



Plainville Board of Education's Community Letter

Fall 2016

To provide rigorous and enriching experiences that prepare each student for success in a changing global society.

Message from the Board of Education

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Follow Us On Twitter!

Plainville Community Schools invites you to follow district happenings through our newly launched Twitter account via our handle: @PlvComSchools

This fall, Plainville Community Schools has been going through a process called Strategic Planning. This process involves setting the goals of the school district for the next five years. The committee is made up of an extensive group of stakeholders including school administrators, teachers, school staff, parents, students, town employees, community members, government officials, local business leaders, and Board of Education members.

Plainville Community Schools believes that it is important to have input from all of our stakeholders regarding school related issues to help set the future direction of the district. Instead of using a traditional survey, an online information gathering tool called "Thoughtexchange" was also used to collect ideas from everyone in the district and community as part of the strategic planning process. Participants were addressing two primary areas of focus: things appreciated about the school district and concerns about the district.

The results of this process were used by the committee in the strategic planning process and provide a forum for community stakeholders to help set the course for the school district's future. For more information, please contact Plainville Community Schools at (860) 793-3200.

Master BOE Member Designation

Plainville Board of Education member Becky Tyrrell recently achieved the level of Master Board of Education Member in the CAFE Board Member Academy, according to Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Maureen Brummett. Tyrrell earned the distinguished designation by participating in numerous hours of board-related professional development activities over the 2015-16 school year.

To achieve the Master Board of Education level, a board member must first accumulate at least 20 credits, becoming a Certified Board of Education member (CBEM). The Master Board of Education member must earn an additional 20 credits above and beyond the CBEM level. The areas of study include: Leadership, Effective Meetings, School / Community Relations, Strategic Planning, Group Dynamics, Board Member Ethics, School Finance, Labor Relations, and School Law.

"Mrs. Tyrrell has been a dedicated Board member for 15 years. She understands the complex issues that impact our local community and supports our efforts to continuously improve Plainville Community Schools," noted Superintendent Brummett.



In photo: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Maureen Brummett, Plainville Board of Education member Becky Tyrrell, and Plainville Board of Education Chairperson Andrea Saunders at the October 14 Board of Education meeting where Tyrrell was honored for achieving the CAFE Board Member "Master" designation.

From Sam Adlerstein, Director of Business and Operations:



Our office door is open, and we encourage and welcome visitors. I would love to meet you and learn how we can better / best support you. We are on the third floor of the Municipal Center. If it's better for you, please call or write: 860-793-3210 x205 adlersteins@plainvilleschools.org

WHAT ARE YOUR PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES AS DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AND OPERATIONS?

Generally, we handle district activities that lie outside of direct education of children. Business Office activities include Human Resources, Payroll, Accounts Payable, Facilities, Food Service, Transportation, and managing district budgets (including grants).

WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO THIS POSITION?

I have spent my career in finance and operations, so that is natural. I became attracted to primary and secondary school education as a parent and a volunteer. As my children grew, I became more involved. I want to have a positive impact on children's lives because, in my opinion, that is the heart of community. I've been deeply involved in three school districts now and each is very different. I'm particularly attracted to Plainville for too many reasons to list here!

WHAT IS YOUR TOP PRIORITY?

Continual improvement, always toward outstanding customer service. In the business office, our customers include community members (and groups), students, and staff. We extend the same service priority to the State and others who provide our funding.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS YOUR MOST DIFFICULT CHALLENGE?

My role in school budgets, something every community struggles with. Done well, voices are heard and respected and we end up with what is best for Plainville, through the process that provides for high quality education in a responsible manner, within our financial means. The tensions can be great, the situation can feel paradoxical, yet, in most respects, we all want the same thing.

DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE.

At the heart of leading others is self-leadership. My goal for myself and others is to decode the things that make us feel great about our jobs and build on that everyday. Through teamwork, we need to align work with individual talents, harness self motivation and strive for improvement. In doing this for ourselves, we model what we want for our children!

Spotlight on...Wheeler School



Student reporters Mikayla Ayers and Lindsay Barbagallo asked Miss Bartomioli, a fifth grade teacher and the Student Council Advisor, about what she is doing this year to improve the Student Council. We hope you enjoy!

WHAT ROLE DO YOU SEE THE STUDENT COUNCIL PLAYING IN OUR SCHOOL? I envision the **Student Council helping to create a positive school environment through spirit days and community projects.**

IF YOU COULD SEE THE STUDENT COUNCIL DOING SOMETHING FOR THE COMMUNITY, WHAT WOULD IT BE? **We are currently running a food drive for the Plainville Community Food Pantry in preparation for Thanksgiving! The students have a lot of ideas about how to give back to Plainville through various fundraisers as well. They are a very generous bunch!**

WHAT ACTIVITIES DO YOU HAVE PLANNED? **We have a calendar set up for the next three months with different spirit days every Friday. We have events like Pajama Day, Twin Day, and everything in between for student involvement.**

Adult Education: ServSafe

The Plainville Community Fund II at the Main Street Community Foundation, awarded a \$2,618 grant to Plainville Adult and Continuing Education, providing 16 needs-based scholarships for Plainville residents to partake in a ServSafe Manager Food Protection Certification Course in October. Students received a text book, study materials, and sat for the ServSafe Exam on-site. This hands-on course was instructed at Plainville High School, by Jim Bondi, a registered ServSafe Instructor and Food Services Director of Plainville Community Schools with over 36 years of experience in the Food Services Sector.

Following training completion, programming expanded to provide students with an *Interview Etiquette* workshop, customized for employment acquisition in the food industry.

Jill O'Brien, Plainville Adult and Continuing Education Coordinator said, "Plainville residents benefited from this local training opportunity, due to the generous financial support from the Plainville Community Fund. Participants are in a better position now to secure employment."

Good News! Great things are happening in our school district.

PLAINVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

Students in **Chef LeSage's Culinary Arts** classes carved and prepped pumpkins donated to children at the Plainville Pumpkin Fest...The **PHS Girls Volleyball Team** collected over \$1,500 to fight breast cancer and support research through the SideOut Foundation, at their "Dig Pink Night" held on October 6...PHS celebrated Homecoming during the first weekend in October with several activities including a float parade, varsity football game and dance. The Homecoming Court featured fourth runners-up: **Kaitlyn Butler** and **Will Anderson**, third runners-up: **Melissa Lux** and **Jonathan Olson**, second runners-up: **Jessica Masco** and **Cory Carlone**, first runners-up: **Erin Brochu** and **Dwight Burns**, and Homecoming Queen and King: **Kiya Broughton** and **Grant Sarra**.

MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PLAINVILLE

The **Middle School's library** will host its annual winter book fair at Barnes & Noble, at Blue Back Square in West Hartford on Saturday, December 3, from 10:00AM – 5:00PM. **MSP's art students** will have their work on display, and the school's **Military Mailroom** will have holiday cards available to be signed and sent to our troops. Profits will benefit MSP's library...**Middle School faculty and staff** raised \$2,490 for the Plainville Community Food Pantry through their "Jeans Dress Down Day" program...**MSP faculty members Camille Westfall** and **Adam Murphy**, together with **18 eighth grade girls**, recently attended the "Multiply Your Options (MYO)" event – a one-day program at the UCONN School of Engineering. MYO is a conference for middle school girls designed to expose them to female role models in science, mathematics, engineering and technology.

LINDEN STREET SCHOOL

Linden physical education teacher Melissa Patterson was named *Physical Education Teacher of the Year* by the Connecticut Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. **Patterson** also recently received a grant to implement a "Marathon Kids" running club at Linden entitled Linden Runners Rock for third through fifth grade students...**The Linden school community** held "Soctober" during which they collected two boxes of socks for local homeless shelters...**Linden's staff** dress down days raised over \$2,000 that was donated to the Connecticut Children's Medical Center, the Plainville Community Food Pantry, the school's scholarship fund and a wheel chair swing fund.

LOUIS TOFFOLON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The **Toffolon School community** held its inaugural Color-A-Thon Run on October 1 to benefit the **Sue Steele Picnic Grove**. Over 120 students, teachers, family members and friends ran the course at the Middle School while

volunteers tossed handfuls of colored powder. There were three different runs to accommodate novice and experienced runners alike, with most participants opting to participate in all three...**Toffolon students** are participating in their 2nd Annual Cardboard Challenge--an event which invites children across the world to use their imagination and the power of creative play to build upon STEM concepts and create something of their own out of cardboard and recycled materials to share with others. On November 9, Toffolon had their "Day of Play" where students shared their creations with the entire school. **Fifth graders** at Toffolon recently took a field trip to the YMCA's Camp Sloper in Southington. Throughout the day, **groups of fifth graders** worked indoors and outdoors on tasks requiring trust, team work, cooperation and problem solving.

FRANK T. WHEELER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Wheeler faculty and staff collected \$1,240 from dress down day donations for their Relay for Life Team and the American Cancer Society...the **Wheeler School community** is holding a non-perishable food item collection for the Plainville Community Food Pantry from October 12 - November 18...**Wheeler kindergartners** recently enjoyed a field trip to Minor's Farm in Bristol, Connecticut where they took a hay ride, picked out pumpkins, and rode on a "cow" train.

DISTRICT

Plainville Community Schools received a grant from the new Dunkin Donuts on Farmington Avenue in Plainville. The grant is earmarked for eco friendly initiatives in the school district...**Plainville Community Schools** welcomed former **PHS Physical Education teacher and coach Chris Farrell** as the district's new Athletic Director...**Plainville Board of Education member Foster White**, together with **Assistant Superintendent Steven LePage**, **Linden Principal Paula Eshoo**, **PHS Assistant Principal Carl Johnson**, **Steve Michaud**, and **several district faculty members, (including the Linden Spinners!)** recently participated in the Wheeler Regional YMCA's Rick Varsell Memorial Spin-A-Thon to help survivors thrive...**Elementary Math Resource Teacher Alicia Atterato** received a grant from the Ben Was Here Foundation to obtain "Blue Bots" which will be introduced to students and teachers in Plainville elementary schools to use as a small group math center, and in other coding and STEM related learning and activities.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Plainville High School Class of 2016 graduates received **\$272,790** in scholarships.





In photo: Linden Street School Principal Paula Eshoo with the district "Grade 1 PLC"

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are a process whereby teachers work collaboratively to look at student work and assessment results in order to achieve better results for the children they serve. PLCs operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous, job-embedded learning for educators. During PLC meetings teachers look at student work to determine if they have met the teaching standard. Educators discuss what to do for students who have not yet met the standard as well as for those students who have surpassed the standard.

In an effort to expand the work of district PLCs, there are six additional shortened days during the 2016-17 school year, bringing the total number of PLC work days to 11--this additional time provides for making the overall PLC process more effective. In order to make it as predictable as possible for families, all of the shortened days are on Wednesdays throughout the school year. The first 2016-17 PLC day was held on October 5 with faculty members and administrators engaged in meaningful teaching, learning, discussion and planning around curriculum, assessments, data, instructional practices and more. PLCs in Plainville are off to a great start this year!

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Belief Statements... We believe:

- Our public school system is the core of the community and has a fundamental responsibility to develop productive educated citizens in a democracy
- Optimal achievement for each learner is a responsibility shared by students, home, school, and community
- We must provide each student with a comprehensive curriculum and effective instruction to ensure meaningful engagement in the learning process
- A safe, caring learning environment promotes the academic growth, health, and emotional well being of each student
- Communication and collaboration foster knowledge, trust, and respect and are the responsibility of everyone in the community.