

Plainville Citizen Op-Ed, September, 2016

On June 13th, I was honored to offer my sincerest congratulations to the Class of 2016, as one of my first “official” addresses as Superintendent of Schools in Plainville. As I noted that evening, our 2016 seniors consistently demonstrated amazing potential, growth and achievement as they moved through elementary, middle and high school, and into the next chapter of their lives. Over 92% of the Class of 2016 went on this fall to attend college, a trade school, or the military. 71% of the class was accepted into their first choice college. Another reflection of their success in becoming well rounded young adults, was the completion of more than 5,600 hours of community service in a variety of capacities.

Members of the Class of 2016 were also fortunate to have been awarded over \$270,000 in scholarships, which is substantially higher than any previous class at Plainville High School. Collectively the group earned over 700 college credits through the high school’s Early College Experience courses (ECE), which translates into \$420,000 of tuition costs that these students and their families were able to avoid.

It is also important to recognize and thank the parents, guardians, teachers, counselors, administrators and mentors to the Class of 2016, each of whom supported the evolution and development of these students over the years.

Throughout the final months of the 2015-16 school year, I attended the Super Senior banquet, the Night of Excellence and many other awards and scholarship ceremonies for our graduating seniors. My favorite part of all of those events was seeing the parents beam with pride and wiping away a few tears of joy, as we all

reflected on their individual educational journeys and growth into young adulthood, and celebrated their collective achievements and accomplishments.

If someone told me at my high school graduation that I would someday become a Superintendent of a school district with a doctorate degree, I would not have believed it. But as I conveyed my final message to the Class of 2016 as Plainville's newest school Superintendent, the following words rang true personally and hopefully resonated with our seniors - - *anything is possible if you believe in yourself!* I am proud to serve as Superintendent of Plainville Community Schools and proud of the members of the Class of 2016, who I am certain will continue to do amazing things!