

# AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5

*Bethany Orange Woodbridge*  
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## Superintendent's Report – April 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

**School Day SAT:** The annual School-Day SAT Testing Day was Wednesday, March 22, 2023. The day featured the SAT test for Grade 11, Pre-ACT test for Grade 10, a series of team-building and awareness activities for Grade 9, and an opportunity for Grade 12 students to work on their preparations for the spring UELP internship program.

**CT Science and Engineering Fair Results:** Throughout the second half of March, 18 of our Science Research students have been competing virtually in the CT Science and Engineering Fair, the most prestigious science fair in CT. We learned last week that 10 of our 18 Amity students became finalists, which is a near-record high for the school, and that they were awarded more than \$95,000 in scholarships for their innovative work.

**AMSO Counseling Lesson – Text Anxiety:** In response to a survey given earlier in the year, AMSO school counselors met with 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to do a lesson on reducing test anxiety. Students learned how to identify the symptoms of test anxiety along with coping skills and strategies students can implement to ease stress and perform to the best of their ability. Students were encouraged to reach out to the counseling staff with any questions or concerns if they feel they need additional assistance in coping with test anxiety.

**Mathematical Puzzle Challenge:** On Thursday, March 16, 2023, members of the Amity Math Honor Society (Mu Alpha Theta) and the Amity Math Team participated in the Mathematical Puzzle Programs High School Challenge hosted by Southern Connecticut State University. The team-based competition emphasizes collaboration and communication where students solve problems drawing from design theory, number theory, graph theory, and topology. Amity had three teams of 4-8 students participating and one of the teams (No Limit Gang) secured first place. The student mathletes were chaperoned by Joycelyn Romero (Math Teacher and Faculty Advisor of Math Team & Mu Alpha Theta) and Courtney Morrison (Math Teacher).

**AMSB Media Center:** Students have been utilizing their Academic Success period by coming down to the Library Media Center and checking out books, working with partners, and enjoying the games and puzzles. They have also been using the Media Center during lunch. AMSB students just completed a Ping Pong tournament during the lunch waves, and several students use the quiet time to choose from our many puzzles and board games. Students can come down any day after they finish their lunch.

**AMSO Small Ensemble Concert:** Several AMSO students performed in the small ensemble concert on Wednesday, March 22, 2023. Parents and guests were treated to a wide variety of music including rock, classical and pop. Ms. Morace and Mr. Barnes brought these students together to share their diverse talents and their passion for music.

**ACES Curriculum Writing Training:** English teachers in grades 7-12 met with Dina Secchiaroli from ACES for training on curriculum writing in an Understanding by Design format. Teachers were given time to collaborate on lesson design, practice developing essential questions, and create performance-based assessments. Following the training, teachers will begin revising units and assessment throughout the spring and summer.

**BOWA District Meetings:** The meeting of the BOWA District Curriculum Directors was hosted by Amity in March, as the inter-district team reviewed the Portrait of the Graduate Learning Progressions. The document will now be shared with the teachers and staff in the BOWA schools for review and feedback. This is an essential step in building vertical articulation and alignment in grades K-12 as we continue to rollout the Portrait of the Graduate.

**Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC):** Technology Instructional Coach Lisa Lassen attended the district's PDEC Committee this month to demonstrate how Schoology can be used as the primary platform for Teacher Evaluation in 2023-2024. The group also continued their work on the development of the 2023-2024 professional learning calendar.

**Curriculum Articulation Meetings:** Science, Visual and Performing Arts, and Math curriculum articulation meetings occurred during the month of March. The agenda topics that were covered included identifying opportunities for targeted professional learning and discussions pertaining to curriculum alignment and pacing.

## **Resources**

**Haven's Harvest Food Collection:** ARHS students and Science teacher Alison Nork are helping the environment and those in need through their collaboration with the Haven's Harvest food collection program in New Haven. We learned in March that, thanks to their efforts in the past year, Amity kept more than 3,300 pounds of food out of the landfill and got it into the hands of people who need it.

**Annual PMT Update:** Selected certified staff, paraprofessional, school nurses, and security refreshed their skills in the area of Physical and Psychological Management Techniques (PMT) on March 16, 2023. PMT training is essential to proactively ensure student and staff safety and well-being. It increases understanding about the aspects of the crisis intervention process and increases the range of response options available to individual staff and teams. By using PMT problem solving and critical thinking skills, it helps staff avoid the use of physical restraint techniques.

**Administrator Professional Development:** District leaders attended the "Innovating Against the Tide" Conference hosted by CAPSS on March 28, 2023. School districts throughout the state were represented at this engaging event. Among the many topics discussed were the use of Open AI and ChatGPT within the classroom, the economics of school budgeting, and strategies for addressing school attendance.

## **Climate**

**Spring Athletics:** The warmer weather brings out our athletes! The spring athletic season started with 522 student athletes registered for try-outs at ARHS and close to 200 student athletes registered across our two middle schools.

***Beauty and the Beast:*** The big news in the Amity Arts world was the performance of Amity Creative Theater's *Beauty and the Beast*, which staged its two-weekend run of sold-out performances throughout the past two weeks. Beyond what you will see on stage, this production is a schoolwide event that called on the talents of student actors, musicians, stage crew members, and carpenters as well as a team of adult volunteers and advisors to become a reality.

**School Climate Survey:** The annual school climate survey was administered to students during the last week in March. Surveys were also distributed to staff and families throughout the district. The results will be collected, analyzed, and reported to the Board of Education at a forthcoming meeting.

**STEAM Day:** Amity High School will be holding its annual STEAM Day event on Wednesday, May 31, 2023. All Bethany, Orange, and Woodbridge fifth grade students are invited to attend this wonderful day and actively engage in Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics activities.

**Digital Media Meets ATA:** Students in the Amity Transition Academy-UNH Orange Campus celebrated International Down Syndrome Day on March 21, 2023. Students from ATA-UNH Orange joined students from the Digital Media class at AMSB to exchange gifts (that were created as part of a digital photography unit) and have a pizza lunch together. We are looking forward to this new yearly tradition. Thank you to Ms. Morrill and Ms. Benton for coordinating this amazing activity.

**ATA Winter Unified Basketball Tournament:** On March 24, 2023, Amity Transition Academy (Albertus Magnus) hosted our annual winter unified basketball tournament at the Cosgrove Marcus Messer Athletic Center on the campus of Albertus Magnus College. Students from ATA-UNH Orange, Milford Public Schools, New Haven Public Schools, and Southington Public Schools all participated. Thank you to Ms. Fitzgerald and Albertus Magnus Athletic Director Michael Kobylanski.

**Music Outreach:** On Thursday, March 9, 2023, Tri-M Music Honor Society and Music for the Community Club performed for the residents at Coachman Square at Woodbridge Senior Living Center.

**AMSB 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Panoramic Picture:** The 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be taking their panoramic class picture on Thursday, April 6, 2023. It's a tradition that was on hiatus during the pandemic and we are happy to have it back.

**AMSB School Spirit Day:** Wednesday, April 5th is AMSB's next School Spirit Day: Every Day is a Holiday! Students and staff are encouraged to dress up in the theme of any holiday you wish...Ugly Winter Sweaters, Easter Bunnies, 4th of July, Daylight Savings, Earth Day...the more obscure the better!