

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



Charles S. Dumais, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

charles.dumais@reg5.k12.ct.us
203.392.2106

Superintendent's Report – February 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

Off-Site Transition Program Partners. As part of the vocational component of the Amity transition program, we have recently forged new partnerships with Pez and Grand Apizza. These partnerships give authentic working experience to students.

Middle School Mathematics Teams. Both Bethany and Orange sent ten members of their respective teams to the 2017 New Haven Chapter MathCounts competition. Both teams qualified for the state competition and the Bethany team had individual members who qualified for the next round of competition.

Reading & Special Education Professional Development. Attorney Marsha Moses worked with counselors, psychologists, and administrators from Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge, and Amity to ensure understanding of and compliance with the newly released 504 guidelines. Dr. Kim Bean provided support to reading and special education teachers in the development of program recommendations and program implementation.

NAEP. Sixty Amity Middle School Orange eighth grade students participated in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Administered by the National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP is the largest nationally representative assessment of what students know and can do in math and reading. NAEP is different from our state assessments because it provides a common measure of student achievement across the country. The results are released as The Nation's Report Card, which provides information about student achievement to educators, parents, policymakers, and the public.

STAR. Data from administrations of the STAR Assessment continue to be utilized across the District to help teachers personalize instruction, develop targeted interventions, plan professional development, and align curriculum. STAR data coach sessions have been held in all three schools to support teachers in the effective use of STAR data.

School Reengagement Program. The counseling/support faculty have been working with building and district administration to organize a new program aimed at helping students who struggle with school-avoidance. The program would offer students a structured approach to

reentering the high school through classes that will meet after regular school hours. A pilot of the program may begin this spring.

Robotics. Students participating in the Social Robotics and Engineering Research Program are preparing to compete in the annual Connecticut Science and Engineering Fair at Quinnipiac University.

CPR. All Amity freshmen were trained in hands-only CPR through physical education classes in January/February.

Elementary. Teachers from Orange Elementary Schools visited Amity Middle School Orange in January to observe rigor, instructional format, questioning, pacing, and content in seventh grade science and mathematics classes.

Assessment. The high school faculty will be reviewing midterm exam student work and continuing to reflect on ways to enhance the authenticity of the assessment experience, including reflecting on/incorporating performance tasks, extending the exam testing period, and cross-discipline standard alignment.

Hidden Figures. Amity Middle School Bethany had a school-wide field trip to view the film *Hidden Figures* as part of their study of the role of women and minorities in science and history.

Baseball and Softball. Baseball and Softball coaching staffs attended the World Softball/Baseball Coaches' Convention to expand their knowledge in best practices in coaching.

March Professional Development. Plans are being developed to provide professional development on school avoidance, anxiety disorders, and educational considerations of diabetes. Additionally, the results of the Amity Youth Survey will be shared with all staff.

Collaboration. District level committee meetings for February include Teacher Evaluation and Staff Development. Curriculum articulation meetings for February include World Language, Mathematics, and English Language Arts. BOWA articulation in February includes science.

Resources

Copiers. The installation of the new copiers and the implementation of the PaperCut print management system are complete.

Fiber. Twelve strand fiber optic cable has been run (above ground) from the high school field house to the main high school building increasing bandwidth and connection for cameras, live streaming, communication, and expanded wireless access.

CPR. The entire high school faculty has been trained - free of charge thanks to the donation of time and talent from AMR Operations Supervisor John Macfarland - on hands-only CPR and use of the defibrillator. The training took place during the February faculty meeting.

Live Streaming. Our live streaming capabilities are being used in more and more events. Most recently, the Amity Regional High School Boys Basketball game was live streamed, with more than sixty viewers accessing the live feed.

Scholarships. The Amity finance team is exploring the benefits of transferring our scholarship funds to a community foundation.

Financial Obligations. Student financial obligations are now posted to PowerSchool and may be reconciled through MyPaymentsPlus. Obligations are posted quarterly for high school students and annually for middle school students.

Single Learning Platform Pilot. More than thirty teachers across disciplines in all three schools are currently piloting PowerSchool Learning as part of our efforts to identify a single learning platform and development of a deployment plan.

Climate

Rachel's Challenge. The high school presented the program "Rachel's Challenge" for all 9th and 10th graders on Wednesday, February 8, 2017. A complementary Parent University community program for "Rachel's Challenge" was presented on the same evening after parent conferences.

Anti-Defamation League. The Anti-Defamation League's "Step Up!" Program was presented to all Amity Middle School Bethany seventh graders at an assembly on Friday, January 20, 2017. The program gives a voice to the targets of bullying and prejudice, builds empathy in the aggressors, and inspires bystanders to become allies.

Chasing the Dragon. In cooperation with the FBI, DEA, Justice Department, Yale, and Woodbridge Youth Services, Amity hosted a Parent University on January 11, 2017 to explore opioid abuse. The documentary *Chasing the Dragon, the Life of an Opiate Addict* was shown, and a panel discussion followed. More than one hundred Amity community members were in attendance.

Spreading Kindness. The theme for the high school advisory program this month is *spreading kindness*. A variety of activities will focus on intentional kindness to others and to self. Advisory groups will be conducting an *empathy project* in the fourth quarter of the year.

Digital Footprint. Middle school students have been learning about the digital trail that their use of social media produces and how to manage it responsibly.

Special Education Services. The Support Services Team at Amity Middle School Orange hosted an evening for the incoming sixth grade parents of students who receive special education services. The Team presented an overview of the school that included scheduling, the team structure, subjects that students take, and a question and answer session. It is the first of the transition opportunities provided to our incoming families.

Basketball. The largest crowd in years attended the Amity versus Notre Dame – West Haven basketball game.

Student Council. Amity Middle School Bethany Student Council Members attended the CAS Middle-level Leadership Conference at Trinity College and presented ways that Student Council improves the school climate.

Inter-District Grant. Amity Middle School Bethany students hosted students from the Breakthrough Magnet School in Hartford as part of a grant program designed to improve school climate, student achievement, and student leadership.

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 110* classrooms across all of the buildings.

Legislative Breakfast. With a number of Amity Board of Education Members, I participated in the CABE Area Legislative Breakfast. In the next few weeks, I will be visiting Republican Minority Leader Themis Klarides to discuss educational issues.

AMSO Principal Search. Sixty-one applications have been received for the Amity Middle School Orange Principal position. The posting closed on January 20, 2017. Initial school-based committee interviews and semifinalist central office interviews have been conducted. We are in the process of selecting a finalist to present to the Amity Personnel Committee.

Shea Scholarship Board. I have been invited to join a team at Southern Connecticut State University that will set criteria, evaluate applications, and award scholarships from the Shea bequest, which is more than \$75,000 annually.

Professional Development. Last week, I joined more than one hundred public school principals, public school superintendents, and private school headmasters from across the country to discuss local, national, and international issues associated with education, human rights, and ethics.



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.