

Principal's Report

Amherst School District

School: Amherst Middle School

December 21, 2017

Porter Dodge, Principal

Elementary & Middle
School Excellence

- **Department of Veterans Affairs Assembly:** This past Monday, December 18th, the Amherst Middle School was recognized by the Manchester Veterans Hospital Outreach Program for its continued support. Individual students played music and sang songs as the classes entered the gymnasium. After the Pledge of Allegiance, Grade eight soloists sang our National Anthem, and then Principal Dodge reminded everyone of his challenge to keep the needs of our Veterans our hearts every day.

After some wonderful selections from the AMS Band, United States Air Force Veteran and NH Veterans Administration Medical Center Director, Alfred Montoya, addressed the audience with kind words of thanks for raising thousands of dollars over the years for Veterans Outreach. His remarks concluded with the reading and presentation of a beautiful plaque and banner to student officers of the AMS Student Leadership and Service Committee and the National Junior Honor Society.

The AMS Chorus then sang three numbers from the Winter Choral Concert, followed by a powerful message of thanks from Congresswoman Ann Custer, read by AMS alum, Robert Graham.

During the ceremony, the audience enjoyed a picture and video presentation featuring the actual Veterans Walkathon, and challenged to accept the **Kindness Challenge** starting in January.

- **AMS Kindness Challenge:** As a natural transition from the Veterans Affairs Assembly, the Middle School will embark on the Kindness Challenge, to continue to help others through a variety of deeds and actions.

Diligent Fiscal Oversight

- **Facilities Use Procedure Manual:** At the November Board Meeting, we provided members with the manual and procedures for facilities use but it was incomplete. Additional information was forwarded to Board members, and as noted by Board Member John Glover, it may be time to revise the fee schedule to reflect increased costs to remain consistent with other districts since the current plan was approved in 2007.

- **Consolidation Discussion:** Meetings to discuss the “How” of possible consolidation has been postponed until the SAU Board is briefed.
- **Enrollments:** Beginning in January, enrollment will be reported in a new format consistent with the Clark-Wilkins model. Total student enrollment at the Middle School is unchanged from November:
 - Grade 5 137**
 - Grade 6 140**
 - Grade 7 175 (28 Mont Vernon)**
 - Grade 8 187 (32 Mont Vernon)**
 - Total: 639**

Inspirational & Effective Teaching

- **Response to Instruction (RTI) and Multi-Tiered System of Services (MTSS):** Seven schools have visited AMS already this year to learn from us. Our 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.
- **Curriculum, Assessment, and Grading:** Christine Landwerhle and Dr. Bethany Bernasconi continue to lead this important work. At our December Late-Start, teachers worked on their individual work plans. Dr. Bernasconi will be glad to speak to the work at the meeting.

Innovative Technology Integration

- **The Innovation and Design Lab/ Maker Space:** AMS secured a major donation of equipment from a local business. Makerspace members and teachers disassembled and installed them AMS on weekends and evenings.

Summary of Upcoming Events

December 18: Ceremony with Manchester VA, 8am
 December 18: SAU 39 Consolidation Forum, 6:30pm MVVS
 December 19: 7th Grade Field Trip to Concord Theater
 December 19: Grade 5 Band and Chorus Concert, 6pm
 December 19: Grade 6 Band and Chorus Concert, 7pm
 December 20: Grade 7 and 8 Band and Jazz Band Concert, 6pm
 December 20: Grade 7 and 8 Chorus Concert, 7pm
 December 21: Concert Snow Date
 January 4: Spelling Bee, 8am (snow day Jan. 5)
 January 9: **Late Start**, school begins at 9:25am
 January 12: School dance, 7pm, grades 6, 7, 8
 January 15: **NO School**, Martin Luther King Day
 January 18: Geography Bee, 8am (snow date Jan.19)
 January 22: PTA meeting at 6:30pm
 January 23: Trimester 2 Progress Reports
 January 23: Quarter 2 special end for grades 5/6

