



Plainville Board of Education's

Community Letter

Winter 2013

To provide rigorous and enriching experiences that prepare each student for success in a changing global society.

Message from the Board of Education

In this issue...

Message from the BOE	Page 1
Computer Power	Page 1
Spotlight: Linden St. School	Page 2
Program of the Year	Page 2
Good News!	Page 3
Family eReaders	Page 3
Let's Chat With	Page 4

It's the start of a brand new year--2013! It's a time for looking back to the past, and more importantly, forward to the coming year. With that comes hope for new beginnings, opportunities and, of course, the New Year's resolution. It's a time to reflect on the changes we want (or need) to make and resolve to follow through on those changes. Here are some resolutions provided by a few of our Board of Education members:

- Go to the gym 3 times a week.
- Commit more time to volunteering in the community.
- Maintain positivity and continue to be myself.
- Invest money properly so my family has a good future.

All of these resolutions have a common thread. They require action in order to lead to positive outcomes. Wouldn't it be nice if

we could live by our New Year's resolutions all year long. Think of the things we could accomplish. From the Board of Education we would like to wish all of the students, parents and community of Plainville a very happy and healthy new year.

Computer Power: Efficiency Evolved



"In order to reduce our carbon footprint and to comply with our energy conservation program, all of our computers in the district shut themselves down at a certain time each night."

Over the last two decades, computers and their uses have come a long way. They have gone from being the size of a briefcase, to something that can fit in your pocket. In that time, computers have also become faster, thinner and most importantly, more energy efficient. Technology has advanced to the point where a typical LCD (flat panel) monitor uses 200 percent less power than that of a similar sized CRT (Glass and Tube) monitor. A typical desktop computer uses about the same amount of power as two or three light bulbs, whereas an older machine may use the equivalent of five or six. To further make computers energy efficient, software can be configured to dim, or turn off, the monitor. Components of the computer such as the hard drive can be put to sleep when the computer is idle. When you combine all of these facts, you end up with a computer that uses as little power as possible. In Plainville's schools, we utilize these tools every day. In order to reduce our carbon footprint and to comply with our energy conservation program, all of our computers in the district shut themselves down at a certain time each night. This ensures that power is not being wasted on unused machines. During the school day, computer displays turn themselves off after a few minutes, and computers go into a power save mode soon after to minimize power consumed. When the computers are in this state, they use almost no energy, but can quickly come back to be used within a few seconds. These methods can easily be used on home computers, without shortening the computer's lifespan. As technology moves forward, so does our diligence to keep energy costs low and efficiency at its best.



*Written by:
Logan Miller and Gillien Peck*

There are many new faces on the teaching staff this year at Linden. We caught up with: Mrs. Bakaysa, Grade 3; Miss Buccilli, Grade 4; Miss Gionfriddo, Kindergarten; Miss Brendel, (Music); Miss Lynch, Kindergarten; Miss Hill, Resource; Miss Fournier, Grade 4; and Miss Tynik, Grade 3.

Q: What do you think some of the highlights of the new enVisionMath program are?

A: The videos that go along with the lessons are engaging and the math centers help students to practice the skills and challenge them. The manipulatives are great for the kids who need hands-on practice.

Q: How do you use technology in the classroom?

A: We use SMARTBoards every day for science, math and social studies videos. We also use them to display the morning message, practice letters in Kindergarten, give “brain breaks” to the class, and in the computer lab for research and reports. We also use computers and iPads to make our own comic strips and story books, and write and research reports. Miss Brendel even uses her iPod, laptop, and stereo system to play music and perform dances.

Q: If you won a million dollars to spend at Linden what would you buy?

A: We would buy laptops for every classroom, add a Moe’s restaurant to the cafeteria, purchase more books, and bring in a new science club. Other wishes include Djembe drums to start a drumming program, iPads for everyone, new playground equipment, field trip money, and football equipment for recess.

Program of the Year *by student authors: Brandon Mello and Kyle Smith, Grade 8*



*Kim Coyle and Camille Westfall,
Technology Education Teachers,
Middle School of Plainville*

The winners of the International Technology Education and Engineering Association Program of the Year for the State of Connecticut are Kim Coyle and Camille Westfall, technology education teachers at the Middle School of Plainville. In order to win this award, they had to create a portfolio containing documents that depict how they teach, what they teach, and pictures of their rooms. Furthermore, they had to explain how their curriculum is above and beyond other schools, and why the students enjoy their classroom activities. Westfall and Coyle explained that their teaching is more hands-on than other schools. Also, their jitterbug (electronics) and dragster (design, test, and modify) projects are not those that you would see in just any ordinary school. Moreover, they competed against five other schools. When they found out they won the award, they were thrilled and proud!



Brandon Mello and Kyle Smith

Good News!

Great things are happening in our school district.

LINDEN STREET SCHOOL

Over 60 students participated in a safety themed poster contest. Winners included: Bicycle: **Skyler Ibitz**, Fire: **Jacob Deschaine**, Stranger: **Jose Rodriguez**, Halloween: **Matthew Rotundo and Tamara Ibitz**, Playground: **Bianca Talarico**, Overall: **Guillermo Hernandez**, Creative Tip: **Keegan Mullan**, and All Safety Poster: **Kaylie Hall**...Parent volunteer **Marta Cruz** received a *Parent Involvement Recognition Award* by the State Education Resource Center and Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center as part of the National Parent Involvement Day program.

PLAINVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

Faculty and **students** showcased the outstanding academic, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities at the second annual Curriculum and Activities Showcase...Dress Down Days for faculty members and Hat Days for students supported the Plainville Community Food Pantry...**students in Mark Chase's Transportation classes** refurbished unclaimed bikes provided by the Plainville Police Department. The bikes were then donated to the Plainville Community Food Pantry and Plainville residents...Student Athlete Leadership Team members **Kyle Daddabbo**, **Erica Mikulak**, **Alicia Gorski**, and **Meghan Linquindoli** presented workshops at the CAS Leadership Conference, and **Nick Bendas-Giano**, **Dan Costantini**, **Abby Negro** and **Sarah Thompson** were presenters for the Middle Level Conference held at Wesleyan University.

MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PLAINVILLE

Students created posters for the district energy conservation program around the theme of "*Turn Off. Unplug. Reduce Our Use.*" The posters will be laminated and hung in each of the school buildings as a reminder to conserve energy. MSP art teachers **Laura Meehan** and **Lori Vigue** coordinated the poster project...Students **Erin Brochu**, **Kloe Hidri**, and **Karolina Zalewski** created an anti-bullying video that placed third in a competition sponsored by the local United Way...**Rachel Frank** of Fox 61 News visited **sixth graders** to discuss her career as a meteorologist.

WHEELER

Mr. Vahan Zhamkochian, President and CEO of **Transatlantic Commerce** in Newington recently donated 140 eReaders to encourage students to read more independently and be successful in their education...the **Wheeler community** held a Slipper Day to collect pajamas for the "Great Bedtime Story Pajama Drive" and the Scholastic Corporation donated a book for every pair of PJs collected for those in need...Faculty member **Maureen Briggs** received a *Using Technology Mini-Grant* from the Connecticut Council for Exceptional Children for the purchase of an i-Pad to be used as a teaching tool to improve the delivery and efficacy of language arts and integrated content area instruction.

TOFFOLON

Students participated in a schoolwide Read-A-Thon fundraiser featuring literacy activities, raising more than \$2,700 to fund two author visits...*Holiday Hallway*, decorated by faculty and staff with items donated by **staff** and **families**, raised over \$200 for the Connecticut Children's Medical Center...**Fourth graders** spent a day exploring two different biomes in Connecticut; the ocean at Meigs Point and the deciduous forest at Chatfield Hollow State Park, where they learned about landforms and how animals and plants adapt to these environments in order to survive.

DISTRICT

Students and **adult volunteers** in the Reading Partners and Mentor programs made 400+ cards that were shipped to an Army Aviation unit deployed to Afghanistan...the Plainville Community Schools' Volunteer Program received a \$1,000 grant from the **AXA Equitable Life Insurance Company** as part of the company's Day of Service national volunteer program...**The Plainville Board of Education**, **Town of Plainville** and **Plainville High School "Friends of Rachel Club"** held a candlelight vigil in support of the Newton Community.

Family eReaders

The Coalition to Enhance Family Literacy was awarded grants from the Community Foundation of Greater New Britain and the Christine E. Moser Foundation, to promote literacy through the use of eReaders, children's interactive book applications, eBooks, and other supportive services. The Coalition's Plainville representatives--**Donna Cavallaro**, Coordinator of the Plainville Family Resource Network (PFRN), **Peter Chase**, Director of the Plainville Public Library, and **Jill O'Brien**, Coordinator of Plainville Adult Education--have collaborated to select eReader content, appropriate for children and adults, along with additional eBooks, available for loan. Twenty-eight new Kindle Fire eReaders will be lent to PFRN families and participants of the *Plainville Family Literacy Program*, which is funded by a federal grant that delivers educational family literacy services with adult education classes to eligible adults and families. The *Plainville Family Literacy Program* begins in February, offering morning adult education classes--**Adult Basic Education**, **English as a Second Language**, and **GED Preparation**--at the PFRN in Linden Street School. While parents attend classes, their preschool children will attend Play&Learn Group. For registration information, please call the office of Plainville Adult Education: **(860) 793-3209**.

Let's Chat With...Brent Davenport, Board of Education member



What is your top priority as a Board member?

My top priority is to be there for the school system and to ensure that the students can have opportunities to succeed.

What is the biggest challenge facing public education today?

I think the biggest challenge today is funding. The cost of living rises and so does education. It is a vicious circle in society with funding for the school systems.

Why did you want to become a Board member?

I got involved because I love this community we call Plainville. I was born and raised and continue to live here. I am involved with other town organizations and felt I was up to the challenge for the BOE.

What is your vision for Plainville Community Schools?

For the school system to continue on the great path that it has been on, and to improve where we need to improve. To provide the students with a positive, fun and great education so they can prosper in their lives.

What do you feel will be your greatest contribution to the Board of Education?

I am employed in education. I work for the Connecticut Technical High School System as a trade teacher and am also a product of the Plainville school system. I believe I can contribute to knowing this town and knowing the school system but also being employed in education, I know the rules and regulations and being able to connect with students. Also I know what else there is out there for the students to be successful. The students are the important ones, but the staff is very important as well because they ensure that the students will go above and beyond the call of achieving.

PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Jeffrey C. Kitching
 Superintendent of Schools

Lisa Buckley
 Brent Davenport
 Michael Giuliano
 Deborah Hardy
 Cheryl Provost
 Andrea Saunders
 Becky Tyrrell
 Foster White
 Barbara Willard



Belief Statements...We believe:

- Our public school system is the core of the community and has a fundamental responsibility to develop productive educated citizens in a democracy.
- Optimal achievement for each learner is a responsibility shared by students, home, school, and community.
- We must provide each student with a comprehensive curriculum and effective instruction to ensure meaningful engagement in the learning process.
- A safe, caring learning environment promotes the academic growth, health and emotional wellbeing of each student.
- Communication and collaboration foster knowledge, trust and respect and are the responsibility of everyone in the community.