



Community Letter

Summer 2012

Promote a challenging environment creating an extraordinary community of learners

Message from the Board of Education

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With the summer months upon us, it is a great time to reflect on the 2011-12 school year with growth, preparation and new "beginnings" for our students as we look forward to the 2012-13 school year.

Members of the Class of 2012 may be getting ready to start the first year of college, learning to balance the increased demands placed upon them as they enter the next chapter of their lives. Students becoming seniors will have much preparation ahead--from planning for SATs, to decisions about college, employment, schoolwork, sports, and life with friends and family. Our students entering sophomore or junior year may be working toward making a varsity team and continuous improvement in course work, while freshmen will be filled with excitement as they anticipate beginning high school. Many more "new beginnings" will take place for our students as they transition from elementary to middle school, or begin their very first day of kinder-

garten! Whatever stage our students are in, we hope that they can take a step back with their families this summer and reflect upon all that they have accomplished, and look forward as they continue on the educational path that will lead them to reaching their life long goals. Congratulations to the Class of 2012!
"Wherever you go, go with all your heart" - Confucius

Recognizing our Volunteers

Plainville Community Schools' volunteers Cindi Witham and David Barry have been selected as this year's school district volunteer award winners, and were honored at the annual volunteer recognition program held at Plainville High School on May 23.

The 2011-12 Dick Ronalter Mentor of the Year Award was presented to David Barry. This award is given to a volunteer mentor who has gone above and beyond in his or her role as an adult friend to a student. Barry joined the Plainville Community Schools' Mentor Program 18 years ago and has mentored at Frank T. Wheeler School, Plainville High School and currently at the Middle School of Plainville. One staff member shares, "Dave is someone you admire, look up to and respect. His quiet, unassuming manner has spoken volumes through the years. He has taught countless life lessons, brought smiles to those paths he has crossed, coached fellow mentors, and made that one hour a week shared with many students over the years, a time to create friendships and priceless memories that will last a lifetime."

Cindi Witham lives in Plainville and is a former special

education teacher. She has volunteered in Mrs. Debbie Camp's classroom at Linden Street School for the past eight years. Mrs. Camp shared, "Cindi is a caring person who is loved by my students and is affectionately known as our classroom fairy godmother."



From left, Plainville Community Schools' mentee Andranik Melkonyan, Mentor of the Year David Barry, Volunteer of the Year Cindi Witham, and Linden Street School faculty member Debbie Camp.

Budget News

On February 13, 2012, at the regularly scheduled meeting, the Board of Education unanimously adopted a 2012-2013 budget. That approved operating budget showed an increase of 1.77% or \$577,309 over the current year. During the budget process, the Town Council reduced the allocation of funds for the Board of Education by \$200,000--reducing the increase to 1.15% or \$377,309 over the current year. This budget was ultimately passed at the all-day vote.

The one single factor most influencing the Board of Education's budget development for next year was undoubtedly the impact of minimal increases to our budget over the last three years (0.05%, 0.75% and 0% respectively). The administration worked with the Superintendent and Director of Finance and Operations to explore all possible spending reduction and cost containment opportunities. After those

efforts, the Superintendent made a number of additional reductions to staffing increases and program improvements proposed by school and department administrators. Finally, the district explored all available outside funding sources to minimize the financial impact to the community for those improvements that were deemed essential and are included in the approved budget.

The final Board of Education budget for FY12-13 does not include reductions to existing staff, but does add the equivalent of one-half of an elementary classroom teacher to meet an expected enrollment shift, help maintain the Board's class sizes policy, and add a full-day Kindergarten option for Wheeler. The administration and the Board have worked to reduce expenditures in nearly every area of the budget. *(see page 3)*

Adult Education

Plainville Adult and Continuing Education will offer programming, free of cost, this summer.

English as a Second Language classes are designed to assist students in a multi-level group atmosphere. With students who have little or no fluency in English, attention is given to learning the basic English skills that permit increased self-reliance in speaking the language. Classes will be offered at the Plainville Community Food Pantry on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday afternoons, 1p.m. - 3p.m., from July 2 -20.

Adult Basic Education classes offer structured practice in reading and English to survive in today's world, with communication emphasized. In addition, students are instructed in mastering basic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division using whole numbers, fractions, decimals, percents, and setting up numbers to solve problems.

The GED Preparation Program features multi-level class instruction in mathematics, reading and writing. Adult Basic Education and GED Preparation programs will take place at Plainville High School on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, 10a.m. - 12noon, from July 10-August 16.

Pre-registration is required. Call Plainville Adult and Continuing Education: (860)793-3209.

Spotlight on Linden St. School: Student Interviews



Maddy Rund (left) and Sebby Soli (right) interviewed Linden Street School employees: Mr. Grochowski, Physical Education Teacher and Principal Eshoo.

What is your favorite part of your job?

Mr. G: Being able to play fun games and challenge our students to be the best they can be

Principal Eshoo: The kids

Is your job hard?

Mr. G: It's not hard but very rewarding and fun, and it's challenging at times

Principal Eshoo: Some of the aspects of it are very hard, sometimes discussing topics with kids and teachers can be tough.

What are your favorite things to do in your free time?

Mr. G: Going to the gym, fishing, working on cars, and spending time with friends

Principal Eshoo: Being outside with my dog Addie, and reading

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During their budget development process the Board agreed to utilize funds from 2011-12 grants to implement two initiatives, a new elementary math program and a district-wide technology replacement plan. By doing this, the Board was able to eliminate these expenses from next year's proposed budget. The 2012-13 Board budget also utilizes the State's Excess Cost Grant to help minimize the overall budget increase. Another cost savings component of next year's budget will be the district's participation in the Energy Education program, which allowed for reductions in our utilities budget projections.

The passage of the budget at the all-day vote also approved a plan for capital projects including one project for the Board of Education in 2012-2013. This project is the replacement of the cooling unit at the middle school, with a total estimated cost of \$80,000. The Board agreed to move a number of other projects into the following year of the plan.

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

LINDEN STREET SCHOOL

The Linden school community raised \$240 for the American Cancer Society-Plainville Relay for Life...Students recently participated in a "JA in a Day" program. Volunteers from the local business community led Junior Achievement grade level specific, interactive lessons in each classroom on financial literacy, workforce readiness, and entrepreneurship.

LOUIS TOFFOLON SCHOOL

Toffolon students participated in a "flash mob" as a symbol of their 'stand' to improve the school climate, respect diversity and eliminate bullying through treating each other respectfully...The Toffolon Student Council worked this year to research and ultimately add additional healthy food items to their lunch menu options.

FRANK T. WHEELER SCHOOL

Frank T. Wheeler Elementary School celebrated Earth Day with a number of events. Students and staff wore green, had a waste free lunch day, and collected funds for the World Habitats Foundation. In addition, fifth graders researched and prepared presentations for an EcoFair to talk about issues that have an impact on the earth and the environment, such as air and water pollution, and why it is important to reduce, reuse and recycle. Finally, representatives from the Plainville Lions Club donated a tree to each elementary school in honor of Arbor Day.

MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PLAINVILLE

Students from the Middle School of Plainville's **Military Mailroom** received the *Connecticut 2012 Challenge to Educational Citizenship Award*. The award is given by the State Student Advisory Council on Education and the Commissioner of Education. The group received a plaque on June 4 during a ceremony at the state

Capitol...Several students in **Camille Westfall's** Technology Education class won awards at the spring Connecticut Technology Education Association Conference. **Venus Syammorn**-first place, **Matt Violette** and **Amber Fortier** tied for second place, and **Emma Snowden**, **Jessica Skawinski**, and **Meghan Guimond**-tied for third place...The Anti-Defamation League held a CyberALLY training session for students to help improve school climate and anti-bullying efforts.

PLAINVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

The PHS Blue Devils Baseball Team won the Class M state championship against Haddam-Killingworth on June 8...Senior **Adam Foster** was recognized as 2012 champion of the Class M 200 meter dash in boys outdoor track. PHS students **Julie Zaleski** and **Marcquille Johnson** have been named recipients of the "Students Rock Award" recognizing their outstanding contributions to PHS...Students in **David Gagnard's** Communication 3 class collaborated with the Plainville Chamber of Commerce on redesigning the Chamber's logo. Senior **Marek Narewski's** design was selected as the winning logo entry. Senior **Megan Johnson** was named Female Student Athlete of the Year and **Brian Lister** was named Male Student Athlete of the Year at the Athletic Backers Senior Sports Banquet. The PHS Athletic Department awarded the William F. Cassidy Trophy to Most Outstanding Female Athlete (**Alle Caponigro**) and Most Outstanding Male Athlete (**Tony Lo Pizzo**).

DISTRICT-WIDE

Frank T. Wheeler Elementary School Teacher **Tawana Graham-Douglas** has been selected as the 2013 Plainville Community Schools' Teacher of the Year.

Let's Chat With...Lynn Davis, Energy Education Specialist



Lynn Davis
Energy Education Specialist

What is Energy Education? Our school district has partnered with Energy Education Inc. to develop and implement a customized, comprehensive energy conservation program for Plainville Community Schools. The program focuses on reducing energy consumption and utility costs.

What is your role as Energy Education Specialist? I oversee implementation of the energy program for our school district, serving as the liaison between school district employees and representatives from Energy Education. The entire school district will be examined on an ongoing basis for opportunities to reduce energy consumption. I work closely with members of the Facilities Department and representatives from Energy Education to identify and implement savings initiatives in all aspects of building operations, from turning lights off that are not needed, to ensuring that the heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems are operating efficiently and effectively.

members of the Facilities Department and representatives from Energy Education to identify and implement savings initiatives in all aspects of building operations, from turning lights off that are not needed, to ensuring that the heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems are operating efficiently and effectively.

What are the goals of the Energy Education program? The primary goal is to reduce energy use in our schools where possible, through assessing our building systems to ensure they are working optimally, and modifying our energy consumption behavior as needed to reduce the cost of utilities. Money that we are able to save on utility costs can be redirected to fund other school district priorities.

Is the Energy Education program in effect over the summer? Over the summer, the energy program focus will be on summer district operations and streamlining and consolidating energy consumption where possible. Additional planning will also be done over the summer months to continue our efforts to maximize energy conservation throughout the school district as we move into the 2012-13 school year.

PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION

- Jeffrey C. Kitching
Superintendent of Schools
- Robert Anderson
- Lisa Buckley
- Michael Giuliano
- Deborah Hardy
- Charlotte Koskoff
- Cheryl Provost
- Andrea Saunders
- Becky Tyrrell
- Barbara Willard



Belief Statements...We believe:

- that a quality school system is the core of our community and increases the quality of our lives
- in a safe, caring learning environment that respects individual difference and rejects discrimination of any form
- that optimal achievement for all learners is a responsibility shared by home, school and community
- that all students, faculty, staff, and parents are accountable to participate and maintain a positive learning environment throughout the district
- a high quality curriculum emphasizes the arts and sciences, with a focus on literacy, mathematics and technology
- effective communication and collaboration builds trust and respect