

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



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Superintendent's Report – November 2020

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**

**Virtual Parent-Teacher Conferences Night:** Teachers will meet with parents through virtual meetings for the three designated meeting times in November and December. This will be an opportunity for teachers to discuss student progress directly with parents. The technology department has been a great support to set up this process and ensure that the staff and parents are prepared to meaningfully engage.

**School-Wide Mock Presidential Elections:** As part of the Spartan Seminar Advisory program, the entire high school community watched 4 student-created presidential “campaign ads” created by 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in the popular social studies elective “Critical Issues” before filling out a ballot to vote for a presidential candidate. The Spartan Seminar activity offered the opportunity to showcase student work, participate in an activity that was civically minded and offered the opportunity to have respectful dialogue regarding the presidential race.

**October Professional Learning:** Professional Learning sessions continued throughout October on Thursday afternoons. Sessions were focused on technology tools and apps that are particularly useful for hybrid/remote instruction. Teachers were also given dedicated time to work on their goals for this year. Per the adoption of the SDE Flexibility Guidelines for Teacher/Administrator, teachers will identify *one goal focused on social and emotional learning for students, or student and/or family engagement, or academic performance*. Goals can be demonstrated by implementation of school-wide or individual strategies.

**November 3 Professional Learning Day:** Outside consultants provided workshops during the full-day Professional Learning Day. Presenters from the Pacific Educational Group (PEG) provided the morning session titled *Introduction to Courageous Conversations about Race*. One of the afternoon sessions featured Dr. Isobel Stevenson, consultant with the CT Center for School Change, who presented a continuation of her October 9<sup>th</sup> session focused on Social Emotional Learning and An Introduction to the Developmental Relationship Framework from the Search Institute. Other afternoon sessions provided by in-house staff included a variety of technology tools and Google Classroom tips.

**Middle School Students Start Second Quarter:** With the start of the second quarter on November 5, 2020, middle school students will have the opportunity to experience a different life arts class.

**ARHS Adjusts Schedule Based on Collaborative Feedback:** After a successful first marking period of instituting the Reopening of Schools plan, the administration has worked collaboratively with teacher and student representatives to make appropriate adjustments to the hallway directionals, letter day schedule

and bell schedule in order to continue to work to maximize instructional time, traffic within the building and students'/teachers' approach to the school day.

**AMSO Debate Team:** Congratulations to the AMSO debate team on their success at their first debate scrimmage. The team won 2 rounds and are excited to use the feedback they received to prepare for the next tournament in December.

**AMSO Newspaper:** The AMSO newspaper club has started. The first edition of the paper should be released in early January.

**AMSO Band Performance:** Through the creative use of technology, the AMSO band shared a performance of "Creature Feature" with their peers on October 31<sup>st</sup>. Please see this [link](#) for the performance.

**National School Psychology Week:** During the week of November 9-13, 2020 Amity will celebrate National School Psychology Week (NSPW) to highlight the important work school psychologists and other educators do to help all students thrive. This year's theme is "The Power of Possibility." The word "possibility" implies hope, growth, resilience and renewal.

**Work Goes on Virtually:** Mrs. Mahon attended the fall NEASC Commission on Public Secondary Schools meeting in October virtually; it usually meets in Burlington, MA, as well as the annual meeting for the Advisory Council for NMSQT which normally meets in Chicago, IL.

**African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course:** The Connecticut Department of Education mandated African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino course of studies curricular framework will be available in spring 2021. In fall 2022, all Connecticut high schools must offer this 1-credit yearlong course as an elective.

## **Resources**

**PPS Professional Learning:** Through Amity's partnership with Beacon Services of Connecticut, we are providing our paraprofessional staff additional training in Applied Behavior Analysis and Data Collection at no additional cost to the district. Ms. Guthrie, Pupil Services Coordinator, completed a two part professional development on transition planning and assessment. Ms. Schwartz, Special Education/Reading Teacher at ARHS completed the Wilson Reading Foundations Training (3 full days) which will prepare her to complete the process and training associated with becoming a Wilson Dyslexia Practitioner (Certification Level I).

## **Climate**

**AMSB Color Run 2020:** The Second Annual AMSB Color Run has gone virtual. Following the recommendations of QVHD, the color run was held virtually this year with families participating from home. Video submissions are still coming in and will be compiled into a video montage in the coming weeks.

**OBOA Books and a Blanket:** Throughout a few afternoons in October, members of the OBOA committee (both students and teachers) hosted book discussion groups where students and faculty members were invited to discuss their experience of reading an individually-chosen memoir during the summer. The discussion group session provided some much-needed face-to-face time among people and offered a sense of a somewhat "normal" after-school activity.

**Middle School SAILS:** Students in Ms. Galiani's 7-8 SAILS program decorated pumpkins while working on their group social language skills. A special thank you to Ms. Affinito for facilitating the session.

**Halloween Celebrations:** The students and staff of AMSB celebrated the Halloween season with a school-wide costume contest. Teachers voted for student winners in a number of categories, and the PTSO provided Amity Gear prizes for the winners. There was also a staff contest, and winners were given gift cards and Amity Gear. Woodbridge Youth Services provided all students with a small treat as they exited school.

**AMSB Mask Breaks:** With the longer time in school and anticipated colder weather coming, AMSB has created a school-wide mask break schedule with designated mask break stations around the campus. This will ensure that students and staff get a break, but do so in a physically distant manner. With the upcoming weather change, all students are encouraged to dress warmly, as all mask breaks will be outdoors.

**Escalation of Hate Training:** At the AMSB November faculty meeting, teachers led the staff through an activity that helped them to recognize unconscious bias. It also provided staff an opportunity to examine the escalating nature of hate and to consider the difficulty of stopping the progression once it begins. Teachers have been encouraged to share the activity with students in upcoming advisory sessions.

**AMSO Red Ribbon Week:** AMSO students and staff celebrated Red Ribbon Week Oct.22<sup>th</sup> – Oct. 30<sup>th</sup>. Each day students discussed strategies to make positive healthy choices while enjoying school wide spirit week.