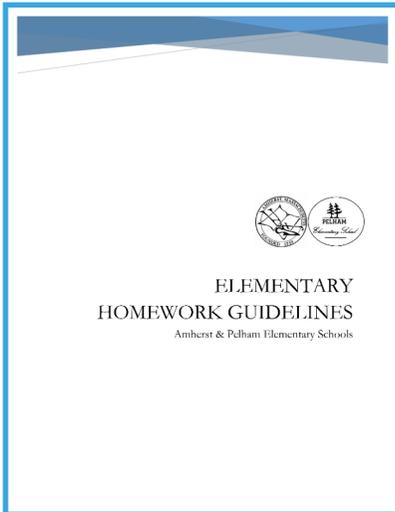


ARPS Update

January 12, 2018

A Message from Michael Morris, Superintendent of Schools



I am pleased to report that the district's *Elementary Homework Guidelines* have been finalized. Development of these guidelines was a truly collaborative, inclusive effort from the development of the initial draft by the Elementary Homework Working Group this past

summer, through the gathering of feedback from all stakeholder groups, to the finished product that incorporates that feedback. I believe these guidelines provide the necessary balance between homework assignments that enhance and reinforce learning and free time for students to spend with family, friends and in their own creative pursuits. A letter with more information will be sent home to parents in the report card envelopes at the beginning of February, and implementation of the guidelines will begin after the February break. The *Elementary Homework Guidelines* are available [here in English](#) and [here in Spanish](#).

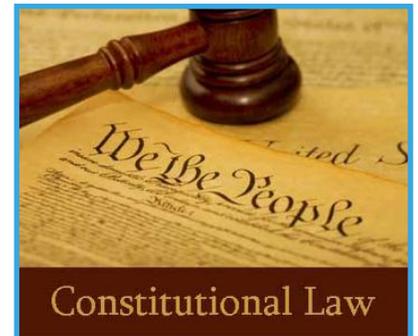


One of the suggestions that was incorporated into the homework guidelines document was inclusion of

ideas and resources for caregivers to engage in with their children outside of school hours. In that spirit, we are partnering with [Tinkergarten](#) for an exciting event that will inspire learning through creative play. Tinkergarten, which was co-founded by Amherst parents Meghan and Brian Fitzgerald,

teaches activities that “help kids ages 18 months—8 years develop core life skills while enjoying healthy, fun, engaging experiences in the physical freedom of local green spaces.” The event will be held at the Fort River gym beginning at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 3rd. Mark your calendars now and watch for more information as we get closer to the event!

On Wednesday, I had the great pleasure of visiting Tom Fricke's Constitutional Law class at the high school, where I served as the judge in a student exercise



to hear an appeal about gender specific bathroom/changing room laws. The appeal centered around a proposed bathroom access law in Texas and how the 14th Amendment's guarantee of equal protection might apply to transgender citizens were the law to be enacted. The students were highly engaged and did an excellent job of presenting their arguments and responding to unscripted questions, thoughtfully and in-depth.

As I mentioned in last week's update, we received a remarkable amount of feedback on the first drafts of potential district logos. This week we are happy to share the revised draft options based on that feedback. One of these will be selected as our official logo, so please [visit the survey here](#) to select your favorite! The survey will close next Friday, January 19 at 12:00 p.m.

Have a great weekend,

Michael E. Morris

Superintendent

Update from the Amherst School Committee Chair and Vice-Chair

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES TO THE AMHERST SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE AND ENROLLMENT WORKING GROUP PRESENTATIONS:

- Wednesday, January 24, 2018:** The Amherst School Committee will hear presentations by the Special Education and Declining Enrollment subgroups of the Enrollment Working Group
- Monday, February 5, 2018:** The Amherst School Committee will hear presentations by the Dual-Language/Magnet and Preschool subgroups of the Enrollment Working Group

The public is welcome to attend!

Questions or comments for the Amherst School Committee can be emailed to schoolcommittee@arps.org. For posted meetings, agendas, and meeting minutes, please visit www.arps.org.

Phoebe Hazzard, Chair

Anastasia Ordonez, Vice-Chair

Save the Date!



May 11, 2018

6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Latino Achievement Night

**For more information
contact**

Mildred Martinez at 413 362-1871

or email @ martinezm2@arps.org



FAMILY
CENTER