

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5

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Superintendent's Report – October 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

OBOA Day of Dialogue: On Thursday, October 14, 2021, students attended various workshops during the second half of the academic day focused around various themes of activism and social justice. Over 30 workshops were presented by student groups, faculty, staff, and outside presenters. This is the 5th year ARHS has held a workshop program.

U.S. News and World Report Rankings: Congratulations to AMSB for being recognized as the 7th Best Middle School in Connecticut and to AMSO for being ranked 10th Best in the state. Amity Region 5 is the only district with 2 middle schools in the top 10.

Portrait of the Graduate Pilot: ARHS Teachers will unpack and reflect on the recently-released BOWA Portrait of the Graduate through ongoing discussions in Interdisciplinary PLC. The second semester will be focused on a small group project, conceived by each individual PLC group that focuses around the Portrait of the Graduate.

Readers Workshop Launch: The Readers Workshop (RW) launch in both middle schools continues to be very successful. Students have a broad array of titles to choose from in their first unit of study. The launch unit oriented students to the RW model. In this program, our students will be reading many more books per year, as they read texts that are connected to a mentor text and explore authors from different cultures, genders, and backgrounds. Teachers continue to work on curriculum planning with Andrea Drewry, MS Literacy Coach. Plans are being made for teachers to attend a four-day Teachers College Summer Institute for Readers Workshop. It has not yet been decided as to whether the summer institutes will be in-person or virtual.

PSAT Administration: On Wednesday, October 13, 2021, all 11th grade students sat for the annual administration of the PSAT, the qualifying exam for the National Merit Scholar Competition. In a shift from previous years, 10th grade students did not take Pre-ACTs on the same day. Rather, they will sit for that exam on the same day that the annual SAT is given to juniors in March, which will allow for 10th grade students to cover more material throughout their sophomore year prior to taking the practice exam.

Work on the AMSO Mural Continues: Art students resumed work on the Blue Green Story mural that was started two years ago. The mural showcases the Long Island Sound, its commerce, wildlife, and key landmarks of our New Haven Harbor. This year students are continuing to research and explore this complex eco system and add another dimension to the mural. This mural represents a wonderful blending of art, science, and local community resources to express student learning in a meaningful way.

Hispanic Heritage Month at AMSO: In recognition of Hispanic Heritage month, the AMSO news recognized a Hispanic artist throughout the month. Culturally relevant songs were also added to the broadcast throughout the month.

High School Options for 8th Grade Students: School choice presentations were provided to students in both AMSO and AMSB last month. These presentations included visits from Trumbull Vocational/Agricultural High School, Nonnewaug High School, and Platt Technical High School. The presentations were well attended.

Curriculum Committees and District Meetings: Curriculum articulation meetings held included High School Reading, Social Studies/History, and World Language. District meetings held included Professional Development and Evaluation Committee, Wellness Committee, and District Steering. The BOWA STEAM Committee met and would like to plan for STEAM Day during the 2022-2023 academic year.

ATA Expansion to UNH-Orange: On September 20, 2021 Amity Transition Academy expanded to a second classroom at the University of New Haven-Orange Campus. We are grateful to our partners at the University of New Haven and look forward to our on-going collaboration and partnership with the University in the coming years.

Pupil Services Professional Learning: The State of Connecticut has started the process of training school districts in writing high quality IEPs related to the new IEP being introduced July 1, 2022. Amity has registered a team of teachers, related service providers, and administrators to attend the training starting in January. Dr. Michael Regan from Fairfield University provided two days of training to our new special education teachers on test administration, interpretation, and report writing. We were able to offer this training to our teachers through the CSDE Special Education Stipend that was awarded to the district.

Resources

Professional Learning 2021-2022: Both the full-day sessions and the minimum day afternoon sessions will focus on the theme *Inclusive and Supportive Environment*: Trauma-Informed Classrooms, Diversity, Inclusion and Equity, Anti-Bias Education, and Transgender and other Diverse Groups Education. Elena Serapiglia, ARHS Dept. Chair for World Language, created an Infographic of the 2021-22 Professional Learning that was shared with all teachers and administrators.

CES Partners for Curriculum Audit: Dr. Lori Elliott, CES Consultant for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, will provide training in conducting a Curriculum Equity Audit. Identified departments will work with Dr. Elliott to examine curriculum through the lens of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Additionally, participating teachers will examine books and supplemental materials for curriculum with focus on diversity, inclusion, and equity. English 9-12 and Social Studies/History 7-12 will begin the process in November and continue through this year. A Library Media Specialist will work with each grade along with the MS Literacy Coach. Other content areas will be reviewed in subsequent school years. Dr. Elliott will provide the Board of Education and the District Steering Committee a presentation describing the process and rationale for using the Curriculum Equity Audit.

Donations from Smoothie King: One Thursday afternoon, October 14, 2021, a local business donated smoothies to the faculty and staff of ARHS as a thank you for their hard work displayed every day.

TEAM Mentor Program: The Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) Program held a 2021-2022 kickoff meeting for all new teachers. New teachers were introduced to the TEAM Dashboard login and expectations for the 2021-2022.

Amity Represented on ConnCase: Mr. Thomas Brant, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, was recently appointed the Related Services Representative to the Connecticut Council of Special Education Administrators (ConnCase) Executive Board.

Climate

No Place for Hate: Nineteen AMSO and AMSB students participated in leadership training from the ADL. The training focused on preparing students to lead the school wide initiative to achieve a No Place for Hate designation. Students learned more about their commitment, shared ideas, and aligned programming for this school year. AMSB held their first No Place for Hate Committee meeting last week, and it was the most well attended meeting in years. A large number of students, staff, and parents participated, speaking to the commitment of our staff, students, and community to examine and strengthen our school climate, and continue to make AMSB a safe place for all students. An introduction to No Place for Hate was one of the workshops students could choose to attend during the Day of Dialogue at ARHS.

ARHS Club Day, 2021: For the first time in 2 years the ARHS Club Day event was held in-person, on campus on September 30th, where over 60 student-run clubs set up tables for all students of ARHS to peruse. Club meetings began the following week after school and activities, such as trips and fundraisers, have already begun to be planned.

2021 AMSB Color Run: The AMSB Annual Color Run is scheduled for October 23, 2021, starting at 9:00 am. This event is one of the main fund-raising activities for our 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 are encouraged to join and come have a fun day of music, exercise, and community.

Unified Programs: Unified Sports has resumed at ARHS. Students are preparing for their interscholastic event at the end of the month. Practices are held every Tuesday during the month of October for our student athletes. Unified Theater will be resuming on October 21, 2021. Students will meet every other Thursday in preparation for their production in early March. Unified Sports on the Collegiate level at Albertus Magnus College and the University of New Haven has resumed. The athletes will be participating in an interscholastic event on Friday, October 22, 2021 at Albertus Magnus College.

District Crisis Team: The District Crisis Team chaired by Mr. Brant and Mrs. LaPlante had their first meeting of the year on September 30, 2021. This committee will support building level crisis teams through the creation of procedures and protocols to support best practices in Crisis Management. Members of the district crisis team will receive training in the NASP School Safety and Crisis Preparedness Training (PREPaRE) to further support their work.

Amity Region 5 Professional Development 2021-2022



Inclusive and Supportive Environment



Professional development sessions will take place through:



full day sessions
11/2, 3/8



building-based minimum day sessions
10/14, 2/17, 12/9, 1/13, 4/28

Connection to Evaluation

focus on continuous learning, and reflection



Questions?

Reach out to your evaluator, or the PDEC members at your school

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