

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5

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Superintendent's Report – March 2021

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.

March is National School Board Member Appreciation Month. Please know that our entire Amity community appreciates the efforts you make on behalf of our students. You work with heart and heads and always consider what is best for kids. I know this role takes time and effort and we say thank you for all you give.

Instruction

Pupil Services Update: Students in the Amity Transition Academy recently published their February newsletter, which highlights activities and experiences of the students and staff. Students in our SAILS program celebrated reaching a classroom goal by picking an activity of their choice! Great job by those students and staff! ARHS special education teacher Ms. Wendy Carrafiello and AMSB special education teacher Ms. Lisa Meyer are engaging in asynchronous professional development on Assistive Technology for Secondary Students with SLD/Dyslexia presented by CREC. Amity will be celebrating School Social Week from March 7-13, 2021. Thank you to our school social workers, Ms. Nicole DeNara and Ms. Talia Marinaccio for all they do to support our students.

CT State Delegate to NASP: Congratulations to Pupil Services Director Tom Brant who was recently elected as state delegate to the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). Mr. Brant begins his term as delegate on July 1, 2021.

CT STEM Fair Success!: Amity Regional High School Students in the Science Research Program had an amazing series of success at this year's CT STEM Fair, winning 21 out of 27 places, including winning first place in EVERY category this year. The Amity Teams also swept all four places in the "teams" category. Congratulations to teachers Ms. Piscitelli and Mr. Shamp, along with all of the students who competed in this virtual event.

Trident Journalist Receives Recognition: During a virtual journalism symposium held by Yale Daily News, senior Justin Roche won "Best Sports Article Award" for his article from the February issue.

Photo Students Recognized: Amity student artists entered the CT Scholastic Art Competition and won 3 gold keys, 1 silver key and 1 honorable mention. These awards were in myriad mediums, including painting, drawing and illustration, mixed media and photo.

Amity Middle School Debate: The Amity Middle School Debate team completed its' third and final debate on February 28th. The overall team did exceptionally. Each individual group of debaters won at least 2 rounds.

CMEA Auditions: 19 AMSO music students are submitting audition videos to the CMEA to participate in the Regional Music Festival. Participation in CMEA concert festivals provides our students with the opportunity to be challenged through the performance of high quality repertoire.

Reader's Workshop: The middle school ELA teachers and reading consultants will meet for a joint meeting in March to continue discussing a group focus book: *A Novel Approach* by Kate Roberts. Other items for discussion will be the upcoming training in May and planning for summer curriculum writing. Three middle school reading consultants applied and have been accepted to attend Teachers College virtual Summer Institute for Readers Workshop professional learning.

Curriculum & Instruction: Curriculum Articulation meetings scheduled for March include Math, Social Studies, Career and Technical Education, English Language Arts, World Language, and Science. District Steering is scheduled to meet in March. Agenda items include Readers Workshop in grades 7&8, Summer Curriculum Writing, Teachers College virtual Summer Institutes, and revisiting Understanding by Design curriculum development for 2021-22. The District Professional Development and Evaluation Committee conducted a districtwide faculty meeting on March 1, 2021 to explain the vision and goal for the full day of professional learning scheduled for March 19, 2021.

Mid-Year Conferences: Administration and staff are completing mid-year conferences as part of the teacher professional development plan. Conversations centered on improving student and family engagement, social and emotional wellness and support, and our work with students who are struggling academically.

Resources

QVHD Vaccination Clinics for Education Staff: Quinnipiack Valley Health District (QVHD) has partnered with the school districts in North Haven, Bethany, Woodbridge, and Amity to provide closed vaccination appointments for education staff. During the first week, approximately 100 Amity staff received vaccination appointments. Appointment times and availability are determined on a weekly basis based on the number of doses QVHD receives and the availability of Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers. We are truly appreciative of the work from QVHD and the abundant response from the Amity community to support the MRC.

Collaboration on Technology: In an effort to be efficient with resources, members of the Visual and Performing Arts Department have been working collaboratively with building and district technology administration to reflect on and consider Mac and PC computers to create a supportive and consistent learning experience for our students that will allow them access to the appropriate tools to create amazing art work.

CHRO Training Rescheduled Due to Remote Snow Days: The Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities Sexual Harassment Training Part 2 will take place on March 11, 2021 and is mandated for all Amity employees.

QVHD Walkthrough: To prepare for the return to a full day instructional model, the AMSB administration conducted a walkthrough with local health department officials, with a focus on the use of the lunchroom and maintaining acceptable spacing and structure. A full plan for the lunch structure was submitted for approval, prior to the walkthrough, and all feedback from the visit will be incorporated into the formal plan.

Climate

Spartan Seminar Series: Throughout February and March, Spartan Seminar has focused around raising awareness of implicit bias in order to foster a more inclusive school culture. The Spartan Seminar advisors partnered with 4 student leaders to design the lessons and have meaningful and poignant conversations about bias in our school community. While this work is not easy or comfortable, it is

absolutely necessary to continue to move toward creating a just society where all members are validated and included.

Unified Sports Campaign: Wednesday, March 3rd, was Global Inclusion Day and, in order to raise awareness, members of our Unified Sports Team made an announcement during morning announcements on Wednesday. They have asked everyone to “Pledge to end the “R” word,” a campaign that has long been championed at Amity Regional High School.

AMSO 6th Grade Transition Update: On March 4 2021, parents of incoming 7th grade students participated in a webinar hosted by the AMSO administration. The webinar outlined the middle school program and provided information on the registration process. The event was very well attended.

AMSB 6th Grade Transition Update: Administration, counselors, and support staff met with teachers from Beecher and Bethany Community Schools to discuss the transition and recommendation process for incoming 7th grade students. The same Amity team met with the incoming students and discussed the expectations of middle school and answered questions from the students. The administration and 7th grade team prepared a family orientation video for our incoming 7th grade students and families. In the video, we introduced the daily happenings and philosophy of Amity Middle School. A webinar was held on March 4th to provide parents the opportunity to ask questions about the transition process. The video can be found here: <https://www.wevideo.com/view/2072106314>