

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5

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

*Dr. Jennifer P. Byars
Superintendent of Schools*

**AMITY REGIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA
Monday, January 26, 2026, 6:00 pm
25 Newton Road, Woodbridge, CT
Lecture Hall**

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a. Board of Education Regular Meeting – January 12, 2026 [page 3](#)
4. **RECESS**
5. **STUDENT REPORT**
 - a. Monthly Report
6. **PRESENTATION OF ARHS LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER DESIGN PLANS - Silver Petrucelli**
7. **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON APPROVAL OF ARHS LMC DESIGN PLANS [page 7](#)**
8. **SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**
 - a. Superintendent Report [page 8](#)
9. **CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**
10. **SUPERINTENDENT MID- YEAR REVIEW (Executive Session anticipated)**
11. **PUBLIC COMMENT – Public Comment will be limited to those items noticed in this agenda**
12. **ITEMS FOR THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING AGENDA – Due to Chairperson by January 30, 2026**
13. **ADJOURNMENT**



Jennifer P. Byars, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

pc: Town Clerks Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge

***Working to "enable every Amity student to become a lifelong learner
and a literate, caring, creative and effective world citizen."***

District Mission Statement

If you require accommodations to participate because of a disability,
please contact the office of the Superintendent of Schools in advance at 203-397-4811.

AMITY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 5
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Bethany Orange Woodbridge



NORMS

BE RESPECTFUL

- Model civil discourse and discussion, respecting all viewpoints, welcoming ideas, and disagreeing with courtesy.
- Collaborate as a team.
- Listen actively and refrain from interruptions or side conversations.
- Respect each others' time by brevity of comment.
- Be fully present and mindful of the distractions caused by electronic devices.
- Grow and learn from each other.

HONOR THE POSITION

- Work within the Board's statutory and policy duties.
- Prepare for Board & Committee meetings by reading the packet prior to the meeting.
- Treat each student, parent, and stakeholder respectfully and assist them in following the designated chain of command.
- Be reflective, including conducting an annual Board self-evaluation.

REPRESENT THE BOARD WITH UNITY AND PRIDE

- Make decisions based on what is best for the collective student body of Amity Regional School District No. 5.
- Respect the professional expertise of the staff.
- Be flexible in response to challenges.
- Collaboratively engage in discussions and actions and once voted on, provide undivided support of Board decisions in both public and private.

AMITY REGIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, January 12, 2026 6:30 pm

25 Newton Road, Woodbridge, CT

Lecture Hall

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Cathy Bradley, Jennifer Blando Jacquet, Dr. Karunakaran, Michael McDonough, Meghan Rabuse, Patrick Reed, Donna Schuster *via phone, Dr. Oladele *arrived at 7:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Cloud-Ingram, Davis, Lombardi, Schlank, Young

STUDENT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Janet Fan and Shreya Viswanathan

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Dr. Jennifer Byars, Dr. Shannan Carlson, Theresa Lumas, Thomas Brant

Documents provided during/ after meeting:

[RETURN TO MEMBER TOWNS MEMO- FY2024-25.pdf](#)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Reed called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Amity Board of Education Vice Chair Patrick Reed

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Board of Education Regular Meeting – December 22, 2025

MOTION by Michael McDonough, SECOND by Meghan Rabuse to approve December 22, 2025 minutes as submitted.

VOTES IN FAVOR, 5 (Bradley, Jacquet, McDonough, Reed, Rabuse)

ABSTAIN, 2 (Dr. Karunakaran, Schuster)

MOTION CARRIES

4. CAPSS SUPERINTENDENT STUDENT AWARD RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Presented by Amity Region 5 Superintendent of Schools Dr. Jennifer Byars, Amity Region 5 AMSB Principal Dr. Tracy, Amity Region 5 AMSO Principal Kathy Burke and Amity Region 5 High School Mr. Andre Hauser

Vice Chair Reed calls a short recess for pictures and dismissal of CAPSS students and families 6:58 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

ARHS Student

Raised a variety of concerns regarding the use of AI for grading and the dangers that may present.

Orange Parents

The President and Vice President of Amity Travel Youth Basketball are requesting a partnership with ARSD to coordinate the scheduling and use of district buildings for practices and games.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

None

7. CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

a. Committee Reports

- 1. **ACES**
- 2. **Ad Hoc School Start Time**
- 3. **CABE**
- 4. **Communications**
- 5. **Curriculum**
- 6. **District Health and Safety**
- 7. **District Technology**
 - a. Monthly Report
- 8. **Facilities**
 - a. Monthly Report
- 9. **Finance**
 - a. **Presentation of Fiscal Year 2025 Audit Reports**

Presented by representatives from Mohoney Sabol & Company, LLP

b. **Discussion and Possible Action on Audited 2024-2025 Financial Statements**

MOTION by Meghan Rabuse, SECOND by Cathy Bradley to accept the Annual Financial Statements for the period ending June 30, 2025

VOTES IN FAVOR, 8 (UNANIMOUS)

MOTION CARRIES

c. **Discussion and Possible Action on Reducing Member Town Allocations**

MOTION by Dr. Karunakaran, SECOND by Meghan Rabuse to authorize the Superintendent of Schools to reduce the March Allocation payment of the member towns by a total of \$898,605, as follows:

<i>Town of Bethany</i>	<i>\$ 147,479.35</i>
<i>Town of Orange</i>	<i>\$ 446,061.23</i>
<i>Town of Woodbridge</i>	<i>\$ <u>305,064.50</u></i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$ <u>898,605.08</u></i>

VOTES IN FAVOR, 8 (UNANIMOUS)

MOTION CARRIES

d. **Discussion of Monthly Financial Statements**

i. **Special Education Update**

Presented by Amity Region 5 Director of Finance Theresa Lumas and Amity Region 5 Director of Pupil Services Thomas Brant.

e. **Director of Finance and Administration Approved Transfers Under \$3,000**

Presented by Amity Region 5 Director of Finance Theresa Lumas

f. **Discussion and Possible Action on Transfers over \$3,000**

MOTION by Meghan Rabuse, SECOND by Jennifer Blando Jacquet to approve the budget transfer for special education services to cover homebound services.

ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT NAME	TO	FROM
04-12-1204-5330	Professional Technical Services	\$ 5,000	
04-12-1204-5111	Certified Salaries		\$5,000

VOTES IN FAVOR, 8 (UNANIMOUS)

MOTION CARRIES

MOTION by Jennifer Blando Jacquet, SECOND by Dr. Oladele to approve the budget transfer for special education services to cover transportation services

ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT NAME	TO	FROM
04-12-6110-5510	Transportation- Public Out	\$ 7,500	
04-12-6110-5560	Tuition – Public Out		\$7,500

VOTES IN FAVOR, 8 (UNANIMOUS)

MOTION CARRIES

MOTION by Meghan Rabuse, SECOND by Jennifer Blando Jacquet to approve the budget transfer for a CNC Maker Fab router.

ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT NAME	TO	FROM
03-11-1008-5731	Equipment-Replacement	\$ 4,036	
03-11-1001-5730	Equipment- New		\$2,000
03-11-1008-5611	Instructional Supplies		\$2,036

VOTES IN FAVOR, 8 (UNANIMOUS)

MOTION CARRIES

g. Other

- i. CNR Report**
- ii. Educational Expenditure Report**
- iii. Grant Report**

Presented by Amity Region 5 Director of Finance Theresa Lumas

10. Policy

a. Second Reads

- i. Policy 6111 School Calendar**

MOTION by Meghan Rabuse, SECOND by Jennifer Blando Jacquet to approve Policy 6111 School Calendar.

VOTES IN FAVOR, 5 (Jacquet, Karunakaran, Reed, Oladele, Schuster)

VOTES AGAINST, 2 (Bradley, Rabuse)

ABSTAIN, 1 (McDonough)

MOTION CARRIES

11. **Personnel**

a. **Personnel Report**

Presented by Amity Region 5 Superintendent of Schools Dr. Jennifer Byars

8. **NEW BUSINESS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

9. **ITEMS FOR THE NEXT REGULAR MEETING AGENDA – Due to Chairperson by January 30, 2026**

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairperson Davis adjourned the meeting, without objection, at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Zaleski

Lisa Zaleski

BOE Recording Secretary

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Bethany Orange Woodbridge
25 Newton Road, Woodbridge Connecticut 06525



Theresa Lumas
Director of Finance and Administration
terry.lumas@amityregion5.org

Phone (203) 397-4813
Fax (203) 397-4864

To: Jennifer Byars, Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools
From: Theresa Lumas, Director of Finance and Administration
Re: Design Plans for Library Media Center
Date: January 23, 2026

Design Plans for ARHS Library Media Center

The Amity Regional School District Building Committee met on January 21, 2026 to review the design plans for the high school library media center.

Amanda Cleveland of Silver Petrucelli brought the original design plans and answered questions from the committee. Electronic copies of the design, cost estimates and furniture samples are linked in the building committee minutes.

Amanda will be present at the Board meeting to answer questions from the Board.

The plans must be approved prior to our PCR meeting with the DAS. The minutes of the plan approval also must be approved prior to the DAS meeting.

For the Amity Board of Education:

MOTION:

The Amity Board of Education approves the design plans for the Amity Regional High School Library Media Center.

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Bethany Orange Woodbridge
25 Newton Road, Woodbridge, Connecticut 06525



Dr. Jennifer P. Byars
Superintendent of Schools

jennifer.byars@amityregion5.org
203.392.2106

Superintendent's Report – January 2026

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

ARHS Midterm Exams: Midterm Exams took place during the week of January 20-23, 2026 with each day featuring two 2-hour midterm exams and a make-up exam period for students who required it. Second Semester begins on Monday, January 26, 2026.

Preparing for Midterms: To help students prepare for midterm exams, student groups offered two opportunities for students to get study assistance from their peers, and both events were well attended by students getting ready for midterms. These events were:

- National Honor Society hosted a *Snack & Study* afternoon for students in all grades on January 13, 2026, from 6:30 – 8:30 pm.
- Link Crew hosted their *Cocoa and Cram* event for 9th grade students on January 14, 2026, from 6:00 – 7:30 pm.

9th & 10th Grade Parent Night: On January 14, 2026, ARHS Counseling Dept. held an informational night for 9th and 10th grade parents. The program began with a brief overview of the counseling department and developmental counseling program scope and sequence. Parents then were able to attend three workshops of their choosing. Topics included building resiliency, alternatives to a 4-year college, demystifying the college process, dual/concurrent enrollment, building a culture of attendance, graduation requirements, making healthy choices, school resources and supports, and an overview of standardized testing. Over 100 parents attended. Recordings of all presentations will be sent out early next week for parents who were not able to attend.

Rigorous Coursework Acknowledgement: Parents of 9th and 10th grade students who met the state goal on their 8th grade SBAC or NGSS state assessments recently received a “rigorous coursework” letter from the State Department of Education. Approximately 500 of our students met this goal and received letters, which encourage them to challenge themselves in the upcoming course selection process.

Course Selection for 2026-2027 Begins: The course selection process for next year has begun for students in grades 9-11, with teachers talking with students now about their course recommendations and the elective course offerings available to students in each subject area. Students will be meeting with school counselors to begin the process of requesting courses for next year in the next few weeks.

Connecticut Scholastic Art Awards: Congratulations to the Amity artists who have been selected for this year's Connecticut Scholastic Art Awards. All work that received an award will be on display in the Silpe Gallery at the University of Hartford Art School until January 30, 2026. Our selected students are:

- Gold Awards:
 - Augustus Khan, Photography
 - Monica Chen, Illustration
 - Quin Cohen, Experimental Photography
 - Benjamin Xi, Photography
- Silver Award: Angelina Ring, Photography
- Honorable Mentions: Mattia Vessicchio, Experimental Photography

Blues and Beyond Performance: AMSO seventh grade Social Studies students recently participated in an interactive workshop on West African music and storytelling led by Jocelyn Pleasant from *Blues and Beyond*. During the program, students explored traditional instruments such as the djembe and other West African drums, as well as the balafon, a xylophone made with gourds. Students also learned about the Mande people of Mali and Guinea and the important role of the *Jeli* (griot) as storytellers, musicians, historians, and community leaders. Classroom learning will continue as students make connections between West African history and themes from *The Lion King*.

Professional Learning Early Release: On January 8, 2026, we welcomed Tim Klein back to the Amity community to work with all staff. Tim continues to support our district-wide efforts to create learning environments where every individual experiences a strong sense of belonging and togetherness. During this session, he explored how purpose and belonging help students find their way and emphasized the power of formative experiences. Tim also shared insights into the attributes employers seek in today's graduates, strategies for helping students reflect on and articulate these qualities, and ways educators can intentionally create spaces for shared meaning-making across our schools.

Milford Rape Crisis Presentations: The Milford Rape Crisis Center presented to 8th grade students earlier this month. The 8th Grade students focused on the concept of consent as it relates to sexually based offenses. School counselors followed up with students as needed following the presentation. A presentation that focuses on sexual harassment and knowing the different forms of sexual harassment is planned for 7th grade students later in the year.

STAR & LAS Links Assessments: The AMSB and AMSO students completed the Winter STAR Screening for Reading and Math. The results from these assessments will be reviewed by teachers during school Data Talks and at the District Data Team meeting later this month. Results will be used to inform planning and instructional practices. LAS Links testing for English Language Learners will be taking place over the next few weeks. This testing is required by the State of Connecticut to monitor the progress of EL students' reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills.

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment: Curriculum articulation meetings were held across the departments of World Language, History, Science, English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Teachers of Multilingual Learners. These meetings are a critical component of our ongoing work to strengthen vertical articulation and ensure coherence, alignment, and continuity of learning experiences for students in grades 7–12. A dedicated curriculum writing day took place on January 8, 2026 for courses in the VPA and CTE departments. Teams worked on curriculum development in the following areas: Know Your Car, Advanced Culinary, Theater Workshop, Film and Theater III.

Resources

AP Honor Roll: ARHS has been selected as an AP Honor Roll School again this year. The College Board created this designation in 2023 to “recognize schools whose AP programs are delivering results for students while broadening participation,” and Amity has been selected each year since then. Schools earn this recognition based on criteria that reflect a commitment to increasing college-going culture, providing opportunities for students to earn college credit, and maximizing college readiness. Amity's repeated selection recognizes both the great work our counselors and teachers do identifying and fostering the potential of our students and our students' dedication and hard work in challenging courses.

Dr. Ben Lovett Presents: The Pupil Services Department hosted Dr. Ben Lovett from Teacher's College at Columbia University for a virtual presentation in January. Dr. Lovett presented on the topics of anxiety and accommodation. His article on this topic can be found [here](#) and the video of his webinar presentation can be found [here](#) Passcode: e?%.na6K

Trident Online! We are excited to announce that our award-winning student newspaper has taken the leap to online publication, and the [Trident website](#) is now live. The website features updated stories, as well as previous issues, fun polls, contact information for the editors, and a link to The Trident's Instagram page. We will, also, continue to produce our print version of the paper. Thank you to the students who worked hard to create this website, and to newspaper advisor Ms. Clark and website manager Ms. Forcier for their guidance throughout the process of developing the site.

Middle School Schedule: We are in the early stages of building the new middle school schedule for the 2026–2027 school year. Over the next several weeks, recommendations and student elective preferences will be gathered as part of the initial phase of the scheduling process. This work will help ensure schedules are responsive to student needs and aligned with our instructional priorities.

Amity-UNH-SLP Partnership: Amity Regional School District is proud to partner with the University of New Haven's Speech and Language Pathology Graduate Program for the fourth year in a row through the Amity Transition Academy. This collaboration provides ATA students with meaningful opportunities to strengthen communication, social, and workplace skills through engaging activities with UNH graduate students. This partnership has created valuable learning experiences and lasting relationships for students and staff alike. Amity is grateful to Allison Morrill and Taylor Affinito for their leadership and commitment in supporting this important work.

Hidden in Plain Sight: The Pupil Services Department in collaboration with the Woodbridge Youth Services hosted the "Hidden in Plain Sight" training for parents and caregivers on January 22, 2026. Additional information on this presentation can be obtained by contacting Woodbridge Youth Services. "Hidden in Plain Sight" is an interactive awareness program designed to help parents, caregivers, and other adults learn how to recognize subtle signs that a young person may be using drugs or engaging in risky behaviors.

Upcoming Love 146 Webinar: The Pupil Services Department will be hosting [Love146](#) on February 25, 2026, at 7:00pm via Zoom Webinar. This presentation is tailored for the role of the Parent/Caretaker in the identification and prevention of human trafficking. The Pupil Services Department has had two presentations from Love146 to their mental health on similar topics. Additional information, including how to register for the webinar, will be shared in the coming weeks.

Climate

Model UN: Congratulations to the Amity Model UN club, which had 14 members participate in the Yale Model United Nations Conference from Jan. 15-18. This is one of the nation's largest Model UN conferences, and our students were joined by students from around the U.S. as well as from 35 different countries. Out of all these participants, Amity student Alexandra Palcic was awarded "Best Position Paper for the UN Entity for Gender Equality & the Empowerment of Women" at the Final Ceremony.

Reflective Intelligence Facilitator Training Day #2: On January 7, 2026, a cohort of teachers and administrators participated in a second full-day professional learning experience with Dr. Tim Klein, co-author of *How to Navigate Life*. This session centered on experiences that promote meaningful reflection and connection, with the goal of cultivating the conditions necessary for safe, supportive spaces in which individuals feel heard, seen, and valued. Participants will turnkey this work with colleagues during the February and March faculty meetings. Over time, we will support its integration into classroom practices with students.

AMSO Drama Club Present 'Into the Woods JR.': Over 50 students are taking part in the AMSO production of Into the Woods JR. Students will be involved in every aspect of play production including acting, set construction, sound and make-up. Our thanks to the Jaimie Hulley Foundation for their continued support of the drama club.

Unified Sports Winter Season: Unified activities are quickly approaching the winter season. The high school unified sports team, with Ms. Carrafiello and Ms. Tucker as coaches, will be starting the first week in February with tournaments scheduled through February and March. Middle school unified sports, with Ms. Benton coaching will also begin in February with events planned in Cheshire and Berlin. Ms. Collins and Ms. John are also advising our Unified Theater program at ARHS. The students are working towards a final performance in late February.

Thanks to AMSB PTSO for Holiday Cheer: Thanks is given to the AMSB PTSO for sending students off with a little gift before the winter break...and for not sending them off with whistles this time! The holiday socks and chap stick was a huge hit. Thank you for the gifts for staff prior to the break also...the breakfasts, coffee, conference dinners and the donation for our staff gifts all help to support a positive climate and keep our teachers happy.

School Climate Improvement Plans: Each school has finalized its School Climate Improvement Plan, and all plans have been approved. The plans are now available on each school's website under the "Info" tab. School climate committee meetings are continuing in each building to support implementation and advance the actions outlined in the plans.

AMSO School Climate Meeting: The AMSO School Climate Committee met this month to review current climate data and develop plans for implementation of the action plan the committee developed earlier this year. The committee, which consists of administration, teachers, students and parents, made several suggestions to improve the climate including student recognition breakfasts, increased use of the welcoming committee and daily positive messages on the message boards.