

Superintendent's Communication Brief: January 11, 2020

The Special Education Department November/December newsletter is out now! [Read it here.](#)

PCSD Special Services

November/December 2019 Highlights

This week, Board Trustee Branwen MacDonald and Dr. Mauricio met with the Peekskill PTO executive committee. At the meeting, the group discussed a summary of parent engagement efforts, successful enrichment initiatives, improving the Class Parent Program and greater collaboration with schools.



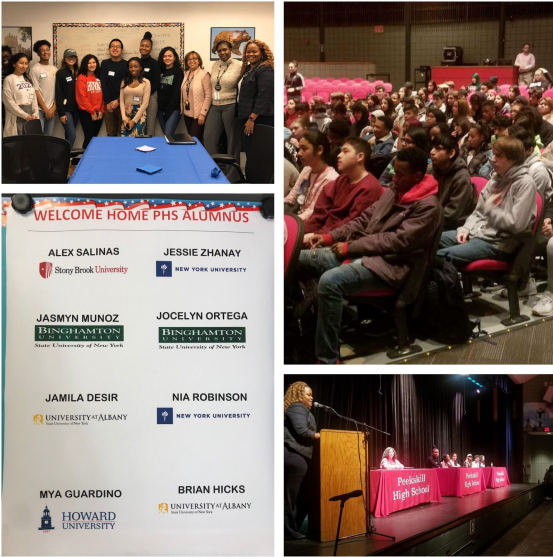
This week, Director of STEM Dr. Anchala Sobrin hosted members of the Ten County Math Educators Association (TCMEA) Conference planning committee at Peekskill Middle School. Assistant Superintendent Mr. Dan Callahan, Director of Facilities Mr. Camine Crisi, Peekskill Middle School Principal Mr. Jamal Lewis and PCSD Communications Specialist Ms. Laura Belfiore also attended the planning meeting as Peekskill CSD prepares to host the TCMEA conference at PKMS on March 21. The group toured the middle school building to discuss the logistics of the event.



Peekskill High School welcomed back several alumni to participate in a college roundtable discussion with current PHS juniors. At the event, students had the opportunity to hear from recent Peekskill High School graduates who spoke about the college acceptance process. Our alumni gave detailed tips on how to make a successful transition from high school to college. Thank you to our guest panel:

- Jamila Desir - SUNY Albany
- Brian Hicks - SUNY Albany
- Mya Guardino - Howard University
- Jasmyn Munoz - SUNY Binghamton
- Jocelyn Ortega - SUNY Binghamton
- Nia Robinson - New York University
- Alex Salinas - Stony Brook University
- Jessie Zhanay - New York University

As part of our #PeekskillPride campaign, we highlight and recognize students, staff and community members for the great accomplishments in our District. We are now expanding our efforts to recognize our alumni as well, as they serve as living examples of our successful outcomes. Are you, or do you know, a Peekskill alumni who would like to be highlighted by our District? If so, [click here for our alumni "Where Are They Now" form](#). We will be showcasing what our former students are up to in upcoming newsletters, social media posts and more!



This week, the Peekskill Youth Bureau hosted a Call to Action kick-off meeting for local youth-serving organizations. The purpose of the event was to conduct a community needs assessment of programs for the children of Peekskill, while networking and sharing information. The evening was facilitated by Peekskill Youth Bureau Executive Director Mrs. Tuesday McDonald and PCSD Director of Special Services Mrs. Ellen Gerace. Mrs. Gerace is also a new member of the Youth Bureau Board. PCSD attendees at the event included Peekskill High School Principal Mr. Rodney Arthur, PHS Assistant Principal Dr. Margie Daniels, Parent, Family and Community Liaison Mrs. Maria Olivier Flores and Coordinator of Special Services Ms. Sadika Clarke. Thank you to everyone who helped make this evening a great success! We look forward to our continued collaborations.



Each month, we will be honoring students who embrace our monthly Commitment to Character theme. For December, we focused on “Community.” This week, our Commitment to Character honorees for December were recognized at a Peekskill Board of Education meeting. These students went above and beyond to embrace the theme of community. To watch a short video about what community means to us here at Peekskill Schools, [please click here](#).



As part of his weekly School Supports visits, this week Dr. Mauricio visited Peekskill High School. During the visit, Dr. Mauricio and District administrators met with Peekskill High School Principal Mr. Rodney Arthur and Assistant Principal Ms. Naima Smith Moore to conduct a mid-year review of graduation data. The high school team has created a “graduation tracker” to help identify the status of each student and next steps. This is a work-in-progress and we look forward to improving our data-driven efforts. Our longitudinal data shows continued growth in graduation rates. Great work PHS!



This week, Dr. Mauricio joined 20 students from Peekskill Middle School and Peekskill High School who were invited to represent the Hudson Valley Region at Governor Cuomo's State of the State Address at the Capitol Building in Albany. While there, students attended a State University of New York (SUNY) information session where they heard from recent SUNY graduates. Our students participated in a game show during the informational session, and we had three Peekskill students win SUNY scarves. After the Governor's speech, our students received a private tour of the Capitol Building where they had the opportunity to visit the Senate and Assembly rooms where all meetings and voting takes place. The tour included information about the building's history and architecture as well. Students also met local elected officials Senator Peter Harckham and Assemblywoman Sandy Galef. We thank Governor Cuomo's office for the invitation and opportunity for our students to partake in such an enriching experience. Reminder: It is the time of year when New York State and school districts are making budget decisions. Visit our District's [advocacy webpage](#) to learn more on how you can help support Peekskill students.



The Peekskill City School District is excited to announce that we have been selected to receive a three year award totaling \$1.56 million from New York State to fund an Empire State After-School Program at Peekskill Middle School. The Empire State After-School Program was initiated by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to provide funding for school districts to establish or expand quality after-school programs. Stay tuned for more information on an afterschool program for students in Grades 6-8. Thank you to Assistant Superintendent Mr. Dan Callahan for writing the grant.



EMPIRE STATE **AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM**

Explore new opportunities! Develop your talents! Grow with us!

In recognition of National Mentoring Month, the New York State My Brother's Keeper program highlighted our Peekskill MBK Chapter by posting about our middle school's holiday MBK mentor breakfast. Since that breakfast, our PKMS and PHS MBK students have had several opportunities to attend enriching events with their mentors, including a student conference in White Plains and Governor Cuomo's State of the State Address in Albany. Students and their mentors are planning college tours in the spring. We thank all of our Peekskill mentors who give their time to support our students.



New York State MBK @NYSMBK · 13m

This holiday season, @PeekskillMBK students and their mentors had a special breakfast together. The breakfast was prepared by the mentors, and the event celebrated students' success.

[#MentoringMonth](#) [#NYSMBK](#) [@EdTrustNY](#)
[@NYSEDNews](#)



Dr. Mauricio, Assistant Superintendent Mr. Dan Callahan, Coordinator of Student Support Services Ms. Sadkia Clarke, Director of Multilingual Learners Ms. Madeline Sanchez, PHS Principal Mr. Rodney Arthur and PHS School Psychologist Ms. Shenea Brown met with leadership from the Girls Inc. organization to discuss planning and programming for the school

year. Girls Inc. focuses on the development of the whole girl by encouraging long-lasting mentoring relationships and establishing a pro-girl environment. They use research-based programming to equip girls to navigate gender, economic, and social barriers so young ladies grow up healthy, educated, and independent. The team set out an aggressive action plan which will enrich the lives of our students. The plan will be implemented over the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.



Congratulations to Peekskill High School's Madeline Cairl, who was selected out of hundreds of entries as the first place winner of the 2019 American Freedom Essay Contest in the "High School" category. Miss Cairl is enrolled in Mrs. Zorielle Rodriguez-Alcazar's Advanced Placement Government class and is also a member of the Academic Competition Club. As an award for her achievement, Miss Cairl has won a free field trip for her entire class to visit the Constitutional Walking Tour of Philadelphia!



This week, Dr. Zoila Morell of Lehman College hosted a presentation on “Bilingualism in Prekindergarten” to our Pre-K parents. Thank you Dr. Morell and to all of our parents that came out for this informative session.



On Saturday, Peekskill High School hosted the 4th Annual FTC Robotics Tournament! The day welcomed 22 teams from the regional area. Attendees included students, parents, administrators, Peekskill Board of Education members, elected officials and more. Members of the Peekskill PTO, the Peekskill Education Foundation, the Computer Science Club and the Exchange Club were also present to show their support and/or participate in the day's activities. Special thanks to PHS Robotics teacher Mr. Carlo Vidrini and PCSD Technology Manager Mrs. Janice Reid for the countless hours spent coordinating the event. Additional thanks to Director of STEM Dr. Anchala Sobrin, Assistant Superintendent Mr. Dan Callahan and PHS Principal Mr. Rodney Arthur for their leadership and assistance. Shoutout to PKMS teacher Mr. Jon Harrison for emceeing for the day, and to our many volunteers who we could not have done this without. Finally, congratulations to our Iron Devils Robotics team for their efforts and for being a shining example of Peekskill Pride! For a video of our team's machine in action, please [click here](#). For photos from the event, [click here](#).



The Peekskill Middle School Drama Club will soon be performing, "Frozen, Jr." on the PKMS stage, but before they open the show, the cast will be treating community members to a free sneak peek at the Field Library next Saturday, January 18 at 2:30 p.m. The full show will take place on Friday, January 24 (7 p.m.) and Saturday, January 25 (3 p.m.) at the Peekskill Middle School Theater.



Many parents have asked for a Spanish class...our Lisa Roller Parent Center will now offer the class! Peekskill Schools invite you to participate in FREE conversational Spanish classes at the Parent Center. Classes begin Wednesday, January 22 and take place every Wednesday that schools are open until June 17. See the attached flyer for details on how to register. Seats are limited, so register soon.

LEARN TO SPEAK SPANISH!



*Peekskill Schools
invite you to participate in FREE Spanish classes!*

**WEDNESDAYS, JANUARY 22 - JUNE 17
5:30-7:00 PM**

**AT THE
PARENT RESOURCE CENTER
980 PEMART AVE, PEEKSKILL**

*(Please note, classes will only be held on Wednesdays
when school is in session.)*

ROLLING ENROLLMENT!
(Attend some or all classes!)

TO REGISTER AT ANY TIME:

**EMAIL: MOLIVIERFLORES@PEEKSKILLSCHOOLS.ORG
CALL: 914-739-0682 EXT. 7102**



The Peekskill Parent Resource Center will be hosting a FREE Parent Workshop on Monday, January 13. Please see the flyer below for times and registration information.



PARENTING WORKSHOP

WORKSHOP WILL COVER

- Positive Discipline ■ Understanding your child
- Bridging communication Gaps ■ Parenting for Success
- Diffusing power struggles ■ Engaging cooperation
- Reasons of behavior ■ Tips for Everyday struggles

Where: Parent Resource Center
When: January 13, 2020
Time: 9:30 - 11:00 AM or 6:00 - 7:30 PM
Cost: FREE!

Register: online at Peekskill Parent Resource Center website or Call Maria Flores at 914 739-0682 x7102

Facilitated by **Ridvan Foxhall**, OTR/L & Certified Positive Discipline Parent Educator. Ms. Foxhall is the founder and Executive Director of New Era Creative Space, an educational enrichment center dedicated to empowering children and youth to live to their highest potential. She is a mother of two children ages 20 and 17.

This flyer is being distributed by the School District as a community service to students and parents for information purposes only. This program is not affiliated with nor endorsed in any way by the School District.

Enjoy your weekend!

Dr. David Mauricio, Superintendent of Schools