

**AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5**  
**Bethany Orange Woodbridge**  
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Superintendent's Report – April 2019

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**

**Opening of *Catch Me If You Can*:** The opening night of the ARHS Spring Musical *Catch Me If You Can* was on April 5<sup>th</sup>! This night is sold out and the show will run for 2 consecutive weekends!

**OBOA Announces 2019 Title:** The One Book/One Amity Committee, comprised of teachers, administrators and students, announced this upcoming year's title after students and teachers were surveyed regarding preferred genres and then given the opportunity to vote on 2 options. The final pick for this year is the newly-released novel *Dear Evan Hansen*, based on the hit Broadway Musical of the same name.

**Science Fair Awards:** High school students have spent many weekends over the past few months competing—and winning—at state-level science fairs, including Junior Science and Humanities Symposium/Science Fair, the Google Science Fair and CT Entomological Society.

**Art Gallery Opening:** On March 19<sup>th</sup>, many Amity High School artists, including photography and ceramics students, hosted an art show in Ansonia called *The Study of the Visual*. The opening was a **huge** success, with over 80 pieces shown and 36 pieces sold!

**Seventh Grade Awareness of Global & Local Issues Projects:** AMSB seventh graders presented their Global Issues projects to their families, friends, and the Amity community on Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup> in the gym. Students have been working hard on these projects for nearly 6 weeks and issues included access to water, access to education, disease and epidemics, use of child soldiers, LGBTQ and gender rights, civil war, refugee crises, and habitat preservation.

**Eighth Grade Interdisciplinary Project:** During the first week of March, eighth grade students at AMSB had an opportunity to create a fiber art piece expressing what they have learned about a 19<sup>th</sup> Century social reformer. Heather Stoltz, a fiber artist, visited our school to guide students in the creation of their artwork. This project was made possible through the generous grant of the Jamie A. Hulley Arts Foundation.

**March Motivation Assemblies:** On March 20<sup>th</sup>, AMSB celebrated “March Motivation”. Seventh grade students had the opportunity to listen to one of two speakers as they discuss their

own stories of perseverance and motivation. Eighth grade students listened to both speakers. Linda K. Barry, M.D., FACS is a board-certified surgeon with a background in clinical and basic science research. Mike Papale is the varsity basketball coach at Fairfield Prep, but he also started the non-profit *In a Heartbeat* in 2015 to raise money and awareness for sudden cardiac arrest and Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy.

**AMSO Career Fair:** Over 30 professionals set up displays and spoke with students at the AMSO Career Fair on Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>. A wide variety of professions were represented including medical, business, trades, the arts and more. Students enjoyed asking questions and participating in many interactive activities that gave them a glimpse of the road ahead.

**Vaping Presentation:** AMSO had a presentation by Tricia Dahl, from the Yale School of Medicine on vaping. Students learned about the potential health concerns, asked questions, and learned about the state and federal laws that apply to teens regarding vaping.

**Washington DC Plans:** AMSO 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students are gearing up for their trip to Washington. The parent information sessions were also well attended.

**AMSO Art Installation:** Students in the Mixed Media art elective are in the process of installing a ceramic mural in the hallway of AMSO. The mural centers on caring for the Long Island Sound. The mural is the result of students' research on the marine ecosystem and kelp farming done in nearby Milford. We thank the Jamie Hulley Foundation for funding this project.

**Martial Arts Demonstration:** The students at Amity Transition Academy presented a martial arts demonstration to their parents at Tom Smith's Academy in Northford. This was the culminating activity after students attended several weekly classes as part of the Friday leisure and recreation component of their program.

## Resources

**March 15<sup>th</sup> Professional Learning Day:** The full-day professional learning day held on March 15<sup>th</sup> went very well. A new concept in professional learning that Amity teachers participated in was an EdCamp – or “unconference” experience. Roundtable discussions were facilitated by administrators covering a variety of topics. The EdCamp reviews were overall rated positive and we hope to continue this practice next year. Evaluation data for the EdCamp, Technology Integration, and Wellness sessions was collected and will be shared with the District Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC) for future planning.

**K-12 Science Articulation:** A combination BOWA Directors and Science meeting was held in late March to discuss how the NGSS science standards are being addressed in grades 6-8. It was determined that instructional time in science in grade 6 needs to be considered for alignment across the districts. Science specialists from all three elementary districts and Amity schools attended along with Bob Gilbert, Dr. McPadden, and Lisa Lassen. A priority to arrange for professional learning in NGSS science standards in grades 6-8 was also discussed for planning sessions during the next school year.

## Climate

**To Kill A Mockingbird/Night Mentors:** On Thursday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 6 juniors and seniors from ARHS spent the day with AMS-Orange 8<sup>th</sup> grade English classes to discuss the significance of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* on their personal, social and civic development. On March

27<sup>th</sup>, a junior and senior visited a 9<sup>th</sup> grade English class to discuss the personal and societal relevance of Eli Wiesel's memoir *Night*.

**Open Mic Night:** The English Department hosted an Open Mic Night on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, where numerous students and faculty performed for an audience of roughly 120 in the cafeteria. The night was a huge success!

**Upcoming Programing:** The high school will be hosting a PRIDE week to support the LGBTQ community in April and a Diversity Week in May. We will also be partnering with the ADL to host the *Becoming an Ally* training for 30 high school students on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**AMSO Community Concert:** AMSO eighth grade orchestra students performed a community service concert hosted by Coachman Square at Woodbridge assisted living center. The students prepared several pieces of repertoire, old and new, to share with the residents. The concert concluded with a sing-a-long to "Over the Rainbow", which the residents stated was a highlight of the event.

**Restorative Practices Professional Development:** Two AMSO teachers attended a two day training program at ACES in Hamden. The training centered on Restorative Practices as a means to promote open honest communication among members of the school community.

**Unified Sports Comes to Albertus:** Amity Transition Academy had the first ever College Unified Sports Basketball Tournament. This was held at the gym at Albertus Magnus and students from SCSU (Hamden Transition Academy), Branford, North Branford, and Milford partnered up with towns whose 18 to 21 year old programs are not on a college campus.

**School Climate Committee:** The AMSB School Climate Committee met on March 12<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of this committee is to foster a healthy school climate by supporting and providing a socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually safe school climate for all students and staff. The agenda included reviewing special assemblies and programs to improve school climate and to review monthly data related to disciplinary issues.

**AMSB PTSO Sponsored Self-Defense Workshop for Girls:** The PTSO sponsored a self-defense and tai chi meditation workshop for AMSB girls on Thursday, March 14<sup>th</sup>. The event was held after school and limited to 20 girls.