

Superintendent's Communication Brief: December 3-9, 2018

Last week was so busy at Peekskill Schools that the excitement rolled right into the weekend!

Dr. Mauricio and Assistant Superintendent Mr. Callahan recently ventured to Albany for a meeting with the State Education Commissioner and business leaders. At the meeting, they learned more about the P-Tech grant opportunity, which will be released soon. The district will apply for the grant, which provides the opportunity to create STEAM related college and career pathways at the high school. Westchester Community College and local business will partner with us in the grant.

As part of his weekly school supports visits, Dr. Mauricio met with Uriah Hill's Early Childhood Director Mrs. Vargas. The two walked the building while discussing educational programs and visiting classrooms. During the month of December, Dr. Mauricio will be visiting each building leader to hold a mid-year reflective dialogue.



This week, Dr. Mauricio also met with Assistant Superintendents Mr. Callahan and Dr. Foster, as well as building leaders, to debrief about the District's K-12 Insights Parent/Student/Teacher Survey from the 2017-2018 school year. This data will help guide the District's Comprehensive Transformational Improvement Plan (DCIP).

Dr. Mauricio joined the Peekskill Board of Education in honoring PHS students Samantha Saca and Ebany Tapia, who were selected to participate in the 2018-2019 Puerto Rican Hispanic Youth Leadership Institute. Ms. Tapia was unable to attend the event, but Ms. Saca was there

to accept her certificate of recognition and speak about the opportunities Peekskill High School has afforded her. [Click here to see what she had to say.](#)



Also at the meeting, Principal Rebecca Aviles-Rodriguez presented an overview of Woodside Elementary School, including leadership, the use of data to drive instruction, new Walk-To literacy initiatives and family/parent engagement. Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services Dr. Mosey also presented a proposal for the District's diversity recruitment plan. This plan will guide our efforts this year and moving forward. Both presentations were well received and highlight the excellent work of our dedicated staff.

This week, Dr. Mauricio joined a My Brother's Keeper meeting led by Assistant Superintendent Mr. Callahan. The meeting welcomed District Leadership and the following MBK partners:

West Artope of Be First Boxing

Martin McDonald of Black Diamonds (NAACP)

Ridvan Foxhall of New Era Creative Space

Wilfredo Moral of Arts10566

Tuesday McDonald and Darryl Francis of Peekskill Youth Bureau

At the MBK meeting, the group discussed continued collaborations and ideas for how to improve the program. Dr. Mauricio noted that the City and District will have accepted the National/NYS My Brother's Keeper Challenge as of Saturday, December 8.



Dr. Mauricio presented at the Hudson Valley Chamber of Commerce's Annual Breakfast. Dr. Mauricio spoke about graduation data, our Saturday Academy, the My Brother's Keeper initiative and our District's top priorities. Arts10566 students played a selection of holiday songs and the City Singers sang for the attendees.



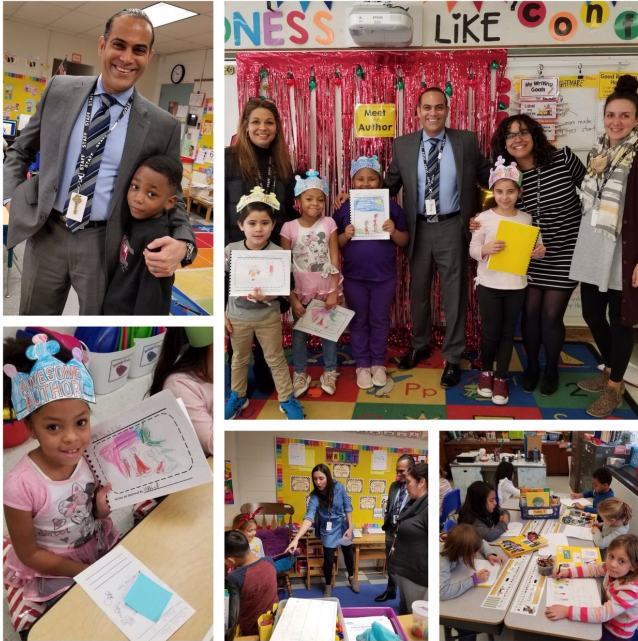
After the Chamber presentation, Dr. Mauricio visited Peekskill Middle School as part of his weekly school supports visit. While at the building, he met with Principal Lewis to walk the

building, discuss educational programs and visit classrooms. During the month of December, Dr. Mauricio will be visiting each building leader to hold a mid-year reflective dialog.

While at Peekskill Middle school, Dr. Mauricio witnessed one of our teachers engaging his students, as well as students involved in dialog about their assignments. Dr. Mauricio also had the opportunity to meet a particularly dapper Peekskill Middle School student during his visit. The student was formally dressed for his school day. When asked why he was wearing a blazer, the young man responded, "I just like to dress up when I come to school."



Dr. Mauricio was invited to visit Woodside Elementary by the School Leadership Team. They showcased their Dual Language and Special Education programs, student authors, the Walk-To Model and other great initiatives taking place in their building.



Dr. Mauricio visited Hillcrest Elementary to join their school in greeting New York State's Teacher of the Year Mr. Christopher Albrecht. Mr. Albrecht was greeted by the Hillcrest chorus upon his arrival. Students sang, "26 Stars," a moving song composed by the school's Assistant Principal Mrs. Crystal Hernandez in memory of those that were lost at Sandy Hook. The video of this moving moment has been viewed more than 1.2K times on the District's Facebook page since it was posted on Friday. [Watch it here.](#)



Two groups from Peekskill City School District presented at the BOCES Regional Social Emotional Learning Conference. A team of staff also attended the conference to participate in various workshops and will take back information and new ideas.



On Saturday, the Peekskill City School District kicked off their Saturday Academy program by welcoming City of Peekskill Mayor Andre Rainey, who presented a Proclamation noting the City and School District's acceptance of the National/NYS My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Community Challenge. Numerous members of the community came out to celebrate the occasion, including City Council members, Board of Education trustees, District administration and staff, and other members of the Peekskill school community. If you missed the event, you can [watch our archived live stream of the excitement here](#). See more photos from the Proclamation presentation [here](#).



After the Proclamation was presented, PCSD's third Saturday Academy session for the 2018-2019 school year began. The day welcomed approximately 500 guests and multiple community partners. We offered wellness workshops such as yoga, crafts and activities for children and more! Santa also joined us for the fun with free toys for children generously donated from various organizations, as well as over 100 new children's books donated by the Peekskill Police Department. [See more photos from the event here.](#)



On Saturday evening, Assistant Principal Dr. Daniels hosted MBK mentors and mentees for a Westchester Knicks game at the White Plains County Center. Those in attendance had a great time while watching the game.



To conclude the week, Dr. Mauricio joined Board President Simpkins and Trustee Jenkins and family, as well as PTO members and others from our community at the Peekskill Education Foundation's Pottery event at the Hat Factory. For more information on PEF and future events, [please visit their website.](#)



Enjoy your week!

Dr. David Mauricio, Superintendent of Schools