

Superintendent's Communication Brief: March 4-8, 2019

This week, Peekskill High School celebrated National Foreign Language Week. As part of the week's activities, students decorated the halls in a variety of flags. In addition, each day the Pledge of Allegiance was recited in a different language during morning announcements. Students also enjoyed films and food from abroad. On Friday, the celebrations concluded with a dance session in the high school cafeteria.



At this week's Board meeting, Dr. Mauricio joined the Peekskill Board of Education in recognizing our dedicated parent volunteers and those staff members that helped re-launch our Lisa Roller Parent Resource Center. Also recognized at the meeting were our education advocates (including our PHS student rep), who recently traveled to Albany to speak with elected officials about fair and equitable funding for our schools. Peekskill Middle School Principal Mr. Lewis also provided an energetic presentation about the excellent work being done at PKMS.



Hillcrest Elementary held their Annual Instrumental Night this week. The beginning Band and Orchestra students showcased their talents to a packed gymnasium. Our Hillcrest music teachers should be incredibly proud of their students' musical accomplishments - the children played beautifully! See more photos from this event [here](#).



As part of the Superintendent's weekly School Supports visits, this week Dr. Mauricio and Assistant Superintendent Mr. Dan Callahan met with Peekskill Middle School Principal Mr. Jamal Lewis. At the meeting, the group discussed the school's data-driven instructional practices, attendance and other data. They also discussed the great work being done in the middle school's MBK program, as well as other successful initiatives at the school.



Dr. Mauricio and Assistant Superintendent Callahan ventured to Westchester Community College this week to tour the school's Culinary program. They enjoyed lunch with the provost and met with the deans of various departments. They also met Instructor Mr. Colon, who has been a chef for over 30 years and is passionate about teaching students.



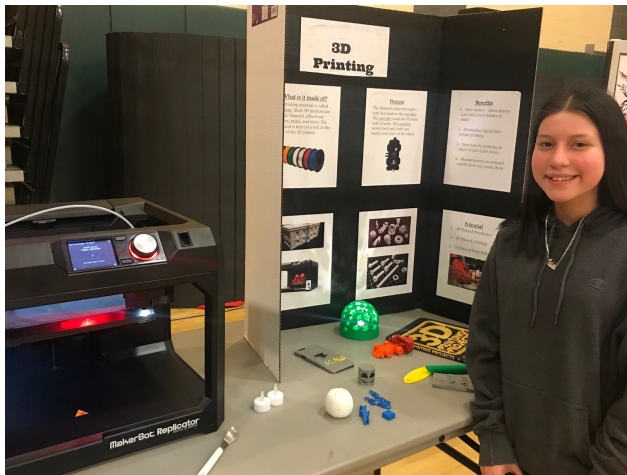
Dr. Mauricio met with Peekskill Parent Teacher Organization President Ms. Marisa O'Leary this week. At the meeting, the two discussed how the collaboration between the District and PTO is leading to strong partnerships with families. They also discussed funding efforts to support our schools and students.



Board of Education Trustee Mrs. Branwen MacDonald and Dr. Mauricio joined the Peekskill PTO Executive Committee meeting, which took place this week. Together the group discussed plans for the District's upcoming Open House tours, which will be taking place April 22-25 at each school. They also discussed advocacy efforts, the District's strategic plan and special events at our schools.



Peekskill Middle School hosted their annual STEAM Fair this week. Students presented projects on how to make slime, examined why candy machines jam and discussed how magnets can play a role in the future of transportation. It was great to see our students so engaged and passionate about their projects. See more photos from the event [here](#).



Dr. Mauricio met with Peekskill Historian Mr. Frank Goderre at the VanCortlandtville Historical School Building to discuss Peekskill's important role in our country's history. We will use this information to connect Mr. Goderre's presentation with our schools' curriculum, so our students can share in this important time period of Peekskill history.



Dr. Mauricio met with District Communication Specialist Ms. Laura Belfiore and Cable TV Director Mr. Doug Brown this week to discuss PCSD's public relations and videography initiatives. The group reviewed our public relations and communication progress and planned for future features. Our efforts include our mobile app, the text feature, the weekly brief, the e-newsletter, school newsletters, cable TV shows, social media, our website and more. A new exciting student initiative will be announced soon - stay tuned!



Dr. Mauricio, along with Director of Special Services Mrs. Ellen Gerace and Coordinator for Student Support Services Ms. Sadika Clarke, met with Mr. Albert Pucci and his colleague from NY Life to discuss a possible collaboration. Mr. Pucci heard Dr. Mauricio speak about the My Brother's Keeper program at a Chamber of Commerce meeting, and is interested in partnering with the District to help the initiative as a mentor. NY Life is also interested in teaching financial literacy and a women's self-defense class at our recently refurbished Parent Center.



The Peekskill CSD Athletic Department held their Winter Sports Awards Night this week. Student-athletes and their families joined coaches and PCSD staff to celebrate the season's successes. In the photo below, our "Team 90" scholar-athletes show off stickers they were presented with, which note their academic and athletic achievements.



As part of the Peekskill High School Robotics program's AIM19 spotlight video, Dr. Mauricio, District Technology Manager/CIO Mrs. Janice Reid, Peekskill High School Principal Mr. Rodney Arthur and PHS Robotics Teacher Mr. Carlo Vidrini were interviewed by Cable TV Director Mr. Brown and students at Good for You Productions' studio at the Hat Factory. Good for You owner Mr. Jeff Cobelli and Hat Factory owner Mr. Ben Green are coordinating with the Hudson Valley Chamber on the 2019 Art Industry Media (AIM) event taking place in Peekskill on April 13-14. Our high school students will be showcasing the Robotics program from 2-4 p.m. on Saturday, April 13. Please mark your calendars and come join us to support our students!



This week, Dr. Mauricio attended the NYS and the Lower Hudson Council of School Superintendents' meeting. Guest speakers included Commissioner of Education MaryEllen Elia and NYS Regent Judith Johnson. Topics of conversation included various initiatives related to improving student outcomes, such as enhanced graduation pathways and an update on the new education law.



A Language Development Approach and the Blueprint for ELL Success

Eight Principles

1. All teachers are teachers of ELLs.
2. Address, academic, social, linguistic, and emotional needs.
3. Engage all learners in grade appropriate, rigorous instruction.
4. Recognize bilingualism and biliteracy as assets.
5. Value all parents and families of ELLs as partners.
6. Leverage the expertise of bilingual, ESOL, LOTE teachers and support personnel.
7. Leverage home languages, cultural assets, and prior knowledge.
8. Use diagnostic tools and formative assessment practices to measure ELL progress.

Blueprint for English Language Learner Success

Dr. Mauricio presented Peekskill City School District highlights at a Realtor Forum hosted by Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices this week. The event welcomed over 60 local realtors who came to hear about our District's great and longstanding programs and partnerships. He also presented the strategic pathway forward - Peekskill's Promise. Students from Peekskill Middle School added to the day's event by showcasing their musical talents for guests. Peekskill Board President Michael Simpkins, Trustee Mrs. Branwen MacDonald and PTO Special Events and Enrichment Co-Chair Ms. Mia Shirvington also spoke on behalf of the District. The presentation was well received by those in attendance.



Don't forget Saturday Academy is taking place today at 10 a.m. at Peekskill Middle School. After the Academy, come march with us at the St. Patrick's Day Parade, which is also happening today, Saturday, at 2:30 p.m. We will be gathering behind the high school for the parade line-up. Have a great weekend!

Dr. David Mauricio, Superintendent of Schools