

November, 2011

A primary goal of the Plainville Board of Education is to “*Promote a safe, secure and positive learning environment.*” As such, our school district continues to support and nurture a safe climate and culture in each of our school learning communities district-wide. As we strive for continuous improvement across the district we have taken a number of additional steps this year to enhance school building safety from both a building access perspective and a maintenance standpoint.

Most recently, school district officials worked closely with town officials and volunteers to provide a safe and comfortable environment for Plainville residents at Plainville High School during the October snowstorm. The shelter that was set up at the high school was a testament to successful cooperation from many groups including local businesses who donated time, funds and goods to the operation of this critical temporary housing.

A number of safety enhancement projects were completed over the past year in our schools. First, additional security cameras have been installed at Plainville High School and at Wheeler School. Our security system has been configured such that the school’s security cameras may be viewed from one system. This adjustment allows the Plainville Police Department remote access to the cameras at each school. In addition, students and staff members consistently practice lockdown procedures, working closely with the Plainville Police Department to ensure our school buildings are secure. District personnel also work in conjunction with the Fire Marshal throughout the year. Each school building is inspected every summer and throughout the year by the Fire Marshal who also confirms proper access to fire safety equipment. The Fire Marshall ensures that exit doors remain clear and conducts a review of evacuation plans.

The Facilities Department also repaired gutters and downspouts at Wheeler School to alleviate water leaking into the classrooms. At the elementary schools, special mats have also been added under swings to prevent mulch from being displaced from fall zones. District-wide, we have made the switch to green cleaning products that improve indoor air quality for students and staff. Automated demand response software has been installed as well as energy meters to monitor and optimally control energy consumption of the schools.

From a maintenance perspective, a number of improvements have also occurred. We continue to make repairs to the sprinkler system where leaks have formed; expired lamps are replaced in the outdoor lighting areas as needed; and playground equipment is maintained to levels that meet state standards. Mechanical systems are maintained on an ongoing basis to ensure that heating and air conditioning are consistently working properly. Overall, the Facilities Department has a schedule of maintenance for all emergency alarms and signaling devices, and these systems are routinely tested to ensure that they remain operational.

As always, Plainville Community Schools strives to provide optimal communication to deliver critical information to parents, staff and the community through our automated communication system. This system sends messages from school officials through telephone and internet connections at a high speed and delivers the intended messages in a very short time frame to all of the intended recipients. The messaging system provides enhanced communications in a number of situations-both emergency and non emergency.

Moving forward, we hope to gain community and Town Council support for a 10-year capital plan that includes a number of facility items that need to be addressed. The capital plan would include upgrading exterior lighting at two of the schools and further improvements to the Middle School's mechanical plant. In addition, work has been completed to replace some sections of roof at Wheeler that have been leaking for the past few years, but additional work is needed in the next couple of years to address other sections of that roof. For next year, the capital plan includes replacing carpeting at Wheeler and the Middle School to improve indoor air quality, replacing Wheeler's underground oil storage tank, re-piping the sprinkler system at Wheeler and replacing the tennis courts at Plainville High School.

Plainville Community Schools will continue to consider safety our number one priority, as we work together with local safety officials to maintain this focus and commitment.