

WAPPINGERS

Central School District



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JOSE CARRION, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS



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Dear WCSD Community,

Our students have completed their first semester and are now entering into the second semester. During these next few months, our District will be extremely busy as we continue to prepare a school budget for approval by the Board of Education and the community, prepare students for the New York State Assessments in grades 3-8, finalize the plans for District-wide improvements, and ensure that all of our seniors are successfully ready for graduation. While there are many items being worked on by our District and building-level leaders, teachers, and support staff our focus in the coming months is on the above items as they provide the foundation for our work moving forward.

On February 8, we will hold our second preliminary budget presentation to the Board of Education. As the budget season continues, we add to the General Support and Instruction presentation by providing the Board and the community with a presentation on the Undistributed and Transportation component of the budget. Once again, these items are extremely preliminary but necessary to ensure that we create a budget that reflects our mission statement and core values, as well as attain recommendations, comments, and considerations from our Board and the community as a whole. To provide the community with additional opportunities to ask informal questions about the budget process the District held two ABC (A Budget Conversation) workshops. While attendance was low, at the first workshop, we recognize this is still a new method of communication for our community. We hope future opportunities will increase community participation. However, it is important to note that you can submit questions related to the budget to a dedicated e-mail address: budget@wcsdny.org.

We have also received important news from the New York State Education Department regarding "Changes for the 2016 Grades 3-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests." Please note that the WCSD encourages full participation of all students in grades 3-8 on their assessments. The changes that have been made to the assessments are as follows:

- Greater involvement of educators in the test development process
- Decrease in the number of test questions, and
- A shift to untimed testing.

For more detailed information, please visit the [New York State Education website](#).

At the January 25, 2016, Board of Education meeting, our Director of Facilities and Operations, Mr. Ron Broas, along with Mr. Phillip Zemke from Rhinebeck Architect, continued with a presentation outlining District-wide improvements. The improvements that are long overdue in our District include meeting American Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and improving our Athletic and Fine and Performing Arts facilities. Please visit the presentation on [District-wide improvements](#).

I am sure many of us remember our senior year in high school. This age is truly a very exciting time for our students. This is a life-changing moment where students begin to contemplate and plan for their future. As we move forward into the second half of the school year, our seniors are navigating their next journey to college or a future career. It is important that we work together as a team to provide all of the necessary supports, encouragement, and interventions, if necessary, to help make this transition successful for all. This will be their very first step as an adult and should be an exciting step as they end their high school careers.

Lastly, as per our Strategic Plan, our new website has been organized to allow you to maneuver and attain information. There are so many great events, activities, and opportunities that our District and building-level leaders, teachers and support staff are doing for our WCSD students. We are a very fortunate District where we can take pride in our educators and all other employees that are committed to living by our core values and provide our students with high-quality instruction and opportunities. In a District our size, it is quite a task to highlight all of the coming events. Therefore, it is important to visit our District and local school websites. To provide a brief sample of the highlights provided on our website:

- February 27 STEM Fair (Grades 5-12)
- Focus of Professional Development Day on February 12
- February 18 Celebration of President's Day
- Black History Month
- Musical Festivals throughout the month
- COMING SOON: Our second WCSD Parental Workshop, April 2, 2016.

We look forward to seeing you at any of our District-wide and school events. Lastly, I end by showcasing one of our core values, "We believe that everyone can

reach their potential and when they do, both they and the community thrive," as I believe this encompasses what is currently happening in the District.

Sincerely,

José L. Carrión
Superintendent of Schools