

Superintendent's Communication Brief: February 11-15, 2019

This week, a group of Peekskill CSD representatives traveled to Albany to meet with elected officials and advocate for fair funding for Peekskill Schools. At the meetings, district advocates highlighted PCSD's successes and explained the challenges Peekskill faces due to an inadequate amount of NYS Foundation Aid. Peekskill City School is owed more than \$15 million from New York State for the 2019-20 school year? That amount increases to a cumulative \$73 million owed since 2007. You can learn more about the District's advocacy efforts, and find a pre-composed letter to send to our elected officials [here](#). Please call / write to the Governor to support our request. The day's reps included: Superintendent Dr. Mauricio, Assistant Superintendent of Business Ms. Robin Zimmerman, Board of Education President Mr. Michael Simpkins and Vice President Mrs. Maria Pereira, Board Trustee Branwen MacDonald, Peekskill Education Foundation Vice President Mrs. Adriana Frega, PTO Advocacy Co-Chair Margery Rossi and PHS student, Luke Torres-Rossi.



Dr. Mauricio and Assistant Superintendent Callahan Visited BASF Corporation this week to meet with leadership and discuss increased opportunities for our high school students. BASF Corp. is the largest affiliate of BASF SE, and is the second largest producer and marketer of chemicals and related products in North America. BASF has been a great partner to our District in the past by inviting our students to participate in their, "Who Wants to be a Chemist" Challenge, and we look forward to the possibility of future collaborations with the company.



This week, District Technology Manager Mrs. Janice Reid, PHS Principal Rodney Arthur, PHS Assistant Principal Dr. Margie Daniels, PHS Robotics teacher Mr. Carlo Vidrini and PCSD Communications Specialist Ms. Laura Belfiore met with Hat Factory Owner Ben Green, Jeff Cobelli of Good For You Productions and Actor/Producer J.D. Lawrence to discuss the upcoming city-wide [Art Industry Media](#) (AIM) event, which will feature a showcase of our PHS Robotics program from 2-4 p.m. on April 13 at the high school. Our students will collaborate with AIM to create a promotional video for the event by filming interviews of our robotics students and footage of our robotics curriculum. While at the high school, Mr. Green, Mr. Cobelli and Mr. Lawrence toured the building to look at PHS' media technology and discussed possibilities for future media related collaborations.



Congratulations to our Board President Mr. Michael Simpkins who received a Proclamation from the City of Peekskill this week in honor of Black History Month! Each February, Peekskill honors outstanding African American members of the community for their achievements, civic contributions, and general good deeds that have favorably impacted local citizens. Mr. Simpkins was nominated for the recognition by Peekskill Superintendent Dr. David Mauricio. Former graduate Elton Brand was also recognized.

We thank you for all you do for our community and schools, Mr. Simpkins!



Mrs. Carmen Vargas and her team at Uriah Hill hosted a Black History Month Celebration at the elementary school this week. The event featured a stunning song by special guest Ja'Quon Welch, inspirational words from Peekskill Mayor Rainey, and a special presentation from the NAACP's Michael Stephenson. Stephenson came accompanied by props such as an astronaut helmet and scientist goggles, which he handed out to students with the message that they can grow up to be whatever they'd like. Mrs. Vargas' special dance troupe and Mr. McClellan's class also performed, and Ms. Council's class recited poems for guests.



Our Core Planning Team reconvened this week to continue the discussion of our District's mission and goals, and the work surrounding our initiatives. The team consists of PCSD administrators, a Board member, staff, parents, students, community members, city representatives and clergy. At the meeting, Superintendent Mauricio, Dr. Joseph Mosey, Dr. Mary Keenan Foster, Mr. Dan Callahan, Mrs. Janice Reid, Mrs. Ellen Gerace and Mrs. Maria Olivier-Flores updated the team on District accomplishments so far this year, and they received helpful input on these efforts. The team was impressed by the District's work and supported our focus on children and excellence. Dr. Larry Licopoli facilitated the meeting.



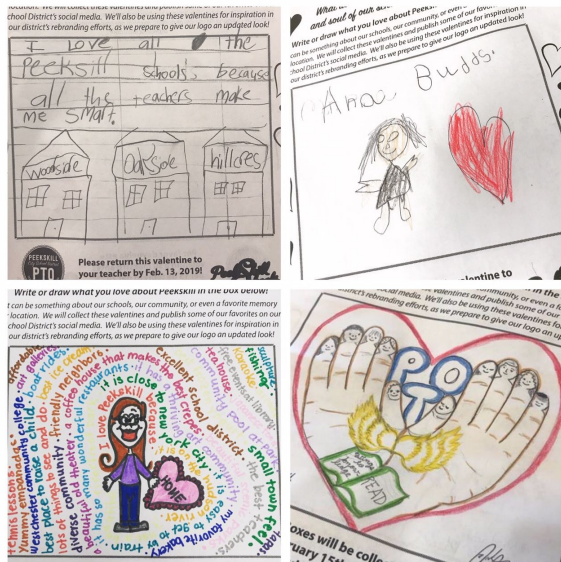
The Hudson Valley Regional Basics Networking Convening took place Uriah Hill Elementary this week. Members of Basics communities, including Lakeland, Tarrytown, Yonkers and Ossining joined Peekskill Basics partners to discuss their purpose and goals.



We were excited to have NYS Regent and former Peekskill CSD Superintendent Judith Johnson back in our district for the Hudson Valley Regional Basics Networking meeting. While visiting, Regent Johnson took the time to meet with our teachers and students. She saw student art decorating the walls and met a PHS alumni turned teacher - Mr. McClellan, who fondly remembered her tenure as Superintendent while he was a student at Peekskill schools. Regent Johnson also spoke to high school students about their feelings regarding Regents Exams, and witnessed our Pre-K students creating a mural for our local fire department.



As part of the District's "Love Letters to Peekskill" campaign, students and community members submitted hundreds of valentines expressing the things they love about Peekskill and our schools this week. [You can see many of these valentines](#) posted on our District's social media accounts just by searching the campaign's hashtags: #IheartPCSD and #IheartPeekskill. To add to the love this Valentine's Day, Woodside Principal Mrs. Rebecca Aviles-Rodriguez gathered heartfelt testimonials from students, staff and parents who shared what they love about Woodside. [Watch a video clip here!](#)



Enjoy your weekend!

Dr. David Mauricio, Superintendent of Schools