

# WEDS NEWS

Spring 2019

## Message from Head of School

WEDS does not have “typical” school endings. Our students are not running out, excited to start vacation. There’s a sense of running out of time. Teachers are still trying to get their groups to their next level; our clinicians are still making individualized plans; and our students, faculty and parents alike are holding onto that last bit of togetherness. As proud as everyone feels, an overall sadness to ending the school year is always a side-effect of our relationship based model and strong sense of community.

My favorite part of this time of year is the overwhelming gratitude parents and faculty share as our students take the stage (or backstage) for their final triumph. Each year, more and more students show such comfort and ease performing in ways that were once unexpected. The icing on the cake was our awards ceremony, where every student receives an award that is unique to the strides they have made this year.

We have so much to be proud of as a community. We came in finishing up Phase I of our capital campaign with our beautiful ground floor renovations and have now moved into Phase II by raising funds for our next dream, a new Gymnasium. I feel so fortunate to be a part of this amazing community of faculty, parents, and students who are endlessly dedicated to the mission of West End Day School.

Wishing you a peaceful summer,

Carrie Catapano, LCSW  
Head of School



## Message from Education Heads

The spring has been filled with wonderful learning experiences! We were so impressed with our scientists this year. Our science fair had exciting experiments and the students really enjoyed showing off their hard work. We could see how the students grasped onto the scientific method. Well Done!

Another highlight of the spring was I Love to Read Day. It was an amazing, all school event in which we celebrated our love for reading; from students being read to by different staff members they don't work with every day, to our oldest students being mentors and reading to our younger students. One new addition this year was having two therapy dogs join us, and children read to them and pet them. It certainly put a unique twist on this already wonderful day!

This year's Field Day was a tremendous success! The children demonstrated outstanding athleticism, teamwork, and enthusiasm. As always, the picnic at school was a wonderful close to a fun filled day.

It has been a productive and enlightening year and we are so proud of all that our students have accomplished. Congratulations to our graduates, we wish you the best of luck. To our returning students, we look forward to seeing you in September!

Katy Jenkins & Jessica Chambers  
Co-Education Heads

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## Ms. Steinfeld & Ms. Henry's Class

Ms. Steinfeld and Ms. Henry's meteorologists in training concluded their unit on the water cycle to begin the semester. They enjoyed participating in the hands-on lessons as they learned about the steps of the cycle, namely evaporation, transpiration, condensation, and precipitation. The students also enjoyed conducting their own cloud in a cup science experiment and predicting what they thought would happen. Next up was the weather unit. The students were introduced to the different forms water takes as precipitation. The class also discussed how weather changes through the seasons and conducted an experiment about Earth's rotation using a flashlight on a globe to represent the sun shining on the earth. They had an overview of the various weather instruments scientists use to study the weather, including a thermometer and barometer. To end the year, the students made predictions for how rainbows are formed by doing various classroom experiments, one including skittles!

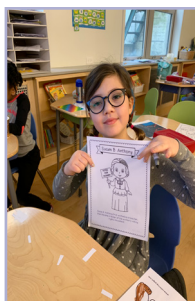
In social studies, the class explored transportation this semester! First, the students explored five major kinds of bridges including: suspension, cable-stayed, cantilever, arch, beam and truss. The students also learned about the specific bridges found right here in Manhattan, such as the George Washington Bridge and the Brooklyn Bridge. The class enjoyed the story about the Brooklyn Bridge and how engineers tested the bridge's strength by having elephants and camels cross the bridge before people could begin to use it. The book, *Twenty-One Elephants* by Phil Bildner, was read to further explain this big event in history, followed by an elephant craft. A highlight for the students was building their own truss bridges out of marshmallows and toothpicks. This mini-unit on bridges segued to the different methods of transportation. The class studied the NYC subway system in depth, from the changes in the fare to the mosaic artwork at each stop.



## Ms. Berger & Ms. Kronfeld's Class

Ms. Berger and Ms. Kronfeld's social studies class brought out the students' individual creativity in their Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities unit. The class brainstormed what it means to be a good citizen, and came up with words such as kind, responsible, and respectful to others. The students were interested in learning about how a bill becomes a law. They then thought about some laws and rules that they see at school, at home, and in their communities. This discussion segued into a unit on Community Helpers, and how different jobs complement each other to benefit the needs and wants of different people. The students had a blast sorting pictures of wants and needs and even coming up with their own ideas!

The students enjoyed their science class this semester, especially during the preparation for the science fair. They learned about the scientific method through the lens of their own science experiment about cookies and milk! The class looked at four different cookies to see if they would sink or float in a cup of a milk. The class explored outer space, and took a trip after their trip to the Hayden Planetarium to learn about the planets of the solar system. They experienced the differences among these large bodies in our solar system, and even the sun and the moon, in the interactive exhibits offered by the museum.





## Ms. Carhart & Ms. Michilovich's Class

Ms. Carhart and Ms. Michilovich's class of climatologists studied weather and climate to start the semester. They discussed the distinction between the two terms. They applied this information to an analysis of what types of living things can survive in different climate conditions. Moving on, the students created barometers that they used to measure the change in pressure around the school. The group enjoyed working on hands-on projects throughout the unit and creating a weather report for the culminating activity. The class' next unit focused on forces and motion. Throughout the unit, the students explored balanced and unbalanced forces, friction, and patterns in motion. To end their unit, the class created rollercoasters to experience forces and motion in action!

This semester, the social studies globetrotters continued to explore the varied people and cultures of the inhabited continents. They began by focusing on South America. The students identified the countries, studied cultural differences, and discussed various traditions found there. To conclude the unit, each student picked a South American country to research in depth. They enjoyed presenting their final projects to their classmates. Next, the students moved on to Asia. They focused on China, Japan, India and Vietnam. Some highlights from the unit were learning about the Great Wall of China, exploring the school system of Japan in comparison to the United States, and learning about the Taj Mahal in India! Lastly, the students covered the continent of Europe. They enjoyed exploring all the unique countries and the languages spoken in every country. Overall, the students had a great year discovering the eclectic cultures found across the world.



## Mr. Crapella & Ms. McGowan's Class

Mr. Crapella and Ms. McGowan's class journeyed on through the history of key civilizations in the Western Hemisphere. The class had the opportunity to learn about several civilizations that originated in South America. They also studied the modern nations that later formed in this region, such as Brazil, Mexico, and Peru. The class moved on to a unit on Canada before exploring the colonial history of the United States. The class applied their knowledge to creative projects, including designing travel brochures about the countries and civilizations they studied! After completing their curriculum on the Western Hemisphere, the class began a unit on the structure of the United States government. They recently discussed the three branches of the government and how the concept of checks and balances are central to proper functioning of the government. To end the year, the group will continue this unit with lessons on how citizen participation is integral to American democracy.

The scientists in this class have continued planning and working on many hands-on experiments using the scientific method. The class completed a unit on Stars and the Solar System. After learning about how time and weight differ from planet to planet, the class was able to use an online formula to determine how old they would be on each planet in our solar system. Additionally, the class learned why Pluto was no longer considered a planet, and is now classified as a "Dwarf Planet" instead. Students were able to create their own planet with a unique name, length of day and year, temperature and moons. The students completed this unit by outlining the life cycle of a star. The students ended the year with a Nutrition Unit where they learned how to read food labels and create a balanced meal. The students enjoyed some fun field trips this year, including their trip to the Intrepid where they supplemented their unit on the solar system with a visit to the space shuttle exhibit.



## Ms. Moss & Mr. Stella's Class

This Spring, students in Ms. Moss and Mr. Stella's class expanded their knowledge and skills related to the following topics: international trade, African American History, Women's History and the U.S. Government. In their first unit, the students considered the positive and negative impact made by the global banana industry on local communities. They studied political maps and discussed how geography affects a country's ability to produce and sell bananas. Next, the group explored fair trade as a business model from the perspective of both producers and consumers. They held in-class debates on the benefits and challenges inherent to the fair-trade model and challenged each other to think more critically about this model. The class studied the lives of activists in the civil rights movement and the women's suffrage movement. For their unit on U.S. Government, the students dove deep into the history and structure of the three branches with a particular focus on the Constitution and Bill of Rights. Themes covered in class included separation of powers, federalism, and local government. With the year coming to a close, the students are being introduced to the geography of the Eastern Hemisphere and engaging in country-specific case studies to further enhance their knowledge.

In Science, the students learned about the five forms of energy and energy transformations. They also discussed the differences between weather and climate and how to read a weather map. Next, the class discovered the layers of the atmosphere. Also during this unit, the students conducted an experiment where they filled a plastic cup with water, marked the levels, and put the cups near the window for a week. Then the students observed and marked the levels for each day. The students noted the water level decreasing in the cup and the type of weather for each day which would affect the evaporation. Then they explained how evaporation works in their own words. They moved on to their atmosphere unit, where the students worked together to create a Layers of the Atmosphere poster. They followed a rubric to help define the expectations of the project. Included in the project were the following: altitude, temperature, and three characteristics of each layer. Once completed, the students did an excellent job presenting their poster to the class. For their final lessons of the school year, the class will classify living things into seven categories and discuss the importance of having a classification system.



## Mr. Kassel & Mr. Afzaal's Class

This year, Mr. Kassel's and Mr. Afzaal's class surveyed the history and culture of the Eastern Hemisphere. This semester began with the classic period of China, the Han Dynasty. After learning about the ancient Chinese earlier in the year, the class picked up with this chapter of history to study how the Chinese evolved from a river civilization to a powerful empire. The class then studied the classical civilizations of Greece and Rome. During this unit, the students worked on a research project where they compared a Greek god to the Roman equivalent. They compared and contrasted the two gods, including their importance to their respective cultures. Following their study of the classical period, the class began their unit on World Religions. Covering the six most influential religions in the world today, the students discussed the questions that these religions attempt to answer through their respective belief systems.

In science this semester, the class wrapped up their unit on simple machines before moving on to their final unit on the Interdependence and Diversity of Life. Their unit consisted of exploring biomes, including the relationship of organisms as producer, consumers, and decomposers. During their field trip to the American Museum of Natural History, the class watched the film Backyard Wilderness, which explored the New York State forest biome. For their final research project of the year, the students each chose a biome to explore in depth. They identified the key environmental conditions that effected how the plants and animals that live there adapted over time.





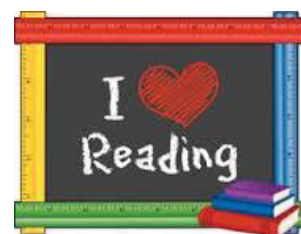
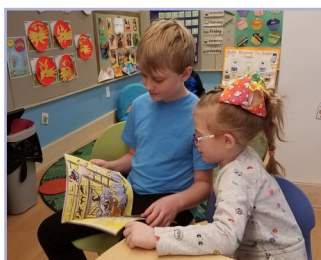
## Earth Day

It was all hands on deck for the WEDS Earth Day celebration! In honor of this event, each class had a lesson on how plants play an integral role in their habitats. They also discussed how planting gardens or trees is a great way to get involved in improving their community. The PA-led garden committee organized a special activity for this Earth Day. They have been working on growing our courtyard garden, and enlisted the students to help plant pachysandra. A special thank you to Trish Jackson and Ed Sowder for helping our students plant.

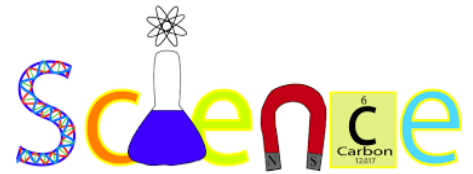
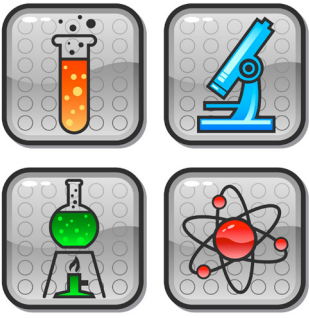


## Celebrating Our Love of Reading

WEDS held the annual I Love to Read Day. There was an exciting selection of literature at the Book Fair. To celebrate our love of Reading, each class had a special staff member read aloud. Our oldest class also visited the ground floor to read to the younger students. This year, we had a special visit from therapy dogs that the students had the opportunity to read to and pet. Thank you to the parents who put together this exciting event!







## Calling All Scientist to Our Science Fair

- This year our budding scientists collaborated in groups for their Science Fair projects and the outcome was extraordinary! We were also proud of the students that chose to present their own project. There was a great mix of topics and fields covered among the experiments and research displays. Ms. Steinfeld and Ms. Henry's class presented their collaborative project in their classroom to their families before exploring the fair in the auditorium. The students impressed us all with their hard work and creative displays for a fun and informative day!



## A Fun-Filled Field Day

- The students and their families fun-filled day with a spectacular exhibition of cooperation, support, and athletic skills. The students competed in some of their favorite events, such as relay races, fireman, and pin knockdown. As a finale, they faced-off against their teachers and parents in an exciting match of tug of war. The event ended with the delicious all-school picnic put together by the PA.







## A Whole New World

- This year, Ms. Treanor led the June Show production of Aladdin. The students created a wonderful adaptation of this famous folk tale. They also
- created the backdrops and props for the show to transform the auditorium into the kingdom of Agrabah. The performance was another instant classic.
- Thank you to Ms. Treanor, Ms. Carhart, Mr. Robert, Ms. Alt, Mr. Henson, and
- Mr. Kassel for heading the crew that helped bring this iconic musical to life!



## Caps off to the Class of 2019

- Congratulations to our 2019 graduates! We wish you the best of luck and look forward to hearing how you continue to grow and learn.

