



First Impressions

Jeffrey C. Kitching, Superintendent of Schools

Over the past several weeks I have had the opportunity to meet with the Board of Education, faculty, staff, parents, students and community members in Plainville. Through these meetings, I have learned a great deal about Plainville Community Schools, and we have much to be proud of. My “first impressions” of our school district are positive ones and include the following:

Schools / Programs

- There is a strong connection between the central office administration, school administration, and the teachers in the classrooms, with an understanding by all that we will...
 - *work together to constantly improve what we teach and how we teach.*
 - *use data to support our initiatives and strategies.*
 - *infuse technology at all levels of learning.*
 - *base all decisions on what is best for students.*

As a result, we have...

- *standardized test (CMT and CAPT) results that 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.*
- *witnessed a significant reduction in the number of students performing at lower levels on the CMT and CAPT. Between 2007 and 2011, there was an 82% decrease in the number of 10th graders who scored at the Below Basic level for the Reading portion of the CAPT; between 2006 and 2011 there was a 77% decrease in the number of sixth grade students who scored at the Below Basic level for Reading on the CMT.*
- *expanded opportunities for participation in Advanced Placement courses at PHS, with the number of AP course enrollments growing from 116 in 2009-10 to 354 in 2011-12.*
- *a software system, procedures, and a committed focus to use data to drive instruction.*
- *a variety of academic, co-curricular, and support programs to engage, motivate and meet the needs of our diverse student population. Examples include: Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI), STARS summer reading and math program, Connections, Project H.O.P.E., and the Plainville Family Resource Network. In addition, students can choose from more than 23 clubs and organizations as well as a full complement of athletic teams to be a part of at Plainville High School, while students at the middle and elementary levels enjoy a myriad of athletic, enrichment, and community service opportunities.*

a positive behavior intervention system that supports improving the social/behavioral school climate and contributes to whole-student development and success. Our program has been recognized by the State of Connecticut as a model for other school districts.

- *award winning arts and athletics programs that are significant points of pride across the district and the community.*

Plainville Community Schools

Promote a challenging environment creating an extraordinary community of learners



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Board of Education / District Operations

- The volume of information and materials shared publically by the Central Office administration with the Board of Education, on a regular basis, exceeds what is typically shared in most school districts.
- The business practices and procedures of the administration have been scrutinized to a level not seen in most other districts.
- The Business Office has worked tirelessly to streamline operations and seek and employ cost containment strategies and economies of scale. Examples include purchasing consortiums, e-payables, and automation of services.

Community / Stakeholders

- There is an obvious and visible sense of pride in this community toward our schools and the accomplishments of our students. Parents are proud of their children and support their efforts to succeed. Parent involvement is a positive contributor to student achievement.
- We have a vibrant and formalized volunteer program than links members of the community to our school district.
- We enjoy a number of significant partnerships with local businesses and organizations, and benefit from the commitment, involvement and support from...
 - *General Electric*
 - *Wheeler Regional YMCA*
 - *The Petit Family Foundation*
 - *Elizabeth Norton Trust Fund*
 - *Plainville Coalition for Positive Youth Development*
 - *Plainville Community Fund*
 - *and more...*
- Students giving back is an integral component of each school learning community. Examples include support for the Plainville Community Food Pantry, blood drives, Military Mailroom, police vehicle and bicycle refurbishing projects, and many more.

Physical Space / Environment

- The school facilities in Plainville have been thoughtfully updated and improved as part of a responsible plan of action. In addition, we...
 - *have incorporated eco-friendly and cost saving features, achieving Energy Star designations at Linden and Toffolon elementary schools.*
 - *provide safe learning environments, with classrooms that are well equipped and conducive to teaching and learning.*
 - *enjoy buildings that are immaculately maintained.*

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