

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5

Bethany Orange Woodbridge
25 Newton Road, Woodbridge, Connecticut 06525



Dr. Jennifer P. Byars
Superintendent of Schools

jennifer.byars@amityregion5.org
203.392.2106

Superintendent's Report – September 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.

Instruction

Convocation and PL Day: Amity's Convocation and Professional Learning Day took place on August 26, 2021. The morning was organized to have teachers and paraprofessionals rotate through three separate 50 minute sessions all facilitated by Amity teachers. The sessions included Trauma-Based Training, Social and Emotional Learning, and Restorative Practices. All of these sessions represent the themes for continued professional learning this year.

Dr. Steve Robbins provided a keynote message for the afternoon session. Dr. Robbins is an inspirational speaker well versed in diversity, inclusion, and equity. Additionally, he is an entrepreneur and university professor. The feedback for Dr. Robbins was excellent!

AMSO and AMSB Launch Readers Workshop: AMSO and AMSB English teachers have been working with their Content Leaders and Andrea Drewry, the Middle School Literacy Coach, to prepare their classroom libraries for the introduction of the Readers Workshop. Students were very excited to see the number of books, bookcases, and bins that are all set to go. The books represent a variety of genres and authors. The "launch" is scheduled for Monday, September 13, 2021. Teachers and admins are very excited to start the process.

Opening of School: Link Crew Orientation for 9th grade students was a huge success, with over 95% of the class participating in the voluntary orientation day on Friday, August 27, 2021. On Monday, August 30, 2021, the ARHS community reconvened as an entire school for the first time in over a year and a half with our Kick-Off to the 2021-2022 school year. The day was spent in Spartan Seminar groups, working on building community through Seminar, as grade levels, and an entire school. The day featured our "Spartan Stories" annual program with Kim Simon, Amity Class of 2011, returning after a decade post-Amity to share with students how the core values of fairness, respect, and passion helped shape her in to the contributing member of society she is today. The day culminated with a whole-school assembly on the newly-refurbished Field 3. Students also received their school-issued devices before the early dismissal.

AMSO Technology Introduction Day: Teachers provided students with an overview of the various technology platforms they will be using this year. Students participated in a variety of activities and tasks that allowed students to explore the useful features of Google Classroom, Aristotle, Nearpod and Powerschool.

AMSB & AMSO Back to School Night: AMSB and AMSO held Back to School night Thursday, September 9, 2021. It was wonderful having parents back in the building as we welcomed the new school year. This year, attendance was limited to one parent per student, as the event is held in classrooms.

Teachers provided parents with an overview of their classes and introduced parents to the Amity School Community.

Welcoming New Special Education Students: Special Education teachers and related service providers across the district hosted open houses at all three buildings to welcome rising 7th and 9th grade special education students to their new buildings.

Curriculum Articulation Meetings: A major focus of curriculum articulation meetings with department chairs and content leaders will be to examine books and supplemental materials for each content curriculum with a laser focus on diversity, inclusion, and equity.

Resources

DBT Training for Support Services: School Psychologists, School Social Workers, and School Counselors attended a two-day Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) training facilitated by Dr. Rebecca Kamody from Yale Child Study Center and funded by a State of Connecticut Special Education grant. Those staff that were trained in DBT will receive monthly clinical supervision moving forward.

Connecting Counselors and Local Resources: On August 27, 2021, members of the counseling department from all three schools hosted a “meet and greet” breakfast for outside therapists, practitioners, and agencies that are accepting new clients. Invitations were sent to all of the resources listed in the COVID crisis manual developed by the Amity social workers. Currently a list of about 20 people are identified who can work with our students and families and who are interested in helping to build a community of resources.

Middle School Fall Sports Registration: Fall sports registration was a success, as parents utilized online resources to request information, submit forms, and register for sports. We are looking forward to a successful fall season! This year middle school fall sports include field hockey, cross country, boys’ and girls’ soccer, and girls’ volleyball.

AMSO Field Refurbished: The enhancements to the field are having a positive impact on the PE classes and on all fall sports teams. The fall sports teams are able to have home games and practice without leaving AMSO. With regular access to a playable field, we are able to lower transportation costs associated with our middle school sports program. Please [click here](#) for a video update on the improvements.

Climate

OBOA Day of Dialogue Program: The OBOA Committee is busy planning for the upcoming October 14th workshop day--the annual "Day of Dialogue." The group is currently soliciting ideas and presenters for workshops; students will participate in workshops of their choice as well as listen to a keynote speaker presentation during the Day of Dialogue Workshops.

Preparing for Engagement: Members of the Student Government, various school clubs and the ARHS Club Council are holding preliminary meetings before the annual Club Day sign-up that will be held on September 30th. The No Place for Hate Committee is currently taking student applications for participation. While not everyone will necessarily serve on the No Place for Hate Committee, every student who is interested in participating in organizing activities will have the opportunity to do so.

ATA Graduation: Amity Transition Academy celebrated their graduates with fresh pizza from the New Haven Pizza Truck and desserts from LOVE, LERA BAKERY. Congratulations to our ATA graduates!

Red, White and Blue Day: The entire ARHS School Community was encouraged to wear Red, White, and Blue on Friday, September 10th to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. This recognition was sponsored by the Amity Regional High School Student Government.

AMSB Fall Musical: For the 2021 Spartan Players fall production, we will be performing *Moana, Jr.* Auditions for the production were held September 8, 2021 and callbacks will be held September 13th. Students arrived at auditions ready to show off their talents, and all students who auditioned will help support the production, either on stage or behind the scenes. Show dates will be Friday, November 12 and Saturday, November 13, 2021 beginning at 6:30pm.

2021 AMSB Color Run: The AMSB annual Color Run is scheduled for October 23rd at 9:00am. This event is one of the main fund-raising activities for the AMSB PTSO and is a wonderful way to come together as an AMSB family. The event takes place on the AMSB campus and is always well attended. Family teams can join and come have a fun day of music, exercise, and community.

Fall Amity Adult Education: A variety of fall classes for adult learners are being organized through the Amity Adult Education Program. Director Phil Dolan is busy working on a fall schedule that will include bus trips offered by Hamden Adult Education and Valley Regional Adult Education.