

At high school TV studio, it's lights, camera, action!

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Who knows, the next Jerry Bruckheimer or Aaron Spelling might be peering out from a camera right now at Weston High School. The school is putting finishing touches on a new state-of-the-art video production studio, dubbed "Trojan TV," which will offer students the opportunity to learn more about broadcasting and get hands-on experience producing television shows.

Initial plans call for students to use the studio to film a news magazine show, athletic events, artistic performances, and school board meetings.

But there are endless possibilities for what the studio can be used for, according to Dave Eger, who teaches videography at the high school.

"The potential for cross-curricular involvement is extraordinary.

Imagine the journalism class writing copy for drama students to read on camera while the videography kids operate the equipment, bringing in graphics and music created by our art students. This is more than just an extension of the videography class - it is an entirely new entity," he said.

To date, the studio has cost \$88,000 to equip, and was funded through donations from several local organizations, including the Weston Education Foundation, the primary benefactor, as well as Weston Arts, and the PTOs.

Maria Kalivas, chairman of the Weston Education Foundation, said she wasn't initially convinced that a TV studio was needed at the high school, but has since changed her mind.

"My initial reaction was-of all the things we need, do we need this? But then the more I learned about the plans for the studio, the more I was convinced. Now I am sold on it," she said.

One of things that sold Ms. Kalivas was an explanation by Lisa Wolak, the principal at Weston High School, as to why the studio would be an important part of the school's curriculum.

"Eighty percent of the jobs that kids currently in high school will get after they complete college haven't even been created yet," Ms. Wolak said. "Kids need to learn the fundamentals, but they also need to learn how to think.

The future depends on them being able to take ideas and go to the next levels with them." Ms. Kalivas also appreciates how students in various disciplines will need to interact with each other in order to produce a show.

"From a high school standpoint, the television studio teaches students more than how to run a camera. Someone has to write scripts and figure out who is going to say what.

It encourages students to work together in collaboration, meet deadlines, and get a quality product on the air," she said.

Ms. Kalivas noted that there are many broadcasting professionals who live in town and may want to get involved as mentors. "This is an opportunity for the entire community," she said.

Channel 78 As students start to learn how to use the new video equipment and learn techniques such as three-camera shooting, plans are underway to start filming and airing broadcasts on channel 78, Cablevision's educational public access station.

"We should be ready by the end of the year," Mr. Eger said.

Mr. Eger teaches videography and advanced videography, two cutting edge courses that will make use of the studio.

In the basic videography class, students are taught to master the use of equipment and understand the roles and techniques involved in film, video and television production.

Students are involved in both individual and cooperative projects, as well as introductory lectures and audiovisual stimuli.

The course is designed to help students develop a critical eye toward comprehending and using contemporary media.

Mr. Eger is also putting together a proposal for a new course in television production, which will focus on shooting a show with one camera and then piecing it together.

"I am proposing the class for next year. In the meantime, students in my videography class are very enthused about the studio," Mr. Eger said.

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