

PLAINVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS BUSINESS BRIEF

Volume 4
Issue 1



Promoting a challenging environment creating an extraordinary
community of learners

IN THIS ISSUE

FROM THE
SUPERINTENDENT

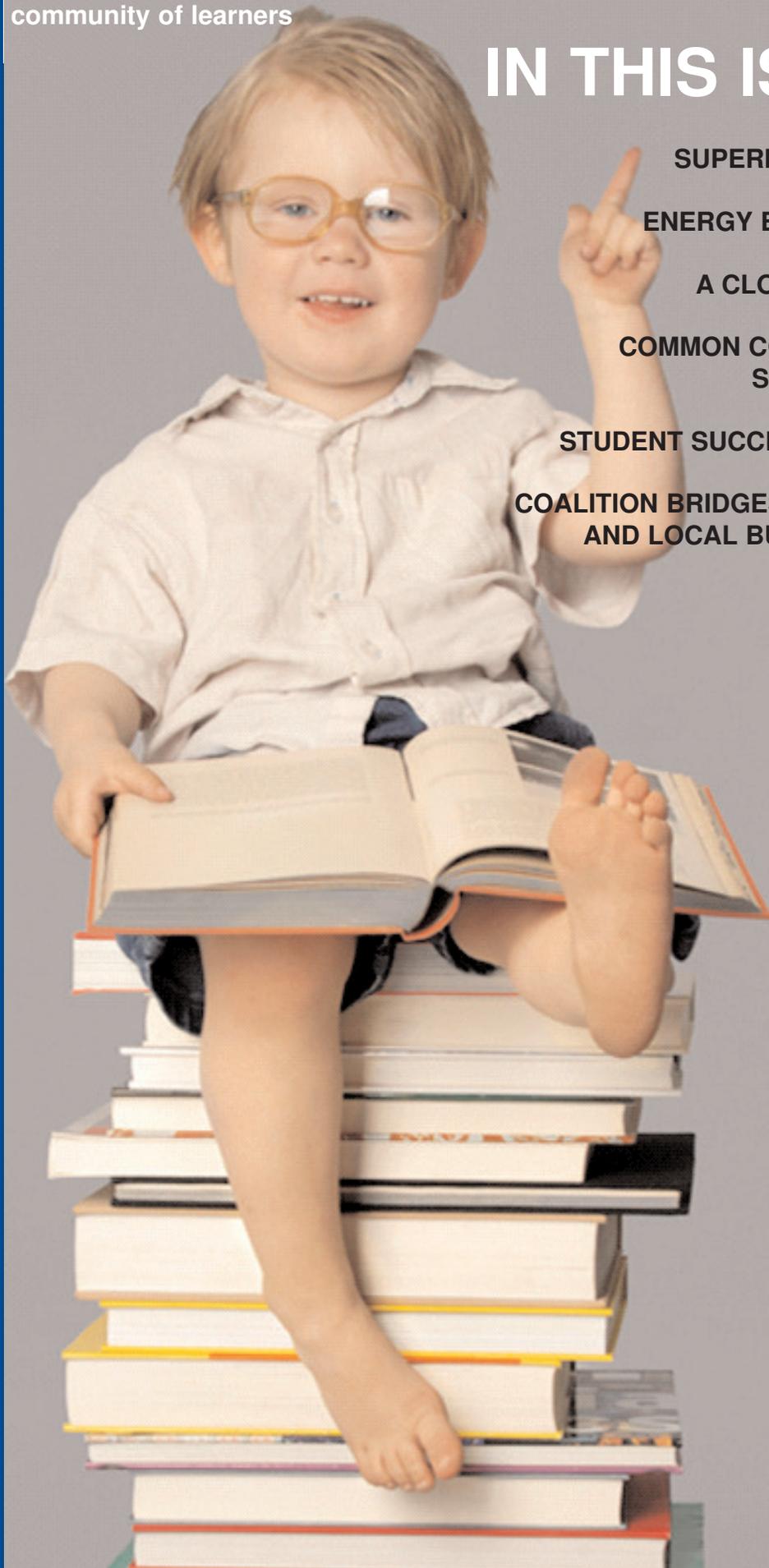
ENERGY EDUCATION

A CLOSER LOOK

COMMON CORE STATE
STANDARDS

STUDENT SUCCESS PLANS

COALITION BRIDGES DISTRICT
AND LOCAL BUSINESSES





Jeffrey C. Kitching

At the Plainville High School graduation ceremony in June, I addressed the Class of 2012 regarding the commitment their community has made to them through education and reminded them of the obligation they have to give back to the community. I explained that through their hard work and commitment to earning a high school diploma they had already begun giving back to Plainville.

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) recently facilitated the opportunity for Plainville Community Schools and other school districts across the United States to assess the impact of 2012 local graduates on their respective local economies. Information relative to the

Plainville High School Class of 2012 was assessed using a model created by Economic Modeling Specialists Inc. (EMSI), an economics firm specializing in socioeconomic impact tools. According to AASA Assistant Director of Policy, Analysis & Advocacy, Noelle Ellerson, at the heart of the model used for this analysis is the well-documented fact that high school graduates earn on average, more money than their peers who do not earn a diploma. Further, the extra money earned by graduates is being spent and invested in local communities. As a result of this exercise, a number of data points about Plainville's Class of 2012 were identified:

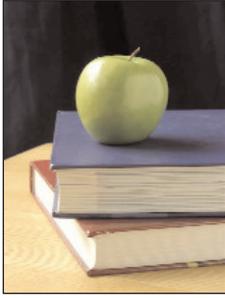
- **Collectively, this single class of Plainville High School graduates are expected to earn as much as \$2.7 million more in an average year compared to their likely earnings had they not earned a high school diploma**
- **By the midpoint of their careers, these new graduates, combined, will likely purchase homes totaling in value as much as \$12 million more than what they would have spent without a diploma**
- **Class of 2012 graduates will likely spend up to an additional \$200,000 in vehicle purchases during an average year**
- **The spending and investments made by these graduates, combined, will likely be enough to support as many as 10 new jobs in the Plainville area and increase the gross regional product by as much as \$2.2 million by the time they reach their career midpoints**
- **As a result of increased wages and higher levels of spending, federal, state, and local tax revenues are expected to grow by as much as \$1 million during an average year.**

For the majority of our graduates who will be continuing their education after high school, the economic benefits to them and this community are more than three times as staggering. Communities support education because education is an undeniably positive investment in any community's future. By taking advantage of the opportunities provided to them in the Plainville Community Schools, our graduates have made that investment pay off - a win-win for all.

ENERGY EDUCATION

Plainville Community Schools has taken a proactive step in good stewardship of budgeted funds and energy by embarking on a comprehensive energy conservation program with Energy Education, an energy management company based in Dallas, Texas. District Communications Specialist Lynn Davis was recently named as the district's Energy Education Specialist (EES). As EES, Davis will conduct energy audits to ensure that students and staff are comfortable during class time and scheduled activities, and that energy is used only as necessary. Davis will also ensure equipment is operating as intended, and will work with district personnel to follow the program's guidelines. The program is funded by the savings it generates, allowing Plainville Community Schools to use saved energy dollars for other school district priorities.





For the past year curriculum teams have been examining the newly adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and revising curriculum documents to ensure that every student will have ample opportunities to practice the skills and apply the knowledge necessary to leave our schools prepared for the challenges of college and career.

The CCSS initiative is a state-led effort coordinated by the National Governor's Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. The standards were developed through collaboration of teachers, school administrators, and experts in order to provide a clear, comprehensive, and consistent framework to prepare students across the country for college and the workforce. To date, 46 of the 50 states have adopted these standards, and the next generation of state testing will be based on the CCSS.

In reading, the standards establish a "staircase" of increasing complexity in what students must be able to read and require that as they read more complex text they are also developing their comprehension skills so that they gain more understanding from the more complex texts that they read. The focus is on

informational text and literary text to promote the skills of reading beyond literature. Science and social studies teachers will also engage students in reading complex, primary source texts to build skills in reading and comprehending more technical writings.

The ability to write logical arguments based on substantive claims, supported by sound reasoning and relevant evidence is a key component of the writing standards. Opinion writing begins as early as kindergarten and increases in complexity as students progress through the grades. Research--both short focused projects similar to those commonly required in the workplace, and more extended projects --is emphasized throughout the standards. Vocabulary development as well as the mechanics of writing and speaking are woven throughout the standards for English/language arts and will apply to teachers of science and social studies as well. Speaking and listening is also a component of the CCSS as students are expected to gather, evaluate, and present increasingly complex information and evidence through listening and speaking and through media. These presentations may occur in academic discussions, in one-on-one conversations, as well as through formal presentations.

The mathematics standards begin with a solid foundation in

whole numbers, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions and decimals in grades kindergarten through five. Students in kindergarten through grade two will focus their learning on understanding and making sense of the ways numbers work, learning how to put numbers together and take them apart. Addition and subtraction, along with a strong understanding of place value are the major foci for kindergarten through second grade. Third through fifth grade students navigate multiplication and division, fractions, negative numbers, and geometry.

The standards stress procedural skills and a deep conceptual understanding to lay the foundation for higher learning in geometry, algebra, probability and statistics. A focus on practical application of mathematical ways of thinking to real world issues and challenges begins in the middle school and extends through high school, where students develop a depth of understanding and ability to apply mathematics to novel situations as college students and employees regularly do.

We have already begun the shift in curriculum and instruction necessary to meet the expectations of the CCSS. It is our hope and expectation that students will leave us better prepared to meet the demands of college and career as a result of these efforts.

STUDENT SUCCESS PLANS

As of July 1, 2012, the Connecticut State Department of Education is requiring students in grades 6-12 to have a Student Success Plan (SSP). The SSP is an individualized student driven plan that will be developed to address every students' needs and interests to help them stay connected in school and to achieve post secondary educational and career goals. The SSP will begin in grade 6 and continue through high school to provide the student support and assistance in setting goals for social, emotional, physical, and academic growth, meeting rigorous high school expectations, and exploring post secondary education and career interests. The SSP and supporting structures such as student portfolios and academic/personal records will be electronic and portable from school to school.

A C L O S E R L O O K



Source:
*Plainville's 2010-11
Strategic School Profile*

- Plainville's schools serve approximately 2500 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12
- 13.3% of Plainville students receive special education services in the school district
- 11.4% of Plainville students in kindergarten through grade 12 come from homes where English is not the primary language
- 7% of high school juniors and seniors work 16 or more hours per week
- 88.2% of students from the Class of 2010 pursued some form of higher education
- Average high school class size is 17.2 students
- There are 1.4 students per academic computer at Plainville High School

Coalition Bridges School District & Local Business

This past spring, the Plainville Coalition for Positive Youth Development sponsored a community breakfast for local businesses. The goal was to connect members from the local business community to opportunities to become involved with youth in Plainville's five schools. The Coalition has spearheaded a number of initiatives over the past several years, in support of local youth.

During the event, several representatives from the school district provided an overview of ways that their programs could benefit from a partnership with the business community, including job shadowing, internships, teaching a class in the middle school's after school program, providing scholarships, donating supplies or funding for programs, and more. As a result of the Business Breakfast, a number of additional local businesses committed to partnering with Plainville Community Schools in a variety of capacities.

If your business would like additional information regarding volunteer opportunities and other ways to become involved in the school district, please contact: **Sue Bradley, Volunteer Coordinator, (860) 793-0221 extension 212**



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