PENDING BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVAL

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION PLAINVILLE, CONNECTICUT MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2024

6:45 PM - The Board of Education photo for the yearbook was taken.

Order of Business 7:00 PM

I. Convene—Pledge of Allegiance

Board Chair Becky Tyrrell called the regular business meeting of the Plainville Board of Education to order at 7:00 PM. Jered Bruzas led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: Mesdames Buchanan, Clark, Lauria, Martinez, St. Lawrence,

Tyrrell, and Messr. Bruzas and White

Also Present: Brian Reas, Superintendent of Schools

David Levenduski, Assistant Superintendent

Sam Adlerstein, Director of Business and Operations Valiantsin Kasabrukhau, Student Representative

Absent: Lori Consalvo, Board Member

Maja Grabowski, Student Representative

Late Arrivals: None

Early Departures: None

Returns: None

II. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:

A) PCS Staff All-Star Awards—Shannon Rivera, Special Education Paraprofessional at Plainville High School

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A) A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF DECEMBER 11, 2023 WITH CORRECTIONS TO PAGES 5 AND 7, ITEMS A, E AND F, WHERE THE WORDING "NO REPORT" SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM THE DOCUMENT. A MOTION WAS SECONDED BY REBECCA MARTINEZ. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.
- B) A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF NOVEMBER 30, 2023 (CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE) AS PRESENTED. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.
- C) A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF DECEMBER 5, 2023 (FACILITIES AND FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE) AS PRESENTED.

REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.

IV. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT

Student Liaison Valiantsin Kasabrukhau reported on the following:

Mr. Kasabrukhau stated that as students have returned from the holiday break, they have been hard at work focusing on completing their PHS service requirements, as well as preparing for the upcoming mid-terms.

- ► Mid-term Exams will begin on Tuesday, January 16th and will commence until Friday, January 19th. Due to the Martin Luther King Day holiday, students will have a three-day weekend to study. With that said, teachers have been able to push through to complete the necessary content by the mid-term deadline this week, while still maintaining some review days for students.
- ▶ The first day of the second semester begins on January 22 and report cards will be released on January 31. All Seniors will have their mid-term reports submitted to their perspective colleges. Students will wait until March for final decisions to come back.
- ▶ The Winter sports season has been well underway and final competitions are fast approaching. The Boys' and Girls' Indoor Track Team competed at Hillhouse last Friday, January 5. Numerous members of the team qualified for States, most notably in the girls' 1600 meter, 55 meter hurdles, boy's 2200 meter sprint and girls' SMR team. The next meet will be held this Thursday, January 11th.
- ▶ The PHS boys' swim team also had a meet on January 5th against Granby at the Farmington Valley YMCA. They brought home their third win of the season, so far, going undefeated. Congratulations to Coach Kramer and Coach Verrastro. The team will be competing again tomorrow against East Hartford. Also, the Boys' Basketball team is currently holding a game in the main gym tomorrow evening.
- ▶ The PHS Chapter of the National Honor Society has been hard at work completing their tutoring hours and producing videos. Now, through a collaborative with the Counseling Department, the Video Committee will attempt to produce videos for incoming freshmen and 8th graders to watch, with class signups, and will work with class schedules to help smooth their transition to the High School.
- ► The PHS Hockey Coop held a Cancer fundraiser in the lunchroom last Thursday and raised a fair amount of money.
- ▶ The Science National Honor Society will be holding a Science Night for PCS elementary school students and PHS families on April 22 from 6-8 PM.
- ▶ The Math National Honor Society will be holding a bottle and can drive on January 13. Also, they are currently working on establishing a collaboration with the Hartford Science Center to set-up a day where Plainville students will help out at the Science Center to help introduce kids to Physics.

V. CITIZEN COMMENTS—No Comments

RESPONSE TO CITIZEN COMMENTS—No Responses

VI. COUNCIL LIAISON—No Report

VII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Reas reminded all Board Members of the upcoming Board Retreat which will be held at the High School tomorrow evening at 6 PM. The Board will engage in conversation with Mr. Nick Caruso of CABE.

Mr. Reas reported that tomorrow, the district will release its guidance for Plainville Community Schools, regarding the Kindergarten entrance age. The legislature moved the

age of enrollment from December 31 to September 1 for SY2024 students entering kindergarten. The big question is typically, "Who's affected by this"? Essentially our Pre-K will start immediately with their four year-olds starting with a September 1 cut-off as opposed to a December 31 cut-off, which will get the process started. Mr. Reas stated that with regard to kindergarten next year, essentially families will be in a transition year. Therefore, with the State's goal of having everybody start with the September 1 cut-off date, we are working on the assumption that students will come in with that cut-off date and we will then develop a waiver process per the State guidelines. Therefore, if a parent sees a need for their child to come to kindergarten next year, they will have a process in which to work through in order to establish that. We've tried to spell it out as quickly and as effectively as we can to make sure parents are understanding what we're doing and that we're working with our kindergarten teachers to make sure that they are in a position to be ambassadors for this process. Our primary goal in these conversations is to maintain a positive relationship with our parents. He then disseminated the letter to Board Member for their comments and concerns. The plan is to release the letter tomorrow.

Mr. Reas stated that the Strategic Plan with the blue background is absolutely beautiful. He stated that Mrs. Davis obviously has talents in that area. He stated that the administration wants to make sure when presenting to the Board, that they can take and annotate certain areas of the plan. He emphasizes that the plan is now differently organized, but it is the original plan. He stated that they want to draw connections to the plan for better clarity.

The district has submitted a reading waiver that is partially approved, which is the best place to be. Because we were approved for the reading waiver, we are able to requests funds of approximately \$90,000 to help support us in some of the places where the State process identifies where we can use some help with Science and Reading. Effectively, the majority of our program for reading is considered okay and now we have some funds to supplement and augment that program as well. He will keep the Board up-to-date with regard to what reading materials are being purchased.

Mr. Reas stated that the Middle School renovation project has taken quite a bit of our time recently. He reported that the Town Council has formed a Steering Committee to try to get us to the position of going to referendum. The Town is working with a firm called Tall Timbers which was part of the original contract with CSG, who helps us understand what's involved with publicity, both from the legal side and from the "how to" get those messages out. The Town government is very much involved in leading us and we are certainly supporting them in this process. The Committee has already met and things are moving very quickly. They plan is to get communications out, with Tall Timbers support, by the end of the month.

Discussion ensued regarding the aforementioned topics.

Mr. Reas then turned the meeting over to Plainville High School Principal Jennifer DeLorenzo, who had an extensive PowerPoint regarding all of the good things going on at Plainville High School.

PHS STRATEGIC UPDATE

Mrs. DeLorenzo stated that this is her seventh month as Plainville High School's new Principal. She thanked both Assistant Principal Kelly Hickey (also in her seventh month as Assistant Principal) and Assistant Principal Jon Coe, for all of their help and support.

Student Enrollment:

Mrs. DeLorenzo stated that she is very happy to come to the Board to speak about the High School's accomplishments and hopes for the future. He began by giving a brief overview of enrollments at the High School. The largest class is actually the freshmen class (Class of 2027) which is at 196 students. The sophomore class (Class of 2026) comes in at 182 students, compared to the other two class sizes which remain consistent at around 160+/– per class. Mrs. DeLorenzo stated that over the last seven years, enrollment at PHS has stayed pretty consistent at 690+/- students but the numbers are starting to go up.

Staffing Update:

Mrs. DeLorenzo reported that there are currently 11 academic departments; 61 faculty members; 19 Paraprofessionals and tutors; 5 school counselors; 1 school psychologist; 1 school social worker; 4 administrators; 1 School Resource Officer; 6 Office Professionals and 2 Security Monitors. She stated that the numbers have remained stable over the past couple of years.

Student Learning and Performance: SAT/PSAT Results Class of 2024:

The High School continues to see consistent growth over time. Mrs. DeLorenzo said that she is very proud that the senior class was able to break their average SAT scores by just under 100 points (a transition from their freshmen year to their senior year). She stated that to lift the average scores this much is a significant feat.

Class of 2025:

She then stated that the Class of 2025 went from a score of 807 to an improvement of 919 last fall. These students will be tested again in the spring.

Mrs. DeLorenzo stated that there will be a shift in testing everyone in the school from the fall to the spring. This is will take place to see if test scores are a reflection of the curriculum being taught. Students will be tested after seven months of being in the classroom rather than seven weeks. She hopes to see the same continued improvements in their SAT scores.

Class of 2026:

Mrs. DeLorenzo stated that the sophomore class is starting 50 points ahead in their baseline assessment. Averages are looking very good. They are ahead of the State averages in every single test administration. Of that, she is very proud.

Class of 2023:

Mrs. DeLorenzo then gave a few updates on where the graduating class of 2023 currently stands. She stated that almost 98% of graduating seniors had a plan (higher education, trades, military, or the work force). Very few students took a gap year or are undecided. She stated that this is a reflection of the work being done in the Pathways Program, that everyone has a plan post-graduation. She stated that they will continue to work on getting all students (100%) to have a plan by graduation.

Class of 2023 Post Secondary Plans:

Higher Education	77.6%
Vocational & Trade Schools	5.5%
Military	3%
Work Force	7.3%
Gap Year Experience	.6%

Undecided	1.8%
4 Year College	61%
2 Year College	39%
In-State	79%
Out of State	21%

- ▶ Overall the Class of 2023 performed over 5,335 hours of community service
- ▶ 71 members (43%) of the class took one or more UCONN ECE Courses while at PHS (they earned 725 college credits through this course with 188 courses taken)
- ▶41% of the class took one or more AP course while at PHS (135 exams were taken and over 216 credits were earned through those exams)
- ► Eight members of the class participated in the CCSU Partnership Program and earned 42 college credits.
- ► Seven members participated in the Goodwin College Partnership and earned 21 college credits
- ► Twenty-nine members of the class participated in the Tunxis Dual Enrollment Program and earned 87 college credits

PHS Awards and Recognitions:

Mrs. DeLorenzo stated that PHS students raised over \$1,500 to support the children at CCMC on *Pajama Day for Kids* on December 8th.

- ▶ Plainville High School was voted one of the high schools nationally by U.S. News and World Report for 2023-24
- ► The Career Pathways Video Series won a Bronze Telly Award for 2023
- ► Congratulations to our School Counseling Team who were honored at the CT FAFSA Challenge Celebration on September 15th. CT FAFSA Challenge participants were honored because they met or exceeded their goal.
- ▶ Plainville High School is a Connecticut Champion for the Vocabulary Bowl in the Fall of 2023. Students mastered 10,986 words and came in first place in the state.

Mrs. DeLorenzo then highlighted a few of the PHS building improvements.

PHS School Improvement Goals:

- 1) To utilize high level district PLC's and department CPT's to analyze data on both student performance and instructional practices, to guide instruction to ensure all students are college and career ready.
- 2) To develop a more complete Response to Intervention system to include Tier I classroom instructional strategies that support all PHS students.
- 3) To provide safe and orderly learning environment to support the learning community for all students.
- 4) To provide supportive and equitable learning environments that address the social and emotional needs of our learning community.

PHS School-wide Expectations for Students:

Mrs. DeLorenzo reported that in line with District goals, when touring the Plainville High School building, you will find various posters displayed throughout the classrooms. This is a product of a student led group throughout the summer. There were 10-12 students in attendance for a week-long session on schoolwide expectations for all students in Plainville High School. Each department submitted what they wanted to see. The teachers also had some input and the students created the common messaging. Five schoolwide expectations were created to be platformed for the year. They are as follows: Attendance, Cell Phone Use in the Classroom, Late Work (academic late work policy),

Decorum (good behavior and professionalism) and the Dress Code. These are the five focus areas. She then gave a shout out to PHS student Mikayla Jo Ayers, who was the designer of the posters, which are displayed in every classroom for everyone to be reminded of the school's expectations.

PHS Committee Work for 2023-24:

Mrs. DeLorenzo stated that four standing committees were established during the 2021-22 school year in hopes of giving students more of a voice throughout their four years of school. The committees include the SEL & Advisory Building Level Committee, Learning Adventure Day Committee, IL/Faculty Advisory Council and Mastery Based Credit and Portrait of the Graduate Committee.

Attendance Work at PHS:

- ► Increased focus on attendance, both daily and classroom attendance.
- ► Messaging and communication around attendance.
- ► Use of systems and procedures to better monitor.
- ► Use of Student Assistance Meetings to meet student and family needs.
- ► Attendance review letters and mappings.
- ▶ Percentage of students chronically absent

College and Career Pathways:

- ► Clear delineation of pathways for students in our departments
- ► Increased work with students around their SSP Folders and future pathways
- ► Increased electives for 9th graders to begin Pathways exploration earlier
- ▶ "Experience PHS" night in September
- ▶ Promotion in the building and each department
- ► Increased partnerships with colleges and universities
- ► Alignment with District level committees and MSP
- ► Job Shadows, Field Work Experience/Independent Study Opportunities, and Career Center

Learning Adventure Days (Three Events in 2023-24):

- ► Career Gallery Exploration—October 13, 2023
 - --100+ Professionals for students to engage in conversation with
- ► Career Focused Learning Adventure Day—November 8, 2023
- ► Learning Adventure Day—TBD Spring, 2024
- ► Focus on unique, relevant, and positive growth experiences for our students
- ▶ Direct alignment to PCS Portrait of the Graduate Skills, College and Career Pathways and Mastery Based Graduation Requirements.

Mrs. DeLorenzo included photos of the Career Gallery Learning Adventure Days.

Mrs. DeLorenzo then highlighted the various departments in the High School such as Fine Arts, English, Music, Math, Science, Social Studies, School Counseling, Career and Technical Education (CTE), World Language, Health and Physical Education, Special Education and the popularity of the PHS Learning Commons (Library) since its redesign.

PHS Next Steps:

- 1) Continue to integrate the Learning Adventure Program, College and Career Pathway work, Student Success Plans and Advisory programs for the benefit of all students.
- 2) Continue to be a leader in providing exploration and growth opportunities to our students around their post-secondary pathways.

- 3) Implementation of the Mastery Based Credit Experience at PHS, with a focus on Portrait of the Graduate skills and increased opportunities for reflection by students on their personal growth
- 4) Dedication to support the whole student at PHS through partnerships, opportunities, social and emotional learning, and professional growth.
- 5) Refinement and growth around assessment practices at PHS with a focus on accurate measurement of student learning and skills.
- 6) Continue to focus on attendance as a critical component of success and finding ways to support students and families.

Further discussion ensued.

Mr. Reas thanked Mrs. DeLorenzo and members of her staff for this in-depth report.

Mr. Reas also stated that students from Toffolon School created two posters to thank the Board for their new playscape.

VIII. BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Facilities/Finance Subcommittee Report—No Report
- B. Policy Subcommittee Report—No Report
- C. Curriculum Subcommittee Report—No Report
- D. Outreach Subcommittee Report—No Report
- E. PAC Liaison--Plainville High School Report
 - ► The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 10 at 7 PM.
- F. PTO Liaison--Toffolon Elementary School Report—No Report
- G. PTO Liaison--Linden Street Elementary School Report

Mrs. Clark reported on the following:

- ▶ The Holiday Gift Shop wrapping event was held on December 13. There were over 15 volunteers from Plainville High School. Mrs. Clark stated that they can always use more people to help wrap gifts.
- ▶ The PTO had over \$5,000 in sales at their sponsored Holiday Gift Shop which broke the record. Approximately \$1,000 will go toward Valentine-grams and Lucky Leprechaun Bingo. She stated that none of this could have been done without amazing volunteers.
- ► Mrs. Clark stated that PTO President Nicole Michaud is an outstanding President and an amazing person and thanked her for all the time she puts in.
- ► The PTO held a successful butter braid fundraiser.
- ▶ The PTO will hold a Movie Night on January 9th. Monsters Inc. will be the movie of choice. Students can go to the gym to watch the movie, sit on blankets, eat snacks and get comfy with their friends.
- ▶ Due to the limitations of the new food policy in schools, the PTO used to sponsor lolligrams for Valentine's Day which was a huge hit with students, parents and teachers. However, because of the new limitations regarding the dissemination of food in schools, the lolligrams are no more.
- ► The PTO is working on a new endeavor to spread joy on Valentine's Day.

Those ideas will all come together at the next meeting.

► The next meeting is set for January 11th at 6 PM

H. PTC Liaison--Middle School of Plainville Report

Mrs. St. Lawrence reported on the following:

- ▶ The last meeting of the MSP PTC was on Tuesday, December 12.
- ► The PTC discussed new ideas for spring.
- ► The PTC will hold a Winter Bingo Night on January 22 from 6-7:30 PM at MSP
- ► End of the year activities was also the primary topic of discussion
- ▶ Parents are invited to the next PTC meeting being held on January 9th at 6:30 PM in the MSP Library. Parents will discuss many additional end-of-the-year activities which are being planned. The regular PTC meeting will follow at 7 PM.

I. PTO Liaison--Wheeler Elementary School Report

Mrs. Buchanan reported on the following:

- ► The next January Wheeler PTO meeting will be held on January 18 at 6 PM in the Wheeler Library.
- ▶ Wheeler students had a fun trip to Disney on Ice a couple of days ago.
- ► On February 13th, the PTO will hold a Valentine Bingo Night.
- ► The PTO will be selling their annual Smencil Grams on Valentine's Day, February 14th.
- ▶ The next Wheeler PTO meeting will take place on February 22 at 6 PM in the Wheeler Library.

J. CREC Council Report

The CREC Council does not meet in December. Their next meeting will be held on January 17.

K. Chairperson's Report

- ► Mrs. Tyrrell reminded everyone of the upcoming Board Retreat set for tomorrow evening at 6 PM at Plainville High School.
- ▶ With regard to the Middle School project, Lynn Davis will be involved with the Steering Committee due to her knowledge and background of prior school projects. She is a great resource that not many schools have. Mrs. Tyrrell stated that the district is very fortunate to have her.
- ▶ With regard to diversity in the planning of the project, what the committee wants to be sure to do is have all of the officials in town be on the same page, pulling together with the same message and everyone pulling together for this project. It is a very important piece. She stated that Mrs. Buchanan was right in her thinking. It is imperative that everyone work together for the sake of this project.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

X. NEW BUSINESS

A) Board Open Forum

<u>Roberta Lauria</u> stated that she needed clarification from the Superintendent. She stated that she received quite a few calls regarding the 2-hour delay for all schools today, due to the storm. Many people did not receive a SchoolMessenger call, so people were confused.

Mr. Reas that he has received input that parents and staff would like a call and this will be done for all future delays/cancellations. He stated that there were many

conversations with area Superintendents throughout the day on Sunday and everything seemed to come to a head at around 8:45 PM. At that point he didn't call people on their phones because he thought everyone had this on their radar as there were signs throughout the day that the storm was going to be an issue. He went ahead and sent emails to everyone the night before the storm and all of the television stations were contacted regarding the 2-hour delay. He stated that he will fix the problem next time.

<u>Cassandra Clark</u> stated that she could not attend the December 8th Board meeting due to illness. She wanted to recognize a very wonderful woman who passed away in November, Patricia Labbe. Mrs. Labbe had worked extensively at Great Beginnings and was a tremendous help to staff and Linden Street School. Mrs. Labbe left two sons who went through the Plainville School system, both with special needs, and she was widowed twice. Her passing has left a big hole in a few peoples' hearts here in Plainville and Mrs. Clark wanted to recognize her for all that she did for so many people throughout the district. She stated that Mrs. Labbe will be missed.

Foster White stated that it seems that we have so many bits of bad news and so many negative things crossing our lives. He stated that a couple of bright spots have come to mind. First, what typifies Plainville High School as a great and positive learning place is our Honor Society students offering tutoring to those students who are in need of help. This is a further example of the positive learning taking Plainville in Plainville schools. Also, the Middle School VEX Robotics team went to Quinnipiac University to compete and did very well by receiving high ranking honors. Also, on January 19th in Room 403 of the High School, the PHS Coffee House will provide everyone with a very enjoyable evening with some very talented students.

<u>Cassandra Clark</u> also stated that several Linden scholars will be attending a young people's Leadership Conference tomorrow at Naugatuck Community College. This is a wonderful opportunity for our students to participate at the elementary level.

<u>Rachel Buchanan</u> congratulated Shannon Rivera who was the recipient of the Staff All-Star Award this evening.

She stated that reading through the highlights in Mrs. Davis' *Staff Notes*, she was delighted to see that a piece of music had been commissioned for the All-Town Band Performance which will take place on March 7. She stated that as a former flautist, it is so exciting to have a piece of original music to perform. This is super cool!

Mrs. Buchanan also wanted to thank Board Chair Becky Tyrrell for circling back to her comment about the diversity and representation of the MSP Steering Committee. She stated that the Board has supported this project and wants to make it clear that diversity is important and representation is important and to be inclusive of all voters and constituents is important. She stated we may not all convey our message in the same way, but this is wonderful news. It means that we are a diverse Board of Education. She thanked Mrs. Tyrrell for bringing up the topic.

B) Quarterly Special Education Cost Report (October, January, March and June)

Mr. Adlerstein stated from a financial lens, things can change vary quickly and can have a big impact on the financials. Our Special Education tuition looks to be on budget until the end-of-the-year. However, there are four students awaiting

outplacements. Once these students are placed, things can change. He also stated that the district has submitted its data for excess cost reimbursement, to be paid in February. At that time the district will find out the reimbursement percentage. The district is currently estimating 78.9% based upon legislation and in line with history. Also, the updated estimate for Choice students receiving services, for which we bill Hartford, has been completed. Those services are higher than usual and likely an accurate forecast for the year. He will keep the Board updated.

C) Turf Committee Report (September and May)—No Report

XI. CONSENT AGENDA—Board Approval

- (A) Budget Object Summary
- (B) Food Service Report
- (C) Check Registers
- (D) Request Approval of PHS Jazz Band trip to the University of New Hampshire Jazz Festival, Durham, NH, March 15, 2024
- (E) HR Report (Informational Item)
- (F) Private Donation for the month of December (Informational Item)

 - -- Donation from Enzageth Harding Norton Trust to the PHS Unified Sports.... \$2,500
 - --Donation from Elizabeth Harding Norton Trust to the District Volunteer

 Program......\$ 700

A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. ROBERTA LAURIA SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY REBECCA MARTINEZ TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. FOSTER WHITE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOULSY CARRIED 8-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Calistro

Recorder of Minutes

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION SUMMARY OF MOTIONS MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2024

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