



Plainville Board of Education's

# Community Letter

Summer 2014

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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Another successful school year has come to an end, and we owe that to the wonderful students and teaching staff we have here in Plainville. We say "goodbye" to the Class of 2014 and wish them well as they move on to the next chapter of their lives.

Summer is upon us and we should remember that this is a great time to learn and explore, even while school is out. It is important for students to keep up their learning over the summer. One way to do this is through the RAMP program (Reading and Math Power program). The program runs from July 7 to August 1 at Linden Street School. The goal is to maintain school year learning in literacy and numeracy in an effort to prevent a "summer slump." Technology will be used to incorporate learning and instruction, plus the students will participate in a daily art program that is fully integrated with literacy and/or numeracy. This program can supplement the summer reading program that is provided by the Plainville Public Library.

We can also look ahead to the many exciting programs and services planned for the next school year. The Pre-K program will be expanded to accommodate a larger number of students in need. The Chromebook rollout will be extended to grades 6 and 7 at the Middle School, and we will be adding more technology to all three elementary schools. A new Coordinator of Athletics and Extracurricular Activities, Amy Labas, will be joining the High School administration, and Tawana Graham-Douglas has been appointed as the new K-5 Curriculum Coordinator.

## Ken Fusco, 2014-2015 Teacher of the Year



**Plainville Community Schools Teacher of the Year Ken Fusco, Plainville High School students Christian MacDonald and Briana Lugo, and Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Jeffrey Kitching.**

Plainville Community Schools has named Plainville High School Science teacher Ken Fusco as the 2014-2015 Teacher of the Year. Fusco was nominated by fellow Plainville High School faculty members. He has been an educator at Plainville High School for 13 years, teaching Biology, Marine Biology, and Oceanography through the UCONN Early College Experience program at the high school. As Teacher of the Year in Plainville, Fusco will also participate as a candidate for Connecticut's 2015 Teacher of the Year Program. Each district Teacher of the Year will be individually recognized at an awards ceremony later this year hosted by the Connecticut Department of Education.

**Congratulations Plainville Community Schools' Retirees!** Vivian Bianca, Linden; Maureen Briggs, Wheeler; Marianne Hogan, Wheeler; Pamela Thomas, Toffolon; and John Zadnik, Athletic Director

# Energy Conservation



**Linden Street School students learn about energy conservation from Plainville High School Advanced Placement Environmental Science students.**

The Plainville Community Schools' Energy Conservation program continues to thrive! Beginning the third year of the collaboration with energy conservation partner Cenergistic, district utilities consumption continues to decline, with an accrued utilities cost savings of more than \$500,000 to date. Thanks to the efforts of students and staff across the district, and continuous improvements to building operations, savings from utility consumption reductions have been redirected to district educational programs and initiatives that directly impact students and staff. From shutting equipment off when buildings are unoccupied, to turning off

and unplugging non-essential electronics when not in use, and utilizing energy efficient lighting systems and motion sensors, there has been a significant reduction in utility consumption since the inception of the program in March 2012.

Beyond the fiscal benefits of the program, the energy conservation effort continues to have a positive effect on the environment, with an energy reduction impact of 21,690 MMBTU or 1,263 equivalent metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. This is equal to 263 passenger cars not driven for one year or over 32,300 tree seedlings grown for ten years.

Student engagement in district energy conservation efforts is also a program goal. Students in Leanne Nolan's Advanced Placement Environmental Science class at Plainville High School have partnered with Linden Street School students for the past two years, teaching a "hands on" energy conservation lesson. General Electric volunteers also lent their support and expertise, as well as a donation of light bulbs. During the lesson, fifth graders learned how to measure and compare energy use on a number of electronics and light bulb varieties, calculated energy use over time in kilowatt hours, and discussed how they can help conserve energy in school and at home.

Let's Chat with...John Zadnik, Retiree



**John Zadnik is retiring after working 45 years in the Plainville school district.**

**What will you miss most about your role as Athletic Director?**

I will miss interacting with our student athletes, helping them in any way I can, and watching them perform athletically to the best of their ability.

**What is the most significant accomplishment in your Athletic Director career?**

I believe that my most significant accomplishment has been the formation of the Student Athlete Leadership Team (SALT) and its development as an important and influential organization not only within our school, but on the state level as well.

**How do you feel organized school level athletics support students' future success?**

I firmly believe that the playing of interscholastic sports enhances the chances of student athletes achieving success after high school. I hear this all the time from returning alumni that played sports in high school. There are many things that can be learned being part of a sports team that cannot be learned as easily in a classroom. Some of these things are bonding, loyalty, sacrificing personal goals for the good of the team, discipline, and the ability to perform under pressure.

**What are your plans after retirement?**

No immediate plans. I will be around for a while to help the new Athletic Director. I will travel some but hope to continue officiating high school basketball and softball for a few more years. I also look forward to watching the Blue Devils compete against other schools, but in a more relaxed manner!

### **PLAINVILLE HIGH SCHOOL**

The PHS Robotics Team 5129 won 1st place and two rookie awards at the Hartford Regional FIRST Robotics Competition in March and continues to shine with its recent State Championship win in the FIRST Robotics state competition held on May 17...PHS students **Joey Esposito, Megan Farmer, and Myranda LaPira** were honored at the spring Students Rock Award ceremony on May 20...**Alicia Gorski** and **Andrew Rottier** were honored at the Connecticut Association of Schools / Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference's 31st Annual Connecticut High School Scholar-Athlete Awards Banquet...PHS hosted a career day program for students on May 21. Guest speakers and fields represented included medical, legal, education, culinary, HVAC, science, business / marketing, public safety and more...Two Plainville educators have earned awards--PHS Science Department faculty member **Leanne Nolan** has won the "Rookie of the Year" Award for Excellence in First-Year Course Instruction, and **PHS Principal Steven LePage** has won the UCONN Early College Experience Principal Award for Program Support and Advocacy from the University of Connecticut Early College Experience Program.

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PLAINVILLE**

MSP has been selected to participate in the 2014-17 Cohort of Connecticut's State Personnel Development Grant. The grant is designed to establish a multi-tiered system of academic and behavior supports within approximately 100 schools across Connecticut...MSP held its 7th Annual Students vs. Staff Charity Basketball Event. The **MSP students** and **staff** raised \$4,700 for the StandUp for Kids charity which benefits homeless children...**MSP students**, accompanied by art teachers **Lori Vigue** and **Laura Meehan**, attended the "Arts in the Middle" conference at the Hartford Art School at the University of Hartford on May 20. The event, sponsored by the Connecticut Association of Schools, gave middle school students from across the state the opportunity to participate in various art workshops led by professional artists from Connecticut, Boston, and New York City.

### **LINDEN STREET SCHOOL**

Representatives from the Connecticut Science Center recently presented a "Playing with Polymers" hands on, interactive after school program for the **Preschool students** and their families at Linden...The Linden community recently enjoyed a visit and demonstration from Mr. Moon and "Rainbow" of the National Education for Assistance Dog Services (NEADS) organization--a non profit organization with a mission to provide independence to people who are deaf or have a disability through the use of canine assistance. **Linden student Lexi Charbonneau** and her dog **Giudo**, also an assistance dog trained by NEADS, demonstrated a number of assistance commands.

### **FRANK T. WHEELER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**Wheeler students** and **staff** enjoyed a lunch option provided by Chef Timothy Osuch from J. Timothy's Restaurant, as part of the **Chefs Move To Schools** Program...Four **fourth grade students** represented Wheeler at the 31st annual Connecticut Invention Convention (CIC) on May 3 at UConn's Gampel Pavilion. **Wheeler fourth grader Gabriella Bishop** received a recognition award for her invention called "Shower Shoes" which were designed to keep you safe from slipping and/or using public showers...**Wheeler students** were recently treated to a special performance--the Forbes Flyers, a nationally recognized competitive jump rope team, performed for the whole school.

### **LOUIS TOFFOLON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**Toffolon** recently held a Book Character Parade for **students** and **staff**. The parade was followed by an assembly in the gymnasium and reading of the book *The Day the Crayons Quit*...Forty members of the **Toffolon Select Choir** performed the National Anthem at the New Britain Rock Cats game on June 15...**Students in grades 3-5** recently visited the Plainville Senior Center to make a presentation of "Stop Motion" movies that they created with inanimate objects including legos, clay, wooden figures, and other materials. The students then worked with the seniors to make their own Stop Motion movies as part of the visit...**The Toffolon Jazz Band**, consisting of members in grades four and five, rehearsed after school this past winter and spring as part of Toffolon's after-school enrichment program. They recently visited and played four songs at the Plainville Senior Center, directed by Instrumental Music Teacher **Michael Boncimino**, featuring numerous improvised student solos.

### **DISTRICT**

Twenty-four **Plainville fourth and fifth graders from Linden** and **Toffolon** recently participated in the 11th Annual Marine Science Day, sponsored by The Connecticut Association of Schools, Project Oceanology, and the Connecticut River Museum...**33 fifth graders from Linden, Toffolon** and **Wheeler** were invited to attend a workshop at the Middle School entitled "Becoming an Ally: Responding to Name Calling and Bullying" sponsored by the Anti Defamation League. The students were selected to participate in recognition of their leadership skills...**Plainville Community Schools** was recently recognized for the district partnership with the Open Choice program. **Superintendent Dr. Jeffrey Kitching** and **Assistant Superintendent Dr. Maureen Brummett** were invited to attend a recognition ceremony sponsored by the Sheff Movement that oversees the Sheff V. O'Neal settlement. The ceremony was held at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford.

[www.plainvilleschools.org](http://www.plainvilleschools.org)

**Summer classes at no cost, beginning in July!** English as a Second Language, Adult Basic Education, and GED Preparation. Register today, call Plainville Adult Education (860) 793-3209.

# Spotlight on...Louis Toffolon Elementary School



*By Paige Levesque  
Grade 5  
Miss Veronesi's class*

On May 16th, the Toffolon fifth graders went to Sturbridge Village. At Sturbridge Village, we met many farmers, colonists, and housewives. We were able

to go into their houses or barns and asked them questions. We asked them about poor farms, which is a system to support the poor people in a town. We walked through the village and every time we turned around there was another building that showed us what life was like in colonial times. In the schoolhouse, we saw where the teacher would sit and the children's desks--we even acted out what it might be like to be in school there! After our exploring, we went to the Town House for a Town Meeting, which looked like a big church. Everyone went there to meet and discuss what the town should do. At our meeting, we debated whether poor farms are a good idea. The second issue was how we could raise money to buy the poor farm. Overall, our trip to Sturbridge Village was exciting, fun, and we learned a lot. I will always remember this trip, it was awesome!

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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.