

West End Day School  
2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT

# When Students Enter Our School, Our Doors Open To Their Families.





# THE WEST END DAY SCHOOL TEAM

Robert Aitchison, B.F.A., Art Specialist

Sarah Auslander, M.S., Head Teacher

Gabriella Bardelli, M.S., Associate Teacher

Andrew Barnes, M.S. Ed., Business Manager

Jessica Block, M.S. Ed., Head Teacher

Sanda Bulvanoski, M.S. Ed., Head Teacher

Carrie Catapano, Head of School

Jessica Chambers, M.A. Ed., Co-Education Head

Suzanne Gallanter, M.S. OTR/L, Occupational Therapist

Liza Gershen, L.C.S.W., Counselor

Jennifer Greene Susser, L.C.S.W., Admissions Head

James Harvey, Music Teacher

Leon Hoffman, M.D., Psychiatrist/ Psychoanalyst

Winston Horn, P.E. Teacher

Christine Kim, M.S., Speech-Language Pathologist

Greg Kinsey, M.A. Ed., Technology Specialist

Anastasia Manes, L.M.S.W., Counselor

Emma Marks, M.S. Ed., Head Teacher

Madeleine McGowan, M.S. Ed., Head Teacher

Kelsey Monfort, M.S. Ed., Associate Teacher

Abigail Moore, M.S. CCC-SLP, Head Speech-Language Pathologist

Yesenia Ortiz, Administrative Assistant

Zoe Palminteri, M.S. Ed., Associate Teacher

Florence Perry, Bookkeeper & Payroll Manager

Julio Reynoso, Head Custodian

Dalton Richardson, B.S., Director of Advancement

Samantha Rosenbaum, B.S., Head Teacher

Jennifer Rothman, L.C.S.W., Counselor

Alyson Rumley, M.S. CCC-SLP, Co-Education Head

Jacqueline Sibille, M.S. Ed., Associate Teacher

Jenna Stogsdill, L.C.S.W., Clinical Head

Haley Wise, M.S.W., P.E. & Group Counselor

Emma Yovanoff, L.C.S.W., DEIB Leader

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# MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

I am delighted to present this year's annual report, which focuses on our deep commitment to not only our students, but their families.

This commitment is, and has always been, an integral part of West End Day School. Our families are an indispensable part of our community.

They're not sitting on the sidelines – they are at the center of it all, always helping us to create and sustain a truly nurturing, inclusive, collaborative, and fun environment. West End Day School's driving principle is to always be *More Than A School* and the bonds we continue to forge with our extended families are a testament to the type of school we strive to be.

Our new gym space is the perfect example of how our collective vision can impact our school in the most tangible ways. After years of dedication and planning, it stands as a symbol of our commitment to creating spaces together – ones that can be enjoyed together. Unveiling this space has been one of my proudest moments of the year, as I know this space will serve as the home for so many exciting events for our sports, drama, and community-building endeavors for years to come.



Before you dive into this year's annual report, I want to take a moment to express my profound gratitude to every member of our loving community. Our students, with their resiliency and curiosity, inspire us every day. Our dedicated faculty and staff bring our mission to life, working tirelessly to foster an environment where our students can thrive both academically and socially. Our trustees who have played a pivotal role in advancing our unique mission. Our dedicated alum and generous donors whose continued support enables us to innovate and excel. And last, but of course not least, our families whose active engagement has enriched the lives of our students, our community, and our space in immeasurable ways.

As we look ahead, we do so with enthusiasm, anticipation and with a big smile. Together, we will continue to nurture a warm, inclusive, and supportive community that is *More Than A School*.

Carrie Catapano  
Head of School



# THE BIG (GYMNASIUM) REVEAL!

The Alumni Cocktail Celebration was the perfect way to kick things off. Our Alum parents and faculty and our current parents and faculty spent the night connecting – and reconnecting – and it was magical. A heartfelt thank you goes out to all of those who were able to attend and make the night so special!

We were absolutely bursting with excitement to officially unveil our brand new gymnasium! We marked the occasion with a wonderful Alumni Cocktail Celebration, welcoming our entire community for our first official celebration in our newly renovated space.

Our new gymnasium is state-of-the-art, giving our students plenty of room to learn and play. It also features a brand new stage for our theatrical performances and more. This amazing renovation is the result of our community coming together for years of planning, and it shows. We can't wait to see the positive impact it has on the lives of our students. Much like West End Day School is *More Than a School*, this gym is more than a gym: it's the center of our school where we come together as a community.





# EXPLORING OUR DIFFERENCES BRINGS US TOGETHER

Diversity, Equality, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) has always been at the heart of our school's mission, and we are incredibly proud of the progress we've made in embracing and celebrating our differences. Our team is always building upon ways to celebrate diversity in a meaningful way by exploring different cultures, perspectives, and backgrounds through our community events.

This year, our celebrations around diversity felt even more special because of the active involvement of our families in their planning. We wholeheartedly believe that our families are an integral part of our school community, and their insights, ideas, and cultural perspectives have enriched our programming. Together, we collaborated to create a lineup of diverse and engaging activities that brought a profound sense of togetherness and understanding to our community.



LUNAR NEW YEAR

We had a wonderful school-wide celebration in honor of Lunar New Year! Classes gathered to enjoy freshly made dumplings and everyone was given lucky pouches meant to bring joy and wealth into the year ahead. Everyone had the opportunity to adorn their pouches with festively decorated name tags written in Korean. And to capture all of the wonderful Lunar New Year memories, we had a photo booth! Special thanks to Tana Chung for being so instrumental in spearheading this celebration.

Our students took part in lessons and discussions around the significance of Diwali and learned all about its traditions and festivities. We celebrated with stories and crafts such as sand art rangoli, paper lanterns, and decorating clay diyas. To close out the event, we adorned our lobby with our wonderful craft creations. It was the perfect way to end this momentous celebration of lights!



DIWALI



PRIDE DAY

Our Student Council spearheaded this year's Pride Celebration and asked their peers to share in their own words what Pride means to them: *Loving Yourself No Matter What. Being Happy. Accepting All Love. Kindness and Leadership. Love Who You Love. Being Yourself.*

The kindness and love on display that day was so touching to see and experience, we were absolutely beaming with *Pride*!

In celebration of AAPI Heritage Month, a fan-favorite moment was having Kulture Kool visit WEDS to share their presentation, *Discover India*. Students engaged in an interactive lesson to learn more about Indian culture including a saree demonstration and a discussion around the diverse and vibrant customs across India. This wonderful all-school event culminated in a schoolwide Bollywood dance lesson enjoyed by all students and staff!

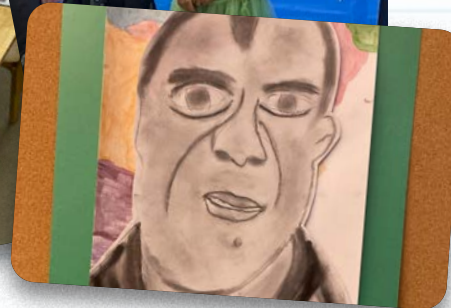


AAPI HERITAGE MONTH





# THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE: DIVERSITY ON DISPLAY



In addition to our vibrant community events, our students are also deeply immersed in their academic journey. They delved into a comprehensive study of Black artists, musicians, and pivotal figures exhibited during our **Fine Arts Exhibit & Performance**, with a focus on the illustrious Harlem Renaissance era. This immersive experience allowed our students to showcase their talent and knowledge, bringing the essence of this cultural movement to life through their own artwork and performances. Families who joined us for this captivating showcase were left in awe of the incredible creativity and dedication our students poured into their projects. It's moments like these that reaffirm our commitment to nurturing both a strong sense of community and a deep passion for learning in our students.

Students also took time to celebrate Black Joy by listening to music made popular during the Harlem Renaissance and reading stories from *Black Boy Joy* by Kwame Mbalia. We were even lucky enough to hear from local Harlem restaurant entrepreneur, Melba Wilson, about her life growing up in Harlem and the deep influence the neighborhood has had on her restaurant.

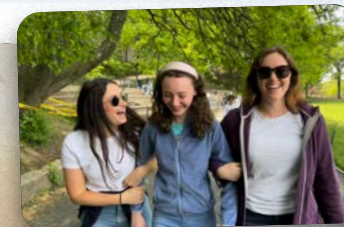


## STUDENT COUNCIL: LEADING THE WAY IN OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH POSITIVITY IN ACTION

Our Student Council is the backbone of our school's student leadership and they continue to inspire all of us with their remarkable initiatives. They exemplify leadership in action and their dedication to making a positive impact on the world around them is nothing short of extraordinary.

This year, our student leaders took the reins on **Giving Tuesday**, displaying their compassion and empathy by organizing a school-wide fundraiser aimed at aiding displaced shelter animals in Ukraine. Their boundless enthusiasm and creativity were on full display as they hosted a heartwarming breakfast for their fellow students and staff, using the occasion to spark meaningful dialogues about this critical cause.

But their remarkable efforts didn't stop there. Our Student Council also orchestrated a **Miles for Moore Walk-a-thon** at Riverside Park, a testament to their unwavering support and love for our dear Ms. Moore during her recovery. This event not only showed their resilience and commitment to community, but also brought us all together in a spirit of unity and solidarity – like the true family that WEDS is! Our Student Council's dedication serves as a shining example, reminding us all of the positive change we can achieve when we come together as a community.







## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A WEDS FAMILY:

We love celebrating our families and we love celebrating *with* our families. Being a WEDS family member means that you have access to our team each and every day. It also means that you have an entire community to rally with, celebrate with, and make forever memories with. And this year, the power of our family community has only grown stronger.

We began the year with our **Parent and Faculty Rooftop Cocktail Party**, where we kicked off the school year together. It's always a beautiful night to connect and hear from our Parents' Association leaders about our goals and visions for the year ahead. From there on, each event was full of bringing the community together – from supporting our student council fundraisers to supporting events and hosting parent mingles. Whole-school events like our **Halloween Carnival**, **I LOVE to Read Day** and **Field Day** are also events that our parents and admin team design together and are always full of spirit and smiles. Family Game Night is always a fan favorite, too, as it brings in two cornerstones of WEDS: our commitment to play and the importance of doing so with the whole family.

We make sure to find ways for students to shine and we go above and beyond to showcase their hard work for their families through events like our **Winter Sing** and our **STEM Fair**. And families are invited to bring every year to a momentous close at our **June Awards Ceremony & Performance**. This year, our talented students took center stage in our spectacular production of *High School Musical: A WEDS Musical*. It was a grand showcase of the incredible dedication and hard work it takes to put on a production – and the energizing performances left our audience with the feeling that *We're All In This Together*. The Awards Ceremony was a moment of celebration and recognition, where we honored the outstanding achievements and contributions of our students across various facets of school life. But our parents didn't just sit back (and cry some happy tears); they also presented each teacher with gratitude remarks and flowers to show them just how much they mean to the students and their families.



## EVERYTHING





# ONE NIGHT, EVERY REASON TO BE THERE.



Words won't do justice to how amazing our Spring Benefit was this year – the memories still have us smiling months later. The love, support, and WEDS spirit that filled the room was so special and we are so grateful to the entire WEDS community for rallying behind our one-of-a-kind school. The benefit was especially memorable this year, because we honored one of our most beloved faculty members, Jennifer Susser, for her decade of service to WEDS. The tribute video dedicated to Jennifer's honor, along with the touching remarks from Motoni Hodges further exemplified the remarkable influence Jennifer has made on our community. We are beyond lucky to have Jennifer as part of our loving school community and we are grateful for her impact on our *More Than A School*.

We were also able to raise over \$140,000 that evening in support of our technology and physical education initiatives and are overjoyed by the overwhelming enthusiasm and contributions from our entire community. We want to once again extend our gratitude to our remarkable community for making the benefit a true success! We would also like to thank our wonderful Spring Benefit Committee – Jill Margolies (Chair), Tana Chung, Anna Hindell, Hillary Lipstein, Amanda Robbins, & Leslie Spitalnick – for all of their hard work and support. We couldn't have done it without you!

## HONORING JENNIFER SUSSER FOR OVER A DECADE OF PUTTING OUR STUDENTS (AND THEIR FAMILIES) ON THE RIGHT PATH

We were thrilled to celebrate our beloved Admissions Head, Jennifer Susser, for her remarkable dedication and service to our school. Her tireless efforts, passion, and expertise have played a pivotal role in shaping the present day and the future of our school and have touched the lives of countless students and families. Jennifer is our community's first face as she introduces families to WEDS and gets students – and their families – on the path to success. She is *More Than* an Admissions Head as she also counsels our families and goes above and beyond to support all aspects of a child's planning needs. Serving as a placement coordinator, Jen also oversees ex-missions placing, ensuring our students have the best path forward when they are ready for their next school journey and beyond.

Here's to many more years of Jennifer's inspiring leadership and the continued growth and success of our community.





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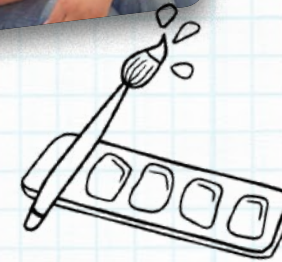
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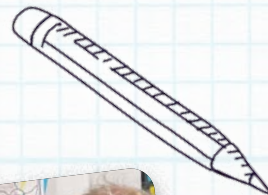
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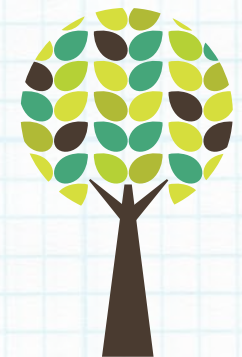
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Sarak Wartski  
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Carrie Catapano  
Jessica Chambers  
Liza Gershen  
Winston Horn  
Greg Kinsey  
Anastasia Manes



Madeleine McGowan  
Kati O'Keife  
Dalton Richardson  
Samantha Rosenbaum  
Alyson Rumley  
Jacqueline Sibille  
Jenna Stogsdill  
Sarah Treanor





# ANNUAL FUND

We have so much gratitude for the support West End Day School receives each year from our generous community of families, alumni, trustees, faculty, and friends. Our Giving Tree continues to become more green and full each year and we thank you all for your tremendous support. Your commitment to our Mission and students is what makes us *More Than A School!*



## BRANCHES \$7,500

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Jennifer Schimmel and Robert Moskowitz



## Gold Leaves \$5,000

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Bob & Stacey Seltzer  
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Jodi & Patrick Milner  
Caroline Turner



## Bronze Leaves \$1,000

Kara Alfonso & Jeremy Tennis  
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Quiara Alegría Hudes & Ray Beauchamp

In Honor of Rose, Ms. Gershen, & the Incredible WEDS Staff

In Memory of Steven Lederman  
The Seligman Family Foundation



## Green Leaves \$500

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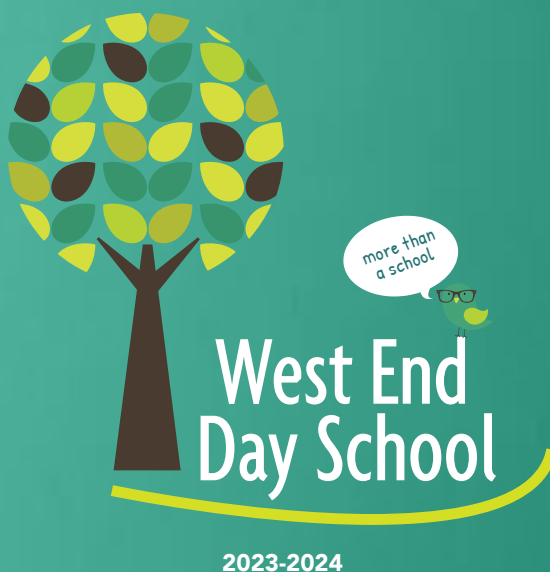


We would like to thank our wonderful PA Officers – Angela Dirks, Jill Margolies, Christine Kattan, and Leslie Spitalnick – for their unwavering support throughout the school year. We are so grateful for all that you do for our community!

We gratefully acknowledged the donors who have supported West End Day School with gifts between July 1, 2022– June 30th 2023. Every effort has been made to include each person or organization who contributed to West End Day School during this period. If a name has been omitted or listed incorrectly, please accept our apologies and notify the Office of Advancement at [drichardson@westenddayschool.org](mailto:drichardson@westenddayschool.org).







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