

Amity Board of Education News – April 2024

By Paul Davis, Amity BOE Chair

Board of Education Public Budget Hearing

On April 8, 2024, the Amity Board of Education held its District Public Budget Hearing. Superintendent Byars presented a brief overview of the 2024-2025 budget. There was no comment from any member of the public at the hearing. The Board of Education adopted budget is 3.49% higher than the current year's budget. The proposed budget includes contractual increases (salaries and benefits) for staff and addresses the needs for technology, instructional supplies, textbooks/online texts, and facilities maintenance. The budget also supports an additional Middle School Math Interventionist teacher and a new High School Math Interventionist teachers to support all Amity students performing below grade level in math, a new Financial Literacy teacher to meet new graduation requirements in Financial Literacy for the Class of 2027, and a new special education teacher to support the transition of students with disabilities from secondary education to college, career, and independent living.

The Amity Board of Education will conduct its Annual Meeting on May 6, 2024, at 5:30 pm at Amity Regional High School. That meeting will adjourn to a referendum on the Amity budget. The referendum will be held on May 7, 2024, from 6:00 am until 8:00 pm. All registered voters in the towns of Bethany, Orange, and Woodbridge can vote in the Amity referendum. Voting will take place at Bethany Town Hall, High Plains Community Center, and the Woodbridge Center Gym. Detailed budget information is available on the District website www.amityregion5.org/boe/budget.

Spring BOE Community Forum

The Amity Board of Education invites you to a Community Forum designed to give Amity community members an opportunity for a back-and-forth conversation with members of the Board of Education and school and district staff. The Community Forum will be held on Monday, May 20, 2024, from 6:30-8:00 pm in the Library Media Center at Amity Regional High School. The focus topics of Spring 2024 Community Forum will be the unleveling of classes at the middle schools and the expansion of dual enrollment classes at the high school. If you're interested in getting more information about either of these topics, we sincerely hope you join us to ask questions and hear about these strategic goals for the Amity school district. The Community Forum will be moderated by the Amity BOE Communications Committee. Participants are encouraged to submit questions prior to the forum to ensure the right staff will be on hand to answer questions. The form for submitting questions will be available on the Amity website beginning April 23rd. Questions may also be submitted the night of the event and will be answered as time permits.

Congratulations to Mr. Goodwin!

Congratulations to Athletic Director Ernie Goodwin for being selected to receive the 2024 *Paul Mengold Unified Sports Athletic Director of the Year Award* which will be presented at the CIAC Unified Sports Awards Banquet on April 29, 2024. Mr. Goodwin was selected for all he does to support and facilitate Unified Sports at Amity Regional High School and to include schools in our region in numerous events and activities.

Dual Enrollment Presentation

At the April 8, 2024, meeting, the Board received a presentation on the work to expand dual credit course offerings to all Amity students. Spearheaded by Assistant Superintendent Frank Purcaro and Director of School Counseling Jill LaPlante, Dual enrollment classes allow students to take college level courses while they're still in high school. Dual enrollment classes count for both high school and college credit. Colleges and universities, with approval, permit the high school instructor to act as an adjunct professor and offer their course for college level credit. Dual enrollment benefits students by allowing them to earn college credit for a fraction of the cost, experience college aligned coursework before graduation, and increase coursework identified as "rigorous" by college and university admissions directors. Eighteen courses have been identified as potential dual enrollment expansion options for the 2024-2025 school year and are currently in the process for college or university approval. Our partnerships include the University of Connecticut, Sacred Heart University, University of Bridgeport, Quinnipiac, and Goodwin University.

Mean Girls

Once again, Amity Creative Theater stunned our community with an exceptional performance of *Mean Girls*, wrapping up a two-weekend run of sold-out performances. 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. Thanks, and appreciation goes out to Director Rob Kennedy and his entire cast and crew for bringing the opportunity to our students and this magical event our community.

Student Scholarships Available

Spring is "Scholarship Season" for high school Seniors, and during March our Seniors had the opportunity to apply for approximately 100 different scholarships given by organizations and families in the BOWA communities. Recipients will be selected based on their applications and the individual scholarships' criteria later this spring.

Spring Athletics

The warmer weather brings out our athletes! The spring athletic season started with 520 student athletes registered for try-outs at ARHS and 238 student athletes registered across our two middle schools. We invite all members of our BOWA community to come out and support our student athletes – you can find our sports schedules on sites.google.com/amityschools.org/athletics/home

Digital Media Presentation

As part of the monthly 3A's and POG Presentations, the Board received an update on the middle school Digital Media class at the April meeting. Added as an optional elective in the 2022-2023 school year, Digital Media teaches students how to use programs and applications to create multi and varied media presentations, in addition to teaching students the responsibilities of good digital citizenship. The presentation highlighted the "Six Shot Story Project," Broadcast News, Photography Portfolios, the Found Alphabet Project, and other elements of graphic design and animation. Thanks to teachers Elizabeth Tremper and Amy Benton and students Finley Crout, Colin Mann, and Deystin Patterson for presenting.

"Box of Sox" Fundraiser Update

Thanks to the support and generosity of the entire Amity community, AMSO was able to collect 1,779 pairs of socks for our Box of Sox Fundraiser in memory of Ray Heenie. Ray's memory inspired many of you to generously give to our collection and local shelters in New Haven, Milford, Ansonia, and beyond will be able to help those in need because of your kindness.