

The AMES Nucleus

Quarterly Newsletter

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Follow AMES on the Web!

- Official AMES website: www.ames-slc.org
- AMES Student Groups on Facebook: [AMESslc](#)
[AMES Student Council](#)
- AMES on Twitter: [AMESslc](#)

Principal's Message: AMES—An Inclusive Learning Community

For nearly a decade, the Academy for Math, Engineering and Science (AMES) has provided many students and parents a unique inclusive learning environment that has demonstrated many positive quantitative and qualitative results. When entering into the south hallways of AMES/CHS, students and parents are now greeted with a sign that proudly states, "AMES – An Inclusive Learning Community." It has taken us nine years, but we now have official "signage" that proudly represents the school we have been, are, and continue to become.

When describing AMES core foundation and educational focus as an early college high school to policy makers, community leaders, prospective parents, or the general public, I'm always asked, "How much does the tuition cost to attend AMES?" My response is a polite smile, followed by the words, "No more than your large scale traditional public school, and in fact, in many cases less." People are always shocked to hear that AMES is offered to the general public as a primary school of "choice," producing scholarship outcome results that can be compared aggregately to nearby private schools, but at no additional cost. The shock is typically followed by in-

quiry into AMES mission, philosophy, curriculum scope, offerings, and partnership with both Cottonwood High School and the University of Utah. It's an incredible return on tax payers' investments in Utah's public education system, despite a new school report card based solely on CRT (Criterion Reference Test) scores.

AMES is defined as a blended school between preparing our youth for high school completion and the opportunity to complete between one to two years of college. AMES curriculum is aligned very closely with the Utah Regents Scholarship program (a financial incentive based funding program that rewards students for taking rigorous coursework in high school). Research conducted by ACT has shown that students who complete the following coursework in high school have nearly a 90% attainment rate of Bachelor's Degree completion:

- 4 years of Language Arts
- 4 years of (progressive) Mathematics
- 4 years of Science (3 lab based)
- 3.5 years of Social Science
- 2 years of consecutive World Language (grades 9-12)

What continues to make AMES a unique and inclusive learning institution are a few key variables that lead to a positive school climate and enhance student achievement. The first is the high caliber faculty that provide excellent instruction, and every day demonstrate a genuine regard, care, commitment, and compassion to each individual student. A second variable is the intrinsic value that our students and parents place on their education, and the continued craft of the school, students, and parents working as "one." A third variable is our school's leadership commitment to the Early College Core Principles, adopted in partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation & Jobs for the Future (JFF). These core principles are a part of every decision that is made to ensure AMES remains committed to student success:

1. Providing underserved youth with an academic and contextual learning path through high school graduation, post-secondary readiness, persistence and completion.
2. Fostering a joint partnerships between AMES (as an independent LEA – Local Education Agency), Salt Lake District, Granite District, and the University of Utah.

(continued, page 2)

AMES—An Inclusive Learning Community (continued)

3. Developing and sustaining applicable and relevant course level curriculum that allows for students to complete one to two years of transferable college credit (leading to college completion).
4. Providing a comprehensive support system that develops academic and social contextual (meta-cognitive) skills, as well as, behaviors and conditions necessary for college completion.
5. Partnering with the community (i.e., business, non-profits, industry, medical profession,

etc...) and establishing ongoing service learning/internship based opportunities for students to connect their education to the world of work.

6. Ensuring leadership promotes "early college" state and national public policy, advocacy, and legislation to further grow, expand, and support the movement.

Our graduating class of 2011 attained many milestones that further exemplified the recipe for success at AMES including:

- Nearly \$6 million in scholarship offerings
- \$644,000 in tuition savings to Utah's families
- Over 1,400 University of Utah credits earned
- Over 1/3 of seniors eligible for the Regents' Scholarship (up to \$5,000 in tuition savings)
- 36 Science Awards at the Regional Fair (with six invitations to International competition)
- 1st place in the state Math competition
- 1st place in state for Varsity Junior Engineer-

- ing Technical Society
- 2nd highest SAT scores in Utah
- Over 1/3 are first-generation college going students

And, all of these accolades with half of our students considered underserved, low income, and Ethnic Minority. Please share and celebrate with me our ninth year of operations and continued commitment to serving all students!

Sincerely,
Mr. McGill,
AMES Principal and CEO

Dean's Den



The first quarter is over! As you look back on this quarter, did you do your best?

Back in the day, I remember reviewing my grades with my father each quarter. He would praise me for my hard work and dedication. I remember my mother helping me study for tests throughout my education. For me, going to college was a foregone conclusion. We talked about going to college from my first days in elementary school. I had no idea what I wanted to do early on, but I knew it was important to have a college education to open the doors of opportunity!

Our goal at AMES High School is to prepare students to not only get into college, but to also complete their degree. Taking hard classes and getting good grades is important, however, it is only one piece of the puzzle. We also want to make you good navigators of the college system. Parents, please take advantage of the SEOP (Student Education Occupational Plan) that our counselors provide. It is in these meetings and other AMES activities that you will learn much of the hidden college curriculum. For example, what classes do I need to take

and what grades do I need to earn to be eligible for the Regents' Scholarship? Do I need to do community service in order to receive scholarships? What is the difference between Early Decision and Early Action? Do I really need to fill out the FAFSA? The AMES counselors, Mr. McGill and I will spend a lot of time helping your students build a system of information to complete this complex task. Our teachers and counselors also spend time in our bi-monthly College Forum Monday meetings covering much of this information.

We will do our best to provide great information for students and parents about this very important process and will go the extra-mile to help students get to where they want to go. We need to do this as a team, working toward the goal of a college degree. Please ask us lots of questions and talk to us about your goals, desires and dreams for the future.

do you do your best? Your best is our expectation and the key to your future!

Craig Haslip, Dean of Students

Counseling Corner

Welcome to 2nd term, beginning on Monday, Oct. 31st. It's incredible that we're already a quarter complete with this school year, and we hope it has been a good experience for your student(s) thus far. Students who have struggled with grades may need to re-think their study habits this next term to see some improvement. [Here are a few key questions for students:](#)

- 1) Are you keeping track of daily assignments? How?
 - 2) Do you take notes in class to summarize main concepts in your own words?
 - 3) Are you taking notes to improve textbook comprehension of new vocabulary?
- Note:** Items 2 and 3 become a perfectly legal cheat-sheet you can use to study for tests!
- 4) Do you talk to your teachers if you have questions or need extra help understanding topics discussed in class?

Those students who turn in assignments on time, attend class every day, listen & take notes, read assigned text, and review class & reading notes before a test, generally do very well with grades. If you need help with this, please talk to your counselor at the start of this new term for suggestions and ideas. You can see real improvement next term if you start now to develop good study habits!

SSI TEST (Student Strengths Inventory) :

To be given to all AMES students!

Our entire student body, grades 9-12, will be taking the SSI in the next few weeks. This inventory measures student attitudes and beliefs towards education and social skills that research says are critical to college and career success. Each student will receive a profile that outlines strengths and also areas needing improvement, to help them be better prepared for future opportunities. According to the University of Utah, students who score high on the SSI are much more likely to complete college successfully.

Join AMES PTSO

AMES may be only a few years old, but in those years the parents, teachers and students who form the AMES PTSO have made a very large impact on the culture of the school and the future of the students. From the beginning, it was a way for parents to help other parents be more involved and better informed. One of the primary goals of the group is to encourage students to continue their education after leaving AMES. As a way to support this, the PTSO uses 100% of the money it raises from membership dues and the one fundraiser each December at Barnes and Noble to award scholarships to students who plan to continue their education, and to fund other unique school opportunities.

Aristophanes said, "Hunger knows no friend but its feeder," and the parents of the PTSO have certainly made

many friends among AMES students and teachers by generously donating food, time and energy to have students well fed before EXPLORE, PSAT and PLAN tests on October 12, College Application Saturday workshop for 12th graders on October 15, and for teachers before Parent/Teacher conferences.

Looking for more ways for our students to get together outside of class time, the PTSO is sponsoring an after school Twister party **on Friday, November 18 in Skunkworks**. The room will be transformed into a giant Twister Board, so the more the merrier. (YouTube opportunities galore!) Those who would prefer to socialize instead of play will be happy to know that, once again, there will be food and music. What better way to get ready for the holidays than laughing with your friends.

Speaking of the holiday season, you will have 2 opportunities to support the PTSO Scholarship efforts at the Barnes & Noble in Murray (5249 South State Street). Our main event will be on **Saturday, December 10 from 9am-9pm**. For all purchases made with our special voucher (forthcoming) on that day a percentage will come directly to the AMES PTSO for scholarships. So if you are planning any book or book-related holiday gifts, **WAIT** until that day to make your purchases. Details about the online option will be shared through the AMES website as soon as they are available. **AND** if you hate to wrap your own gifts, AMES student council volunteers will be there to wrap your presents for you. There is no charge for the wrapping, but they will look



very sad if you don't put a tip in their tip jars. (Wrapping for tips will also be available on Black Friday, November 25th but AMES does not get a percentage of the sales that day, only on December 10.)

If you are interested in being a more active member of the AMES PTSO, you are encouraged to join the monthly meetings, open to ALL parents, held in Skunkworks at 3:45, usually on the 2nd Thursday of the month (check the AMES online calendar to be sure). If you are not able to join the meeting personally, you can contact Michelle Brockman, PTSO chair, about other ways to get involved. If you are currently a member, you should be receiving periodic emails about PTSO activities. If you are not a member, you can join anytime to assist and to continue the scholarship efforts for our students.

Internships

If you currently have an 11th grade student at AMES, you are probably getting familiar with the AMES internship class and opportunities. While there are many things that make our school unique, requiring our students to have an experience in the community with a mentor in order to earn their AMES diploma is one of the most fun and relevant. We have just finished our first term in-class time, with students learning skills that help them to be prepared for, get involved in and better



understand their future in a professional work setting, such as resume writing, interview skills, labor and safety laws and communication skills. Since our students do have a very broad range of career interests, they end up being placed in a wide variety of professional settings in our city. Students spend from 3 - 5 hours each week, shadowing and assisting their mentor at their site. Then on Fridays, we come back together as a class to share experiences with each

other and to learn about aspects of work that make workers successful.

When you patronize local businesses or organizations, ask them if they have worked with or would consider working with one of our interns. Since the placements are just beginning, look for a list of participating businesses and organizations in our next newsletter. Perhaps you would like to start patronizing them if you don't already; I can personally recommend the cupcakes at So Cupcake and Ken

Sanders may just have that book you have been looking for. While we do have an impressive list of willing businesses, we are always in need of more placement sites, especially either near the school or in our students' neighborhoods, and ones that have opportunities both after school and on the weekends. If you work for or have a business/organization that may be interested in furthering the understanding of an AMES student on the value of your career or simply the value of work, please contact Martha Taylor (mtaylor@ames-slc.org or 801.493.5584)

~~~ COMCAST INTERNET CONNECTION AT HOME FOR ONLY \$9.95 A MONTH ~~~

Students who are **eligible to receive free school lunch** may also qualify for "Internet Essentials" from Comcast: affordable \$9.95 a month internet with no price increases, no activation fees and no equipment rental fees. A low-cost computer is available at initial enrollment for \$149.99 plus tax.

Internet training is free online, in print, or in a classroom setting. **You may be eligible to participate if you meet all of the following criteria:**

Your home is located in an area where Comcast offers Internet service;

You have at least one child receiving free school lunch through the National School Lunch Program;

You have NOT subscribed to Comcast Internet service within the last 90 days;

You do NOT have an overdue Comcast bill or unreturned equipment.

For more information, visit InternetEssentials.com or for questions, call 1-855-846-8376.

Term 2 Calendar of Events

- October 31: Term 2 begins
- November 3: 6:00 pm—Math Night, room 209
- November 7: AMES Food Drive BEGINS
- November 10: 3:45 pm—PTSO Meeting
5:00 pm—AMES Board Meeting
- November 17: 3:50 pm—Art Film Festival
Wasteland (99 Minutes, NR)
- November 18: 4:00 pm—PTSO Student Social (Twister)
- November 23-25: **Thanksgiving Recess—NO SCHOOL**
- December 2: Midterm Progress Reports
- December 10: 10:00 am-6:00 pm—AMES/Barnes & Noble
Scholarship Fundraiser
- December 16: AMES Food Drive ENDS
- December 22-January 2: **Winter Recess—NO SCHOOL**
- January 12: Last Day of Term 2
- January 13: **SNAD—NO SCHOOL**
- January 16: **MLK, Jr. Day—NO SCHOOL**
- January 19: 3:50 pm—Art Film Festival
Rape of Europa (116 Minutes, NR)



Advanced Placement at AMES

AMES is a stimulating and inspiring place for bright, talented, and disciplined students. Our mission is to prepare students for success in college and other post-secondary education. Everything we do at AMES focuses on this mission because we believe that *all* students should have challenging learning experiences and an opportunity to become life-long learners.

Why AP at AMES? The purpose of AP at AMES is much larger than simply helping students pass the end of year AP College Board® exam. Taking the AP exam is optional, learning is not. Research has shown that students who take an AP course, regardless of whether they pass the exam or not, are better prepared for college courses. Our purpose is to help *all* of our students develop

attitudes and skills that will enhance their success in college.

The AP experience at AMES can change students' lives. Students enter college with knowledge that might otherwise have remained unexplored in a traditional high school. Each AP course at AMES offers something for everyone. The only requirement is curiosity and the

willingness to work hard. AMES currently offers Advanced Placement courses in Human Geography, European History, United States History, Calculus, and Statistics.

Please visit

<http://apcentral.collegeboard.com>

for more information about exams and test dates.

AMES Food Drive 2011

November 7—December 16

AMES will be collecting donations for the Utah Food Bank. Please drop off donations to Ms. Spencer, room 243.

We will accept canned or boxed food, bagged rice and beans, peanut butter, baby food and formula; All food MUST be *unexpired and unopened*.

We hope to surpass last year's donation of 2,497 lbs. of food.

THANK YOU for your support



AMES Chess Class



Chess students are improving every day and have progressed to "mate-in-two" puzzles. Deceptively simply-looking, mate-in-two puzzles are exponentially more difficult to solve than beginner's level mate-in-one. Ask a current chess student to explain the process for solving these puzzles and be prepared to wrap your brain around an extremely complex idea.

Math Department Highlights

We have had a great start to the school year in our Math Department. A lot of changes have been going on with our College Preparatory Mathematics program, meeting the requirements of the state with the new Core Curriculum State Standards, and meeting the needs of our student body. Our Math Club has already started competing in Math League. Watch for upcoming events in the Math Club, such as, the American Mathematics Competition and the Utah State Math Competition.



Some wonderful opportunities for Math Help have already started that you should be aware of. If your student needs some help with homework or another issue we can help. The opportunities are:

- Homework Help: www.cpm.org
- Lunch Time Tutoring: Every lunch period a teacher is available for help in room 204
- After School Tutoring: Tuesday and Thursday from 3:45 to 5:00pm in room 204
- Saturday School: 10am – 12pm at the Hunter Library (4100 South 4800 West)

- Co-curricular Math Tutoring: Every co-curricular math tutoring in room 204

We hope that providing all of these support opportunities will promote success for all of our math students.

The Math Department is also hosting a Math Night November 3 at 6:00pm in room 209. We will be discussing and answering any questions on our curriculum and the core standards. We hope to see you there.

As always feel free to contact any of the Math Department staff.

Joel Miller
Lisa Jasumback
Brian Birchler

**Saturday School
Math Tutoring**
10:00 am-12:00 pm
Hunter Library
4100 S 4800 W

Spotlight on Language Arts

Laurie Oberg's 11th grade language arts classes are studying logic—as in argumentation and logical fallacies. Soon they'll all know that the argument "but all my friends are doing it!" is an illogical "bandwagon appeal" and they'll have to come up with a better argument when trying to persuade their parents.

Twelfth graders have been learning to view news photographs with an eye to critical analysis rather than just accepting them at face value. Their presentations have been informative and interesting. During second quarter, seniors will be starting to pull information together for their senior portfolios and facing the fact that graduation is getting closer every day.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Essay Contest

The English department would like to encourage students to honor the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by participating in the Utah State Office of Education's annual essay contest. This year's theme is "How are you demonstrating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision of unity in your life." Students may submit an essay of 500 words or less, or a video of three minutes or



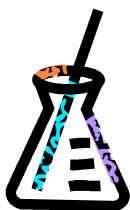
less. Essay entries and DVDs of video entries with entry forms must be postmarked on or before November 15.

There is a cash prize for winning essays and all winners will be invited to attend a luncheon at the Hilda B. Jones Center. Students can access the contest instructions at <http://schools.utah.gov/equity> by clicking on "Martin Luther King, Jr. contest."

Science Department Highlights

AMES now has its very own American Chemical Society sanctioned Chemistry Club. The Chemistry Club is open to all students who are interested in science and would like to try a variety of hands on activities. Students involved in the club can expect to participate in a number of laboratory experiments. Some relate directly to the regular curriculum and some are just plain fun. To date, students have learned to

how to make glow worm style fire works, develop fingerprints with superglue and use chromatography to determine the identity of an unknown substance. Future activities will include making blue print paper, making movie glass and DNA extraction. The club meets during all regularly scheduled co-curricular sessions.



AMES also now has an active photography club, sponsored by Mr. Ramsey. The role of the photography club is to chronicle the life of the school. Photos will be primarily used in the school yearbook but may also find their way into the school newspaper. The students have enthusiastically taken to their role and proudly proclaim that they will "shoot" anyone and everyone they find.

In Biology:
**The Wonderful
World of Cells**
Display in Ms.
Aho's Classroom

Art Department Highlights

Fine Arts Explorations Artist in Residence

We are excited to have Victoria Lyons as an artist in residence at AMES. Victoria is the Director of Bad Dog Arts, a non-profit youth arts organization. Bad Dog Arts has a continued partnership with AMES. Many of our past and current AMES students have participated in a number of their summer apprenticeship programs including comic book art, photography, and mural painting. Victoria is graciously donat-



ed her time and art materials to help introduce our Fine Arts Exploration students to the art of printmaking. The students are busy designing and creating their prints. The project will end with the students producing a series of greeting cards that will be available to purchase in December. All proceeds will go to the AMES art program.

Sacred Spaces & Sacred Places, AP Art History Field-Trip

AP Art History students are looking forward to our 2nd

annual *Sacred Spaces* field-trip on Friday, December 2nd. As a class, we have been studying how cultures from around the world use art to understand their reason for being and their place in the universe. Art can be a way to not only record and practice spiritual beliefs, but also a way to create myths and commune with ancestors. We will be visiting several sites in the Salt Lake Valley, including Kol Ami and the Cathedral of the Madeleine, to give our AP Art History students an opportunity to evaluate how spiritual beliefs are reflected in the art and architecture.

Art & Art History Film Festival

The Art & Art History Film Festival is an opportunity for students to view documentary films about art, design, and art history after school. Students need to have parent permission to participate in the screenings and discussions.

If you have specific questions about any of the films please contact me at amcdonald@ames-slc.org or 801-278-9460 ext. 215.

Foundations of Engineering

The engineering classes recently finished working with a team from the University of Utah's Bioengineering department to design and build prosthetic legs. They worked in teams to overcome the challenge of making a leg that functions similar to a body's real leg. This first photo shows Chris Warner and Chris Widmer preparing to test out the shock absorbing feature of the leg their engineering team designed and built. The second photo shows one of the engineering teams that was especially proud of the pneumatic control feature they designed into their leg.



AMES Co-Curricular Club Offerings 2011-2012

Student Council
Newspaper / Literary Magazine
Interact Service Club
Fashion Club
Art Club
Chess
Improv Club
Sports Club
Key Club
Chemistry Club
Domestic Artisans Club
Native American Cultural Club
Photography Club
FIRST Robotics
Math Club
Open Mic Club
Gardening Club
Rocket Club/Electric Car
HOSA/Future Doctors

College Forum and Co-Curricular

AMES College Forum

- An opportunity to interact with fellow AMES students, to discuss issues and opportunities around our school.
- Meet and build a relationship with an AMES faculty member who can serve as an academic advisor and/or advocate.
- Prepare for graduation from AMES, with emphasis on AMES Senior Project and Portfolio.
- Explore post-high school options and opportunities.
- Learn about the college-going process.
- A place for students to discuss and voice concerns.

College Forum meets every A-Day Monday from 9:00-9:42.

Regular attendance, participation, and completion of activities will earn you 0.25 elective credit.

AMES Co-Curricular

- An opportunity for AMES clubs to meet during school hours.
- Learn new skills, discover new interests/hobbies, and interact with other AMES students.

Co-Curricular meets every B-Day Monday from 9:00-9:42 and during Cottonwood High School assemblies.

Participation in clubs/activities is a great way for you to stand out on college applications, scholarships, resumes, etc.

