

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5
Bethany Orange Woodbridge
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Superintendent's Report – December 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

Teacher/Administrator Evaluation. The Amity Teacher/Administrator Evaluation committee met with CREC consultant Dr. Ellen Retelle to begin planning for revisions to the Amity Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Models. The revised plans will be based on a growth model and implemented during the 2018-19 school year.

TEAM. TEAM Committee members and trained reflection paper reviewers will review the first reflection paper for this school year by teachers who are currently in TEAM. The purpose of the reflection paper is for the new teacher to research and reflect in writing upon the module that they are completing for professional learning, such as instruction or classroom environment.

AMSO Spring Production. Amity Middle School Orange recently held auditions for its spring production of *The Music Man*.

Fall Athletics Wrap-Up. Girls Volleyball reached the CIAC Class LL Finals; Girls Swimming and Diving placed ninth in the CIAC Class LL Championships; Boys Soccer qualified for the CIAC Class LL Tournament for the first time in three years; Girls Soccer made it to the second round of the CIAC Class LL Tournament; Boys Cross Country placed sixth in the CIAC Class LL Championships and ninth in the Connecticut State Open Championships; Field Hockey qualified for the CIAC Class L tournament.

Physical Fitness. More than 75% of Amity eighth grade students passed *all four parts* of the fall Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment!

Creative Connections Art Lesson. Students in Liz Smolinski's Drawing and Painting class participated in an art exchange project through the organization "Creative Connections," an international cultural education organization. Ms. Smolinski learned about this program during her participation in the CAEA conference, and she was paired up with an art class at Hiroshima Nagisa Senior High School in Japan. The teachers from both schools were given the same lesson plans and activities, which included creating a piece of art that reflects a "highlight" from the students' lives. At this point, the students' artwork is in the mail and on its way to our partner class in Japan, and the students in Hiroshima have sent their artwork to Amity.

https://www.facebook.com/pg/amityreg5/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1312290408877217

Using Reading Data. Reading consultants from Amity Middle School Bethany and Amity Middle School Orange conducted a professional development session for their middle school colleagues focusing on using data to inform instruction across the curriculum.

Instructional Rounds. As part of our third year of implementation of Instructional Rounds, *all* teachers will be participating in instructional rounds this year and *all* classrooms will be visited by teams of teachers. Additionally, we have included school visits by a district team of teachers and administrators, with our second school (AMSB) visit being conducted later this month. School visits are facilitated by the superintendent and include the use of an updated protocol that moves participants toward systemic observations.

Visit from Guangdong Province Educators. In partnership with Daniel Gregg, former director of International Relations for the CT Association of Schools, Amity hosted a contingent of twenty educators from the Guangdong Province in China. The guest educators shadowed students for two class periods and met with Amity Regional High School faculty and administrators. This is the third year that Amity High School has hosted a group from China.

Technology and Personalization. A middle school library media specialist and the Director of Curriculum attended a CAPSS Executive Leadership session at Central CT State University in New Britain. The focus of the session was on Technology and Personalization in 21st Century Schools.

Career Day. The annual Amity Middle School Bethany Career Day program was held on November 17, 2017. Thanks to [all of those who volunteered](#) their time and expertise to help our students along their own career paths.

Resources

Budget Process. As part of the budget development process, all District Heads of Departments met to review system-wide budget request submissions.

Transition Program. We are currently engaged in conversations with the leadership of the Town of Woodbridge and Albertus Magnus College to secure facilities for implementation of a comprehensive transition program.

Mandatory Athletic Meetings. Seasonal meetings to prepare coaches and inform athletes and their parents of important standards, rule changes, processes, tryout criteria, and methods of communication have been streamlined to maximize consistency and content delivery while minimizing the time commitment.

Information Technology Shared Services. Representatives from Amity, the Town of Woodbridge, the Woodbridge Police Department, and the Woodbridge Public Schools are working on the development of a plan that would coordinate information technology services between the entities.

Food Service Operations. Chartwells Group has worked with a local small business owner in Woodbridge to include their product in the cafeteria. “Smarty Pops” is an all-natural frozen fruit bar. Joan Conant, Director of Dining Services, assisted the owners with getting the product certified by the State of Connecticut Child Nutrition as meeting the healthy foods standards.

Green Leaf Schools. Each of the principals signed commitment letters to participate in Connecticut Green LEAF Schools Program. The commitment letters have been sent to the CT Green Leaf representative at the Institute for Sustainable Energy. Committees are forming at each school. The Director of Finance & Administration and the Director of Facilities will participate in the committee work at each school. Each committee will complete a Green LEAF School Self-Assessment and work with the program liaison to identify the District’s accomplishments and future goals.



Climate

Parent University. In addition to the early sessions on Student Organization Skills, Unified Classroom, Chronic Absenteeism, and Student Success Plans, we have scheduled sessions to cover various topics (as identified in the District Goals/Objectives) over the course of the year.

Date	Topic
<i>January 31, 2018</i>	<i>Courage to Speak – Drug Abuse Prevention</i>
February 13, 2018	Internet Safety
March 6, 2018	School Security
<i>April 3, 2018</i>	<i>Academic Integrity, Media Literacy</i>
May 8, 2018	Experiential Learning

Guest Speakers. Once again this year, ARHS has used community resources to help deliver curricular lessons regarding drug and alcohol prevention/abuse. With the help of Student Assistance Counselor Gary Lindgren, students in 10th and 11th grade participated in a multi-day lesson regarding drug and alcohol prevention. Mr. Lindgren arranged for a variety of speakers to present for students to learn about the first-hand risks of using/abusing alcohol and drugs.

Friendsgiving. Amity Middle School Orange teacher Lynn Edwards hosted the annual Fabulous Friends Friendsgiving Feast for students from all three Amity Schools. The event included holiday-themed activities and a wonderful selection of culinary treats.

Personal Boundaries. As part of state-mandated sexual harassment education for students, our Amity Middle School Orange seventh graders participated in an educational session on personal boundaries and sexual harassment presented by the Milford Rape Crisis Center.

Coat/Clothing Drive. The Amity Middle School Bethany Student Council and Leo Club supported a month-long coat/clothing drive sponsored by the Woodbridge Rotary Club, serving Bethany, Woodbridge, and the Westville section of New Haven.

New Student Welcoming Committee. Initiated by an Amity Regional High School senior, the New Student Welcoming Committee organizes monthly lunches, welcome cards, and various check-ins for students who are new to Amity this year and those who transfer in throughout the school year.

“Staying Connected,” the Introduction of Narrative 4 (N4). On November 14, 2017, Amity Middle School Bethany teacher Ms. Ortiz organized (and the PTSO sponsored) an opportunity for AMSB families to meet Maroon 5 bassist Mickey Madden and world-renowned author Colum

McCann as part of an introduction to the global empathy organization Narrative 4. This was part one of a two-part event in which participants had an opportunity to experience a story exchange, the core methodology of N4. The second N4 event for the AMSB community will be on December 14, 2017.

Class Act Council. The Amity Class Act Council accepted the Michaels Achievement Cup at the 2017 Sportsmanship Conference. The student group is planning the winter pep rally, rolling out the [Spartan Pledge](#) to the winter athletes, and discussing the creation of the CIAC “Battle of the Fans” video for submission.

Special Education Panel. Amity Director of Pupil Services Mary Raiola served on an Administrator Panel at Southern Connecticut State University for students in the special education program planning to graduate in December. The session addressed current issues in special education and included components that provided students authentic experience for interviews for special education teaching positions.

Teen Life Workshop Day. November 22, 2017, was a special program day for the entire high school. Throughout the morning, students attended various workshops led by students, teachers, and club advisors. As part of the November 22 Teen Life program, Amity welcomed back several members of the Class of 2017 to talk to our juniors and seniors about their transition out of high school.

Advisory. Middle school principals, teacher representatives, and the Director of Curriculum have begun discussions on the development of an Advisory Plan for middle school students.

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 135 classrooms (and other activities for non-classroom certified employees) across all of the buildings.

Legislative and University Connections. I met with State Representative Pam Staneski and Southern Connecticut State University Provost Robert Prezant to discuss opportunities for greater collaboration between secondary and higher education in Connecticut.

Rotary Senior Holiday Luncheon. I joined nearly twenty other Woodbridge/Bethany Rotarians in serving a holiday meal for local seniors at the Woodbridge Senior Center.

Advisory Council Relating to Digital Citizenship, Internet Safety & Media Literacy. The first meeting of this legislatively-established advisory council met for the first time last month. The productive meeting resulted in the establishment of critical definitions and the scope of work of the group.

Storify. See this past month’s tweets with the #AR5 hashtag here: <https://storify.com/charlesdumais/amity-nov-dec-2017>

Shadowing. In early 2018 (January and February), I plan to shadow a student at each of the Amity schools as they go through their normal day of classes and activities.

Teacher of the Year. Dr. Richard Dellinger and I enjoyed an evening of celebration with Kevin Berean, Amity's 2017 Teacher of the Year, at the Bushnell Theater in Hartford.

Adjunct Professor: I have been asked to teach a course on educational leadership (specifically, EDL 606 – Leadership in Teaching and Learning II) at Central Connecticut State University in the spring of 2018.

Instructional Rounds. As our teachers have engaged in Instructional Rounds, the District Leadership Team (accompanied by a teacher from each school) has conducted their first of three visits for this year and will complete their second visit (to Amity Middle School Bethany) later this week.

Cooperative/Shared Services. Explorations and negotiations are progressing on short term (information technology, facilities) and long term (special education, curriculum) opportunities for shared services. Work is also progressing on securing (multiple) location(s) for our transition program, which may lead to the opportunity to offer tuition services for transition students. In addition to identifying a local facility at which to run our transition program, we are investigating the possibility of partnering with a local university to offer transition services as well.

CAPSS Advanced Leadership & Superintendent Network. I participate in professional learning activities facilitated by the Connecticut Center for School Change and Lead Connecticut. These sessions extend the learning of superintendents in the context of present day challenges and support the development of a professional learning community for school leaders that is directly applicable to the daily work of the superintendent. Most recently, I participated in an Instructional Rounds visit to Windsor Locks Middle School with a team of a dozen superintendents from across the state.



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.