

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5

Bethany Orange Woodbridge
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Superintendent's Report – February 2022

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

High School Transition: The process to transition to high school is underway at AMSO and AMSB. Teachers are making high school course recommendations and sharing that information with students to help them plan for freshman year. ARHS music teachers visited with students to share information regarding the numerous offerings in the performing arts at ARHS. On Thursday, January 27, 2022, members of the high school faculty and student body hosted potential members of the ARHS Class of 2026 through our 8th grade transition night. Over 200 students and their guardians participated in the building tour, a showcase of some of the performing and visual arts classes, and discussions with the department chairs about academic offerings. This in-person activity was a HUGE success. Students will make final course selections by the end of the month.

Midyear Exams: For the first time in two years, the high school held comprehensive exams in January. After a few weather disruptions to the school calendar, students at ARHS were offered an opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge through the midyear examinations. The makeup period will conclude through the middle of February.

2022-2023 Course Selection: Throughout the month of February, 9th-11th grade students will be researching and choosing their courses for next school year through the school's program of studies and book creator prepared by district Director of Counseling, Jill LaPlante, in conjunction with the department chairs. The kick-off for this was on Tuesday, February 8th during the SSP session.

AMSB Learning Projects: AMSB 8th graders will begin the Fiber Arts project in Social Studies classes starting this month. This project will span several days and will allow students to participate in cultural exploration and help them to gain historical perspective. AMSB 7th graders will be participating in the cross-disciplinary, cross-team Global Studies project in their English and Social Studies classes over the next few weeks. Student will work collaboratively to identify a global issue and propose solutions to help address the issue. This project culminates with a poster presentation to the community in our gymnasium. AMSB will hold their annual Solo & Ensemble Concert on February 17, 2022.

Instructional Meetings: Curriculum Articulation meetings scheduled for February include Social Studies/History, Math, Science, and CTE. District meetings scheduled for February include District Steering and the Scientific Research-Based Interventions Committee (SRBI). The District Wellness Committee and the District Health and Safety Committee will participate in a joint meeting to review the results from the Amity Youth Survey administered to all 7, 9, and 11th graders in the spring 2022.

Curriculum Equity Audit Update: Dr. Lori Elliott (CES) continued Curriculum Audit Training with Social Studies/History teachers and with ELA/English teachers on February 8, 2022. Teachers were introduced to several research-based curriculum equity audit instruments to review and create an Amity Curriculum Equity Audit tool for use with the training groups. Dr. Elliott also provided an update to the District Steering Committee following the training sessions on February 8, 2022. Additionally, she reviewed the curriculum cycles and how the training will be on going for both the Curriculum Equity Audit and curriculum cycles.

February Professional Learning: The Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC) completed the planning for the February 17, 2022, minimum-day for professional learning with a focus on the Portrait of the Graduate.

Resources

Signs of Suicide (SOS): SOS was completed over the last four weeks at Amity Middle School Bethany and Amity Middle School Orange. Over 660 students were screened and 122 students were seen immediately between the two middle school campuses. Recognition goes to Jill LaPlante, Director of Counseling, for organizing SOS. Also, thanks are extended to the counseling staff at each building and our School Psychology interns for supporting our students' immediate mental health needs throughout the school day.

ATA-UNH: Amity Transition Academy-UNH Orange Campus was featured in an article written by Renee Chmiel, Office of Marketing and Communications for the University of New Haven. The article can be viewed [here](#). Congratulations to our students and staff at ATA-UNH Orange Campus.

Climate

Pupil Services Support: To date, Pupil Services staff have provided over a dozen support groups of various counseling approaches (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools, Social Skills, etc..) supporting over 90 students throughout the school-year to date. Additional support groups are planned for the spring semester.

Second Semester Class Meetings: On Monday, February 7, 2022, the administrative team at the high school met with each class to remind them of the expectations as we head in to 2nd semester both academically and behaviorally. Students were attentive and responded positively.

Highlighting Significant Celebratory Periods: Throughout the month of February, the ARHS community is celebrating Black History Month and Lunar New Year with announcements, Spartan Seminar lessons, after-school activities, and website resources among other ways to highlight these important aspects of our school and greater community.

Unified Sports: Unified Sports has resumed at the high school and middle school levels. The winter season proves more challenging due to the variability in the weather. However, our student athletes have been enjoying activities that allow them to socialize with peers while experiencing different aspects of our campuses that are both indoors and outdoors. We look forward to the resumption of unified events against other school districts in the very near future.

February Spartan Seminars: Two of the three Spartan Seminars held during the month of February are focused on highlighting and celebrating Black History Month. The first Spartan Seminar was a postponement from January and focused on identifying points of gratitude and opportunities for kindness. All of the Spartan Seminars are created in conjunction with student groups such as the Black Student Union and Amity Advocates.

Middle School Parent Conferences: Middle School parent conferences were held in-person on February 3, 2022 and virtually on February 9, 2022. Both sessions were well attended across all disciplines.

AMSO No Place for Hate Committee Update: Early in February the AMSO advisory groups participated in a lesson designed by our No Place for Hate committee. The lesson centered on authentic experiences of some middle school students. The stories that were shared served to promote conversation around the day-to-day challenges of mean or unkind behavior while in middle school. As a follow up to this lesson, students from the ARHS Diversity in Action club led an activity that focused on bias and bullying.

Internet Safety Presentation: Officer Scott Driscoll came to AMSB on January 31, 2022 and presented to our 7th and 8th graders. He taught the students about internet safety, creating a thoughtful digital footprint, and standing up for their peers. Thank you to Woodbridge Youth Services for funding this important event.

Mamma Mia!: Tickets are on sale for Amity Creative Theater's spring production of Mamma Mia! Remember to purchase tickets [here](#).