

**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 – March 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**

**Letters about Literature.** Five Amity Middle School Orange students are now state finalists in the Letters about Literature contest sponsored by the Library of Congress. These students are joined by only 51 middle school students from across the state as finalists.

**Academic Competitions.** Representatives from Junior State of America (JSA), the Amity Regional High School Debate Team, and Academic Decathlon all excelled in February in state and regional competitions.

**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.

**National Merit Finalists.** Six Amity Regional High School Seniors have been recognized as National Merit Finalists, having scored in the top 1% nationally on their PSATs during junior year.

**Fuel Cell/UI.** Curriculum leaders from Amity and Educational Specialists from United Illuminating met to explore options and opportunities for bringing energy-related (and, specifically, fuel-cell related) educational experiences (including, lessons, field trips, monitoring of local equipment, and internships) to Amity students.

**Spring Productions.** Amity Middle School Orange will be hosting their production of *The Little Mermaid* on March 17 and 18, 2017. Amity Regional High School will be hosting their production of *Fiddler on the Roof* on March 31, April 1, 6, 7, 8, 2017.

**Science Olympics.** The Amity Middle School Bethany Science Olympics Club traveled to the University of Connecticut and placed 4<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> (we have multiple teams) in the competition.

**Professional Development.** On the February 17, 2017 school-based professional development minimum day, work focused on the review of current testing results and associated data, examining students work and assessment examples, and reviewing current final examinations. An extended STAR data coaching session was available to core groups at both Amity Middle Schools.

**Student-Centered Learning Strategies.** Amity Regional High School teachers, via their interdisciplinary PLC (Professional Learning Community) time, have been sharing strategies that focus on the gradual release of responsibility to students through shifting to a student-centered classroom that incorporates engaging student-centered activities and assessments. ARHS faculty meetings have been serving as examples of student-centered learning strategies.

**District Level Committee Meetings.** District level committee meetings in March include District Steering, District Reading, District Wellness, District Technology, SRBI Committee, and Teacher/Administrator Evaluation.

**BOWA Level Committee Meetings.** Science and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) are developing a plan for implementation of the new science standards, particularly in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. Common assessments in grade six are being discussed so that BOWA educators can assess coverage of the priority standards in that grade.

### **Resources**

**Shared Professional Development.** Amity teachers will join teachers from Milford and Stratford in a program to develop capacity for authoring and implementing authentic performance based assessments.

**AESOP and Veritime.** The recently approved purchase of the substitute and time management software system has been finalized. The Finance Department is developing an implementation timeline.

**Grants.** In all Amity schools, administrators and teachers have secured funding through grants and from community organizations to support social/emotional programming.

**Security.** The Amity Directors of Facilities and Technology will be participating in a Security Exposition in April to explore how new technologies may enhance the effectiveness of our current physical security measures.

**Locks and Cameras.** Security cameras have been installed and optimized for maximum coverage and clarity. Wiring for additional RFID door locks has been installed and the installation of the actual lock hardware has been scheduled.

## Climate

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

**Internet Safety.** Scott Driscoll, a retired police officer and annual presenter at Amity Middle School Bethany, presented to staff, students, and parents on how to use the Internet safely and responsibly.

**Unified Sports Basketball Tournament.** Amity Regional High School hosted this year's Unified Sports Basketball Tournament with nearly ten schools represented and hundreds of athletes participating.

**Understanding School Anxiety.** More than sixty parents and community members participated in a workshop focused on developing an understanding of the sources of school anxiety and strategies for helping anxious students succeed in an academic setting. The program was organized by the Amity Regional High School counseling department and funded by Woodbridge Youth Services.

**Talk Show.** Once a week, Amity Middle School Orange hosts Spartan Stories on its morning announcements. The program host interviews students and teachers who share a brief story about themselves, a family tradition, or a meaningful quote.

**Sister School.** Students from the Breakthrough Magnet School and Amity Middle School Bethany participated in a field trip to the Peabody Museum of Natural History as part of an ACES Inter-District Grant designed to improve school climate, student achievement, and student leadership.

**Professional Consultation and Collaboration.** As part of our relationship with an area psychiatrist, Amity school psychologists had an opportunity to discuss case studies and explore school-based interventions for students exhibiting school avoidance and school anxiety.

**Spartan Seminar.** Students and staff participated in a *Month of Kindness*, focusing on encouraging small acts of kindness within a community. The focus in March will be on *Building Empathy*.

**Professional Development.** On March 17, 2017, Amity teachers, along with BOWA nurses, counselors, psychologists, and social workers, will engage in professional learning with presenters from the Yale Child Study Center, the Alliance for Prevention & Wellness, and the Yale Pediatric Endocrinology Unit. Topics will include school avoidance, school anxiety, educational aspects of Diabetes management, and a presentation of the results of the Amity Youth Survey.

**Bystander to Ally.** Thanks to the generous support from Woodbridge Youth Services, nearly thirty Amity Middle School Bethany students participated in training as part of the Anti-Defamation League's *Bystander to Ally* Program.

**Spring Athletics.** Spring coaches have been involved in pre-season meetings, discussing 3-5 year program plans, program philosophy, and current season goals.

**President's Volunteer Service Award.** Congratulations to Amity Middle School Bethany student Alessandro Rivera, recipient of the President's Volunteer Service Award for exemplary volunteer service.

### **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 140 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-feb-mar-2017>

**Amity Middle School Orange Principal Search.** A team from Amity conducted a site visit as a final step in the selection of a candidate to be presented to the Board of Education.

**Boards of Finance.** Presentations of the Superintendent's Proposed Budget for 2017-2018 were made to each of the Member Town Boards of Finance.

**Reading Across America.** As part of what has become an annual practice, I spent a morning at Beecher Road School in Woodbridge with other local officials and volunteers reading to elementary students as part of the *Reading Across America* program. (my title this year was *Leonardo, the Terrible Monster*)



*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.*