

Annual Report 2016 - 2017



FOSTERING **ACCEPTANCE**
FOR MORE THAN
THREE DECADES



West End
Day School

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Message from Head of School

At West End Day, we know that educating children—especially children who have vulnerabilities—is a big job. We also know that there is no greater opportunity. Our 30 years of educational success starts with the deeply-rooted belief that when you work hard to understand and accept each child's unique way of thinking and feeling, amazing things follow. Our approach not only helps our children recognize their distinct (and amazing!) differences, but it empowers them to celebrate them.

The high value we place on inspiring our students to embrace and celebrate their differences is nothing new for us. Since our inception in 1985, a vast component of our philosophy has been to instill acceptance, tolerance, and compassion in our children, as well as their peers and the world around them. Bringing these principles to life through art in our Annual Art Exhibit and our Winter Sing was certainly a highlight for me.



West End Day School continues to be so much “more than a school,” and I continue to be so very proud and thankful for our faculty who understands how to set high academic standards while providing a safe haven for our students.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our donors for championing for us as we embark upon a capital campaign to revitalize our entire school. It is their strong commitment that has given us the opportunity to initiate our biggest plans yet.

And last, but never ever least, I would like to thank our extraordinary students who are both resilient and brave and who could teach us all a thing or two about being generous, open, and kind. Every day I'm in awe of their smarts and their spirit. Thank you all for being a part of the West End Day family.

Sincerely,

Carrie Catapano, LCSW

Head of School

Our Mission Statement

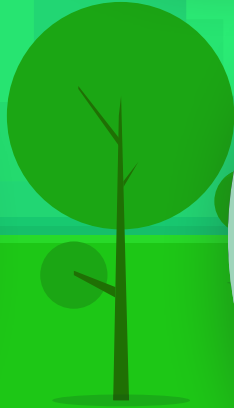
WEST END DAY IS “MORE THAN A SCHOOL”

it is a community of students, staff and parents who have a shared vision. We create a safe haven for learning, strive to be a trusted partner for parents and foster the development of resiliency in children to build a strong foundation for their lifelong success.

TOGETHER WE:

- Establish an individualized and challenging educational program that supports our bright students and their unique learning styles.
- Cultivate our students' inner strengths by recognizing the impact emotions have on learning.
- Provide a flexible atmosphere, where children feel comfortable meeting high expectations.
- Promote, nurture and engage relationships, because they are central to our well-being.
- Ensure that families feel valued, supported and understood.





Celebrating the Beauty of Acceptance Through Art & Language

This year, West End Day School celebrated "Acceptance Through Art and Language" in its Annual Art Exhibit. The students explored the diversity within their own communities, using the inclusive ideas and sentiments of famous thinkers as their starting point.

Classes created art projects that focused on coexistence in a world full of differences. They chose quotes from historical figures that demonstrated acceptance of ourselves on an individual level and the acceptance of others.

Recognizing the unique strengths of our students, each child had the choice to interpret the quote verbally, using art, or through building. Then the students created visual representations of their chosen quotes.



Younger classes created beautiful snowflakes using words that characterized diversity and also created three-dimensional winter scenes depicting diversity using unique shapes, textures and styles.

The exhibit was brimming with beautiful artwork, poetic writings, inspiration, and admiration; with all of it stemming from one word: acceptance.



Singing our Praises for Acceptance through Music

West End Day School continued to explore the idea of acceptance, this time musically, in this year's Winter Sing entitled "Promoting Acceptance through Music."

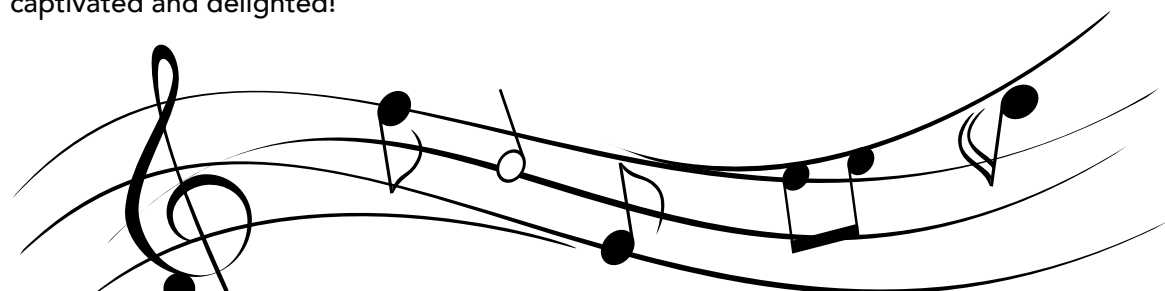
Our music teacher, Mr. Schatz, selected songs that incorporated ideas of inclusiveness and togetherness. Our students also put their art skills to use, creating an inspirational backdrop for the show.

"If You Want to Sing Out, Sing Out," by Cat Stevens was celebrated by our younger students as an anthem of individuality, encouraging them to follow their own path in life and letting them know that there are opportunities to do so everywhere.

Our older classes performed "Your Song," by Elton John, to promote togetherness

through music. The full WEDS Chorus sang "Home," by Phillip Phillips, bringing its message of inclusiveness and support to life.

The Winter Sing closed with the entire school performing "Let it Be" by the Beatles. This renowned song spoke perfectly to our theme of acceptance for an audience that was both captivated and delighted!





Inspiring our Community through Giving



At WEDS, we believe in nurturing our children's sense of goodwill and when Thanksgiving came around, we thought it would be the perfect opportunity to put our philosophy into action. So we traded in our traditional Thanksgiving Feast and started our very first Community Thankfulness Day, where we joined together to give back to the larger New York City Community.

Our students, staff, and parents teamed up with the organization Family-to-Family, and worked with them to make Birthday Bags for less fortunate children. Each Birthday Bag was decorated and filled with toys, books, birthday cake supplies, and thoughtful cards.

That's not where the giving stopped either. Feeling inspired to do more to give back, we also teamed up with Post Card Pick-Me-Up and sent encouraging postcards to both terminally ill and elderly patients. Our oldest class also hosted a food drive for City Harvest.

The spirit of giving back spread throughout our community. That feeling really hit home when community members that they helped shared their love and support of West End Day School with their very own #UNselfie.

The day was so meaningful for the entire community, we declared Community Thankfulness Day a new tradition for WEDS!

Election of 2016: The Winner is in!



Here at WEDS, we embrace not just teaching our students about the electoral process, but also making them an active part of it. That's why, every four years, we follow the electoral process to vote for West End Day School's mascot.

The Eagle, our incumbent mascot, ran against the challenger, the Leopard. In a close race, our students voted for...the Leopard! We were proud of their decision to elect the Leopard as our school representative due to its qualities of uniqueness, adaptability, strength—and for being rare and endangered.

For WEDS, the 2016 election was cause for great celebration! We'll have to see if the Leopard delivers!



This year, our talented students outdid themselves with the production of The Lion King. Through acting, music, and art, our students reveled in the classic show's messages of: accepting who you are, the importance of being part of a pack, moving on from your past, and one of our favorites: that your parents have an influence on you!

Hakuna Matata at WEDS

Our celebrated play director, Ms. Fiasconaro, led the production along with Ms. Carhart, Ms. Stogsdill, Mr. Schatz, and Mr. Robert. In addition to developing their characters and performing their songs, the students created the backdrops and props to bring the African Savannah to life. Each class had a vital role in making this production come alive. The ensemble received at least three standing ovations and of course, Ms. Cat declared it (and meant it) the best production in WEDS history!



When our Giving Tree grows, our children blossom

We are so thankful for the support West End Day School receives each year from our generous community of families, alumni, trustees, faculty, and friends. It is because of all of you that our Giving Tree continues to flourish each year and is fuller than ever! Thank you all for your tremendous support.

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We have imagined the possibilities for our future, and we have a master plan to make our school environment the best it can be for our children.

WE'RE STARTING FROM THE GROUND UP. Our first phase includes the expansion of our ground floor classrooms. The new spaces will boast more space for individualized learning and play, plus plenty of sunshine to keep the mood bright.

WE WON'T STOP THERE. Our balcony classrooms will also be redesigned with enclosures that will make for beautiful, innovative, and calming classroom spaces. There will be more room—and more light—for our already bright students.

THEN, THE PLACES WHERE WE COME TOGETHER WILL COME TOGETHER.

Our master plan includes redesigning all of our floors to accommodate our growth.

Updates also include modernizing our auditorium, physical education space, and roof.

THE FINISHING TOUCHES. Once we dramatically improve all five of our floors, it will make our exterior shine brighter than ever. Our final phases will include re-facing our entire front so our home is complete.

Classroom Transformations: Setting the Scene for Successful Learning



A Transformational Night

Our Spring Benefit is always a remarkable evening, and this year did not disappoint. Our venue was in the heart of the trendy Meatpacking District at the stunning and spacious FIG & OLIVE. We spent the evening celebrating the incredible transformations and achievements we've made throughout the years—both for our students and our larger community.

The room was buzzing as we unveiled our master plan for our biggest transformation yet. With the start of our capital campaign, "Classroom Transformation: Setting the Scene for Successful Learning," we will be transforming (and brightening!) our classroom spaces. "Together We" raised a gross total of \$130,583 towards our plans. We are endlessly grateful for the commitment and generosity of our community of faculty, board, alumni and friends on this night—and every other day throughout the year.





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