

Peekskill CSD PTO Committee/Building Report Form

Submission Date: 9/23/2016

Month & Year: September 2016

Committee/Building: Peekskill High School

Items Requiring a Vote:

N/A

Items Requiring Discussion:

- None

Items for Information Only:

- The students and staff of Peekskill High School started the school year by being introduced to a motivational film entitled, “McFarland USA”. This movie is based on the remarkable McFarland High School Cross-Country Team which, until it was recently forced to compete against much larger schools, dominated its division in the sport state-wide for more than 20 years. Located in California's agriculturally rich San Joaquin Valley, McFarland is one of the poorest communities in California. Its high school students are the children of Hispanic "pickers," farmworkers paid low wages for back-breaking work in the fields — actually, some of the students work in the fields themselves before school, after school, and on the weekends. It turns out that, some of the students run to and from school and the fields each day and . . . they are really fast. The film is based on a true story of the first McFarland championship team and how the discipline that the students learned in running, and the boost to their self-esteem from winning against students from wealthier more advantaged schools, allowed the students to go to college and achieve more in their lives than they had ever dreamed possible. The film also presents a fictional tale of the coach who leads the team to victory. There were many lessons drawn from this movie which highlighted key concepts such as *teamwork, perseverance, grit, multiculturalism, and resiliency*. In the days following the movie, the English teachers facilitated classroom discussions with students and engaged them in writing a reflection as a culminating activity.
- The students were introduced to the enforcement of rules and procedures outlined in the Code of Conduct regarding the use of electronic devices and the dress code. The students have responded well and are adhering to the expectations.
- In honor of Hispanic Heritage month, the Peekskill High School Latino Culture Club sponsored an event featuring Justice Carmen Velasquez, New York State Supreme Court Justice. Justice Velasquez is the first Ecuadorian judge in the country.
- Parents are requested to sign up for the parent portal with Mrs. Maria Gordineer in the high school guidance office. This program will allow you to monitor your child’s attendance, completion of classwork and assignments.

- The student agenda books arrived this week and were distributed to students by their English teachers. Students are encouraged to use the agenda book daily to record homework assignments and due dates of projects.
- Our Open House is scheduled for September 29th from 6 to 8:40 and we are looking forward to a great turnout.
- Towards the end of October, students in the 11th and 12th grades will take a two night trip to Washington, D. C. There were 50 seats available and the students responded with tremendous interest. The seats were sold-out within the first 7 days of school. Because of the strong interest, there may be a second trip scheduled for the spring.
- The Peekskill High School Robotics Team is gearing up to host its first robotics competition in December 2016. Please note that parent volunteers will be needed. Additional information will be provided in the coming weeks.
- The high school administrative team welcomed 35 fathers to the "Dads Take Your Child to School" Day. We started off the day with a light breakfast for the Dads and their children. Mr. Martin McDonald, Parent Liaison and dad to Malachi, encouraged dads to be involved and support PHS. Mr. Arthur, Principal, then engaged dads in discussion regarding the roles and responsibilities of fathers in school. Mr. Arthur highlighted his experience of being a dad of four children and listed multiple examples of ways dads can be involved in their children's school. Mr. Arthur stressed the importance of parents monitoring students' ability to access social media sites.

Submitted by: Rodney Arthur, Principal