



Plainville Board of Education's

Community Letter

Winter 2018

Plainville Community Schools inspire and prepare lifelong learners to follow their passion, engage in their communities, and positively impact our global society.

Message from the Board of Education

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www.plainvilleschools.org

One of the primary focus areas in Plainville Community Schools is instilling the value of “giving back to the community” in our students. In that vein we would like to remind parents and the community about “getting involved” in the district in some capacity. We have many opportunities to choose from such as:

- **Assisting with school-based PTO/PTC/PAC activities**
- **Volunteering as a mentor, tutor, Reading Partner, or classroom helper**
- **Participating in Career Day**
- **Serving on a school committee**
- **Attending district sponsored events and monthly Board of Education meetings**

Additionally, with our new School/Business/Community Partnership focus, we are looking for several ways to “partner” with local businesses and the community. An example of that would be to host students in job shadows, internships or part-time employment. We will also be looking for community support for various projects throughout the school year. Become more involved and informed

about what happens in and around Plainville Community Schools. For more information, please visit our website at plainvilleschools.org. And from all of us at the Plainville Board of Education, we would like to wish you a happy and healthy 2018!

Chase the Chill

The Middle School of Plainville is supporting those less fortunate this winter season through the “Chase the Chill” project. The project was coordinated by Middle School of Plainville faculty members Cindy Birdsall and Melanie Olmstead, together with the Kids in the Middle (K.I.M.) program student members and advisor Amy Kievit. Over the past several weeks, the group organized a donation drive of new and gently used winter scarves and other winter gear, with the goal of making the items available for local individuals who may be homeless or seeking warmth through the cold winter months. Middle school students, staff and families donated a variety of items to be distributed to those in need. On January 29th, the scarves collected were tied to trees and benches throughout local parks and bus stops with an attached note, inviting individuals to utilize the scarves. Hats, mittens and gloves collected were also left in a bin at the Plainville Public Library for those in need.



Kids in the Middle program members distribute scarves for those in need at a local bus stop.

Student Spotlight: MSPN Live News



By: *Emily Zarcone and Maliyah Aviles*

The Middle School of Plainville has come up with a wonderful way to bring information to students with a live morning broadcast news program called MSPN Live. As the students begin their day, they get more than just announcements over the loudspeaker. They hear and see the live news broadcast over YouTube and projected in every classroom using the “smart” projectors, and students can watch the news on their Chromebooks. Students also have a chance to apply and be selected to be a part of the news team as news anchors, camera operators, or operating other behind the scenes technology. Parents and community members can also stay up-to-date on the events at MSP by connecting to the MSPN broadcasts through the middle school web page. MSPN begins each day with the Pledge of Allegiance. In addition, the group shares up-to-date weather for the week, as well Friday raffles, sports updates, weekly buzzword, interesting facts, what's for lunch, and extra information about the school that students need to know. For example, if there is an upcoming spirit day, all the information needed will be given during the morning announcements. MSPN is recorded live in the new “green screen” room. The updates to the broadcast room were made possible by a grant from the Fitzgibbon endowment and were part of the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) Lab renovations completed at the middle school this past summer. When not in the green screen room, MSPN travels to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade home-rooms giving all students the ability to be a part of the broadcasts. The students at MSP are very fortunate to have this great technology. MSPN has really been a good experience for everyone.

FREE TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

Plainville Adult and Continuing Education received a grant award distribution of \$1,525 from the Plainville Community Fund II at the Main Street Community Foundation, to support a “**Customer Service and Sales Certification Training Program.**” This funding will make available 15 (needs-based) scholarships for Plainville residents.

The program will prepare students to take the National Retail Federation (NRF) Basic and Advanced Customer Service and Sales Certifications exams. This 48-hour course will be offered Friday evenings at Plainville High School and Saturdays at the Plainville Public Library, from March 23 until June 16, 2018.

To request a scholarship application, please call Plainville Adult and Continuing Education before the March 9th registration deadline: **(860) 793-3209**

Let's Chat With...Mr. Roberto Medic, Principal of PHS



What are your primary responsibilities as the high school's principal? My primary responsibilities are to ensure the safety and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff. In addition, I serve as the instructional leader, charting our academic program and ensuring students are provided a rigorous and comprehensive academic program which prepares them for life beyond PHS. I also oversee all aspects of school life, including extra-curriculars and our athletic program, with our faculty and staff members.

What do you enjoy most about serving as the PHS principal? For me, it is seeing the students having fun, both in class, and at activities. This is what motivates me, and what I enjoy most about this role, but also being an educator in general. Whether it is at a game, dance, play, musical performance, award ceremony, prom, or graduation, seeing the smiles, and the payoff for their hard work, is the most enjoyable and meaningful.

What is your philosophy about education? I believe that students should have an active choice and say in their learning, and that our instructional strategies promote student ownership and independence. I also believe that students should be able to articulate how their learning fits into the broader context of society, through the design and implementation of service and experiential learning projects.

What professional accomplishment are you most proud of? Professionally, I am proud that we were able to provide teachers with time to collaborate during our daily schedule. This has led to some major changes in instructional practices, which has resulted in improved student learning. In addition, I am proud of the course offerings we added for this school year, and what we will soon add for the upcoming school year.

What one piece of advice would you give to PHS students? Challenge yourself, once you meet that challenge, continue to challenge yourself and push the boundaries of your learning and abilities.

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

LINDEN STREET SCHOOL

The Linden community, led by the school's **Student Council**, sent seven boxes (approximately 140 pounds) of candy to troops overseas...**Linden students** made over 150 candy cane reindeer to sell and raise funds to donate to the Connecticut Humane Society together with other pet related items for the animals...Linden hosted a Plainville Community Food Pantry collection for food, paper towels, and other requested items... students in the **Plainville High School's Interact Club** held their annual "hot chocolate social" in December for the **Scholars of the Month at Linden**.

LOUIS TOFFOLON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The Toffolon Select Choir performed over the December holidays visiting the Plainville Senior Center, Apple Rehab Farmington Valley, Jerome Home and Arbor Rose...**The Toffolon Student Council** announced their year-long commitment to recycling by joining the Pepsi Recycling Rally. This is a free, nationwide program that directly benefits K-12 schools and students by providing valuable resources to help make recycling easy, fun, and rewarding...The 3rd annual Cardboard Challenge "Day of Play" was held at Toffolon in the fall. Leading up to that day, students in all grade levels at Toffolon worked on creating a game, artwork, costume, or anything they could imagine out of cardboard and other recycled materials.

FRANK T. WHEELER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The Wheeler community is supporting **Wheeler father Army Major Steve Landry and his 143rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion** currently deployed to Poland for active duty by establishing a battalion library for soldiers. Wheeler faculty, staff and families gathered books, DVDs, CDs, books on tape, and wrote personalized letters to be sent overseas. In addition, students participated in several fundraisers to support shipping for the more than 450 pounds of Dunkin Donuts coffee donated by Marc Koss from the local Dunkin Donuts establishments...**Wheeler students** are participating in a Jump Rope for Heart event which includes a number of heart health activities with a fundraising option to support those in need of a new heart or heart surgery.

MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PLAINVILLE

Eighth graders in Health classes at MSP supported the "Purple Project Initiative" empowering youth to make a difference and carry forward the message of substance abuse prevention...**MSP faculty members Melanie Olmstead and Cindy Birdsall** are implementing yoga and mindfulness strategies in **seventh grade Health classes** with the goal of students using the strategies to reduce stress levels and help manage emotions. **Middle School faculty members Laurel Schwartz and Camille Westfall**, together with **members of the**

VEX IQ team from the Middle School, were invited to spotlight their award winning Robotics program at this year's Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) conference held in Groton...**25 MSP students** attended UCONN STEM Night at the Connecticut Science Center. Organized yearly by UCONN's Engineering Ambassadors, STEM Night was created in order to show kids the creative ways one can get involved with science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

PLAINVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

2007 PHS alumnus and Investment Adviser Representative, Angelo Pietri, was a guest speaker in **faculty member Brian Edge's Financial Literacy class**. Pietri's interactive discussion stressed to the students the importance of Employable Skills, Credit, Saving, Investing, and how to reach financial goals...the **PHS DECA program** sponsored a gift card and toy drive for children and teens in shelters...**Elona Tanski and Sergio Zaldivar** were named recipients of the high school's "Students Rock Award" for Semester 1... Connecticut State Senator Henri Martin and Connecticut State Representative William Petit Jr., visited **Plainville High School's American Government classes** to speak about the Connecticut General Assembly and how a bill becomes a law...**PHS students Matthew Violette, Taylor LaPira, Abigail Leander, and Cameron Rexinger-McConnell** were selected to receive honors in the 29th Annual Connecticut Scholastic Art Awards in the areas of Drawing and Illustration...**PHS** hosted the 6th annual Career Day program featuring more than 70 speakers from a variety of career fields.

DISTRICT

Plainville Community Schools received a grant from the Community Foundation of Greater New Britain to fund a job coach position in a newly formed alternative high school program at PHS...**students, faculty, staff and administration at the elementary and middle schools** participated in "Pajama-Rama" - wearing PJs to school with a donation for the Connecticut Children's Medical Center. The event was coordinated by MSP faculty member **Melinda Buthe**...**Plainville Community Schools** received a 2017 CABE Excellence in Educational Communications Award in the Social Media category... The local VFW Madeley-Roberts Post No. 574 sponsored the **Plainville Community Schools Reading Partners** program at **Toffolon, Linden, and Wheeler**, with a financial donation for books. District Everyday Heroes honorees recognized at the monthly Board of Education meetings include: **November - Data Integration Specialist Mark Alfano**, and **December - Assistant Superintendent of Schools Steven LePage, Wheeler second grader Mason Martinez, and Linden third graders Braelyn Pate-naude, Lilly Wieczorek, and Haley Kalisz.**

Plainville BOE Receives CABE Board of Distinction Award

The Plainville Board of Education has received CABE's highest leadership recognition; the CABE Board of Distinction Award - Level 2. This award is presented to school districts in Connecticut that meet a comprehensive set of criteria in the following categories: board leadership / student achievement, board member professional development, policy, community relations, and related organizational leadership. According to CABE, this award has been established to appropriately recognize boards of education which are truly exemplary. Only boards which have achieved Level 1 distinction at least twice in the prior four years are eligible to receive the Board of Distinction Award. This is the ninth consecutive year the Plainville Board of Education has received this award.

From left to right - Laurie Peterson, Plainville Board of Education Chair Andrea Saunders, Foster White, Deborah Hardy, Becky Tyrrell, State of Connecticut Department of Education Commissioner Dianna R. Wentzell, Nicole Palmieri, and Crystal St. Lawrence. Photo Credit: Lifetouch



Student Spotlight: Linden Street School



**Mya Juarez-Hernandez, Grade 4
Empathy Ambassador
Linden Street Elementary School**

In what ways are you a leader?

I am a leader by teaching others that it is important to treat others with respect and kindness because that's how you would want to be treated. I am teaching my classmates how to have empathy.

What was the problem that you saw in the community?

I noticed that there was a problem with how kids were treating each other. I wanted to do something about it. I wanted to change how people react to others.

How did you work with Principal Eshoo to address this problem?

I talked to Principal Eshoo one day and told her my story from a previous school. We worked together on a slideshow presentation to teach other kids about empathy. We went into classrooms at our school to teach kids to say something if they see something, stand up for others, and make sure that all kids have someone to play with at recess.

What are some special things about you?

I am a good friend who always treats others with kindness. I participate in Unified Sports to help special needs classmates with sports. I love to play soccer. Alex Morgan is my hero!

Plainville Board of Education
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@PlvComSchools

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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 democratic society
- 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 serve to increase knowledge, trust, and respect, and are the responsibility of everyone in the community
- Professional Learning Communities foster teamwork that results in the continuous improvement of teaching and learning outcomes