



West End News

Fall 2018

Message from Head of School

Our first semester of the year was truly amazing! Our students, new and long-standing, have been reaching milestones and meeting high expectations in so many unique ways. I am so proud of the great achievements we've made so far this year. Our student council has lead us in initiative making a huge impact in their community. First with their "Caring for Vets and Pets" initiative on Community Thankfulness Day. The students raised \$434 for America's Vet Dogs and sent over 60 postcards to active military personnel. The students continued to give back with a food drive with City Harvest and ASCPA donating 150lbs of food for families in NYC as well as pets.

I also must take the opportunity to brag about our incredible parent-body. We have so many new families that have join our community this year, and have quickly joined our established parents to help out with our PA initiatives and events. Our parents have even formed a Garden Committee that has been keeping our courtyard looking festive— and have big plans ahead.

We also completed the first phase of our capital campaign — a full renovation of our ground floor. I am incredibly grateful to our families, faculty, board and friends for their generosity and support of this project. The results are truly "groundbreaking" and the response from our students has been positively overwhelming. There is nothing that makes me happier then seeing our students full with excitement for new learning opportunities, and now have a beautiful new space for them to thrive in.

What an incredible start to the year! I cannot wait to see what the winter semester has in store!

Carrie Catapano
Head of School

Upcoming Events

January 7th: School Re-opens

January 21st: MLK, Jr. Day (School Closed)

January 24th: Annual Art Exhibit

February 14th: Winter Sing

February 18th - 22nd: Mid-Winter Recess

March 1st: All School Skate

March 11th: Parent/Teacher Conference



Message from Education Heads

It has been an exciting start to the school year with so many amazing learning experiences. Besides all of the learning that we have seen happening in the classrooms, the students have been participating in some wonderful assemblies. Our first assembly this year was with the Science Tellers. In this assembly, the presenter told a story about "the Wild West." As he told the story he stopped to demonstrate various experiments that explored chemistry, and the effects of inertia and gravity. The students really enjoyed the story and loved the exciting experiments. Next, we had the Dinosaurs Rock assembly where the students were able to explore museum-quality dinosaur fossils and prehistoric items. The assembly ended with a "Fossil Dig" and the students were able to bring some fossils home! Our final assembly was with the "Reptile Guy." He brought in a Burmese python, a Russian tortoise, a Ball python, Red Eared slider, a Bearded Dragon and an Uromastix Lizard. Coming up this winter, the students will be hearing from the Manhattan School of Music with an Opera assembly, that was a big hit last year, as well as Symphony Space with a performance on European and African influences on American music.

Our professional development workshop day this year was particularly informative. We welcomed back Andrew Watson, President of Translate the Brain. He spent a day with our staff speaking about learning and how the brain works with a particular focus on Working Memory. During the workshop, he explained the psychological and neurological processes that happen when using working memory, and then gave us practical teaching strategies to help prevent working memory overload. It was a great day that left us all eager to get back to the classrooms to continue our work with the children.

Looking forward to a winter filled with more exciting learning!

Katy Jenkins and Jessica Chambers
Co-Education Heads



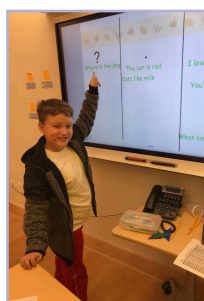
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Ms. Steinfeld & Ms. Henry's Class

Ms. Steinfeld and Ms. Henry's class have been discovering all about the world around them in Science and Social Studies classes! In Social Studies the students have been learning about "self" and "others". So far, they have explored the essential question: How are people the same and different? They have done many fun activities geared around identity, diversity, likes and dislikes, and personal experiences. They have also learned about themselves as learners within a school community and how everyone learns in different ways. One of their favorite activities was learning about how people around the world have different names that are all really special and unique. The students were all given a white piece of paper with their name written in white crayon, as the students began to water color, their special names magically appeared! The students each had the opportunity to explain why their names are so unique. Another craft the students enjoyed was making their own bee-bim-bop (a Korean noodle dish). When learning about the different foods people eat all around the world, the students brainstormed their favorite foods and incorporated them into their own bee-bim-bop!

In science, the class has been engaged in learning about forces and motion! They have done many amazing experiments with magnets including exploring which objects around the classroom attract metal. They also created a ramp to observe which shapes roll further: spheres or cubes. The class jumped into learning about solids, liquids and gasses. They enjoyed a scavenger hunt around the classroom hunting for solids and an activity where they had to predict what kind of liquid was in each mystery bag. Their predictions were based on the color of the liquid, whether it flowed fast or slow and the texture within the bag. Following this activity, the students were able to experiment with water and observed how it reacted when mixed with other liquids (food dye, corn syrup, and soap). The class has loved all of the exciting hands-on experiments that science has to offer!



Ms. Berger & Ms. Kronfeld's Class

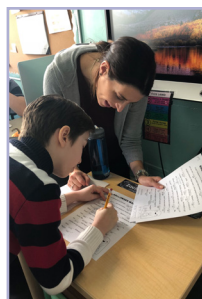
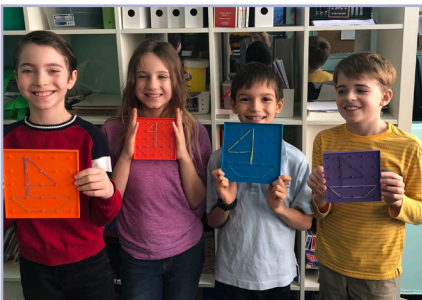
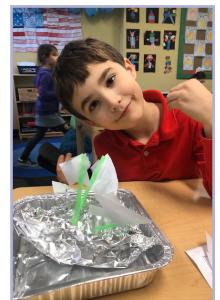
This semester has been off to a great start for Ms. Berger and Ms. Kronfeld's class! The students were true scientists, taking the opportunity to participate in several science activities throughout the semester. They learned about the difference between solids, liquids, and gases by using pom-poms as the molecules found in each of these states of matter. The class then began a unit on different habitats. They brainstormed plants and animals that are found in each habitat, and the adaptations that are necessary for each of the unique environments.

The class took their journey of discovery from the jungle to their home, right here in New York City! In social studies, the students began by learning about map skills. First, they learned the cardinal directions and the differences between maps and globes. Afterward, the students were excited to share their knowledge of the Big Apple by discussing the five boroughs of New York City. They traveled between Brooklyn, the Bronx, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island. The students used different colored clay to represent each of the five boroughs in a 3D map!

Ms. Carhart & Ms. Michilovich's Class

Ms. Carhart's and Ms. Michilovich's science class has been discovering the role that living things play within their environment. Their first unit, Plants and Animals, allowed them to explore the different tiers of living things in a variety of habitats. For example, the class sorted living things into producers, consumers, and decomposers. They also identified and described the parts of a plant and the stages of the plant life cycle. The students created a diagram to represent the sequential stages. Their second unit introduced them to Interdependence, which describes how living things rely on each other in order to survive. They explored food chains and energy pyramids. The class also learned about plant and animal adaptations, and how adaptation occurs. The children completed an experiment in which they used different tools to try and collect as many items as possible. This inquiry lesson represented how bird beaks vary and adapt based on location and accessible food. Currently, they are exploring how the Earth has changed over time. They have identified the difference between endangered and extinct animals, and are conducting further research on why these changes occur.

In social studies, the students began the semester by learning about the globe and locating key geographical features. They identified the cardinal directions and location of the continents. Afterwards, the students created their own globes made out of balloons! For their World Cultures curriculum, their first area of focus was Africa. The students identified climate and geographical regions and explored the plant life and wildlife in Africa. They discussed the traditions, culture, and daily life of various African countries. The class also learned about specific African tribes and discussed the importance of certain tribal cultures. Lastly, the class explored the ancient history of the Egyptian people and discussed the role of the Pharaoh. They learned about hieroglyphics and wrote their own name using this writing system.



Mr. Crapella & Ms. McGowan's Class

This year in Social Studies, Mr. Crapella and Ms. McGowan class will be focusing on the Western Hemisphere. Mr. Crapella has been teaching the students about explorers of the New World. The class learned about European explorers such as Christopher Columbus, Henry Hudson, and Lief Erikson. To build their understanding of explorers, the students worked on projects such as visual timelines, model ships, and trading cards which depicted information about famous explorers. The class also worked on a related project in Art class with Mr. Robert in which they were tasked with drawing portraits of famous explorers they learned about. Right now, the students are learning about the first colonial settlements in North America. The class will be working on exciting projects such as model colonies based on famous settlements they will be learning about.

In science, the students began the year discussing the steps of the Scientific Method. They conducted experiments where they were asked to form hypotheses and identify different variables. The students designed their own experiment to test out what material makes ice melt fastest. The students were responsible for controlling the experiment, making observations, and determining their conclusion. Then, the class began their unit on Physical and Chemical changes. The students watched how chalk interacted with vinegar to create a chemical change similar to the chemical change that occurs when your digestive system breaks down food. Next, they compared this to the physical change that occurs when your teeth chew the food. The students ended the unit by completing a physical and chemical change scavenger hunt around the school! Our scientists are currently investigating atoms and the differences between elements and molecules!

Ms. Moss & Mr. Stella's Class

This Fall, the students in Ms. Moss and Mr. Stella's class have increased their knowledge and understanding of complex civilizations including the Mayas, Aztecs, and Incas. They learned about various facets of each society which contributed to their "complexity," including Mayan hieroglyphics, Aztec Chinampas and the Incan Road System. Next, the class shifted their focus to consider slavery during the 17th and 18th centuries and the impact the sugar trade had on it as an institution. In particular, the students considered the major steps in the production of sugar and the impact it had economically on the demand and price of sugar. Using the Inquiry Design Model to inform their learning, they focused on a series of compelling and supporting questions. Most recently, the class wrapped-up their unit on New France. The students were intrigued by the role the fur trade played in the establishment of the New France colony, and created their own Standard of Trade documents that could be used at a modern-day trading post.

In Science, the students began the school year discussing the steps of the Scientific Method. They conducted experiments where they were asked to form a hypothesis and identify different variables. Then the students began the unit on Forms of Energy and Energy Transformations. They learned about the different forms of energy including heat, light, electrical, mechanical, and sound energy. Using their STEM skills, the students collaboratively designed their own Marble Run to showcase potential and kinetic energy. They worked together in pairs and brainstormed some ideas for their design before building. Then with the materials given, they began building and testing if the design would work properly. After completing their Marble Run and testing it out, they completed a reflection worksheet and discussed what they would do differently if they were to redo the experiment. The students did an amazing job working together and created very impressive Marble Run tracks!



Mr. Kassel & Mr. Afzaal's Class

The students of Mr. Kassel and Mr. Afzaal's class are becoming seasoned explorers of the Eastern Hemisphere! After a review of map skills and an overview of the geographical features of the eastern world, the students travelled back to prehistory for a unit on the Neolithic Revolution. They examined how early humans transitioned from nomadic hunter-gatherers to agricultural societies. The students then completed a long-term project based on their findings where they convinced nomads to join the Neolithic Revolution to become part of a farming society. The class moved on to the Ancient River civilizations that developed during this Agricultural Revolution, namely Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Indus Valley. They observed how these civilizations developed in similar ways as they all relied on rivers to expand.

In science, the class began the fall semester with a review of the scientific method and experimental procedures. The students practiced designing experiments and following the steps of the scientific method through hands-on inquiry lessons. They especially enjoy "Can You Stomach This?" where they investigated what food would digest most efficiently. They modeled a stomach using a plastic bag with seltzer acting as the acid and their hands representing the stomach muscles. Next, the class began their unit on Weather. They studied the water cycle and cloud formation. After learning the variables that effect weather, such as air temperature and pressure, they explored Extreme Weather as a long-term project. The students were assigned a storm to research. They created a presentation to teach their classmates about their findings.



Halloween

What a Boo-tiful Halloween Festival! Our Parent's Association put together a marvelous Halloween Festival. Classic activities were on hand, such as pumpkin decorating, face painting, the potion-themed refreshment stand, and an assortment of Halloween games. The photo-booth doubled as a fashion show where students, families, and faculty could show off their elaborate costumes. A huge thank you to our Parents Association for organizing such an amazing event!



Scientific Assemblies

This fall, we had three exciting assemblies with science themes. First, ScienceTellers visited WEDS for a Wild West adventure. Science Tellers combines storytelling and science experiments into a theatrical learning experience. The students observed and participated in experiments that added special effects for the show. The ever-popular Dinosaurs Rock was our second fall assembly this year. This show presents fossils, both authentic pieces and replicas, to bring the prehistoric world to life for kids. To finish off the afternoon, each student participated in a Fossil Dig where they were able to search for and take home gemstones, fossils, and other mineral artifacts. Finally, The Reptile Guy made his first visit to WEDS. He brought in examples of snakes and lizards for the students to learn firsthand about these fascinating animals.





Community Thankfulness Event

WEDS held the Third Annual Community Thankfulness Event. This year the school teamed up with America's Vet Dogs and A Million Thanks to hold the "Baking Care for Vets" initiative. The funds raised will go to America's Vet Dogs. These dogs are trained therapeutic dogs for veterans. The students and staff also gave thanks to active duty troops by send them postcards through A Million Thanks, thanking them for their service and dedication. A special thank you to the student council and their staff advisor, Ms. Michilovich, for their organizational leadership in putting these projects together.



Alumni Parent Reception

The weather outside may have been frightful, but inside WEDS it was delightful at the Alumni Parent Cocktail Reception! Snow could not keep away staff and current and former parents for this event that was such a wonderful night to hear what WEDS alumni have been up to since graduating. The night was a great way to catch up with old friends, make some new friends and share stories. This wonderful event fully displayed why this community truly makes us "more than a school."

