

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



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Superintendent's Report – April 2018

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**

**Meet the Leaders at School.** On Tuesday, April 3, 2018, Connecticut State Representative Themis Klarides visited Amity Regional High School to tape a session of “Meet the Leaders at School” for the cable company. Students in Critical Issues created questions for Rep. Klarides in advance and had the opportunity to ask their questions and engage in a dialogue about women in politics.

**Performance Assessment Design Initiative/Interdisciplinary Unit.** Teachers who have been participating in the Performance Assessment Design Initiative training put their planning in to action during the month of March. Students in Chef Hans’ Advanced Culinary class participated in a “Chopped Challenge” project that was video recorded by video production students to be aired through the high school website. Students in Tim Gaipa’s Creative Writing class performed a poetry slam that was also recorded by the video production students. Marissa Altimari (Spanish teacher) and Christina Ruenhorst (art teacher) collaborated to offer students the opportunity to research and learn about the Argentinian “Dirty War.”

**Evaluation and Supervision.** The Amity Teacher/Administrator Evaluation committee continues to work with CREC consultant Dr. Ellen Retelle to finalize changes to the current Amity Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Models. An introduction to the new plan for all staff will take place for all certified staff members on the May 21, 2018, minimum professional development day.

**District Committee.** Teacher/Administrator Evaluation Committee; SRBI/RTI Committee; District Steering, and District Reading met in the past month.

**Curriculum Articulation.** Science, Math, and Social Studies departments across the district met to coordinate curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

**Professional Development.** A full-day professional learning day occurred on March 29, 2018. All certified and classified staff participated in various sessions that included, but were not

limited to, 1:1 Introduction Training, Next Generation Science Standards Curriculum Writing Training, Physical and Psychological Training (PMT), and Childhood Trauma and Anxiety Strategies.

**Drama Production.** The Amity Middle School Orange Drama Club production of *The Music Man Jr.* was a huge success. More than sixty students participated in this year's musical.

**Student Led Conferences.** Dr. McPadden, Dr. Dellinger, and Mrs. Burke visited Hillcrest Middle School in Trumbull to observe students and parents participating in student led conferences. This research is being done to inform decisions regarding the implementation of student led conferences in both Amity middle schools.

**Winter Sports.** A total of 393 athletes competed on 17 teams and participated in a total of 287 games and meets this past winter. The boys basketball team competed in the state finals for the first time in school history, finishing as CIAC division II runner-ups. The dance team finished third in the Pom division and fourth in the Hip Hop Division at the New England Regionals in Vermont. The boys swimming and diving team completed an outstanding season breaking five school records this year. Todd Rainey was named Southern CT Conference (SCC) Division I Coach of the year for boys swimming & diving!

**70th Annual Connecticut Science and Engineering Fair.** Nine eighth grade Amity Middle School Bethany students received awards at the 70th Connecticut Science & Engineering Fair held March 12-18 at Quinnipiac University. Over 600 students and 400+ projects competed in the event and Ellina Medovnikov and Audrey Marin received first place in the Lockheed Martin Physical Sciences Middle School Team Award. A number of other AMSB students also received awards at the fair.

**UCONN Student Writing Contest.** Eleven Amity Middle School Bethany students were selected as winners/honorable mentions for their writing or artwork by the 2018 CT Student Writer Competition sponsored by the UCONN Connecticut Writers Project. Connecticut Student Writers is a statewide magazine established in 1988 and published by the Connecticut Writing Project (CWP) at Storrs, in order to recognize excellence in student writing from grades Kindergarten through 12.

**Albertus Magnus College.** Mary Raiola and Patricia Fitzgerald met with the staff at Albertus Magnus College on March 28, 2018 to discuss the needs for our Transition Program as well as opportunities available on campus. They discussed potential vocational and social opportunities for our students. The Albertus Magnus Vice President for Enrollment Management met with parents here at Amity during a presentation of the curriculum to be used in the program.

**District Instructional Rounds.** Amity Middle School Orange hosted District Instructional Rounds on March 22, 2018. Dr. Marie Nabbout-Cheiban, Associate Dean of the School of Education at Southern Connecticut State University, participated in the event as part of our efforts to expand relationships with our local universities and share instructional strategies and knowledge.

## Resources

**BOWA Coordination.** BOWA Directors of Curriculum met in March to continue curriculum alignment discussion specifically related to the end-of-year grade six common math assessment and World Language.

**Perkins Grant Review.** The Connecticut State Department of Education completed the Perkins Grant Review Visit on March 23, 2018. This was the culmination of a year-long report compiled by the Career and Technology Education Department, and spear-headed by department chair Grace Loman. The visit resulted in numerous commendations and a few very good recommendations to help continue to move the programs forward. Amity receives roughly \$35,000 of Perkins Grant money every year.

**Security Training.** District security guards attended training on the district professional development day on March 29, 2018, with Steven Marans, who presented on *Working With Students and Families Dealing With Trauma and Anxiety*. They also attended an afternoon session on Physical/Psychological Management Training (PMT).

**Security Assessment.** A building security assessment is currently being coordinated with the State Police for Amity Middle School Bethany and the Orange Police Department for Amity Middle School Orange.

**Shared Services.** The District Technology Department began supporting the Town of Woodbridge on March 1, 2018. The IT staff has completed walkthroughs, set up a ticket reporting system, responded to work orders, and is preparing to inventory equipment. The District and the Woodbridge Board of Education are preparing a contract agreement for PowerSchool support provided by the District which will commence July 1, 2018.

**RFID Badges.** Shaun DeRosa is working with LifeTouch, the photography company for both middle schools, to create badges for students that would allow them to access copiers for print materials, scan card for lunch purchases, as well as serve as their student ID card. The Director of Technology is coordinating with the principals the best timeline to print and distribute the cards to the students.

**Green Leaf Schools.** The Director of Finance and Administration attended a Zero Waste Faire, a community event hosted by Wilton Go Green. Exhibits included reusing materials, handling food waste removal, composting methods, and organic gardening. Staff, students, and outside contractors participated. Information will be shared with our Green Leaf Teams in April.



## Climate

**STEAM Day.** Please mark your calendars for the Third Annual Amity STEAM Day on May 24, 2018. Amity hosts and presents this event, and we invite our Member Town fifth grade students to join us.

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

Date	Topic
May 8, 2018	Experiential Learning

**Motivational Speaker.** Chris Williams, a motivational speaker, addressed all students at Amity Middle School Bethany in the morning on Monday, March 19, 2018. Mr. Williams challenged students to “Harness Greatness” and to raise their performance by taking simple steps: staying positive, smiling, saying thank you, helping others, etc. He also worked with some selected students in the afternoon, more intently focusing on staying positive and motivated.

**Orientation.** Eighth grade students visited Amity Regional High School on the morning of March 12, 2018, for an orientation program. Parents attended an evening orientation program on March 20, 2018. Amity Regional High School counselors helped eighth grade students with their elective choices on March 27, 2018.

**Principal/Student Lunches.** Mrs. Burke and Dr. Dellinger continue to have lunch with small groups of eighth grade students. In addition to building positive connections with students, these informal lunches allow students to provide feedback regarding the strengths as weaknesses of their middle school experience.

**Advisory Committee.** Representatives from the middle school advisory committee visited the advisory program at Woodland High School and also the Spartan Seminar program at Amity Regional High School as part of their work in designing a program for the middle schools.

**Fan Bus.** In an effort to facilitate student support of the high school boys basketball team, the building and athletic administration organized a “Fan Bus” for students to take to the Boys Division II State Basketball Championships on March 18, 2018. About 35 students and 7 faculty members rode on the bus up to the championships. They were a part of a very large student section that turned up for the game.

**Character Education Assembly.** Amity Middle School Orange students attended an assembly to hear inspirational guest speaker David McCreary. Mr. McCreary has been performing comedy and magic for over twenty-five years. He has visited schools around the country performing magic and sharing motivational stories that encourage students to truly *Live More*.

**Door Decorating.** Amity Middle School Orange students showcased some of their favorite books by decorating classroom doors. This team building activity brought students together to select a favorite book, gather materials, and design a door that highlights the themes and important life lessons from their favorite books.

**St. Baldrick’s.** Amity Middle School Orange teachers, staff, students, community, and family members packed the gym to raise more than \$18,000 to fight childhood cancer. Area barbers and

hairstylists donated their time to shave heads and cut pony tails of over fifty participants. Entertainment was provided by Mulkerins' Irish Dance Studio.

**AMSO Parent Orientation.** On March 22<sup>nd</sup>, the AMSO guidance staff hosted a Parent Orientation for next year's 7<sup>th</sup> grade class. Several staff members were on hand to welcome parents and provide an overview of the middle school program. In addition, parents were given the opportunity to formally register in the Amity School District on Infosnap.

**Coach Education.** The athletic department held its annual CIAC Continuing Education Unit class for all coaches on March 10, 2018, focusing on *communication*.

**Amity in Action.** The annual *Amity in Action* district news report was created, printed, and distributed to each household in Bethany, Orange, and Woodbridge. The report highlights academics, athletics, and achievements in the arts in the Amity District.

### **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 **170** 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-2018>

**Superintendent Network.** As our teachers have engaged in Instructional Rounds, I have participated in Instructional Rounds with superintendents from across the state – most recently visiting the Naugatuck Middle School.

**Cooperative/Shared Services.** Explorations and negotiations are progressing on short term (information technology, facilities) and long term (special education, curriculum) opportunities for shared services. We have most recently reached a tentative agreement for providing PowerSchool support to Beecher Elementary School in Woodbridge.

**NEASC.** I recently participated on a New England Association of Schools and Colleges accreditation visit to Westhill High School, Stamford, CT, as Assistant Chairman.



*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.*