

# AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5

*Bethany Orange Woodbridge*  
25 Newton Road, Woodbridge, Connecticut 06525



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*Dr. Jennifer P. Byars*  
*Superintendent of Schools*

*jennifer.byars@amityregion5.org*  
*203.392.2106*

## Superintendent's Report – January 2023

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

**Post-Secondary Planning for Juniors:** An information night for the parents of Juniors will be held on January 5, 2023 at 6:30 PM in the Brady Center. Ann Fleming Brown, Director of Admissions at Union College, will give a presentation on the overview of the college admissions process. Parents and students in Grade 11 are strongly encouraged to attend.

**Professional Learning Day:** A district-wide professional learning day was held on the afternoon of January 5, 2023. The keynote speaker from convocation in August, performance and leadership coach Sebastian Little, returned to the district to follow up from his "Great Reset" presentation. The focus of the session was on revisiting personal goals that were set at the start of school, as well as looking forward to the second half of the year, staying energized, and finishing strong.

**Portrait of a Graduate & Learning Progressions:** A team of teachers and administrators from across the district met again on December 16, 2022 to continue the work on the BOWA Portrait of a Graduate's Learning Progressions. The creation of a Learning Progressions document will give teachers and students a clearer picture of what the characteristics of the Portrait of the Graduate look like at different grade spans. The team completed a draft version of learning progressions for each of the attributes in the Portrait of the Graduate and will continue to collaborate throughout the year to finalize the document.

**Fentanyl Awareness Program:** On December 20, 2022, the ARHS Phys. Ed/Health Department hosted an informational program regarding fentanyl abuse for Health students featuring fentanyl awareness activist Fiona Firine. Over the course of the morning, she shared her story with approximately 400 Amity students about fentanyl awareness and how fentanyl has affected her family.

**Star Testing:** Middle school students took the winter administration of the STAR test in Math and Reading when we returned from the winter break. The data from the assessments will be used to assess student progress, identify students in need of remediation, and will help to focus instructional work for the rest of the school year.

**SAILS Holiday Field Trip:** Students in the 7-12 Spartan Academic and Independent Living Skills (SAILS) Program attended a holiday themed field trip to the Bridgeport Downtown Cabaret. Students attending this field trip practiced various independent living and community engagement skills.

**Soap Lift Goes National:** Amity Transition Academy students have been assembling Soap Lift (<https://soaplift.com/>) products for the past several school years. Over the winter break, a staff member saw a Soap Lift for sale at a local merchant in Nashville, Tennessee. Our staff and students are extremely proud of their work and were excited to learn the Soap Lifts that they have assembled can be found across the United States.

**Professional Development and Evaluation (PDEC):** The district-wide professional development and evaluation committee met in December to prepare for midyear conferencing with teachers and to approve and post the end of the year materials online for staff. The committee will continue to meet to monitor the use of complementary observers and to review the implementation of the evaluation plan.

**Curriculum Articulation Meetings:** Curriculum articulation committee meetings occurred throughout the month of December, as middle school content leaders and high school department chairs in the subjects of ELA, Social Studies, and World Language met to discuss a variety of topics. In Social Studies, teachers are completing a textbook pilot and preparing to make a recommendation for a textbook adoption in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. In ELA, teachers are planning middle school and high school visits to observe classroom instruction with a focus on observing the implementation of Reader's Workshop. In World Language, teachers shared their findings from the recent ACTFL conference in Boston and began planning for professional learning specific to proficiency based instructional strategies.

### **Resources**

**SOS Lessons and Screenings Wrap Up:** Now in its third year in Amity, the Signs of Suicide (SOS) lesson occurred the week of December 12, 2022 at ARHS. Over 300 students participated in the lesson and were screened for being at risk of suicide. The SOS program remains the premier, research supported suicide prevention program in the country. Thank you to the ARHS Pupil Services/Counseling Departments for their work with this event. In total, amongst all three buildings, over 600 students were screened.

**Scholarship Resources:** Now that many members of the senior class have applied to colleges, they are now turning their attention to scholarship applications. To assist students with that task, the ARHS College and Career Center researches and posts information about local and national scholarships in their office and online providing individualized support to seniors in identifying and applying for available scholarships.

**AMSB Counseling Groups:** The AMSB Counseling Department will be starting a group-based counseling program called CBITS (Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Trauma in Schools) to address the needs of students who have experienced stressful events in their lives. The groups are co-facilitated by our counseling and social work staff. Staff at AMSO and ARHS also run CBITS groups for students.

### **Climate**

**ARHS Music Department Winter Concerts:** The ARHS Music Department hosted two concerts prior to winter break, one for the Orchestra on Tuesday, December 20, 2022, and another for the Band and Choir on Wednesday, December 21, 2022.

**BOWA Boutique:** The Amity chapter of the National Honor Society is hosting the BOWA Boutique, the school's first-ever community thrift store event. To support it, the NHS held a community-wide clothing drive from December 9<sup>th</sup> to December 23<sup>rd</sup>, and the BOWA Boutique opened on January 7, 2023.

**AMSO Student Team Check-Ins:** In keeping with the Amity Region 5 theme of *Reset, Reboot and Recharge*, AMSO administration met with each student team before the break. The focus of the meetings was to acknowledge the hard work and effort students have made so far this year. It was also an

opportunity to encourage students to see the new year as an opportunity to reset and refocus on their academic and social growth.

**AMSO School Spirit:** AMSO held a School Spirit Week from December 19 – 22, 2022. There was an exceedingly high level of participation for each of the theme days. Events like Spirit Week promote a positive school climate as students and staff come together to participate in this whole school event.

**AMSO Annual Door Decorating:** The AMSO advisory groups did an outstanding job on the annual door decorating contest. Each advisory group created a winter themed door highlighting the unique talents and character of their advisory group. Several doors focused on the Jackie's Nine-character traits, while others focused on recognizing the uniqueness of each individual student.

**AMSB Pep Rallies:** On the day before the winter break, AMSB was scheduled to hold its first full-school pep rally. The event was postponed due to the weather and will now be held on January 13, 2023. It will be a time to celebrate the end of the first half of the school year, and welcome in the opportunities of the new semester!!