

In Our Schools

Peekskill City School District News

May 2018

Dear Peekskill Community Members,

I am pleased to present to you the proposed 2018 - 2019 Educational Plan and Budget. Our planning goals for next school year continue to build upon our new mission statement of "empowering all students to strive for excellence as lifelong learners who embrace diversity and are contributing members of a global society." The proposed Educational Plan and Budget has factored in projected enrollment increases and will add value to our District by improving our K-12 program development and in addressing needed capital improvements in our buildings. Our proposed budget increase of 3.74% is supported by a state aid increase of 3.87% that will keep our tax levy at 2.14%, which is tax cap compliant.

At the elementary level, we are continuing the development of "community schools," where each school building serves as a beacon for family and community engagement. Academically, we will continue to enhance our project-based learning experiences for all students in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM). The Elementary Enrichment program is a Grade 2-5 STEAM focus.

As we strive for a 100% graduation rate, the Peekskill City School District will be adding supports to our secondary level in a variety of positions. We will be adding an additional Assistant Principal to the high school to assist with day to day building management and instructional oversight. In our middle school, we will be adding a part time music teacher to our Strings program. The Strings program has grown the past three years in Grades 3-5 and we will proudly extend the program into our middle school, realizing our dream of a full orchestra over time. We have recommended the expansion of Peekskill High School's electives to include an additional teacher in Art and Business. Our goal in Art is to develop classes in digital and graphic arts creating a sequence of classes to add to our already rich Art program. Our Business program will introduce our students to accounting, business law, marketing and management. In addition, our Robotics and Broadband Academy will see additional sections added. All of these courses will enrich our students' learning experiences and better serve them in terms of their post high school college and career plans.

Finally, in order to upgrade our facilities we have budgeted \$350,000 to address needed work. Upgrades will include doors and hardware, brick repointing and sidewalk/asphalt repair at Oakside Elementary School as well as gym painting,

pad replacement and sidewalk repair at Woodside Elementary School.

In closing, I ask that you review the Educational Plan and Budget for the details of our initiatives and I encourage you to exercise your right to vote on the Budget and in our School Board Election on Tuesday, May 15, 2018.

Sincerely,




School Board Election

Two, three-year seats are up for election: Incumbent Lisa Aspinall-Kellawon and one vacant seat. Voters will select two members to the Peekskill City School District Board of Education.

All Individuals Must Be Qualified to Vote: A qualified voter is a person who is a citizen of the United States, at least 18 years old, and a resident of the school district for at least 30 days prior to the vote.

When and Where to Vote: The vote on the annual budget and for school board candidates will take place on Tuesday, May 15, 2018 from 7 A.M. to 9 P.M. To vote you must be registered for either the school elections or general elections. Voting will take place at Peekskill High School, 1072 Elm Street.

Absentee Ballots: The Board of Education provides for absentee ballots for the election of members of the Board of Education, the adoption of the annual budget, and propositions. Applications for absentee ballots are available in the office of the District Clerk, 1031 Elm Street, between the hours of 8 A.M. and 4 P.M.

Absentee ballots will be available in the office of the District Clerk on April 27, 2018. Absentee ballot applications must be filled out and returned to the District Clerk by mail, or in person, by May 8, 2018. After an absentee ballot application is received by the District Clerk, an absentee ballot is mailed to your home. You are to return the absentee ballot in person to the District Clerk at the Administration Building by May 14, 2018 no later than 4 P.M. or by mail on May 15, 2018 no later than 5 P.M. Call District Clerk Debra McLeod at (914) 737-3300 ext. 342 with any questions.

Visit Our Website: Be sure to visit www.peakskillcsd.org and click on the Budget tab for more information.

Contact Us: You may contact the District with any questions or comments by emailing budgetideas@peakskillcsd.org, or by calling 914-737-3300, ext. 303.

Proposed 2018-2019 Budget: \$92,988,282

Budget Increase: 3.74%

Tax Levy: 2.14%

Meet our 2018 Peekskill Board of Education Candidates

To learn more about the candidates, visit <https://bit.ly/2FqQuPf>
To request a paper copy of this information, call 914-737-3300, Ext. 347.



*Pictured (from L to R):
Top row: Lisa Aspinall-Kellawon (Incumbent), Marie DiNardi and Pamela Hallman-Johnson. Bottom row: Allen Jenkins, Jr. and Myriam Pauta*

2018-2019 BUDGET VOTE: TUESDAY, MAY 15
Polls Open 7AM to 9PM at Peekskill High School

Proposed Budget: **2018-2019 Budget at a Glance**

THREE PART BUDGET	2017-18 BUDGET	2018-19 PROPOSED BUDGET	\$ DEC/INC	% INC
ADMINISTRATIVE COMPONENT				
I010....BOARD OF EDUCATION	\$18,610	\$18,550	(\$60)	-0.32%
I040....DISTRICT CLERK	\$17,690	\$17,088	(\$602)	-3.40%
I060....DISTRICT MEETING	\$19,225	\$17,025	(\$2,200)	-11.44%
I240....OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENCY	\$399,612	\$423,508	\$23,896	5.98%
I310....BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	\$457,192	\$465,378	\$8,186	1.79%
I320....AUDITING	\$71,980	\$71,980	\$0	0.00%
I325....TREASURER	\$66,273	\$69,199	\$2,926	4.42%
I380....FISCAL AGENT FEE	\$26,530	\$26,530	\$0	0.00%
I420....LEGAL	\$347,900	\$347,900	\$0	0.00%
I430....PERSONNEL	\$394,395	\$408,357	\$13,962	3.54%
I480....PUBLIC INFORMATION & SERVICES	\$171,544	\$177,042	\$5,498	3.20%
I680....CENTRAL DATA PROCESSING	\$50,072	\$50,072	\$0	0.00%
I910....UNALLOCATED INSURANCE	\$371,050	\$368,410	(\$2,640)	-0.71%
I920....SCHOOL ASSOCIATION DUES	\$30,090	\$30,090	\$0	0.00%
I981....BOCES ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	\$338,294	\$367,150	\$28,856	8.53%
I983....BOCES CAPITAL EXPENSES	\$12,439	\$24,118	\$11,679	93.89%
2010....CURRICULUM DEVEL & SUPERVISION	\$649,503	\$697,614	\$48,111	7.41%
2020....SUPERVISION-REGULAR SCHOOL	\$2,611,236	\$2,824,346	\$213,110	8.16%
9099....EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$1,777,882	\$1,907,071	\$129,189	7.27%
TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE COMPONENT	\$7,831,517	\$8,311,429	\$479,912	6.13%
PROGRAM COMPONENT				
2020....SUPERVISION-REGULAR SCHOOL	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0	0%
2070....INSERVICE TRAINING-INSTRUCTION	\$11,500	\$11,500	\$0	0%
2110....TEACHING-REGULAR SCHOOL	\$25,852,881	\$26,988,209	\$1,135,328	4%
2250....PROGRAMS-STUDENTS W/ DISABIL	\$14,587,672	\$14,722,986	\$135,314	1%
2280....OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION	\$1,182,278	\$1,690,749	\$508,471	43%
2610....SCHOOL LIBRARY & AUDIOVISUAL	\$461,343	\$477,701	\$16,358	4%
2630....COMPUTER ASSISTED INSTRUCTION	\$2,309,569	\$2,238,222	(\$71,347)	-3%
2805....ATTENDANCE-REGULAR SCHOOL	\$41,639	\$25,959	(\$15,680)	-38%
2810....GUIDANCE-REGULAR SCHOOL	\$1,033,567	\$1,231,362	\$197,795	19%
2815....HEALTH SERVICES-REGULAR SCHOOL	\$761,707	\$744,392	(\$17,315)	-2%
2820....PSYCHOLOGICAL SRVC-REG SCHOOL	\$814,121	\$962,078	\$147,957	18%
2825....SOCIAL WORK SRVC-REG SCHOOL	\$540,764	\$551,062	\$10,298	2%
2830....AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES PROG.	\$1,431	\$1,431	\$0	0%
2850....CO-CURRICULAR ACTIV-REG SCHL	\$166,253	\$166,223	(\$30)	0%
2855....INTERSCHOL ATHLETICS-REG SCHL	\$702,241	\$827,970	\$125,729	18%
5510....DISTRICT TRANSPORT	\$254,633	\$256,796	\$2,163	1%
5540....CONTRACT TRANSPORT	\$4,026,247	\$3,835,564	(\$190,683)	-5%
9901....TRANSFER TO SPECIAL AID	\$200,000	\$250,000	\$50,000	0%
9099....EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$15,878,635	\$16,582,838	\$704,203	4.43%
TOTAL PROGRAM COMPONENT	\$68,851,480	\$71,590,040	\$2,738,560	3.98%
CAPITAL COMPONENT				
I620....OPERATION OF PLANT	\$3,117,823	\$3,206,744	\$88,921	2.85%
I621....MAINTENANCE OF PLANT	\$1,477,486	\$1,483,097	\$5,611	0.38%
I950....ASSESSMENTS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY	\$49,500	\$49,500	\$0	0.00%
I964....REFUND ON REAL PROPERTY TAXES	\$100,000	\$50,000	(\$50,000)	-50.00%
9901....TRANSFER TO SPECIAL AID/DEBT SERVICE	\$5,675,789	\$5,626,593	(\$49,196)	-0.87%
9950....INTERFUND TRANSFERS	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$0	0.00%
9099....EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$2,181,394	\$2,320,879	\$139,485	6.39%
TOTAL CAPITAL COMPONENT	\$12,951,992	\$13,086,813	\$134,821	1.04%
TOTAL PROPOSED BUDGET	\$89,634,989	\$92,988,282	\$3,353,293	3.74%

What does the 2018-2019 Educational Plan and Budget Support?

At the Elementary Level:

Transition Classrooms: In 2018-2019, PCSD will continue to support Transition Classrooms in Grades 1, providing literacy rich environments that offer a two-year opportunity for students to succeed academically. A new year-one class in Kindergarten will be created pending student identification and need. In this program, which heads into its fourth year in 2018-19, the classroom teacher “loops” with the same cohort of students. Students learn through play-based and project-based multi-disciplinary units of study. Acceleration will be individualized and movement to the next grade will be fluid. This unique program provides time for students to catch up academically, to keep moving forward each year, and eliminates the traditional retention model.

Enrichment for All: The Elementary Enrichment program continues to provide project-based learning experiences for all students in research, science, technology and the arts. The Enrichment for All program is STEAM focused and is offered in Grades 2-5.

Elementary Strings Program: The Elementary Strings program continues to flourish. The program, which introduces violins, bass and cellos beginning at Grade 3, heads into its fourth year in 2018-19. Students are added to the program each year as the third graders move to Grade 4 and 5. The Strings program will be entering into the middle school this year. The goal of a middle school orchestra and a high school orchestra will be realized over time. Strings students will continue to perform annually in a recital or concert.

Social and Emotional Support: In an effort to care for and nurture the “whole child,” our Elementary buildings will continue to provide school counselor support and social/emotional services to our students.

Community Schools: We look forward to the expansion of the Community School Model. By partnering with local outside agencies, such as, but not limited to Arts10566, the Westchester Food Bank and Hudson River Health Care, together the Peekskill City School District and our community partners are able to provide increased enrichment opportunities for our children.

Highlights in Elementary Education

- Transition Kindergarten (pending enrollment and need), and Transition Grade 1
- Promotion of a Multilingual Ecology, celebrating diversity and recognizing multilingualism as a resource
- One cohesive Bilingual program - Varios Idimos Un Corazón/ Many Languages One Heart. This program has a goal of bi-literacy in English and Spanish for students in Grades K-5.
- Increased parent education and involvement through our Changing Suburbs Institute Partnership with Manhattanville College
- Expansion of Community School Model
- Experiential Field Trips

- Growing Elementary Strings program. By 2020, our District will realize Orchestra and Marching Band Programs
- Technology Upgrades at the Elementary Level
- Replacement of computers consistent with technology replacement plan
- Increase of interactive White Boards at Hillcrest and Oakside Elementary
- Cromebook Carts, each equipped with 30 Chromebooks at each elementary building

At the Secondary Level:

21st Century Electives: Peekskill Middle School and High School will continue to add new and enriching courses for the 2018-2019 school year. New courses will be both informative and challenging for all students. New or enhanced courses will be offered in STEAM, Career and Technical Education, Math, Art, Business and Music. Peekskill High School will look to increase its sections in Robotics and Broadband Academy, while the Middle School will look at enhancing the Music Department by adding Orchestra for the first time.

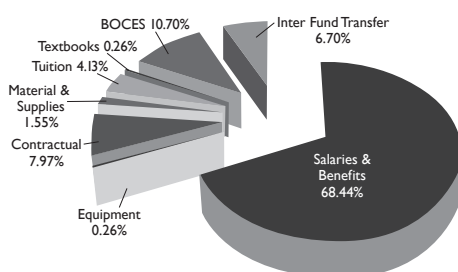
Administrative Supervision at Peekskill High School:

We have increased the amount of staffing at the high school to account for the growing student population, as enrollment is currently at 1000 students and is projected to rise to 1040 by the 2018-2019 school year. We have a high needs student population, with 19% Special Education students, 13% ENL students and a large percentage of students that read below grade level. Because of this increase in staff, we require additional administrative management and instructional evaluation supervision. Additional administrative support will assist building leaders in the close instructional monitoring of our untenured teachers, while still allowing for the management of the day-to-day needs of our students. Our increase in staff will help maintain the solid foundations we have built several of our newer programs on, allowing for the continued development and success of these programs such as: the PHS Freshman Academy, the PHS Summit Academy, our Robotics program, our Science Research program and many more.

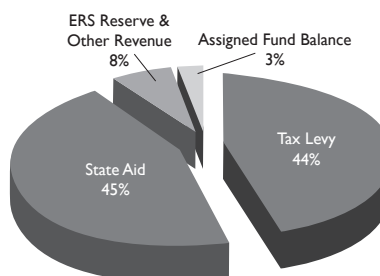
Instructional Supports at the High School: Peekskill High School will continue to look at ways to help support our students instructionally. We will look to add an additional Math teacher, two new Special Education teachers and increase class sections in Spanish. This new Math teacher will allow for a new block class in Algebra I for students who are identified as reading two grade levels below. In addition, adding a Math teacher will open up opportunities for all students to take four years of math, as opposed to the three years they currently take. Not only will the additional year of math help increase math and literacy skills, it will also help to insure our students are college ready. We will track data for 3-5 years on credit accumulation and assess how our students perform on the Algebra I Regents Exams. Our newly

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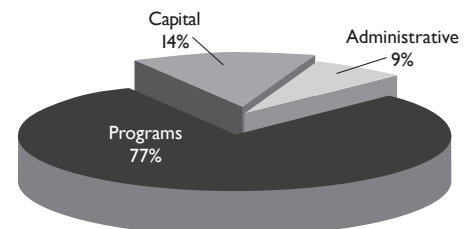
Budget by Object



Revenue Projection



Three-Part Component Budget



What does the 2018-2019 Educational Plan and Budget Support? *Continued from page 3*

added Special Education teachers will focus on Regents level classes in Social Studies and Science for students with disabilities. Finally, additional Spanish classes will increase the opportunity for students to take level 4 and advanced placement classes in the subject.

New High School Electives and Sequences: The High School Art classes are crowded with a class size that averages 24. In order to further grow the Art program and allow students to have more opportunities in Art, we need to increase the amount of sections we have available. The enhancement to the program will be to develop a sequence of classes in graphic arts. In addition, we are excited to bring a Business Department back to PHS. Peekskill High School used to have a thriving Business Department prior to the 2007-2008 recession, when the department was cut. Business is still the largest field of study that students enter when they enroll in college. By reinstating this department, we would give students the opportunity to experience marketing, accounting, management, finance and many other business curriculum topics. The goal would be to develop a sequence of classes over the next three years while developing dual enrollment opportunities with a local college.

Bilingual Core Program at the Secondary Level: The Peekskill High School and Peekskill Middle School English as a New Language (ENL) program will continue to add to its offerings as we meet the needs of our student population and stay in compliance with New York State regulations. Both schools will add sections of bilingual Math, Science, and Social Studies into their core offerings. A "Program of Bilingual Education" means a program of instruction in which eligible children are placed until such time so they may attain a certain level of proficiency in English. Bilingual education is a method used to teach language-minority students in public schools. The concept is that teaching English Language Learners (ELLs) partially in their native language will enhance their understanding of the curriculum and help them succeed in an otherwise English-based environment. Once ELL students are fairly proficient in English, they can continue their education in classes with their English-speaking peers. A benefit of a Bilingual program is that it makes instructional use of both English and an eligible student's native language, while providing for the continuous increase in the use of English. Peekskill Middle School will see changes to its ENL program as we install new bilingual classes into the content courses in Grades 6-8. In addition, we will look to enhance the Newcomer experience by weaving art and music electives into these students' schedules.

Westchester Mediation: Westchester Mediation returns for a second year in 2018-2019 after a short hiatus due to a loss in grant funding in the 2016-17 school year. The Peekskill City School District will contract with Westchester Mediation for use of one of their counselors to assist with the social and emotional support of our students. Westchester Mediation has been instrumental in assisting with the needs of PHS' student population, and will continue to work throughout the school year to ensure a productive school climate and positive student relations. This added position will serve approximately 200+ students.

Highlights in Secondary Education:

Enhancing Graduation Rate

- More middle school students earning high school credits before entering Grade 9
- Extending the Orchestra program from the elementary level to the middle school
- More elective choices for high school students in STEAM and Business to better prepare students for college/careers
- 21st Century Science and STEAM program enhancements
- Newcomer and Bilingual Core Programs expanded at the middle school and high school

Improve Equity and Student Choices

Increase course offerings at PHS' Albany in the High School program partnership with PNW BOCES for Culinary Arts for Special Education program, Consumer Math, and increase access to Robotics, Career and Technical courses.

District Operational Planning:

– Interfund transfer to the Capital Projects Fund \$350,000

Oakside Elementary School:

- Doors and hardware-exterior and interior
- Cafeteria floor replacement
- Brick repointing
- Site work-to include but not limited to sidewalk/asphalt repair and replacement

Woodside Elementary School:

- Cafeteria floor replacement
- Gym painting and pad replacement
- Site work-to include, but not limited to, sidewalk repair replacement



Peekskill High School Students Win First Prize at Westchester Business Olympics

On Friday, February 16, eight Peekskill High School students took part in the Westchester Business Olympics hosted by Morgan Stanley and the African American Men of Westchester. Peekskill students competed against peers from 15 other school districts and came out with a first place victory! Students received Chromebooks and trophies as prizes.

"This is an extraordinary accomplishment that should be celebrated throughout the Peekskill community," said PHS Principal Mr. Rodney Arthur. "Special thanks to Zorielle Rodriguez and Sharon Courtney for preparing our students well. Our students were confident and their greatness came alive. I would also like to thank Stacey Bean for her assistance."

The following students participated in the competition: Jarlen Carcelen, Diana Tenesaca, Debora Martinez, Valentina Loaiza, Aaryana Garzón, Maria Palma, Andrew Espinoza, Jodi Glickert.

NYSPHSAA Announces Scholar-Athletes; 13 Red Devils Make the List

The New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) recently announced its winter 2018 Scholar-Athlete teams and individuals.

To be recognized as a Scholar-Athlete, a student must maintain a 90.0 or greater GPA. Peekskill is proud to congratulate the following students on being named Scholar Athletes for the 2018 winter season, and welcomes them to the District's "Team 90" club:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Samuel Martinez (Boys Bowling) | 8. Samantha Johnson (Girls Basketball) |
| 2. Steven Francisco (Boys Bowling) | 9. Krista Godbee (Girls Basketball) |
| 3. Jodi Glickert (Girls Bowling) | 10. Tatyanna Arceneaux (Girls Basketball) |
| 4. Jarret Lloyd (Boys Indoor Track) | 11. Mariam Osei-Poku (Cheerleading) |
| 5. Yeymily Conde Lopez (Girls Indoor Track) | 12. Alaysia Rosa (Cheerleading) |
| 6. Kaitlan Nelson (Girls Indoor Track) | 13. Yoham Ortiz (Boys Swimming) |
| 7. Jada Frye-Samuels (Girls Indoor Track) | |

"We are extremely proud of our winter season's scholar athletes," said Peekskill Athletic Director Adam Lodewick. "Our Team 90 members/NYS Scholar Athletes are model students for Peekskill's Athletic program and for our younger student-athletes to follow. They exemplify the hard work



Peekskill's Scholar Athletes show off their "Team 90" t-shirts that were presented to them at our Winter Sports Awards Night on April 4.

and determination it takes to excel both on the field and in the classroom, while demonstrating to their peers that it is possible to do both. We look forward to their continued successes and to having more of our student athletes join their rank this spring season."

Peekskill High School would also like to recognize their other student athletes who were honored at the Athletic Department's Winter Sports Awards on April 4:

All League Athletes:

1. Shion Darby (Boys Basketball)
2. Thomas Holman (Boys Swimming)
3. London Claxton (Indoor Track)
4. Sandra Murphy (Girls Basketball)
5. Justin Velasquez (Wrestling)
6. Jodi Glickert (Bowling)
7. Kaitlyn Lehning (Skiing)

All County Athletes:

1. London Claxton (Indoor Track)

All Section Athletes:

1. Shion Darby (Boys Basketball)

Red Devil Award Winners:

1. Jasmyrn Lucas (Indoor Track)
2. Tejah Lawrence (Boys Basketball)
3. Mariam Osei-Poku (Cheerleading)
4. Tatyanna Arceneaux (Girls Basketball)



Spectators surround a playing field at the PHS Robotics Tournament

Hundreds Turn Out For Peekskill High School Robotics Tournament

When you walked through the doors of Peekskill High School's gymnasium on January 27, the scene was one you would expect to see at the Westchester County Center, not your typical high school gym. The Second Annual First Tech Challenge (FTC) Peekskill Robotics Tournament held at the school that day drew nearly 300 attendees and welcomed 19 teams from across the region, from Yonkers to Plattsburgh. Multiple work stations and "playing fields" filled the floor as students, parents, teachers, elected officials and PCSD administrators made their way around the room.

"The day was pretty amazing," said Peekskill Robotics Teacher Mr. Carlo Vidrini. "We received complements from each of the visiting teams and even the judges. Everyone I spoke to that came to the tournament at PHS all said they would be looking forward to returning to our school because this event has become one of the best in the region."

Both of Peekskill's Robotics teams participated in the day's events. The school's senior team, the Iron Devils, served as the hosts of the FTC event, and the school's junior team, the Mechanical Devils, spent the day competing.

"I'm really proud of the progress of our teams and the growth of our Tournament from 2017 to 2018 – it's been great and the atmosphere is fantastic," Vidrini said. "Everyone is ecstatic to be coming to Peekskill and we are very happy to welcome them. We're already looking forward to bringing competition back in 2019."

My Brother's Keeper Program Offers Activities/Workshops to Peekskill Students

Students involved in the My Brother's Keeper (MBK) program at Peekskill High School have been teamed up with mentors both inside and outside of school. Thanks to these partnerships, MBK students have the opportunity to enjoy poetry workshops, bowling, boat building workshops and more!



Here, a group of young men train with Be First Boxing's West Artope.



MBK Mentor Jim Taylor of the Peekskill Youth Bureau's Rising Tides Boat Building program speaks to young men about the skill of boat construction.



Members of the PHS Mechanical Devils work on their machine



Peekskill Students Win at Westchester Science & Engineering Fair

Peekskill Science Research (PSR) students participated in the Westchester Science and Engineering Fair (WESEF) held on Saturday, March 17 at Sleepy Hollow High School. Students took part in the fair under the direction of Peekskill High School Science Research teacher Ms. Erum Hadi. Competing with close to 600 participants from across Westchester and Putnam counties, PSR participants won 4 awards in various categories and made Peekskill proud, once again.

PHS senior Jessie Zhanay became the first PHS student to place at the competitive WESEF. Her project titled, "Benthic Macroinvertebrates as Determinants of Freshwater Quality" won her second place and \$100 in the Environmental Science category. To place in this fair means that the student has achieved excellence (close to 100%) in their poster display and project presentation.

At the event, Zhanay also won the Stockholm Junior Water Prize for her unique contribution to the study of preserving water supplies. The Stockholm award instantly qualifies her to apply to the state level competition for this award.

Shawn Jimerson's project titled, "Cord Blood Transplantation for Patients with Malignant and Non-Malignant Diseases" won him the Greg Horace Award for the most creative and innovative approach in scientific research and a gift of \$50. Jimerson researched the use of stem cells retrieved from umbilical cord and placenta, which bypasses the use of ethically contested embryos.

Two more students also contributed to Peekskill's success at the fair: Robert Chacha and Nicolas Holman's team poster titled, "The Impact of Population Density on Microplastic Pollution Near Hudson River Shorelines" in the Environmental category, won the Stockholm Junior Water Prize for their unique contribution to the study of preserving our water supplies. The two students have also qualified to apply to the state level competition for this award.



PCSD Artists Display Work at Annual District Wide Art Show

Oakside student Alex Ninan shows off one of his pieces displayed at our District's Annual District Wide Art Show, which was hosted by the Peekskill Coffee House for the entire month of February. Bravo to the PCSD Art Department and our student artists on the lovely exhibit.

Meet our 2018 Valedictorian



Class of 2018 Valedictorian Jodi Glickert (left) and Salutatorian Valentina Loaiza (right) stand with Interim Superintendent of Schools Dr. Mary Keenan Foster and Peekskill High School Principal Mr. Rodney Arthur

Peekskill City School District and Peekskill High School are proud to introduce the Class of 2018's Valedictorian Jodi Glickert and Salutatorian Valentina Loaiza. These students have truly shown us how hard work, focus and dedication can result in success. As they prepare to venture forth into their college careers, Jodi and Valentina have shared a little bit about who they are and what their future holds for them after graduation.

2018 Valedictorian: Jodi Glickert

Ms. Glickert is the President of the National Math Honor Society, and a member of the National Honor Society and National Science Honor Society. She is also an active member of the Interact Club, and plays on the Varsity Softball, Volleyball and Bowling teams at Peekskill High School. When not involved in school activities, Ms. Glickert spends time dog-sitting. This fall, she will be attending Grace College in Winona Lake, Indiana and plans on majoring in Environmental Biology. Ms. Glickert chose this major in hopes of pursuing a career in Environmental Law because she cares greatly about our environment. She says she wants to do everything in her power to make sure that companies abide by the laws that are in place to preserve nature.

PCSD: What was your favorite class this year and what did you enjoy most about it?

Glickert: My favorite class this year was AP English Literature. I enjoyed my teacher the most, Ms. Jones. She has a great energy about her that always made me have a good time in her class and I enjoy reading, so the class was practically built for me.

PCSD: What do you think it takes to make an exceptional teacher?

Glickert: I think an exceptional teacher is one who makes learning fun, but can also be serious when he/she needs to be. I think Ms. Pichardo, Ms. Rodriguez, and Ms. Jones were all exceptional teachers. Their classes were extremely difficult, but fun at the same time. They have taught me so much about not only the subject they taught, but also all about life.

PCSD: What is your philosophy as a student?

Glickert: My philosophy as a student is, simply, to work hard. You can achieve so much if you just buckle down and work hard.

PCSD: What inspires you?

Glickert: Kind people inspire me. The people who care more about others than themselves, and those who care about our world and everything in it.

PCSD: What words of wisdom would you like to pass on to your PHS underclassmen?

Glickert: Take advantage of the free AP classes that PHS has to offer. The best teachers in this school are the AP teachers, so you will get the best education if you take the AP classes. The classes may be more work, but it is worth it.

PCSD: What will you miss most about PHS?

Glickert: I will miss my teachers the most. The teachers that I have already mentioned above and all of the other ones who have dealt with my talkative spirit.

and Salutatorian

2018 Salutatorian: Valentina Loaiza

Ms. Loaiza is Vice President of the National Science Honor Society and an active member of the National Honor Society, National Math Honor Society and National Social Studies Honor Society. She has been involved with various Peekskill High School clubs ever since her freshman year. Ms. Loaiza became a member of the Interact Club and French Club in freshman year. In junior year, she joined the Latino Culture Club. Outside of school, she is an active volunteer at the Peekskill Field Library where she tutors children in math, reading and writing, and helps them with their homework as well. She also serves as an English tutor for adults who yearned to learn English as a second language and she worked with the CUNY Citizenship Now project to offer free immigration services to the public. Thanks to the Peekskill High School PIES program, she currently works as an intern for the City of Peekskill's Finance Department. This fall, Ms. Loaiza plans to attend Cornell University where she will major in Government and minor in International Relations. She would also like to take advantage of Cornell's various language courses and learn a variety of foreign languages. Ms. Loaiza one day aspires to work for an organization that promotes the well-being of others by working directly with the community.

PCSD: What was your favorite class this year and what did you enjoy most about it?

Loaiza: I definitely have two favorite classes this year, AP United States Government and Politics and Classism, Racism and Sexism. These classes have been the most important to me as they introduced me to the harsh realities of our society. The majority of the burdens that exist in our society are derived from the poor policy-making of our government. Learning about these injustices infuriated me and I realized that the only way I could possibly make a change was by majoring in Government. I appreciate the impact these classes had on my overall perspective on life by helping me figure out what career I wanted to pursue in college.

PCSD: What do you think it takes to make an exceptional teacher?

Loaiza: An exceptional teacher is one that truly cares for their students and works hard to improve their academic performance. Teachers that take time out of their busy schedule to help clarify a student's doubts are definitely admirable. Hard-working teachers that not only wish to improve their own excellence, but challenge our academic strengths deserve recognition. I would like to recognize two of my most influential teachers, Ms. Pichardo and Ms. Rodriguez. It's sometimes difficult to find teachers that genuinely enjoy their profession. However, it's very easy to see that Ms. Pichardo and Ms. Rodriguez have a passion for teaching, making our learning experience more enjoyable and effective.

PCSD: What is your philosophy as a student?

Loaiza: I've always enjoyed school, and performing well became increasingly significant for me as I realized it was my key to a fruitful future. Becoming a successful individual is what drove me to achieve high grades in high school. My philosophy consists of working arduously to carve a path for a desirable future.

PCSD: What inspires you?

Loaiza: There are many things that inspire me to act the way that I do and to be the person that I am. My mother is definitely the person that pushes me every day to do better. I work hard in effort to one day be able to provide us with a better life. The world around me is another source of my inspiration. There are many things I have yet to learn or discover, and I have made it my goal to learn as much as humanly possible. Pursuing a higher education will definitely allow me to achieve my goals.

PCSD: What words of wisdom would you like to pass on to your PHS underclassmen?

Loaiza: I'd like our younger students to know that they will achieve anything they set their minds to. Persistence is key to achieve your goals, regardless of how large or small they are. High school does get more difficult, but college gets even worse. Therefore, it's crucial to get the appropriate preparation for college while still being in high school. I would also like to emphasize the importance of establishing a good relationship with your teachers. Do not feel embarrassed if you need extra help more than others, you are doing this for your own well-being. Have fun in high school and enjoy the rest of the years you have left!

PCSD: What will you miss most about PHS?

Loaiza: I will definitely miss the diversity and welcoming ambiance of our school. We all get along pretty well, regardless of where we come from. I'll miss the teachers that were supportive and truly care about us. I'll definitely miss the comfort of living in the town I grew up in and seeing familiar faces.



Music in Our Schools Concert

On March 22, we held our district-wide Music in Our Schools Month Concert in front of a sold out audience. Our students showcased their talents and delighted guests.



OC2I Courses Offer Peekskill Students Online and In-Person Learning Opportunities

Peekskill High School students enrolled in the "Introduction to Anthropology" Online Course for the 21st Century (OC2I) recently visited the American Museum of Natural History for a curated talk and tour. OC2I courses bring together students from many Westchester school districts to learn together online. Peekskill Social Studies teacher Ms. Anita Prentice (pictured here) leads the Anthropology class.



Oakside Announces Dental Poster Contest Winners

Congratulations to our Oakside Dental Poster contest winners! Local dentist Dr. Hames runs an annual contest at Oakside for dental health month. Each year, 3 winners are selected to receive Barnes and Noble gift certificates and every student who participates in the contest gets a prize. Dr. Hames and his assistants at Hudson River Health Care work with Peekskill City School District to do dental check-ups and are partners in our District's Dental Sealant program.

Look for **Peekskill City School District** on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Flickr.



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303, correo electrónico azucco@peekskillcsd.org o pase por el Edificio de Administración del Distrito y una edición en Español le proporcionará.

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PCSD's Performing Arts Highlights



Peekskill High School students presented Disney's, "Beauty and the Beast" as their spring musical. Just days before the show opened, PHS students toured Woodside, Oakside and Hillcrest Elementary schools to give our youngest students a sneak peek of the show and a chance to meet the cast. We congratulate the Peekskill High School Drama Club on their recent receipt of the \$10,000 RISE America grant, which was awarded to them by NBC and the Educational Theater Foundation.



Peekskill Middle School students recently delighted theatergoers with their performance of Disney's, *The Lion King, Jr.*



Hillcrest's Annual Instrumental Night gave our Grade 4 and 5 students an opportunity to show off their musical talents.

PCSD's STEAM Initiative Highlights



The Peekskill City School District was recently honored with an Innovative Partner TELL Award from the Lower Hudson Regional Information Center (LHRIC). The District received the award for innovation in curriculum writing in computer science for Grades K-8. Peekskill is a member of the LHRIC STEAM Academy and is represented by Mr. Dan Callahan, Mrs. Janice Reid, Mrs. Crystal Hernandez, Ms. Jaime Rossi, Ms. Jessica Newby and Mr. Anthony Scala.

PCSD Manager of Technology Mrs. Janice Reid and Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education Mr. Dan Callahan accept LHRIC's Innovative Partner TELL Award on behalf of the Peekskill City School District.



Students engaged at the Hillcrest Elementary STEAM Fair



PKMS students present their projects at the school's STEAM Fair