

## Plainville Citizen April, 2012 Op Ed

The role of parents and the community in education is key, particularly with the challenging economy that we face today. “**Community**” in Plainville Community Schools emphasizes the significance of engagement and collaboration among our school district, parents, local businesses, and all Plainville citizens. Research indicates that parent and community involvement in the public education process positively impacts student achievement – our bottom line. This type of collaboration also builds key relationships and leverages additional opportunities. The Plainville Board of Education understands the vital role of parents and community members as reflected in Board Goal #2: *Increase levels of parental and community involvement as it impacts the schools.*

As a school district, our primary function is to educate Plainville’s children. The foundation on which we have built our educational system is evidenced in the Board of Education’s mission, goals, and belief statements. These components, developed together with the community, guide our district focus as we prepare students for lifelong success. Ongoing communication and collaboration with the community emphasizes our shared responsibility to ensure safe, successful schools and well prepared students. Additionally, we employ professionals in the field of education to lead instruction, provide support, and meet state and federal requirements. Alone, this structure allows us to function as an organization, but working together with our stakeholders, we are able to move from a functional system, to a vibrant, high performing learning community.

Understanding the vital role that parents and community members play in the success of our school district, we continue to offer a variety of opportunities for individuals and organizations to become involved and engaged. We are grateful for the many volunteers who share their time and talent through our district’s volunteer program. We appreciate the insight and expertise shared by parents and citizens who serve on school district committees and in parent teacher organizations. We continue to strengthen the valued relationships we have developed with parents through ongoing meetings held to discuss key district issues, including budget development, Board of Education goals, communication, and parent involvement - we look forward to continuing this critical dialogue going forward.

Parents and community members have the right and responsibility to be actively involved in the local school system. As we move through the current budget season, we know that as taxpayers, community members determine the level of funding approved to support town and education initiatives. Through participation in the educational system, residents gain the knowledge and understanding to make informed decisions and build a community culture that supports achieving our collective goals and continuing our focus on students, teaching, and learning. With strong leadership, a positive school climate, effective teachers, and community engagement, Plainville Community Schools will succeed in our mission *to promote a challenging environment, creating an extraordinary community of learners.*