

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



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Superintendent's Report – December 2016

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**

**Hour of Code.** Amity Middle School students will be participating in the *Hour of Code* over the next few weeks to introduce students to computer science. The program is designed to demystify code by demonstrating that anybody can learn the basics of computer programming.

**Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence.** Amity Regional High School Principal Anna Mahon presented at the National 2016 Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence conference on December 1, 2016. The high school was invited to apply to present at this conference as a result of earning the 2014 National Blue Ribbon Award. The focus of her presentation was the work that has been done at the high school since earning the honor of Blue Ribbon status in 2014 to help move our outstanding academic institution into a superb learning community by focusing on improving climate for students, faculty, and parents.

**Instructional Rounds.** At each school, instructional rounds are expanding to include a greater number of teachers. Teams are faithfully implementing the protocol for rounds and are preparing to move the initiative to teacher teams next fall.

**Curriculum Articulation.** Within the District, teams have met to work on articulation of the English Language Arts curriculum. Across BOWA, teams have met to work on articulation of the Social Studies and Mathematics curricula.

**Math, Debate, Robotics, Research, and More.** Students in all of our schools have been competing, and performing very well, in regional and state academic competitions.

**Physical Education Testing.** State physical education fitness testing has been completed at Amity Middle Schools, with approximately 70% of students passing all four tests!

**Student-Centered Learning.** Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) at the high school are groups of teachers from various departments working together to address ways to enhance instructional practices and heighten student learning. An example of one group's work includes efforts to improve students' ability to self-assess through the use of an online mathematics

program (Desmos) to answer open-ended questions and then create their own questions. Additionally, the administration has incorporated professional learning opportunities into faculty meetings, such as workshops, to explore the characteristics of high functioning student-centered classrooms.

**Creativity through Design.** Students in the Amity Middle School Bethany Engineering and Technology Club participated in the SchoolsNEXT Architectural Design Competition, creating a design for a school that enhances learning, conserves resources, is environmentally responsive, and engages the surrounding community.

**Students in the Community.** The Amity Regional High School Transition Program has expanded its interaction with our community, improving instruction, cultivating creativity, enhancing student engagement and performance.

### Resources

**Online Athletic Registration.** The athletic department has completed its initial implementation of the online athletic registration system by utilizing it for winter sports registration this year. Information collection, processing, and distribution has been streamlined, saving time and physical resources.

**PowerSchool & PowerSchool Assessment and Analytics.** Lisa Lassen and Stephanie Kilburn have been working with building leadership teams and groups of teachers from all schools to develop and record individual student intervention plans, and maximize their effective use of PowerTeacher.

**Water Bottle Filling Stations.** District maintenance staff have replaced existing water fountains with combination units that include a water bottle filling station.

**Security Cameras.** Multiple varieties of replacement cameras are being evaluated by the Directors of Facilities and Technology.

**Navigate.** Principals participated in a demonstration of the *Navigate* software, and have received login information for the system. The Director of Facilities is currently scheduling individual time with each principal to facilitate preparations for use of the product during a drill or actual emergency.

**Budget.** The entire District leadership team met, as it has annually for the past three years, to engage in an in-depth conversation of classroom, building, and district needs to better reallocate and reduce funds to meet the financial needs of our instructional and extracurricular programs and supports. This exercise has not only expanded perspectives and heightened awareness of needs across school, but has produced tangible savings.

**Online Services.** Substitute Teacher Management and Employee Time Management software is being considered for use in the next academic year. (Early implementation will allow us to take advantage of considerable savings)

**Fixed Asset Inventory.** The fixed asset inventory is still in progress. Conflicts between database records and actual inventory are being addressed and corrected.

**Copiers.** Over the next four to six weeks, district copiers will be replaced as part of our recently negotiated document service agreement with Xerox.

### Climate

**Clergy Breakfast.** The district leadership team hosted a breakfast for clergy members from our three Member Towns. Nearly a dozen clergy, representing the spectrum of area religious centers, joined the superintendent, principals, and directors in a conversation on how we can work together to meet the social/emotional needs of our students.

**Captains' Council.** Amity winter sports captains participated in the Southern Connecticut Conference Captains' Council, a leadership development program for captains from all schools in our athletic conference (SCC).

**Charity.** Homerooms, clubs, teams, and other groups at each school have been actively collecting hundreds of pieces of clothing, sacks full of toys, hundreds of non-perishable food items, and thousands of dollars to support local families and local/international organizations.

**Class Act Schools.** Amity coaches nominated fifteen junior student-athletes to participate in the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) sportsmanship summit, focusing on student-led leadership initiatives to foster a sportsmanship for all athletes and fans.

**Amity Youth Survey.** Students in grades seven, nine, and eleven have taken the Amity Youth Survey. The survey includes questions about risky behavior that will inform the Amity staff to review curriculum and health programs, and inform the community about the social and emotional well-being of their youth. The results will be analyzed by epidemiologists at the Alliance for Prevention and Wellness, and a presentation will be prepared for the Board of Education for a spring meeting. Consistent with district policy, parents were given the choice to opt out of the survey; fewer than 10 parents chose this option.

**Homecoming.** One indication of school spirit is the attendance at events. This year's Amity Regional High School Homecoming Dance attracted more than 550 students, exceeding attendance at a school dance for the last decade.

**26 Days of Kindness.** Students and staff at Amity Middle School Orange are engaged in their annual effort to encourage the school community to find daily ways to participate in and recognize acts of kindness.

**Student Goal Setting.** As part of our efforts to enhance Student Success Planning, Amity Regional High School students developed one academic and one personal goal which they recorded in their personal Naviance profiles using the "SMART" (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goal protocol. The goals will be reviewed and reflected upon at least twice between now and the end of the school year.

**Sexual Abuse Training and Reporting.** Educators from the Milford Rape Crisis Center have worked with Amity teachers and administrators to implement the mandatory staff training on sexual abuse training and reporting. BOWA curriculum directors have met to discuss the implementation of required student education for sexual abuse.

**University Relationships.** Amity continues to build partnerships with area universities and colleges. Amity will host student teachers and interns from Quinnipiac University, Albertus Magnus College, Southern Connecticut State University, University of New Haven, and Central Connecticut State University. Additionally, Dr. McPadden serves as a member of the Albertus Magnus College Advisory Panel, helping to advise the development and enrichment of pre-service teacher experiences.

**Thanksgiving Luncheon.** Ms. Edwards and the Fabulous Friends Club hosted a Thanksgiving Luncheon for the Amity Middle School Orange *VOCAL* [**V**ocational **A**daptive **L**ife Skills] students, Amity Regional High School transition students, and select Woodbridge students.

**Narrative 4.** A team from Amity Middle School Bethany [Brian Goldstein, Michelle Ortiz, Kathy Habersang, Gail Huitt, and Amy Benton] received a Connecticut Association of Schools Recognition of Excellence Award for their work with Narrative4, a program designed to teach students empathy.

### **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 *seventy* classrooms across all of the buildings.

**CAS Board of Directors.** Having served as Chairman of the Connecticut Association of Schools Principals' Center Board of Control and Technology Committee, I am pleased to announce that they have invited me to serve as a Superintendent Consultant member of the Connecticut Association of Schools Board of Directors.

**CABE/CAPSS Conference.** With seven of our Board of Education members, I attended the annual CABE/CAPSS Conference, participating in sessions on legal aspects of Boards of Education, the Freedom of Information Act, and personalized instruction.



*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.*