

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

Student-led Winter Concert Orchestra Piece. The final orchestra piece for the Amity Regional High School Winter Concert was conducted by senior, Harris Andersen. Harris is a four-year member of the music department and has, for many concerts including this year's winter concert, participated in every single section: orchestra, symphony, and accompanying the choir on piano. For his final performance in the winter concert, Mr. Dolan and Harris worked together so he would be prepared to conduct the finale.

AmityTalks. The first student-led AmityTalks of the 2017-2018 school year featured three students, seniors Jeremy Gustafson and Marissa Proto, and junior Sam Farbman, and one faculty member, English Teacher Jeni Bonaldo. Each speaker shared a talk that reflected the core values, beliefs, and school-wide theme of the 2017-2018 school year.

Advancing Teacher Practice. Amity teachers, Kristin Yaekel, Katie McGonigal, and Lisa Lassen, completed Google Educator Level 2 Certification. This advanced level training focused on the use of Google for Education tools as a means to personalize learning for our students. The teachers will share their new learning with colleagues at our January faculty meetings.

Excellence in the Arts. Twenty Amity Middle School Orange students auditioned to participate in the Southern Region Middle School Festival. This opportunity will allow students to perform with their peers from over fifty middle schools. Several additional students have also been nominated to participate in the World Drumming Ensemble.

AMSO Eighth Grade Tech Crew. This month we launched the Eighth Grade Tech Crew. Their job is to assist in the collection and distribution of technology throughout the building. Working with the media center specialist, the crew is helping to ensure that the Chromebooks are stored, charged properly, and in working order.

National Conference. Athletic Director Goodwin attended the National Athletic Directors' Conference. The event focuses on enhancing the ability of athletic directors to improve the performance and culture of school athletic programs.

Support and Evaluation. The Amity Teacher/Administrator Evaluation committee continues to work with CREC consultant Dr. Ellen Retelle making revisions to the Amity Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Models.

Regional Conference Presentation. Four Amity Middle School Bethany teachers have had a workshop proposal accepted for the 37th Annual Middle Level Conference, sponsored by the New England League of Middle Schools. The proposal, titled *Awareness of Global & Local Issues: a collaborative approach to assessment*, is based on their experience with Amity's Performance-Based Assessment training.

New Teacher Support. The Director of Curriculum attended a Teacher Education and Mentoring Program update meeting at ACES. Districts are now responsible for planning and providing opportunities for new teachers to successfully meet specific requirements based in state statute. The changes represent another unfunded mandate.

Hour of Code. Amity Middle School Bethany Library Media Specialist Kathryn McGonigal conducted the Hour of Code with students during the first week in December. Approximately sixty students participated during their Academic Success period.

Student Success Plans. All Amity middle school students have completed lessons relating to their student success plans. Seventh grade students have completed a learning styles lesson and career key inventory; Eighth grade students have set goals for their current academic year. Parents are encouraged to check their child's work and review their responses with them.

World Language Fair. In December, sixteen senior members of Amity's National Language Honor Societies, accompanied by Latin teacher Laura Hamilton and French teacher Ashley Caron, held the third annual World Language fair in the Amity Middle School Bethany Media Center. Eighth grade Spanish students learned about the high school's language offerings through trivia and games relating to Latin, French, Spanish, and Chinese. This event was organized by Jennifer Blais and Laura Hamilton to foster leadership opportunities and encourage language study.

Resources

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.

Graphics and Athletics. Students in David DeFeo's technology education class were able to match the graphics of our swimming record board, allowing them to update the board in-house, saving time and money (while creating a great authentic learning opportunity for students).

BOWA Coordination. BOWA Directors of Curriculum met during December to continue discussions about curriculum alignment, STAR Assessment data, and each district's plan for recent changes to the CT Teacher Education and Mentoring Program (TEAM).

Barnes & Noble Book Fair. The Amity Middle School Bethany PTSO hosted its first Barnes & Noble Book Fair fundraiser on Monday December 11, at Barnes & Noble in Milford.

Artist Visit. Amity Regional High School hosted Bob Englehart, political cartoonist, thanks to the support of the Jaime Hulley Arts Foundation. Mr. Englehart spoke to students about his creative process and what he tries to display through his political cartoons.

Shared Services. The District and The Town of Woodbridge have agreed upon terms of shared services for technology. The contract will be signed in the next few weeks. Start date for services is March 1, 2018. The District and the Woodbridge Board of Education are preparing a contract agreement for PowerSchool support provided by the District.

Green Leaf Schools. Bethany Middle School held their first meeting in early December. We are in the process of completing the self-assessment tool. Orange Middle School has a meeting scheduled for early January.

Medicaid. The Director of Pupil Personnel attended a session in December with members of our special education and benefits departments to learn more about the new mandate for Medicaid reimbursement.

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

Guest Speaker. Scott Driscoll, a former law enforcement officer, will run workshops for both parents and students on internet safety on January 9, 2018, at Amity Middle School Orange. The parent and student workshops are designed to facilitate ongoing conversations around this important issue.

Clothing/Coat Drive. The Amity Middle School Orange Student Council collected over 100 articles of winter clothing to be donated to Big Brother/Big Sisters for distribution to students in need in the local area.

Service to Our Community. Amity Middle School Orange engaged in a number of fundraising activities that support engagement in their community. Throughout the month of December,

students raised money for the Hamden Children’s Center, collected toiletries to be donated to the Veteran’s Hospital, and raised money for Wreaths Across America.

Student Appreciation Program. The Student Appreciation Program focused on supporting students who have demonstrated the Amity Regional High School Core Belief of Compassion throughout the month of December. An email encouraged faculty to nominate a student(s) who is compassionate in some way either inside or beyond the classroom! As Mr. Allard wrote in the email, “The response, from those students who have received cards, has been overwhelmingly positive!” Students receive cards during their Spartan Seminars on the last Tuesday of every month.

Advisory. A committee of teachers and administrators from both middle schools will meet on the minimum day in January to develop initial plans for an Advisory Program at AMSB and AMSO.

National Spanish Honors Society Food/Clothing Drives. During the months of November and December, the National Spanish Honors Society collected food and clothing to donate to needy families of Fair Haven, the community where their partner elementary school is located. The NSHS collected enough food to create baskets for 106 families, and winter clothing for many others.

Toy Collection. The Amity Middle School Bethany Student Council sponsored a “Holiday for Giving” toy collection, resulting in 77 unwrapped toys for kids ages 1-12.

ArtWorks for Youth. Amity Middle School Bethany seventh grade English teachers have partnered with an organization called ArtWorks for Youth, whose mission is to provide free visual art instruction, academic support, and mentoring to students in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. Seventh grade students/parents donated over \$1100 to purchase books for students in this program. With their donations, we were able to buy 25 copies of *A Long Walk to Water*, a title we will be reading and discussing with the students in South Africa, as well as 99 additional books to add to their collection. These books will help to create a library for the school that Artworks for Youth is working to build in Port Elizabeth.

Leadership Conference. Twenty-two students from both Amity Middle Schools attended the Discover, Lead! Leadership Conference for Young Men and Women of Color in Middle School sponsored by the Connecticut Association of Schools at Sage Park Middle School on Thursday, December 14, 2017. Students participated in workshops and exercises to promote students’ leadership skills.

Narrative 4 Family Story Exchange. Amity Middle School Bethany held a Narrative 4 Family Story Exchange on Thursday, December 14, 2017, for approximately thirty parents and students. Narrative 4 is a non-profit organization whose mission is to build a community of empathic global citizens who improve the world through the exchange of personal narratives.

Inspirational Quotes and Positive Slogans. The Amity Middle School Bethany Counseling Department has been working on getting our students to research and create inspirational quotes and positive slogans to place on coffee sleeves with the hopes of brightening someone else's day. On Friday, December 22, our student's artwork of inspirational quotes was distributed to Starbucks customers who purchase hot beverages.

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.

Storify. See this past month's tweets with the #AR5 hashtag here:
<https://storify.com/charlesdumais/amity-dec-jan-2018>

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.

Adjunct Professor: I have been asked to teach a course on educational technology (specifically, EDL 700 – Topics in Leadership for Technology in Schools) in the Doctoral program at Central Connecticut State University in the summer 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 two of three visits for this year and will complete their third visit (to Amity Middle School Orange) in March. As part of our efforts to increase opportunities, coordination, and understanding with our local Universities, we have invited a Southern Connecticut State University School of Education faculty member to join us.

Negotiations. We have reached a tentative agreement with the Amity Education Association on a bargaining agreement for 2018-2019 to 2020-2021.

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.



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.