

School Governance Council Meeting 12/13/2023

Attendance:

Dr. Maria Stasaitis

Doug Cheatham

Jessica Gaddis

Daniel Cocchiola

Isa Alves

Dan Ferreira

Hanalei Cocchiola

Samantha Nicolasora

Peggy Terhune

Dr. Stasaitis - Thankful for feedback, support, and everyone coming together. Looking forward to the Magnet Schools of America Conference in NYC. Dr. Stasaitis had an opportunity to present at the Baltimore Magnet Schools of America a few years ago. A couple of teachers had opportunities to attend events and conferences regarding magnet schools. Great opportunities to compare and contrast ideas. For example, we continue to talk about block scheduling. Next steps, we will collaborate with Wilby High School and teachers will have an opportunity to observe each other.

Mr. Cheatham – thankful for educational opportunities at WAMS.

Mrs. Terhune – enjoys the block schedules - really benefits students.

Dr. Stasaitis - dancers can change and work on routines. Also, academically teachers and students can really dive into lessons. Block scheduling also allows for additional mini lessons and for students to work in groups.

Miss Cocchiola – 87-minute block schedule is a long time, but it is good in helping to remember and reinforce the lessons. Sometimes there is extra time in class due to the lengthy class time.

Miss Nicolasora – 87-minute block scheduling helps in planning her classes, balancing clubs, homework, work, and academics. Feels more organized. Art classes better for finishing projects.

Mr. Cocchiola – faculty getting to successful planning and recapping the learning. Expressed that Dr. Stasaitis continues to provide support and is very helpful to staff.

Dr. Stasaitis – is currently working with the 6th graders – “What do you like about WAMS and how are you adjusting? A conversation with the 7th graders will be next.

Dr. S - Ferreira has been in many of the art classes and supporting staff. With Mr. Ferreira's background, he is able to provide feedback and extra support to the WAMS staff. Mr. Rivera is now the Performing Arts Department Chairperson at WAMS.

Safety – planning on adding 25 new walkie talkies to add to the safety of the building Also adding signs in PA building and Counseling Department. Welcoming additional comments to help continue to improve our building.

Mrs. Alves – her own children attended after-school program at the Palace Theater

“Turn the Beat Around: Celebrating Culture and Identity through Music”
Featuring On Your Feet! The Story of Emilio & Gloria Estefan & Hairspray

This after-school program allowed students to participate in workshops to learn about theater, culture, history, backstage tour, costumes, language, music, community, identity, and so much more. The program featured guest speakers, WAMS teachers, family celebration, and final project presentations. Students had a chance to meet celebrities in the industry such as a Costumer, Music Director, and a Broadway Actress.

The students also received complimentary tickets to “On Your Feet!” and coming in January “Hairspray.” At the “On Your Feet!” show, the actors and actresses offered an exclusive talk back to the students and shared words of encouragement. During the talkback, students also received signed autographed posters from the entire cast. Alves family thoroughly enjoyed this experience and are looking forward to next year's program.

Ms. Gaddis -

General notes

- We had a great weekend with our new musical, Dia de los Reyes, which included two WAMS students – Annabella Parra & Skylar Jacobs
- Our touring production of the same show with our three professional actors playing multiple parts will go to schools in January

WAMS programs

- The script for the middle school production of *Sadako and the 1,000 Paper Cranes* is in process and will be complete by January 2nd
- *Romeo and Juliet* is cast with Mr. Schulte's Shakespeare class, and has begun staging

Mrs. Terhune –

WAMS/Palace

- The Palace After School program, *Turn the Beat Around: Celebrating Culture and Identity through Music!* just finished its workshop portion with a fantastic afternoon of student project presentations! Next up are the two Broadway shows, *On Your Feet!* and *Hairspray*.

- We have a talk-back with 8 cast members scheduled for after the Saturday *On Your Feet!* matinee.
- There is a dance masterclass this Friday at 12:15 at WAMS with *On Your Feet!* cast members.
- WAMS students continue to join the Learning in the Wings program, getting hands-on experience in our Broadway and other touring shows.
- This month, WAMS has Chorus, Band, and Dance rehearsals and concerts onstage.
- The WAMS video class, along with WAMS Alumni Viola Flowers and Naugatuck-born Nathaniel Zembruski (who will be conducting his First Broadway road show for *Hairspray*), are working to put together a promo video interview for WAMS/Palace social media usage and possibly submit to FOX Kids 61.
- Hairspray date change – 1:00 pm matinee show on January 17, 2024.

Dr. S - auditions took place in the middle of December for “Our Town” and “Newsies”

Jane Do No More is a 3-minute video that WAMS students just completed. This project came from the mayor’s office.

Mr. Cocchiola – parent conferences in-person was great. The auditions for “Our Town” and “Newsies” were held at the same time. Recommended that shows should be spaced out whenever possible. Students had to choose one or the other.

Mr. Ferreira – explained that we are at the mercy of the Palace Theater available dates. For example, “Tina Turner” is not happening due to a scheduling conflict.

Dr. S - Jan 22-26 School Choice – planning a fun week for students – pep rally, etc. They have Chosen WAMS!!!!

Miss Cocchiola - has completed middle of the year HMH testing. Auditioned for “Our Town” and “Newsies.” Stated that it was very helpful to separate the middle & high school auditions.

Miss Nicolasora - complimented how 6th grade gets to rotate and experience the Arts. She feels comfortable that her sister is here with all the supports in place.

Dr. S - Tim Scalzo Lighting new hire!! Tim is able to look at technical equipment. New Attendance Counselor is starting in January 2024! WAMS is still looking to hire high school tutor and hall monitor. Currently, all certified teachers on board at WAMS.

Mr. Ferreira - supporting new department chair Mr. Rivera and has also been supporting the academic and theater departments. New hire Tim Scalzo is excited to work and be shadowed by the students.

Lottery Day – 1350 applications 120 openings 6th grade & 40 to 50 openings in the high school.

Application process – WAMS seeking a partnership with Watertown. January 2024 partners have to sign back up to provide busing. Looking at the application process to possibly ask questions about students' interest in WAMS. For example - Why do you want to come here? More updates next month.

Next meeting Wednesday, January 17, 2023 @ 9:00 am