



## PEEKSKILL CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dr. Cassandra Hyacinthe  
Principal

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Dear PHS Parents/Guardians:

**Our school year is successfully underway. During the month of October, many exciting activities and events have occurred at Peekskill High School. Highlights include:**

### **The Elton Brand Academy:**

Held from Monday through Friday from 3:00-6:00 PM, the Elton Brand Academy has been up and running since September 22, 2014. The Academy provides academic tutoring for all Peekskill High School students in English, mathematics, science, and social studies. Recreational activities such as cooking, chess, board games, belly dancing, and art are also offered. Over 100 students have registered for the program. Registration is continuous and students who are interested should obtain enrollment forms in the main office. Ms. Selma Dias, Freshman Academy school counselor is the program coordinator.

### **PSAT Day—October 15, 2014**

The PSAT Examination was administered to 319 tenth and eleventh graders (80 % participation rate). Seniors participated in three workshops:

- Naviance College Research/Application Process—PHS school counselors
- Writing the College Essay—Ms. Jodi Fernandez
- Understanding FAFSA Application

### **Superintendent's Symposium—October 15, 2014**

Under the guidance of Ms. Miriam Skrivaneck, PHS Students hosted the Superintendent's Symposium. The selected topic of discussion was *The Guardian Charter School* application. Ms. Audrey Warren, charter school advocate, was invited and had confirmed, but subsequently canceled at the last minute. Information from opposing perspectives was presented by Dr. Larry Licopoli, PCSD Superintendent of Schools and PHS senior Gregory Clark who represented the charter school. Johnna Hayward served as moderator.

### **School Spirit Week/Pep Rally—October 14-17, 2014**

School spirit was high as students from each class (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior) decorated the school hallways with creative displays based on popular animation and cartoon characters: *Sesame Street*, *The Avengers*, *Super Mario Brothers* & *The Magic School Bus*, and *Spiderman/Batman* respectively. Students displayed clothing related to each day's theme: mix/match, favorite team, class of . . . , and school colors. On Friday, a rousing pep rally culminated the week's activities. A special tribute was dedicated to Mr. Lenroy Stevens, PHS' beloved school counselor. Students competed in class song and dance performances.

### **Homecoming Game Day/Club Recruitment Fair—October 18, 2014**

The Varsity Boys' Football team took on Gorton High School. Despite the defeat, the players and families filled Depew Park to cheer on our team. Club tables were set up to share information and recruit new members. Community-based organizations also participated.

### **Fall College Fair—October 23, 2014**

Ms. Goordineer, PHS College Center coordinator, organized the annual fall college fair. Fifty-six college representatives and a NY State Trooper recruiter were invited. Seniors and juniors gathered information and learned about the college programs.

### **Emergency Response Live Drill—October 23, 2014**

Surprise! Surprise! Faculty, staff, students, and college reps participated in an unannounced lockdown drill that took place at PHS on the morning of Thursday, October 23, 2014. Led by District safety team members, local Peekskill police, emergency operations members, and BOCES safety team coordinators, everyone successfully responded to the live scenario to move into secure areas until the entire school was searched and cleared by first responder teams.

### **Parents' Club Meeting—October 27, 2014**

Despite the low turnout, a lively group of freshman parents attended the first Parents' Club meeting. Mrs. Griselda Reyes, assistant principal who also supervises the Freshman Academy spoke about supporting ninth graders' first year of high school. Mrs. Selma Stewart-Dias, Freshman Academy school counselor shared information about the Elton Brand Academy. Ms. Robin Hayward, Parent's Club advisor spoke and encouraged parents to get involved and share their talents and advocacy on behalf of PHS students and school community. Principal Hyacinthe reported on PHS and addressed parent questions. Feedback and discussion was positive. Four parents offered to support our goal of increasing parental involvement. The next meeting is scheduled for November 24, 2014 at 6:30 PM in the PHS cafeteria. All are encouraged to attend and to bring along other friends and parents.

### **Teacher Professional Development**

As part of the District's Literacy Initiative to improve students' reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing skills, secondary teachers have taken part in several professional learning workshops. Education consultants have provided training on the ***Danielson Framework for Teaching*** rubric, ***UCLA Walkthrough*** protocol, and ***McRel Teaching Reading in the Content Areas*** (TRICA). Teachers and staff are learning new instructional strategies, working collaboratively to align curriculum to the *Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)*, and updating their teaching practices.

As the first marking period ends on November 7, 2014, I encourage parents and guardians to reinforce the importance of students arriving to school every day on time, prepared, and ready to put forth 100% effort and attention to schoolwork. Remember to access the *Parent Portal* on the District website to stay current with your child's progress. If you have not yet registered for *Parent Portal*, you may come into the main office complete the form (an official I.D. will be required). Please support our code of conduct and remind our young adults to be kind, well behaved, and respectful toward their peers and adults.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Cassandra Hyacinthe  
Principal