

## **Superintendent's Communication Brief: November 25 - December 6, 2019**

We hope everyone had a nice Thanksgiving break and enjoyed their extra time with loved ones. Before the break, students and staff celebrated the holiday together as a Peekskill family. Across the district, students and staff held feasts, made crafts and thought about the things they are thankful for as a school community.



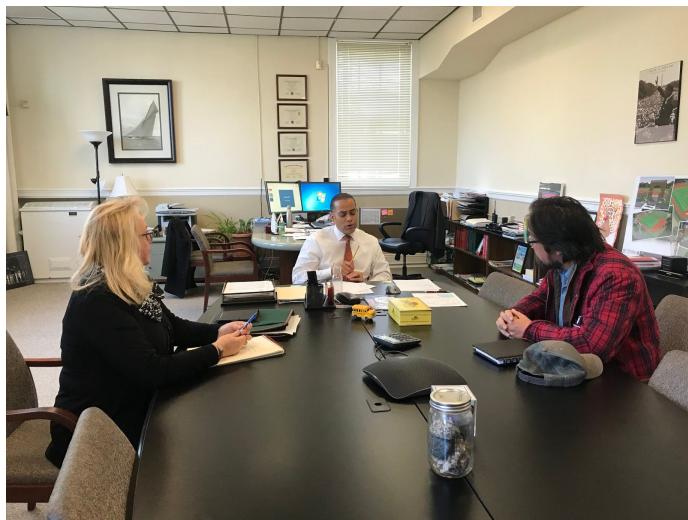
The Peekskill High School Drama Club performed Charles Dickens' classic play, "A Christmas Carol" just before the Thanksgiving break. Cast and crew did a great job and we thank these students for helping to get everyone in the holiday spirit! Special thanks to all involved in helping the students prepare for the play, including Drama Director Mr. Terry Sandler, Tech Director Mr. Ron Johnson, Producer Ms. Laura Belfiore, and sound / lighting assistants Mr. Mel Bolden and Mr. John Harrison.



Peekskill High School's City Singers recently performed at Mamaroneck High School for the Youth Harmony Festival, an event that showcases high school a cappella groups. Our Singers received numerous compliments from the audience members and other choir directors. The event was hosted by the Chordsmen, which is an 80-member all male a cappella group. At the end of the concert, the City Singers joined with the Chordsmen and sang, "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing."



Dr. Mauricio and Assistant Superintendent of Business Ms. Robin Zimmerman met with Jason Angell of the Peekskill Community Congress to discuss his Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) grant proposal which seeks to add a community garden to one of our schools.



Dr. Mauricio joined Peekskill Administrators for a Health and Safety meeting led by PCSD Director of Security Mr. David Santiago. At the meeting, the group discussed recent incidents denoting what we did well and where we can improve to ensure that our children and staff are safe in our schools. We thank our leadership team, staff and first responders for the hard work.



Peekskill Middle School rolled out the red carpet on November 26 to wish longtime school lunch monitor Ms. Frances Berry a very happy 90th birthday. PKMS staff played music, sang and served several cakes to Ms. Berry and students at each lunch period throughout the day in honor of the celebration.



Before Thanksgiving break, Peekskill parents enrolled in our Parent Resource Center's BOCES ESL program gathered to enjoy a meal together and learn about Thanksgiving traditions. The group enjoyed a turkey dinner with a variety of sides. Many attendees also brought in dishes to share. A new Spanish course for parents is coming soon, along with the other courses currently offered. Remember, the Parent Resource Center and all it offers is available to all parents.

[Click here](#) to learn more about our Parent Center.



Dr. Mauricio and Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education Dr. Mary Foster met with Peekskill Police Chief Halmy and Peekskill parent Mr. Tim Joseph to discuss how we can work together to improve safe passage to our schools and parent engagement.



Seven Peekskill High School students participated in the Puerto Rican and Hispanic Youth Leadership training held in Albany on November 19. During workshops, students learned about the legislative process, public speaking and effective leadership.



Congratulations to our Girls Varsity Swim Team who were honored as a scholar athlete team at this week's Board of Education meeting. This means the whole team's average GPA was 90%+ this fall. We also honored dozens of other fall athletes who made Peekskill's Team 90! For a

student athlete to make Team 90, they must have had a 90% or higher GPA for the season. Go Red Devils!



440 Peekskill High School students celebrated reaching academic excellence in their first quarter by participating in an Honor Roll Celebration and Breakfast. PACE students also celebrated Quarter 1 achievements with an awards ceremony that recognized students for attendance, most improved, highest averages and other categories. Some students at each celebration received Kindle Fires and laptops donated by Mr. Arthur.



Dr. Mauricio met with Mr. Larry Damico of the Peekskill Arts Alliance to discuss a potential partnership on a city-wide art project. The Peekskill Arts Alliance will be submitting a proposal to the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Committee, and Peekskill Schools have offered a letter of support for the project, which, if funded will include opportunities for our district and students. Dr. Mauricio noted that the school district must be part of the revitalization efforts of the City and appreciates the collaborative efforts to be included.



Peekskill City School District is happy to now offer free live streaming via Local Live! View home sports games, special events and other performances while they are happening. Getting started is easy. Just [bookmark this link](#), then click on the event you want to watch and enjoy!



As part of our Peekskill's Promise, school District STEAM leaders attended the STEM Made Simple Summit, which was organized by the Lower Hudson Regional Information Center (LHRIC) through the New York State Association for Computers and Technologies in Education (NYSCATE). Eduscape presenters provided 13 different workshops with opportunities to explore, try resources, and share in experiences as a district team. All grades, K-12, were

represented and PCSD attendees continued conversations about the vision and alignment for our STEAM program.



Dr. Mauricio met with local artist Mr. Wayne Marcus to discuss collaborations and support for students in the fields of performing arts, media and visual arts. Mr. Marcus has created a list of local artists who are interested in sharing their knowledge with our students in our schools and in their studios.



This week, Peekskill High School took part in the, “Be an Upstander not a Bystander Campaign” with the Blue Pinky Promise Initiative. This initiative encouraged students to “Be an Upstander not a Bystander,” by speaking up in various situations. The school partnered with several local agencies for the initiative, such as the Peekskill Youth Bureau, the Peekskill PBA, Peekskill Professional Firefighters and Hudson Valley Moca. During lunch periods, our community partners joined PHS students in the cafeteria to launch the campaign. At this time, students

signed a pledge to be an upstander and received t-shirts to wear to show their support for the cause.



As part of his weekly School Supports visits, Dr. Mauricio and administrative leaders visited Hillcrest Elementary. During the school visit, the team visited classrooms and focused on the school's welcoming presence and diversity ecology in the entrance and main hallway. Our District's monthly "Commitment to Character" theme is "Community." Shoutout to Hillcrest Elementary staff for this beautifully curated bulletin board in their lobby, which features photos of our children, staff, community partners, Saturday Academy events and more!



Dr. Mauricio, Peekskill Middle School Principal Mr. Jamal Lewis, Peekskill High School Principal Mr. Rodney Arthur, Director of Special Services Mrs. Ellen Gerace, Youth Bureau Executive Director Mrs. Tuesday McDonald and Student Assistant Counselors met at Peekskill High School to discuss how we can provide support services and better educate students, staff and families on the effects of vaping. We look forward to enacting our steps in the near future.



Join the Peekskill Middle School Drama Club for, "Frozen, Jr." on Friday, January 24 (7 PM) and Saturday, January 25 (3 PM)! Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students and seniors. Please come out and support our cast and crew!

Peekskill Middle School Drama Club's  
Production of



Music & Lyrics by  
**Kristen Anderson-Lopez & Robert Lopez**

Book by  
**Jennifer Lee**

Based on the Disney film written by Jennifer Lee  
and directed by Chris Buck and Jennifer Lee

**Friday, January 24, 2020 at 7:00 pm**

**Saturday, January 25, 2020 at 3:00 pm (Matinee)**

**Tickets: \$10 adults, \$5 students and seniors**

Disney's *Frozen JR.*  
is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI)  
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.  
[www.mtishows.com](http://www.mtishows.com)

On the evening of December 14, writer, actor and director JD Lawrence will present his new show, SKITZophrenia on the Peekskill Middle School stage. A portion of proceeds from the event will go to support the Peekskill My Brother's Keeper program. Please see the flyer for more details and ticket information.

**EBONY**  
"JD Lawrence, the man of many faces  
keeps audiences laughing."  
Starley Hawkins, Ebony Magazine



JD LAWRENCE'S  
**SKITZOPHRENIA**

the musical, no the comedy, it's a drama... it's healing

"JD Lawrence is one of the most respected  
writers/directors/actors/producers  
within the urban theater circuit."  
NPR, Onstage

**The Washington Post**  
"A Real Quick Change Artist."  
Michael O'Sullivan, Washington Post

**DAILY NEWS**  
"JD Lawrence does it all."

JD Lawrence's SKITZophrenia is a new ninety-minute one-man show with over 70 characters written and performed by **Two-Time Telly Award Winner**, writer and director JD Lawrence. Lawrence is also the creator and star of Bravo's Your Husband Is Cheating On Us and BET's The Clean Up Woman. Lawrence's performance in SKITZophrenia made history when it trumped the **Guinness World Records** title in June 2019. **Inspired by actual events**, Lawrence calls the show a "**Therapeutic Dramedy Memoir**". The show takes place in **Amityville**, New York. (Yes, that's Amityville and minutes from the infamous house.) The show is centered around Lawrence after the loss of his mother. In order to help get through his depression, his therapist recommends he let go of the family home where he grew up. As he begins to pack he comes across memorabilia that triggers his schizophrenia as the inquisitive and rambunctious seven-year-old nicknamed Ace and his clingy best friend who just happens to be his shadow. The show deftly tackles important mental health topics including schizophrenia, depression, PTSD, domestic violence, trauma, drugs & alcohol and adverse childhood experiences. Lawrence's performance is an absolute must see for the entire family. **JD Lawrence's SKITZophrenia the musical, no the comedy, it's a drama... it's healing.**

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 14TH @7:00PM**

**Peekskill Middle School**  
212 Ringgold St., Peekskill NY 10566  
Doors 6:00pm / Showtime 7:00PM  
**TICKETS ON SALE NOW!**

*Early-Bird & Group Rates Available (10 or more)*

Contact: Martin McDonald  
(845) 490-4931  
Martin.mcdonald625@aol.com  
[www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com)

**FUNDRAISER EVENT FOR**  
The Peekskill  
My Brother's Keeper Initiative

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

The Peekskill High School Interact Club will once again be selling wreaths as a club fundraiser this holiday season. Please see the flyer below for details or [click here](#).



## Spread holiday cheer!

Show your support for the PHS Interact Club by purchasing holiday wreaths, centerpieces, and more!



Use the link below or scan the QR code to shop our holiday fundraiser or to make a donation!



Please see Mrs. Byrne or Mr. Goess with any questions.

<https://www.lynchcreekfundraising.com/f/1190383>

Our Parent Communication Survey will be closing soon! If you haven't given us your feedback yet, now is the time. We are seeking responses from PCSD parents/guardians so that we can enhance our communication tools and techniques. Please help us determine where we are succeeding, and where we can improve. [Click here to take our 2019 Parent Communication Survey](#). This survey is also available in [Spanish](#). Your input is greatly needed and appreciated!



Our next Saturday Academy will take place on December 14 from 10 AM-1 PM at PKMS. The day's activities will include multicultural holiday celebrations from around the world! There will be brunch, yoga, and our friends from the Two By Two Zoo. Our farmers market returns this week and we'll have a special performance on the PKMS stage at noon.



Enjoy your weekend!

Dr. David Mauricio, Superintendent of Schools