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Communication is the lifeblood of every organization, including Plainville Community Schools. The critical role that effective, ongoing communication plays in our school district is reflected in both the Board of Education Goals and Belief Statements, and is evidenced in the daily operations of our community of learning. As a community school district, we have the responsibility to be proactive in sustaining open and ongoing communication with all of our stakeholders, and we continue to make this a priority. “Transparency” is a buzz word used frequently in describing the degree of communication relative to an individual, group or organization. In my tenure as Plainville’s Superintendent over the past six months, I have consistently witnessed “transparency” in all aspects of district operations through effective ongoing two way communication with our publics. Volumes of information and materials are shared publically by the Central Office administration and the Board of Education, on a regular basis, exceeding what is typically shared in most towns.

The collective focus of our school learning community is on students, teaching, and learning. Research shows that effective and ongoing two way communication with parents leads to greater parent involvement, which positively impacts student achievement – our bottom line. Recent standardized test (CMT and CAPT) results have shown marked improvement over time. For example, there was a 28.3% increase in 8th graders scoring at the Advanced level in Mathematics over a five year period, and an 18.6% increase in the number of 10th graders who scored at the Advanced level for Writing between 2007 and 2011. In addition, we have witnessed a significant reduction in the number of students performing at lower levels on the CMT and CAPT. We include open, ongoing communication with parents and families amongst the factors that contribute to these key successes.

Effective organizational communication is strategic and sustainable, while at the same time dynamic and changeable to meet the needs of stakeholders. Plainville Community Schools utilizes a formalized communication plan framework to guide communication enhancements over time. Through this structure, we are able to consistently assess the communication needs of our organization and those we communicate with, and adjust our

efforts appropriately to maximize communication efforts. Within the communication plan framework, we utilize a variety of channels to meet the needs of students, parents, faculty, staff, and the greater community. From district newsletters and news releases, to our expansive website and automated telephone and email messaging system, a wide range of communication methods support the dialogue with all district stakeholders. In line with our district's continuous improvement mindset, a number of new communication channels have been added recently. An "Ask the Superintendent" feature is now available on the school district website allowing parents and community members to ask district related questions directed to me. A portion of these Questions and Answers are archived on the website to expand information sharing about Plainville Community Schools. Additionally, throughout the school year, we now feature "Education Update" presentations prior to regularly scheduled Board of Education meetings. These presentations highlight various school district topics, and are focused on providing additional information to the public in an informal setting. We also continue to foster the expanded relationship we have developed with parents through meetings held to discuss key issues, including budget development, Board of Education goals, communication, and parent involvement. I was thrilled with the number of parents who attended my first informational meeting on January 23, and look forward to continuing this critical dialogue going forward.

Communication continues to be essential in sustaining parent involvement and community engagement with Plainville Community Schools. Through a focused commitment to the value and role of ongoing communication in our community of learning, we look forward to further strengthening our partnership and collaboration with all of our constituents.