power APAC is the only school of its unique classification in MS. Students may audition to attend Power APAC from within the Jackson Public School District or outside district lines. Within Power APAC there is an academically gifted program for 4th & 5th graders where 85% of the students are classified as both academically gifted and arts talented. Teachers in both arts and academic instruction areas cross lines and integrate core content into the arts as well as arts into the core subject areas. In everything, Power APAC includes the arts, whether it is students performing at community events, bringing alumni to perform student motivational, instructional presentations, attending global performances at local universities or contributing to community efforts at Habitat For Humanity and the American Red Cross, to mention a few. The arts are in the forefront of the minds of the students at Power APAC. Therefore the arts are not the essential component at Power APAC but are the vital, primary component in our school because the arts are the heartbeat of our existence.

As an academic and performing arts school, Power APAC has 4 distinct arts programs: Dance, Music, Theatre Arts, and Visual Arts. These programs are instructed on an advanced placement/college level; however, within the instruction is woven the natural foundation components that support the arts disciplines. The arts programs integrate core content into their arts classes and in turn, the academic teachers are teaching core content through the arts. The 4th and 5th grade academic classes are departmentalized into math/science and reading/language arts. Because of the brain research and studies linked to arts integration, teachers are trained in arts integration and some naturally incorporate the arts into teaching the core subject areas. The arts integration strategies of instruction are developmentally appropriate as well as enhancing to student learning, assessments, performance, self-confidence and self-esteem.

All classes mentioned below are advanced classes, taught during the regular school day, which is 7:30 am – 3:30 pm, 5 days a week. 4th and 5th grade students' classes receive 60 minutes of arts instruction daily; middle school receives 120 minutes per day of arts instruction, and high school receives 90 minutes per day of arts instruction. All arts classes are taught on a rotation within the department in order for the student to be exposed to all components of that

arts discipline of instruction. This is art instruction in addition to art integration in the regular and gifted classroom settings. The table below indicates the makeup of the arts faculty and the areas taught at Power APAC.

Total Numbers of Arts Teachers in the School

Number Employed Full-time

Arts Areas of Instruction

Dance	3	Ballet, Modern, Jazz, Contemporary, Choreography, Dance History
Music	3	Piano, Music Theory, Instrumental/Strings, Vocal, Composition, Music History
Theatre	3	Dramatic Theatre, Theatre History, Technical Theatre, Performance
Visual Arts	3	Art History, Ceramics, Drawing, Sculpture, Painting, Photography, Printmaking

2. Students in the academic settings are encouraged to learn through verbal, written and interpretative methods to express themselves. They are allowed to move forward creatively through their imaginations in written and verbal expressions and through dramatization of material in content areas. Reader's theatre is a teaching strategy seen often in class rooms at Power APAC. They are also encouraged to write scripts and creatively and dramatically present interpretations in text and meaning. Students also creatively convey expressions of study through visual art and originally composed music. Students work in pairs and or small groups to develop, edit and refine skits or dramatic interpretations. They also justify the reasoning for what they are doing and predict outcomes. In the arts classroom settings students are directed and guided to express themselves. They are empowered individually and collectively. They are guided in their area to freely express themselves through music composition, play writing, costume design, sets, and visual arts portfolios and dance choreography. This is a required part of their instruction and allows them the freedom to think and develop their own innate arts talents through these learning processes. Students must be able to verify their works and also accept constructive criticism possibly re-visiting the product in editing and making changes. These learning strategies lead students to a higher level of critical thinking, evaluation, synthesizing and perfecting a definitive work. Students have the necessary tools and support to pursue the creative process at a higher education level. Students feel free and safe to make mistakes in their learning processes and environments. Re-assessing the mistakes is a vital part of their process leading into exploration and inquiry of limitless possibilities. They come to

understand that mistakes are not a stumbling block but rather a stepping-stone to the mastery of their talents. One of our visual art students created the design for our school's T-Shirt that is worn by every student on Fridays

Teachers at Power APAC receive on-going professional development in the arts and arts integration. The Mississippi Alliance for Education has provided training in arts integration; Dr. Charlotte Tabereaux has provided training in drama in the regular education classroom, and teaching artists Althea Jerome and Kathryn Lewis have provided arts integration training focusing on literature and readers theatre. Belhaven University Dance Chair, Cynthia Newland, shared on arts integration in the classroom from dance and creative movement perspective. Limuel Eubanks, Director of Arts and Media, Mississippi Department of Education is scheduled to conduct a training, entitled, "Creating Reflection Portfolios through Art" in May. Emile Wilson, former APAC student, now actor, artist, film director, is scheduled to conduct a theatrical workshop with students and teachers in May. A follow-up with Althea Jerome and Kathryn Lewis is scheduled for May on "Putting Steam in Stem". Teachers continue to receive on-going "cutting edge" professional development in all areas of the education realm in order to provide an education of excellence in academics and the arts. All teachers at Power APAC have advanced degrees, with 6 of 24 teachers having National Board for Professional Teaching Certification and 2 additional teachers in the process of obtaining national board certification. Classroom teachers integrate the arts into their core teaching on a daily basis. Music and movement, visual art, musical instruments, reader's theatre and dramatic interpretation are all incorporated throughout every week's lessons.

3. Power APAC encourages parents to be active in the school setting in many ways. Because of the "open door" relationship the school has with the parents, parents are in the building everyday for many activities and involvement that the parents initiate, support, or collaborate on with the teachers and administration. Some of the hands-on, creative art-based activities that involve parents are as follows:

- S.H.O.P. (Students Helping Others Planet-Wide) day in our Open Doors (academically gifted classes). This student/parent/teacher activity is a research project of needs world-wide and how the students can create businesses and/or products that can impact helping a country, by creating products or uses of materials in the country selected. Students utilize the arts in drawing their designs, posters for advertisements, computer technology, and music to support their efforts. The district supports a night event for all schools to showcase their creative innovations for family and the general public, where students share through explanation, music, dance, and skits about their product.
- Mini Society (academically gifted classes). Students research and learn about the history of other cultures around the world. Various guests of diversity (some of whom are parents) are also invited into the classroom to share their cultures including food, dance, music, language, art, money values, beliefs, customs and ways of life. From their research and guest speakers, students create a culture, currency, and are preferably called a mini society. A day is set for all mini societies to locate on the patios of the school where the parents, community, and stakeholders walk through and learn about the student's society and their culture. Parents work hand-in-hand with students on this

project to create the in-depth study and informative, educational society for the culminating event.

- Reading fair projects – Parents and students work together on these projects as a learning experience for both parents and students. Many materials are provided at the school and parents and students work together as they are guided by a teacher in the research, guidelines, and discussion of creating an exemplary project.
- Science fair projects- Parents and students work together on these projects as a learning experience for both parents and students. Many materials are provided at the school and parents and students work together as they are guided by a teacher in the research, guidelines, and discussion of creating an exemplary project.
- Stage, set design, and construction in Theatre Arts class for performances – In Tech class in the Theatre Arts department, students are taught stage, set design and construction of sets. Parents, not only donate materials, but also actively engage with their student in the creating, planning, and development of set designs and construction of stage sets.
- Costume design in Theatre Arts and in the Wax Museum presented by the Open Doors classes – Costume design is a favorite at Power APAC. Students and parents love to create costumes, select fabrics, sew, model, and start again, if necessary to get that best look for the part in the play. For the Wax Museum, students portrayed African American celebrities, presidents, writers, songwriters, and singers, to mention a few. The students and parents created costumes that fit the role of their character and to match the speech or song, as well as the voice tone and accent.
- Power APAC parents who are authors, illustrators, and musicians, to mention a few, conduct seminars for students on a regular basis. In our music classes, parents shared with the student's information on music literature, and also gave a presentation on African instruments (in authentic costume). Students then had the opportunity to play the drums and experience a different avenue of music. In dance class, as part of the healthy body, skeletal unit, a parent visited the class on numerous occasions and discussed the importance of regular exercise and good eating habits. From this visit, the dance class created the "walking for healthy me" club, invited and involved other moms and walk on a regular basis every week. Pedometers were donated by the moms to track miles but also to support another means for the students to strengthen math skills through calculating their own miles and steps. In visual arts, many of the parents are artists themselves and have shared not only within the art classes, but also with the entire student body. Some of these opportunities included workshops in photography and printmaking; portrait and drawing demonstrations, and architectural design. All of these workshops were interactive and motivated much creativity and combined efforts of outcomes. One parent, a children's book author and illustrator, led the school in the "how-to's" of writing a book, illustrating, and creating a story that is from within you and will capture a readers heart. Power APAC has a supportive PTO and active A-Cubed organization. They work separately, but unite when the opportunities arise. Both are at school to provide support

through materials, hands-on projects and time support in efforts to ensure students are successful. They fundraise, clean, organize and communicate information.

4. Each of the arts areas at Power APAC incorporates a rich diversity of cultures through the history and curriculums. Guests are invited in to supplement the curriculum and relate a more realistic viewpoint of culture to the students. In and through these discussions, the students are able to also work alongside the guest in their art form and experience the true cultural value. Students go on field trips to sites of cultural historical value. The music department, while studying jazz, traveled to Memphis, to sites of the jazz world, and on their return home visited Delta State University where they learned how and recorded jazz music in a college recording studio. The dance department in combination with "The Goya Exhibit" with the Mississippi Museum of Art sponsored the Flamingo Dancers who performed at APAC, shared their culture, and held small group discussions and dance sessions with students. One of our teachers, from India, shared about her culture and taught the students traditional dances of India. One of our former students taught a traditional Polynesian dance using poles to the students and also held informative sessions with the students. All elementary students are exposed to full units on Native American culture, dance and sign language. Dance teachers and regular classroom teachers collaborate in their efforts to create tribes and include drums, rain sticks, costumes, music and dance, culminating in a mock tribal Pow Wow setting. Music students studied Russia, their composers and music, presented their music and also hosted international pianist from Russia, Ireland, and Israel for a workshop session. The theatre and music departments collaborated on a study of Greece. Students researched very early tunes, created a Greek style theatre, wrote a play and presented play with music and costumes for the general public and the student body. At Power APAC opportunities to learn about culture are taught interrelated between the arts departments and regular classrooms. It is what we term, "cross arts integration". Students experience the history, culture, dance, art, music, and drama, through instruction of the academics and arts. It's a win-win for the student everyday!

Students are afforded the opportunities to attend cultural arts events at different times throughout the year. Included in these opportunities was a "Freedom Train" presentation, personal performance from Charles Winston, jazz pianist and composer. Teachers are constantly involved in multi-cultural professional development.

5. The Power APAC program provides arts education to the community in numerous ways. First, all of our performances are open to the public and publicized through every avenue available in the greater Jackson metro area. We take many of our performances to other schools (at our own expense) to share the arts or a particular academic concept with the students there. We have adopted one of our sister schools in the district so that we can reach out and share the arts with the students and faculty. We perform at children's hospitals, the veteran's hospital, and residential assisted living homes and to faith-based groups. We provide community connections that offer the students diverse experiences through partnering with the Eudora Welty House, where student work is displayed and where our students sit in the yard of her home and paint and draw. Our students display artwork and perform at the Jackson Medgar Evers international airport on a regular basis. Students perform with the Mississippi Youth Orchestra, Mississippi Symphony, The New Stage

Theatre, The Mississippi Boys Choir, The Mississippi Honor Choir, Ballet Mississippi, All-City Strings, All-City Orchestra, and All-City Chorus, to mention a few. Diverse experiences occur at the school, in other schools, in community organizations, and at faith-based organizations. Our adopters of 17 years, Watkins Ludlam Winter & Stennis hosted a Visual Arts exhibit/contest at their law firm offices this past December. Student artwork was displayed and awards were given at a reception, during which time our strings students entertained with musical selections. Former Governor William Winter spoke and presented the awards to the students. The adopters also sponsor a similar art show in the spring. Power APAC students recently performed for the Gifted Students Awareness Day at the Capitol, the retirement of the State Superintendent of Education, the Governor's Lighting of the Christmas Tree, the opening of the Mississippi Children's Museum, the Mississippi Department of Education's Holiday Breakfast, and the State PTA Winners Award Ceremony. Power APAC students give of their time and talents in other ways. Students collected over 2,000 cans of food for the local Genesis Food Bank and also gave financially to Habitat for Humanity, Make a Wish Foundation, and the American Red Cross and Cancer Society. Students will soon begin their work on a second Habitat for Humanity House, where teachers, students, adopters, and community will join together in a positive experience to give back to our community. Upon completion, students donate artwork to decorate the walls of the new house. Students create postcards with creative phrases to send to soldiers overseas by invitation of the American Red Cross. The American Red Cross also asked Power APAC students to design and create bookmarks to promote their assistance to people in times of crisis. The Jackson Public School District requested that the Power APAC Theatre Department students work with the District Truancy Department in performing a play, entitled "When Children Are Out of School, We All Lose". This video was staged, performed and filmed at Power APAC and has been used in professional development across the district, in school classrooms, and currently airs on the Jackson Public School District TV Channel. Power APAC students gave of their time and efforts above and beyond to reach out to others in their schools district now and for time to come.

The Mississippi Symphony Orchestra presents a detailed, descriptive concert for students at Power APAC. The Mississippi Boys Choir, including some of our students, included Power APAC on their tour this past year, as well as Jackson State University Chorus, and the Mississippi College Honor Choir. All groups shared artistic points of their music and tour and opened the floor for a question and answer session with students. Writer, Hester Bass, shared her book, *The Secret World of Walter Anderson*, followed by a live interview by Mississippi Public Broadcasting with questions and answers with the students while being filmed to air on TV.

Dance students attend Belhaven University master dance classes during the school year on the average of 15 sessions per semester and also attend their Fall and Spring dance performances. Music students attend master classes in piano at Millsaps and Mississippi College. Music students attended the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition Gold Medal winner performance at Millsaps College in Jackson, MS. Nobu performed his winning concerto and was sponsored by Mississippi's Dr. Lester Center, Opera singer and pianist. Dance students attend the nightly performances of the International Ballet Competition held every 4 years in Jackson, MS. Power APAC Theatre students attend Jackson's New Stage Theatre often and recently saw "The Soldier's Play" by Charles Fuller. The Theatre Department also participates in the Mississippi Theatre Association Festival in

Oxford, MS, and the "Freedom Train" at the Thalia Mara Hall. Students also take many virtual field trips within the classrooms at school.

Students exhibit artwork at the Eudora Welty Home and were asked to be present to celebrate her 100th birthday and cut the cake in celebration. One of our 7th grade visual art students has been selected by an organization reviewing Scholastics winners, to sponsor him to receive the Jack Kemp Scholarship, which would provide him and education and art studies from now through college. Power APAC collaborates with Mississippi School of the Arts in professional development events, such as the dance department attending a master class with guest artist, Patricia A. McConnell. We also highlight former students of APAC in our performances throughout the year. Strings students recently performed holiday music for the tri-area Delta Kappa Gamma Society International meeting. The High School performed selections from "Hairspray" for the Hinds County Junior Miss Competition. One of our male high school vocal students was recently accepted to sing with the Mississippi Opera-a very rare opportunity for a 10th grader. Students participated in the PTA Reflections competition in all areas of the arts, winning state level and national awards.

All of our teachers are professional performers in their own arts area and continue to make contributions to the arts in the community through performances, lectures, and holding seminars throughout the state. Just recently the principal and one of the visual art teachers presented an arts integration workshop for a reading class of pre-service teachers at Jackson State university. Power APAC also provides opportunity for five local universities to send student teachers to observe teaching and intern in our arts and academic programs. High school students from around a 75 mile radius request to conduct their senior projects at Power APAC as well as gain community service hours here. Power APAC is active in community support and involvement with the Belhaven neighborhood Arts Fling, Jackson Medical Mall and local, Christmas Art Competitions.

Power APAC students have been scheduled to perform at the Mississippi Alliance for Arts Education Annual Forum in April, the Mississippi Gifted and Talented Association conference in September, Pepsi Pops, A+ Arts Night (a fundraiser event to support the arts in Mississippi), to mention a few. Power APAC students are rewarded when they see others enjoy their art form as much as they do themselves.

6. For more than 3 decades, the Jackson Public School District has supported and maintained local funding for Power APAC, even during challenging financial times. The Power APAC program is considered one of the most innovative and served as a model for the Mississippi School for the Arts, a residential program for grades 11-12, which opened in Brookhaven, Mississippi in 2003. Jackson Public School District serves more than 30,000 children in the poorest state in the nation where one out of five individuals lives in poverty and the median income is \$33, 9991. Jackson Public School District operates 39 elementary schools, 12 middle schools, and 8 high schools with over 26,000 students receiving free or reduced lunch. Power APAC enrollment includes:

- 4th Grade – 73 students
- 5th Grade- 94 students
- 6th – 8th Grades – 206 students
- 9th – 12th Grades – 200 students

The accountability model in Mississippi ranks the highest performing schools as STAR schools. Power APAC has achieved STAR school status for the 2008-2009 school year and the 2009-2010 school year. Prior to that, Power APAC achieved the highest accountability rating, known as Level 5, for the 2002-2003, 2003-2004, and 2004-2005 school years. Other relevant information is as follows:

2009	2010
2 nd highest QDI for all schools in MS	10 th highest QDI for all schools in MS
Highest QDI for all elementary schools in MS	2 nd highest QDI for all elementary schools in MS
Highest QDI in our district	Highest QDI in our district

Over the past 30 years, Power APAC has provided arts instruction to more than 16,000 students and received state and national awards, including:

- 2011 Program of Research and Evaluation of Public Schools (PREPS) "Governor's Partnership Award"
- 2010 Mississippi Alliance for Arts Education School of Excellence in Arts Education Award
- 2010 Mississippi Alliance for Arts Education Lifetime Achievement Award in Arts Education Award – Sandra Polanski, Music Chair, APAC
- 2003 U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon School Award
- 2001, 2002, 2003, 2008, 2009 Program of Research and Evaluation of Public Schools (PREPS) "Value Added Awards"
- 1993 International Network of Performing & Visual Arts Model School Award
- 1988 Mississippi Governor's Award in the Arts

Power Academic and Performing Arts Complex is a magnet school located in Jackson, Mississippi. It began as a collaborative effort in 1981 when Jackson Public Schools received one of 24 performing arts grants issued from the federal Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA), allocating over \$1.2 million over a three-year period. Doors opened to students in January 1982 with Senator Thad Cochran and Mississippi author Eudora Welty included in the historic opening ceremony.

Over 16,000 students have been accepted to Power APAC through academic assessment and performing arts auditions. Students in grades 4-12 are provided an ~~academically challenging curriculum and arts instruction in dance, music, theatre arts,~~ and visual arts. Over 84% of the students are academically gifted as well as arts talented.

Visitors to Power APAC become fully awakened as every sensory receptor is stimulated by the vibrant environment rich with deep, individual interpretations through all visual, theatrical, dance and musical arts. The visitor is immediately transformed with a longing to see what waits at every corner and through open doors. As one parent of students at Power APAC has expressed, "Because of the expert training received at Power APAC, my children are constantly making connections between the arts and their traditional academic subjects. The best way for me to express to you what the arts do for my children and their education is that the arts completely feed their spirits."

Students cherish moments to share their art forms with others. Is this so unusual; no, because their teachers are active performers in their art areas, as well as the academic teachers being teacher trainers, presenters, and lecturers. Power APAC is a true cycle of teaching and continual learning experiences. Power APAC, a STAR School of Excellence continues to empower students to climb from the valley of ordinary to the mountaintops of limitless possibilities through their unique talents.