



SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMUNICATION BRIEF

MARCH 16-28, 2020

This Superintendent's Brief comes to you in a slightly different tone than the typical weekly updates you have likely become used to in the past. Since our last edition, our school community has been transformed in ways we could have never imagined. In as little as two weeks, we have completely reshaped the idea of what a school system looks like. This publication normally highlights the work being done behind the scenes in our District as well as student success and upcoming events. We will continue to share these moments, granted, they will look a little different moving forward, at least for the immediate future. Regardless, we hope you will continue to enjoy these updates as we navigate through these challenging times together.

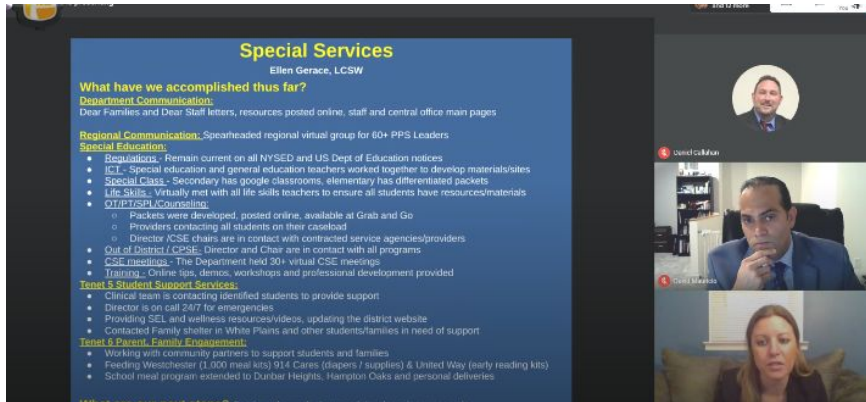
While the past two weeks have had their fair amount of challenges, they have also had some incredible successes thanks to the collaboration and dedication of our staff, families, city leaders and community partners. Our administrators, teachers and staff worked tirelessly to make sure students had Continued Learning packets, meals, bags filled with non-perishable foods, technology and support so that education could continue while students are home. We handed out approximately 2,000 instructional packets and over 14,000 meals. We look forward to everyone adjusting to our "new normal" in the next couple of weeks.



The Peekskill City School District has arranged a "Grab & Go" Breakfast/Lunch Program for students during our COVID-19 closures. Breakfast and lunch "grab and go" bags will be served Monday - Friday to any Peekskill student to bring home. We are also providing warm meals. As of March 30, our pick-up locations will be combined to include only the **Oakside and Peekskill High School sites**. Distribution will take place in these two school building parking lots. Families can visit either site from 10AM-12PM. Please note that during our scheduled Spring Recess, meals will be available Monday, April 6 thru Thursday, April 9 ONLY. There will be NO meal service on Friday, April 10. A special thanks goes out to Food Service Director Mr. Andrew Wiesman and his staff for helping to prepare and serve meals to our families! Additional thanks to Assistant Superintendent Mrs. Robin Zimmerman for her leadership in coordinating this effort, to Director of Security Mr. David Santiago and our security staff for helping to keep each location organized, and to our administrators and staff who volunteered to assist.



Our Board of Education ventured into uncharted territories this week as our District held its first remote Board meeting. We are happy to say the effort went well and we will follow this format for our future meetings while buildings remain closed. At the Board meeting, district administrators and staff presented on our work over the last two weeks. If you missed the meeting's live stream on our website, you can [watch the recorded video here](#). Special thanks to Technology Manager Mrs. Janice Reid and to Cable TV Director Mr. Doug Brown for helping to set up this platform.



In an effort to keep Peekskill “Together in Spirit,” this week the district teamed up with the Peekskill Parent Teacher Organization to implement our first ever Virtual Spirit Week! To see how our community embraced our daily themes, search our social media pages using the hashtag #PCSDTogetherInSpirit. Thank you to everyone who participated for reminding us that while we may not be able to be together, we can still have fun as a school community.



Photo courtesy of @AshleyFdez

Congratulations to Peekskill high School’s Zion Sanchez who officially committed himself to playing for the Alfred State Pioneers next year! Dr. Mauricio states, “Zion is an exemplary member of the My Brother’s Keeper Black Diamonds program and led an event recognizing students with Autism this year at the Youth Bureau. It signifies his character and leadership.”

“Zion is one of the classiest and high moral character students I have ever met,” said PCSD Athletic Director Mr. Austin Goldberg when announcing the news this week. “From day one, I knew he would go on to do great things. This is only the beginning. I am happy that our underclassmen have someone [like Zion] that they can look up to.”



Photo courtesy of @AD_Goldberg

Our Special Services department wants our school community to remember to focus on self-care while we are staying home. See below for some questions to promote a healthy daily lifestyle. For more social-emotional wellbeing tips for adults and children, [click here](#).

DAILY QUARANTINE QUESTIONS

1. Who am I checking on or connecting with today?
2. What expectations of "normal" am I letting go of today?
3. How am I getting outside today?
4. How am I moving my body today?
5. How am I expressing my creativity today?
6. What type of self-care am I practicing today?
7. What am I grateful for today?



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Please [make note of this "Wellness Messages" page on our District website](#), where all letters to our Peekskill Schools community regarding the COVID-19 crisis are being archived. Future updates will be saved here, in addition to being distributed to the community via our usual outlets.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't ask everyone to please keep one of our Peekskill families in their hearts and prayers after the tragic loss of one of our Peekskill High School students this week. In an already difficult time, our sorrows have been compounded by this tragedy. In an effort to offer support to any students, family or staff members affected by this loss, we have set up a District "Warm-Line" for anyone wanting to talk/text, or you may call the Westchester County Crisis Prevention & Response Team.

- PCSD "Warm-Line" (daily 9AM-9PM, call or text; You will be connected to a member of Peekskill support staff): (914) 522-0624

- Westchester County Crisis Prevention & Response Team at St. Vincent's Hospital (available 24/7): (914) 925-5959

In these challenging times, let us also remember to work together as a community and support our children and each other.



I end this brief in memoriam of Omarion.

Dr. David Mauricio, Superintendent of Schools