

**AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5**  
**Bethany Orange Woodbridge**  
**25 Newton Road, Woodbridge, Connecticut 06525**



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Superintendent's Report – April 2017

Continuously improve instruction, cultivate creativity, and enhance student engagement and performance.

Enhance the efficient and effective use of resources.

Foster a supportive climate for students and adults.

**Instruction**

**Reimagined High School.** On April 5, 2017, Amity Regional High School senior Seung I Yu and principal Anna Mahon attended a meeting with the Connecticut State Board of Education as part of the presentation from CAPSS for the Reimagined High School Project. This presentation included four finalized resolutions that address various concerns, including flexibility for the school timeframe, teacher certification, promoting mastery-based programs in high schools, and a variety of options for districts to offer credit in addition to the traditional high school course.

**Instructional Rounds.** Teams of teachers and administrators at each Amity school continued their participation in Instructional Rounds. As we move into our third year of this important initiative, *all* teachers and administrators in the district will participate, and instruction in *all* teachers' classrooms will be observed as part of the process.

**Regional Presenters.** Four Amity teachers [Ms. Benton, Mr. Fragione, Mr. Norton, and Dr. Smolinski] presented at this year's New England League of Middle Schools Conference in Providence, RI.

**Transition.** School counselors and special education teachers have been enriching their understanding of the transition portion of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) under the direction of the Director of Pupil Services.

**District Level Committee Meetings.** April meetings include Curriculum Articulation for Math and ELA, Staff Development, and Teacher/Administrator Evaluation.

**Writing.** Amity Middle School Orange's MaCaelan Rahn received first place honors in the 2017 Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) / Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) Unified Sports Essay Contest. Three student writers and two student artists (along with six honorable mentions) from Amity Middle School Bethany were recognized by the Connecticut Writing Project for excellence in student writing. Five Amity Middle School Orange

students were selected as state level finalists in the Library of Congress sponsored Letters About Literature Contest.

**Geography.** Amity Middle School Geography Bee Champions Varun Prabhu (AMSO) and Peter Scully (AMSB) represented Amity at the state level competition of the National Geographic Bee.

**Professional Development.** On the March 17, 2017, District Professional Development Day, paraprofessionals worked with a trainer from the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) to develop strategies for working with students with autism and other disabilities; most staff members worked with Dr. Eli Lebowitz of the Yale Child study center on the impact of anxiety disorders on students; nurses worked with APRN Kristin Sikes of Yale Pediatric Endocrinology on the educational perspective of diabetes management; teachers reviewed the results of the Amity Youth Survey with Pam Mautte of the Alliance for Prevention and Wellness; custodians and administrative assistants learned about details of their benefit plan; and select staff members participated in mandatory Physical and Psychological Management Training (PMT).

**Science and Mathematics.** Amity Middle School Bethany excelled at the Math Counts state tournament, with a fifth place overall finisher and a fifth place team finish. The AMSB Science Olympiad Club had a great showing at their inaugural competitions with the Connecticut Science Bowl and Connecticut Science Olympiad. Eleven of thirteen student research projects from the AMSB Social Robotics Program were named finalists in the 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Connecticut Science and Engineering Fair.

**Coaches.** Spring coaches participated in the pre-season coaches' meeting; new coaches participated in new coach training; and all coaches participated in professional development on addressing stress.

**College Fair.** More than 130 colleges attended the annual college fair this year which was open to the public.

**BOWA Math.** The BOWA Math Committee will plan for the administration of the grade six end-of-year assessment, scoring the assessment, and reviewing the results to support placement for entering seventh graders.

**Registrar of Voters.** The Woodbridge Registrar of Voters worked directly with senior students through English classes to offer brief lessons on the civic responsibility of voting and then assisted twelfth graders with registration.

**Testing Center.** Students will be able to use the recently established "testing center" at Amity Regional High School as a place to make up missed assessments or complete assessments using designated extra time.

**STEAM Day.** BOWA Stem Committee has finalized the plan for the annual Amity STEAM Day scheduled for May 24, 2017. This event includes activity tables from numerous (internal and external) groups. Fifth grade students from the three Member Towns are invited to attend.

**Music Festival.** More than twenty Amity Middle School students were selected to participate in the Southern Regional Music Festival.

**Student Teaching.** Current and previous Amity cooperating teachers (those who work directly with student teachers from local universities) met with Amity administrators to discuss expectations for student teachers from the perspective of various university programs and Amity. The team will be exploring developing Amity standards that meet the minimum expectations of our university partners and reflect best practices in teacher development.

### **Resources**

**Jack B. Levine Efficiency Award of Excellence.** Several students have submitted proposals for consideration for this award.

**Aesop & Veritime.** Back-end setup is underway. Conversations with personnel responsible for securing, recording, and monitoring substitute activity will help establish necessary training for staff and critical elements of the implementation.

**Security Officer Training.** The Director of Facilities will be working with one of the Connecticut Regional Educational Service Centers to provide training for security officers across the District in order to ensure a consistent approach to emergency situations and a consistent experience for visitors.

**PowerSchool.** The Athletic Department is evaluating the athletic registration module from PowerSchool. Moving to this product would make the athletic registration process simpler for athletes and staff, and would include financial savings for the District. The District Technology Committee has approved the move to a single digital student learning platform for next year. Teachers have piloted the product, which coordinates seamlessly with our student information system (PowerSchool), making navigating it simpler for staff members, students, and parents.

**Electronic Access.** Additional access points have been installed at all Amity schools.

**Security Cameras.** Seven new security cameras are being installed at each of the middle schools. The principals, Director of Facilities, and Directory of Technology coordinated to establish placement of the cameras to minimize or eliminate the existence of interior blind spots.

**Graphics and Peru.** Working in-house with our graphics program to produce customized t-shirts for the school trip to Peru, the world language department has supported a student enterprise and reduced the need to fundraise. [Students will be traveling to Peru over the upcoming break]

### **Climate**

**BOWA Dinner and a Play.** Nearly fifty members of the administrations and Boards from Amity, Bethany, Orange, and Woodbridge gathered for dinner, conversation, and the Amity Regional High School Play (*Fiddler on the Roof*) on Friday, April 7, 2017.

**Captains.** Spring athletic captains participated in the Southern Connecticut Conference (SCC) Captains Council where they worked with captains from all other SCC schools and participated in leadership development activities.

**Parent University.** The results from the 2016-2017 Amity Youth Survey will be shared with the Amity community on Tuesday, April 18, 2017, at 6:00 pm, in the John J. Brady Center for the Performing Arts at Amity Regional High School.

**Empathy Projects.** Spartan Seminars at Amity Regional High School were presented with eight different options for empathy projects for the month of April. Each Spartan Seminar reviewed the various options (including an “other” option) and selected one of the projects to take on in subsequent seminars in April. This culminating activity comes after a focus on spreading kindness during the month of February and building empathy within Seminars and among the school community through March.

**St. Baldrick’s.** Students and staff from Amity Middle School Orange collected more than twenty pony tails and raised more than fifteen thousand dollars to support the St. Baldrick’s Foundation’s efforts to end childhood cancer.

**Be AMITY!.** The Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Committee at Amity Middle School Bethany organized a March motivational assembly that included guest speaker Taiwan Richardson.

**Unified Sports Dance.** The Unified Sports Program at Amity Regional High School hosted an after-school dance. The AMSO Unified Sports Team participated along with student-athletes from Woodland Regional High School and Hand High School in Madison.

**Mock Interviews.** Members of the administrative team will be participating in the Quinnipiac University School of Education Mock Interviews for students who will be graduating from the MAT Graduate Program for Elementary and Secondary Education in early May.

**Woodbridge Youth Services.** Woodbridge Youth Services sponsored two teacher-organized student events [3-on-3 Basketball Tournament and Badminton Tournament] at Amity Middle School Bethany.

**Sixth Grade Orientation.** Both Amity Middle School Orange and Amity Middle School Bethany hosted events to welcome and orient parents from elementary schools in Bethany, Orange, and Woodbridge. Parents had the opportunity to learn about middle school programs and transitioning out of elementary school, as well a chance to interact with students, teachers, and administrators.

## Superintendent

**Instructional Leadership.** I visit each school on (at least) a weekly basis and make classroom observations a regular part of each trip. To date, I have visited more than 160 classrooms (and other activities for non-classroom certified employees) across all of the buildings.

**Storify.** See this past month's tweets with the #AR5 hashtag here:

<https://storify.com/charlesdumais/amity-mar-apr-2017>

**Legislative.** I met with Themis Klarides, Republican Minority Leader in the Connecticut House of Representatives, to discuss educational issues that would impact Amity. As part of the Legislative/Federal Committees of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), I participated in a conversation with Noelle Ellerson, Associative Executive Director of Policy and Advocacy for the American Association of School Administrators regarding proposed federal education policy and financing.

**University Partners.** Dr. Stephen Hegedus, Dean of the Southern Connecticut State University School of Education, visited Amity to discuss opportunities for strengthening and expanding the relationship between our organizations in an effort to improve teacher development with pre-career and active-career activities and support.

**Rotary.** It was a pleasure to have the opportunity to address the local Rotary organization at their monthly luncheon and discuss the potential impact of the Governor's Proposed Budget on the Amity District and our Member Towns.

**Transition.** Kathy Burke, the newly appointed principal of Amity Middle School Orange, has worked with me on the development of a transition plan that will allow her to interact with staff, students, and community members prior to (continuing after) her July 1, 2017, start date.

**Service.** I was honored to have been selected to serve as a judge for the Connecticut Invention Convention Regional Competition, which was held at Quinnipiac University. I also served as a panelist at the annual Central Connecticut State University leadership networking event for new and aspiring school leaders.



*This report is a synopsis of many of the undertakings, efforts, and achievements toward our District Goals and Objectives. It does not represent a complete and comprehensive account of all that has happened in the past month. I would encourage you to contact me directly if you have questions about items that you read or that you anticipated reading. I would be glad to discuss them.*