

Principal's Report

Amherst School District

School: Amherst Middle School

November 16, 2017

Porter Dodge, Principal

Elementary & Middle
School Excellence

- **Red Ribbon Week:** October 23-27, AMS school-wide recognition of International Program for Drug Awareness. Principal Porter Dodge facilitates the Milford NH area Community Action for Safe Teens (CAST) monthly meetings in Milford. This year, AMS decorated classroom doors throughout the school. To highlight this year's Red Ribbon celebration, pictures shared with CAST, on Facebook, and are on our website. Prizes awarded and area CAST officials visited AMS to judge the doors. Our photo this year includes our entire student body and staff with signs displaying this year's theme: *Your future is key so stay drug free*. The signs and giant red ribbon were created by members of our National Junior Honor Society. The voting period begins on November 3 and ends on November 17. Voting is limited to one vote per entry per 24 hour period per IP address.
- **Student Leadership and Service Food Drive** Student Leadership and Service is sponsoring a food drive to benefit the SHARE Food Pantry. Please place donations of canned goods and other nonperishable items in the collection box in the lobby. Donations are accepted until Friday, November 17.
- **4th Annual AMS Veterans Walkathon:** The Walkathon was held on November 3rd and raised over \$2300 to-date for the Manchester VA outreach program, providing veterans with gasoline and food debit cards. The VA outreach coordinator has asked that we purchase more food cards this year, and I will be delivering them personally next week. Special thanks goes out to Souhegan High School for allowing us to use the track and the facilities and to AMS Wellness teacher Corey White for organizing this wonderful event.
- **Halloween and Spirit Week:** The Spirit Week culminated with a costume parade around the basketball court. The music department provided music to allow judges to decide the most spirited grade and the sixth grade won once again this year.
- **Student Leadership:** Students petitioned for a change in the morning recess policy regarding cold weather procedure. We will raise the morning temperature from 18 degrees to 20 degrees or below to bring recess indoors.
- **Veterans Day Observance:** On Thursday, November 9th AMS recognized and honored our Veterans with the lowering of Colors to *Taps*, and raising them to our National Anthem. The ceremony concluded with some inspirational words from the Principal about the importance of being thankful for those that have worn, and continue to wear the uniform of our armed services.

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- **Parent Partnership Team:** Our PPT combined with the Amherst PTA on November 6th for a presentation by School Resource Officer Mike Knox. The timely topic was on Internet Safety and Social Media. AMS Student Leadership provided child-care for parents attending and pizza provided for all. The entire evening very well received.

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Diligent Fiscal Oversight

- **Budget:** Once again, a special thank you goes out to Adam Steel and the finance department for all their budget work and for making the process run so smoothly due to the efficiencies employed.
- **Facilities Use Procedure Manual:** At the last Board Meeting, a request to provide members with rental costs/fees and procedures for facilities use. Included as an attachment is the current consolidated plan approved in 2007.
- **Consolidation Discussion:** Superintendent Peter Warburton has been presenting the Consolidation information at the Mont Vernon Village School and at Souhegan High School and Principal Porter Dodge has been present to give his insight into the prospect of one District in SAU 39.
- **Enrollments:** Student enrollment at the Middle School is unchanged from October:
 - Grade 5 136**
 - Grade 6 141**
 - Grade 7 174 (28 Mont Vernon)**
 - Grade 8 188 (32 Mont Vernon)**
 - Total: 639**

Inspirational & Effective Teaching

- **Response to Instruction (RTI) and Multi-Tiered System of Services (MTSS):** practices continue with our intervention model using **ICan** at grades 5 and 6, and **EAGLE Block** at grades 7 and 8 to access necessary services, provide supports to those needing them, and offer relevant topics of interest to others.
- **Mastery and Grading Forum:** Christine Landwerhle and Dr. Bethany Bernasconi presented an evening parent discussion on Mastery and Grading, here at the Middle School on November 2nd. This presentation is in a series throughout the schools in SAU 39.
- **PACE (Performance Assessment Competency Education):** The New Hampshire Department of Education partnered with the Center for Collaborative Education (CCE) and the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment (NCIEA) to develop performance assessment to measure student mastery of college and career ready competencies. This year, the Middle School has been designated a Tier 1 PACE school and staff training and work continues. Dr. Bethany Bernasconi is taking the lead in this work and the PACE team.
- **Anxiety:** Dean of Students, Dr. Lisa Femia-Hou presented two excellent workshops, to packed audiences, on anxiety and its effect on students and adults at the November 13th In-Service.

Innovative Technology
Integration

- **The Innovation and Design Lab/ Maker Space:** continues to be a hit with students. We are currently working to secure a major donation of equipment from a local business. Makerspace members and teachers have been disassembling them and moving to AMS on weekends and evenings.

Summary of Upcoming
Events

November 15: NJHS Optional Service Session
November 17: School dance, grades 6-8, 7pm
November 27-December 1: Scholastic Book Fair, AMS Library
December 1: Trimester 1 ends, grades close
December 12: Trimester 1 report cards issued
December 19: Grade 5 and 6 Band and Chorus concerts
December 20: Grade 7 and 8 Band and Chorus and Jazz Band concerts
December 21: Concert Snow Date