

SUPERINTENDENT'S BRIEF

Together, We are the Champions for Children in Poughkeepsie City School District

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Sealy is a board liaison for all students



Peter Sealy District Board of Education student liaison

Poughkeepsie High School Senior Peter Sealy is the District Board of Education student liaison for the 2023-2024 school year. The primary function of the board liaison is to ensure that the board and superintendent are aware of issues critical to students, as well as to get feedback from them. School counselor Stacey Lee encouraged Sealy to apply for the position, who noted that he was inspired by the efforts of previous liaisons Harrison Brisbon McKinnon and Gabrihana Jones.

"I was like, 'OK, I can make a change like them or try to uplift the school,'" Sealy said. "Sometimes people can't speak for themselves and I want to speak for them."

Before his first board meeting Sealy surveyed his fellow students to see what issues they wanted addressed. They voiced concerns about feeling underserved by staff and having better quality

school lunches. "Their input is vital," Sealy said of the students. "It's been eye-opening."

While he was nervous to speak in front of the Board at first, Sealy appreciated them being welcoming to him and receptive to the ideas he presented.

"It shows that I could make a lot of change," Sealy said. "They seem like they're open and want to help the students."

During the year, Sealy will also converse with the PHS Student Government on issues, as well as survey students in Poughkeepsie Middle School and the elementary schools for their opinions.

"They're the future and they always have input," Sealy said of the younger kids. "I plan to go over there to give the future a hand."

Sealy is a member of PHS' National Honor Society chapter and the Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, which he credits with preparing him for public speaking opportunities and performing community service.

"These programs put me in touch with the community," he said. "JROTC is the first program that made me speak."

"This young man is a young man I admire a great deal because of his work ethic and his presence as a member of the JROTC", shared Dr. Eric Jay Rosser, superintendent at the November 1st, 2023 Board meeting. "Rosser further stated that he has a lot of confidence that beyond enrollment in the Poughkeepsie City School District, he will continue to do great things for himself and also the community."

Vassar College visits open students' eyes

Even though there are many years before high school graduation, first and ninth-grade students from the Poughkeepsie City School District experienced university life on Nov. 17 when they took separate tours of Vassar College.

Vassar Sophomore Shayni Richter leads first graders from the Early Learning Center



Early Learning Center

Dressed in matching red shirts that read "Future College Student," first graders from the Early Learning Center dual language program stopped by the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center. Student workers asked them what they saw in the various paintings and then had them paint their masterpieces on coffee filters inspired by Betty Blayton's 1983 work "Vibes Penetrated."

Vassar sophomore Shayni Richter, a tutor for new language learners at ELC, showed students the college library and her dorm room and brought them to the cafeteria for lunch. College President Elizabeth Bradley even stopped by to meet students.

Dual language teacher Maribeth Smith worked with Vassar English Language Learners Outreach Program John Bradley to arrange the visit.

"The students were mesmerized by the library," Smith said. "We had a super day."

As part of the [District's 5-Year Strategic Plan](#) preparing students to be career and college-ready is a priority and Ms. Smith wants to expose her young learners to a college environment as early as possible to show them every post-high school opportunity.

"You wait until they're much older, it's just not the same," Smith explained.

Smith was impressed by her students' active engagement both in the museum and on campus, which included asking Richter relevant questions about campus life.

"Now we have so much to talk about in our classroom and so much to write about," she said. "The students came back to the ELC talking about the art and about going to college."

Quah'mir Parker enjoyed the trip, especially seeing the dorm room.

"We learned about where the students live," Parker said. "It's fun."

Natali Munguia Claros counted the art project and visiting the library as her favorite parts of the trip.

"They had a lot of books to read," Munguia Claros said about the library.

Poughkeepsie High School

Eager tour guides, some of whom are PHS graduates, led Poughkeepsie High School freshmen around campus. The freshmen participated in unique activities where they built their schedule out of a list of potential classes and designed their ideal dorm room with small boxes and doll furniture.

For College Readiness & Workforce Education Counselor Kelly Semexant, it is crucial to take freshmen and even middle schoolers on college visits to give them more time to work towards getting into one and explore the means to get there.

"If they see what Vassar has to offer them, what it takes to get here, maybe it will change the mindset of students that don't think they can go to college," Semexant said. "That's the whole theme of today, picture yourself in college, and let's start working towards it."

While Aicinna Ray visited Vassar before, she enjoyed seeing the science classrooms, as she wanted to pursue either biology or marine biology in college.

"I'm a very big science person, so it's really fun for me," Ray said. "I've gotten to see a lot more than I have before."



Vassar Junior Tianyu Xiong shows Poughkeepsie High School students around Vassar.



Ray hopes to attend more colleges and appreciates having the opportunity to learn about all post-high school options.

"I think it's very helpful to know that we have options," she said. "It's a good tool we can use."

Visiting Vassar in freshman year was beneficial to Luis Aguilar. "It gives us more time to think about what colleges we choose," Aguilar said. "Learning it earlier is more helpful."



Sankung Susso Coach of the Year.

Peers name Sankung Susso Coach of the Year

Sankung Susso was chosen by his peers as the Conference 1 League A Coach of the Year for taking a step toward building a varsity girls' soccer program at Poughkeepsie High School.

"This year, I was just focused on recruiting and building a team," said the first-year coach and global studies teacher at the high school. "Thus, I recruited enough to put together a team. Now, we can build on that to make the team competitive next season. I'm looking forward to it."

Poughkeepsie competed in the same league with three of the region's top soccer programs in Arlington, John Jay, and Roy C. Ketcham. Susso highlighted the play of goalie Mahogany Jean-Charles and team captain Nyla Anderson.

"I love the team spirit in each of the athletes," said Susso.

"Although none of the girls ever played a competitive sport in the past, they were very quick to learn the basics of the game.

They worked so hard because they wanted to make a difference in their lives and feel like they were representing their school community."

Winter concerts begin next week

Poughkeepsie City School District schools are getting into the holiday spirit with winter music concerts and the public is invited to attend and enjoy the following performances. Please come show your support for our students and music programs.

- **Dec. 12:** PMS Winter concert, 6:30 p.m.
- **Dec. 14:** Krieger K-3 winter concert, 9 a.m.
- **Dec. 14:** PHS winter concert, 6:30 p.m. This concert will feature the PHS Orchestra, Chorus, Jazz Ensemble, Concert Band, and Wind Ensemble, and will mark the debut of a new ensemble, the Poughkeepsie Jazz Combo.
- **Dec. 20:** Clinton Winter concert, 6 p.m.
- **Jan. 11:** Krieger 4-5 Winter concert, 9 a.m.

Winter Concerts	
Dec 12	PMS Winter concert, 6:30 pm
Dec 14	Krieger k-3 Winter concert 9am PHS- Winter concert 6:30 pm
Dec 20	Clinton Winter concert, 6:00 pm
Jan 11	Krieger 4-5 Winter concert 9:00 am