

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5
Bethany Orange Woodbridge
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Superintendent's Report – October 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

PSAT Testing Day, Oct. 12: On Wednesday, October 12, 2022, all ARHS students in grades 9-11 took the grade-level specific PSAT test during the school day. This is the first year that ARHS has tested all three grades. We will be using the results of the assessments to guide our instructional improvement efforts throughout the school year. Grade 12 students used the day to work on their post-secondary planning and the college application process. The ARHS Counseling Department did a great job of planning and directing the greatly-expanded testing program for this year – over 1000 tests were administered to our students. Students in grades 9-11 expressed appreciation for the opportunity to practice on these tests before moving on to the SAT later in their school experience.

OBOA Day of Dialogue: ARHS's sixth annual Day of Dialogue – focused on the OBOA theme of "Going Global" – took place on Thursday, October 13, 2022. Students attended a keynote presentation from IRIS (Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services), Connecticut's largest refugee resettlement agency, and two workshops of their choice selected from more than 30 options presented by a combination of ARHS faculty members and volunteers from the community.

Middle School Success at the New England Math League Competition: AMSO and AMSB students did very well at last year's New England Math League competition. AMSB and AMSO ranked in the top three schools in the region for both 7th and 8th grade. Six of the nine top performing students in grades 7 & 8 were from Amity Middle School Bethany or Orange.

Learning Walks: A team of administrators, including the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and Building Principals have started the process of collecting observational evidence of the Portrait of the Graduate within classroom instruction. Evidence collection is being done using a Learning Walk protocol that consists of 10-15 minute visits to classrooms focused on five specific look-fors. Look-fors include the level of rigor evident in tasks and assignments, student collaboration, and the predominate types of communication students are engaging in throughout lessons. The Learning Walk protocol will continue through the year and the data will be analyzed to determine the district's strengths and areas in need of improvement related to the Portrait of a Graduate.

Portrait of a Graduate Workshop: A district-wide team attended a two-day professional learning workshop sponsored by NEASC on the development of assessments to measure the characteristics of the Portrait of the Graduate. Based on the information gathered at the workshop, teams of teachers and administrators will continue with the creation of learning progressions for grades 7-12.

AMSB Class Field Trips: On October 24, 2022, AMSB 8th grade students will travel for a day trip to Boston. They will tour historical sites, walk the Freedom Trail, and have time to explore the city with tour guides. On October 27 (Blue Team) & October 28, 2022 (Green Team), 7th grade students will go to Adventure Park in Bridgeport. The park includes a high ropes course that emphasizes teamwork, and encompasses aspects of our Portrait of the Graduate including, collaboration, problem solving, and communication.

Community Vocational and Experiential Trips: Amity Transition Academy (ATA), 7-8 SAILS, and 9-12 SAILS have fully returned to the community for vocational and experiential opportunities. Students at ATA have the opportunity to work at local restaurants, PEZ, university-based experiences (food services and grounds), and Soap Lift. Additionally, all three programs have attended community trips that have included Rose Farm, The Giggling Pig Art and Party Studio, Chili's, and Target. We are grateful for our vocational and community partners for their continued support of our students.

Professional Learning Day: A district-wide professional learning day was held on the afternoon of October 13, 2022. Teachers had the opportunity to attend a variety of sessions. A sample of the topics that were covered include, strategies for differentiated instruction with Dr. Kristin Doubret from James Madison University, continued work with the curriculum audit tool with Dr. Lori Elliott from CES, and blending learning strategies with Dina Secchiaroli from ACES. The instructional coaches also used this time to meet with teachers to support district wide programs such as the implementation of Schoology, Reader's Workshop, and the rollout of the curriculum equity audit.

TEAM Induction: The district's Teacher Education and Mentoring Program (TEAM) held an induction event for first and second year teachers in early October. New teachers were introduced to the requirements for completing the TEAM program which includes the completion of five modules of professional learning over a two-year span. Mentors and teachers also had a chance to collaborate and create plans for sharing and support through the year. Our district TEAM Coordinators led the group through a conversation that focused on ethical and professional dilemmas and their professional responsibility to students, the larger school/district educational community, and to families.

Resources

BOWA Curriculum Leaders Meeting: This year's first meeting of curriculum leaders from the BOWA district was held this past month. Time was used to discuss curriculum alignment, common assessment practices, and the rollout of the Portrait of the Graduate. Future meetings are scheduled throughout the year to promote an open dialogue and consistency in practice throughout the K-12 school system.

Data Talks: Instructional Coaches Lisa Lassen and Andrea Drewry along with the Assistant Superintendent held meetings at each of the middle schools to review classroom level SBA and STAR ELA and math data. Information shared at these meetings will be used to assist teachers when making informed decisions about instructional practices and to help inform the development of student achievement goals tied to teacher evaluation.

Amity Transition Academy and University of New Haven Expand Partnership: Cayla White, CCC-SLP, Clinic Coordinator in the School of Health Services, Mr. Brant, Pupil Services Director, and Taylor Affinito, Amity SLP have been collaborating to develop school-based experiences for students in the Speech and Language Program at the University of New Haven. Through this anticipated partnership, students from the University of New Haven will be completing clinical practicum and internship experiences across the Amity school community with a specific focus on

the Amity Transition Academy. The growing partnership between Amity and the University of New Haven will continue to provide our students with unique and beneficial experiences.

CTSEDs Update: The Pupil Services department continues to work with the CSDE BSE and PCG on the implementation of the “New IEP” and CTSEDs. While there have been some challenges, special education teachers, related service providers, and administrators continue to work together to navigate the rollout. A special thank you to Ms. Amanda Mills, Pupil Services Administrative Assistant who has spent countless hours working directly with the CSDE, PCG, and staff to trouble shoot problems and resolve outstanding questions.

Climate

SCC Scholar-Athletes: The ARHS SCC Scholar-Athletes for the fall sports season are Daniel Liu, Cross Country, and Sophia McDermott, Swimming & Diving. Amity selects two SCC Scholar-Athletes each season based on a combination of athletic and academic excellence.

Hispanic Heritage Month: ARHS celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with displays and announcements provided by the Spanish Honor Society and Latine Student Association, educational information on the ARHS website, and collections to support hurricane recovery efforts in Puerto Rico organized by the students of the Latine Student Association. At AMSO, 8th grade students conducted research on accomplished members of the Hispanic community who demonstrated one of Jackie Robinson's 9 values. In addition, all AMSO advisory groups participated in Heritage Thursdays which focused on various aspects of Hispanic culture. AMSB concluded with 8th grade Salsa dancing; students in the 7th grade participated in lessons earlier in the month. A video of the Salsa lessons can be found on the district webpage.

Unified Sports: Amity Transition Academy will be hosting a Unified Sports Soccer Tournament at Albertus Magnus on Friday, October 21, 2022. This yearly tournament draws schools from across the shorelines and Midstate regions. The Pupil Services department thanks the Athletic Department at Albertus Magnus for their yearly sponsorship and support for these opportunities for students.

No Place for Hate Meetings at AMSO: The AMSO No Place for Hate committee met this month. Students on the committee began planning school wide activities to introduce students to the purpose and goals of the No Place for Hate program.

MADD Presentation at AMSO: Mothers Against Drunk Driving will present their Power of You(th) program to AMSO 7th and 8th grade students on Oct. 17th. The Power of You(th) is one of MADD's programs that provides adolescents with research-based information on the dangers of underage drinking and other drug use and provides strategies to empower students to make positive choices.

Amity Involvement at “Woodbridge Like Me”: ARHS student groups were well-represented at Woodbridge Like Me on Sunday, October 9, 2022, with students from PLAHD, Diversity in Action, National Latin Honor Society, National Chinese Honor Society, and the Chinese Club participating. Students brought a lot of energy and enthusiasm to the event, and they raised more than \$400 to support the Woodbridge Diversity Committee's efforts.

2022 AMSB Color Run: The AMSB Annual Color Run will be held on October 15, 2022. Kicking off at 9:30 am, 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 will take place on the AMSB campus and is always well attended.