

Amity Board of Education News – May 2024

By Paul Davis, Amity BOE Chair

Amity Budget Approved by Referendum

The Amity Board of Education would like to thank the support of the community for the successful passage of the 2024-2025 Amity Regional School District Budget. The final vote count across the three towns was 979 in favor and 407 against. Additionally, each town individually approved the budget. The approved budget is an 3.49 percent increase over the budget for the current year and funds new teachers for a required Financial Literacy graduation requirement, special education, and math interventions; it also adds middle school wrestling to our athletic opportunities.

Amity Teacher of the Year and Award of Excellence

Nominated by her peers, Amity Regional High School Special Education Teacher Wendy Carrafiello is 2025 Amity Teacher of the Year. Warmly and appropriately referred to as the “Spartan Academy Mom,” Ms. Carrafiello has extraordinary ability to create a classroom environment that is nurturing, welcoming, and comfortable for all who enter. Starting her career in Amity as a Social Studies teacher, Ms. Carrafiello has also been a Unified Sports Coordinator, Link Crew Advisor, and unsung champion of the Holiday Bear Project. Selected by the Award of Excellence committee from those nominated, Lisa Criscuolo is the 2024 Award of Excellence Recipient. Ms. Criscuolo serves our students as a paraeducator. Recognized for going above and beyond to make connections with students, Ms. Criscuolo takes the time to develop authentic relationships with them and build supports around their interests. Both of these outstanding educators will be recognized at the Board of Education Recognition Event on Thursday May 30, 2024 at 5:15 pm in the ARHS Lecture Hall.

Amity BOE Approves Design for ARHS Library Renovations

At the May 13, 2024 meeting, the Board of Education approved the Schematic Design and Educational Specifications for the renovation of the Amity Regional High School Library Media Center. Approval of the Design and Specifications was essential for meeting the June deadline to apply for a Connecticut School Construction Grant. If awarded, the grant will contribute roughly 42% of the funding of the approximately \$3.2 million dollar project. The Board also authorized the cost of the project, a requirement of the grant application. Construction is anticipated to begin in Spring 2026, pending receipt of the grant.

Graduation

The Commencement Exercises for the Class of 2024 will be held on June 5, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. at the William E. Sim Athletic Complex at Amity Regional High School.

Stepping Up Ceremonies

The middle school Stepping UP Ceremonies are scheduled for June 6, 2024 beginning at 1:00 p.m.

Supporting the 2 A’s and POG

At the May 13th Board of Education meeting, Mr. Chris Parrillo, a special education teacher in our 9-12 Spartan Prep program, presented on Amity’s partnership the Hammonasset Chapter of Trout Unlimited to bring the *Trout in the Classroom Program* to our students. During the month of April, our students released the trout that our students bred into a local water tributary. Additionally, Mr. Parillo shared the

work Spartan Prep students have done in revitalizing our Community Garden. In its second year of revival, the students grow not only vegetables, but also pollinator flowers that help sustain our Apiary. A truly collaborative effort, the garden also receives support from our Tech Ed department, our Culinary classes, our Environmental Science classes, summer volunteers, and community businesses.

***Mean Girls* Receives Top Nominations**

Congratulations to the cast and crew of *Mean Girls* –they have been nominated for 7 Stephen Sondheim Award nominations, including their 16th straight best musical nomination.

ARHS Math Team Finishes 1st – Second Year Running

Repeating its 2023 performance, the Amity Regional High School Math Team placed first in the state at the Connecticut Math Competition on April 10, 2024.

State Comptroller and Treasurer Visits

On April 29, 2024, Amity Regional High School hosted two guest speakers of note. State Comptroller Sean Scanlon and State Treasurer Erick Russell visited Amity to talk with Financial Literacy students about the importance of personal financial literacy and their roles in state government.

Distracted and Impaired Driving Prevention Program

As our older students set their sights on Prom season and all kinds of summer fun, we wanted them to do that safely. ARHS hosted a special assembly on distracted and impaired driving for our students in Grades 11 and 12 during an extended Spartan Seminar on April 24, 2024, featuring speakers including student assistance counselor Gary Lindgren, students in Amity's SADD chapter, and community members including a retired Woodbridge police officer and members of MADD.

Thanks to BOE Student Representative

Since 2019, the Amity Board of Education has seated two non-voting members from the Amity student body. Elected first by their peers to Student Government and then selected following an application process, a student Board member serves a 2-year term beginning in their Junior year of high school. They play an important role of bringing student voice, opinion, and feedback to the decisions made by the Board of Education. The Amity Board of Education would like to extend its sincere appreciation and thanks to graduating senior Samuel Bae for his two years of service to our students and our community.