

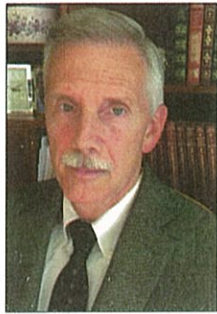


CommunityLink

Fall 2016

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New Acting Superintendent



The White Plains Board of Education appointed Dr. Howard W. Smith Acting Superintendent of Schools at a Special Board of Education meeting on September 26th. Dr. Smith took office on October 1, 2016 and will continue through the school year. He replaces Timothy P. Connors who stepped in for Superintendent Paul Fried who is on a medical leave.

Dr. Smith has had a distinguished career in public school administration and retired in 2013 from the Superintendent position in Tarrytown after 12 years of service. Since then he has held interim superintendent and consultant positions. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Marietta College, Dr. Smith has two Masters Degrees and a Ph.D. from Teachers College, Columbia University. Board President Rosemarie Eller said, **“We are confident that Dr. Smith is an excellent choice for the students, staff and community. He brings the experienced leadership needed to provide stability and to move the district forward.”**

Above Right: Former Acting Superintendent Tim Connors, Board of Education President Rosemarie Eller, WPTA President Kerry Broderick, CSEA President Adele Herzenberg, and ASA President Jesimae Ossorio.

Back to School



Superintendent’s Conference Day

After the student-led Pledge of Allegiance and an impressive performance by the talented George Washington Elementary School Choir, former Acting Superintendent Tim Connors kicked off the new school year at the Annual Superintendent’s Conference Day on September 1st. He was joined by White Plains Mayor Tom Roach and several district leaders, all of whom offered words of wisdom and inspiration to the educators, staff, administrators, and Board members in attendance. Mr. Connors told district staff that they have the best job in the world, encouraged them to strive to be continuous learners and stressed the importance of collaboration and teamwork to ensure every child has the opportunity to maximize his or her learning.

On his way to 2nd grade, Handy is ready to do some math. Big brother Jhonley, a 4th grader, likes math and music, especially playing the bass.



All Smiles at Post Road!

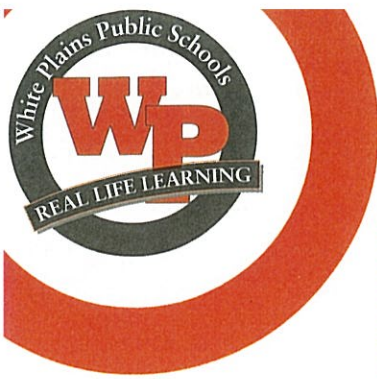
Students at Post Road elementary were excited about everything a new school year brings: meeting their teachers, making friends, reading books, hitting the playground, and learning more about their favorite subjects.

Kimberly, starting kindergarten, is most excited about riding the bus to school for the first time.



Joanna is headed to 2nd grade this year and can't wait to work on art projects.



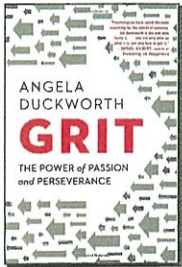


Welcome Aboard!

New teachers received a warm welcome from the Board of Education and district administrators as they kicked off four days of professional development on August 22nd. Facilitating the meeting, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Dr. Corey W. Reynolds encouraged teachers to watch for the “small moments” of success that show how miraculous their work is. Board President Rosemarie Eller told them they’re now “part of the family” in our special school district, as did Deborah Augarten, Assistant Superintendent



for Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services. **“We’re a small, supportive community; we work continually and intentionally to support our students in every way possible,”** she said.



GRIT

Each year, a book is chosen for all administrators to read over the summer and then its application to teaching and learning is discussed and shared districtwide. In this year’s read, *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*, author Angela Duckworth believes that “the secret to outstanding achievement is not talent, but a special blend of passion and persistence” called grit, or stick-to-itiveness. Our goal is to help students develop this trait so they understand that effort and determination will allow them to overcome challenges, to achieve success.

New Faces

Four administrators, 60 teachers, 37 teaching assistants and 9 non-certified staff have joined the district for the 2016 - 2017 school year.

New administrators WPHS House Administrator Jessica Rappaport, Ridgeway School Assistant Principal Kimberly Crawford, Assistant Superintendent for Business Ann Vaccaro-Teich, and Physical Education/Health Coordinator Chris Trieste.



AVID Elementary: College Readiness Starts Early

AVID, Achievement Via Individual Determination, uses proven techniques to prepare students for success in high school, college and careers. Already implemented with positive outcomes in the middle and high schools, the program will now begin at the elementary level.

This summer, teams of elementary teachers and administrators from Post Road and George Washington received training in order to begin to implement AVID practices in their buildings. The goal is to make college awareness part of school culture and to start early to prepare children to succeed as they move forward to middle and high school. This means better organizational skills and use of the WICOR framework for lesson planning, i.e., an emphasis on writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization, and reading in every subject area.

“Students learn best when they are engaged and able to take increasingly more responsibility for their own education,” said Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Jessica O’Donovan. **“As educators, we must provide**

students with the tools as early as possible to help them become independent and proactive learners. That’s what AVID Elementary will allow us to do.”

At both Post Road and George Washington, students in 4th and/or 5th grade will begin to use the binder system and a planner to strengthen organizational skills. There will also be a focus on practicing note-taking to improve reading comprehension and writing skills. These AVID strategies are already used at the middle school level, so students will be well prepared to make the transition to sixth grade. Opportunities for local college tours and professor visits will also be explored to inform students about the application process, the types of programs available and what it’s like to live on campus.

AVID is based on a simple yet powerful philosophy: hold students accountable to the highest standards, provide academic and social support and they will rise to the challenge. This is exactly the philosophy the District embraces for all students. For more information about AVID, visit: <http://www.avid.org/what-is-avid.ashx>.

Continuous Improvement through Professional Development

Teachers new to the district, most of whom are veteran educators, kicked off the new school year with four days of introductions, orientation and professional development activities. They spent time with their mentors, learned about district technology, became familiar with their buildings, and delved into curriculum, lesson planning, Infinite Campus, and more. Throughout the year, this group of new teachers will meet monthly to dig deeper into topics such as cultural

competence, growth mindset, co-teaching models, and supporting all students with the universal design model.

During the initial Superintendent's Conference Days, teachers had building-based sessions that focused on the specific goals of each school. At Eastview and Rochambeau that included Learner-Active Technology-Infused Classroom (LATIC) strategies related to problem-based learning, where students have opportunities to tackle real-world issues to make connections outside the classroom. All teachers and staff were also trained in Office 365 and its features, which increase storage and accessibility and provide useful organizational tools.

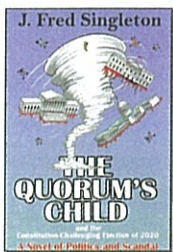
POP QUIZ!

What do the words educate, inspire, nurture, and contribute have in common?

They're key elements of the White Plains School District mission!

Jessica O'Donovan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, addressing new teachers

Teacher, Coach and... Author!



Longtime WPHS cross country/track coach, director of the Glenn D. Loucks Games and retired Rochambeau history teacher J. Fred Singleton recently added a new credit to his resume: published author. *The Quorum's Child:*

and the Constitution-Challenging Election of 2020 is a novel based on a situation where the presumed winner of a November presidential election dies prior to the December electoral college vote. The idea came to Fred while he was preparing a lesson plan for WPHS students back in 2003, when he realized the Constitution doesn't provide a solution to this possible problem. The book, was published in August and Fred is now working on a sequel.

WPHS Publication Wins Award

White Plains High School's student-run art/literary publication, *The ROAR* (2016), was recognized by the American Scholastic Press Association (ASPA) with a First Place award. The ASPA's annual review and contest for scholastic newspapers, yearbooks and magazines compares student publications

at colleges, universities and high schools around the nation. Judges commented on the superior concept, editing, layout/graphics, creativity, writing, and art within *The ROAR*. Faculty advisors are Michael Chiariello and Miranda DeMella.

Excellence in Teaching Economics

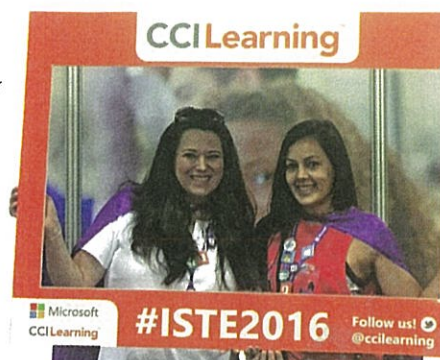
WPHS economics teacher Jonathan Joseph was selected as a recipient of the 2016 Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Teaching Champion Award from the Council for Economic Education in recognition of his commitment to helping his students gain an understanding of economics and personal finance. According to the Council's President and CEO Nan Morrison and Director of Professional Development Amy Geffen, the awards committee was particularly impressed by Jonathan's ability to engage students of all levels by differentiating lessons and projects. In addition to a \$5,000 cash prize, he will receive a scholarship to attend the Council for Economic Education's 55th Annual Financial Literacy and Economic Education Conference in Arizona. White Plains High School will also receive a \$2,500 grant to support economic and financial education.



Teachers named Microsoft Innovative Experts

Lauren Berrios, districtwide visual spatial enrichment teacher, and Lisa Fillat, districtwide math enrichment teacher, were named Microsoft Innovative Educator (MIE) Experts, an exclusive designation that recognizes visionaries who use technology to pave the way for their peers for better learning and student outcomes. As MIE

Experts, educators build their capacity for using technology in both the classroom and curriculum to improve student learning, advise Microsoft and educational institutions on how to integrate technology in pedagogically sound ways, and serve as advocates at conferences, events and trainings. Lauren and Lisa will share best practices with colleagues as trainers for the District.



The mission of the White Plains City School District is to educate and inspire all students, while nurturing their dreams, so they learn continually, think critically, pursue their aspirations and contribute to a diverse and dynamic world.



White Plains Public Schools
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White Plains, NY 10605

Dr. Howard W. Smith
Acting Superintendent of Schools

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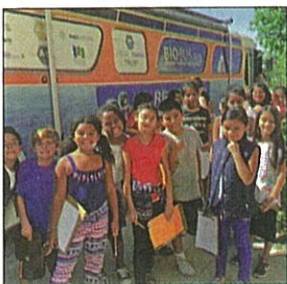
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HAVE SCIENCE, WILL TRAVEL

Fourth graders at Post Road Elementary School recently enjoyed a visit from the BioBus – a traveling laboratory space where scientists join students for hands-on scientific exploration. Thanks go to Arielle Soldatenko, a young lady from Scarsdale who facilitated the bus visit as part of Girl Scout project.



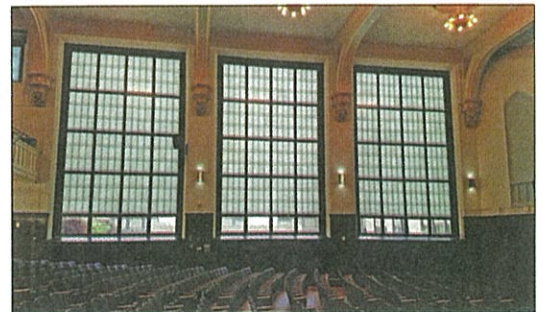
A Day of Peace at WPHS



For the fourth consecutive year White Plains High School celebrated Peace Day on September 21st — an annual day of global ceasefire and non-violence adopted by the United Nations. Teacher Michael Roma's 12th grade Human Rights classes organized the day's activities. The lunchtime celebration featured more than 100 students spelling out the word "peace" on the high school grounds, a concert with performances by the high school's choir, mariachi band and songwriter's club, and student paintings of portraits of famous peace-promoters like Martin Luther King, Jr., Mahatma Ghandi and Malala Yousafzai. Many of the students dressed in white to mark the occasion.

Upgrades to Buildings and Grounds

In addition to the routine work of painting, plumbing and paving, the district completed some major projects this summer which will enhance student learning, safety and recreation. Highlights include a complete renovation of the kitchen and serving area at Eastview (nearing completion at time of publication), replacement of windows in the auditorium at Highlands, installation of air conditioning in the Rochambeau media center and in auditoriums throughout the district so that each building now has an air conditioned space, and new tennis courts at Rochambeau. Work on the pool wall at the High School is ongoing.



New windows in Highlands Auditorium.

Summer School Success

Approximately 500 elementary, middle and high school students in the district took advantage of summer learning opportunities this year. Incoming kindergarteners participated in school readiness activities, including reading letters, writing their

names and getting used to structured daily activities. First, second and third graders focused on improving reading, writing and math skills. Middle schoolers worked on skill development, while high school students were able to earn class credit. Four students graduated at summer's end.