

## Message from the Board of Education

### In this issue...

- BOE Message, 1
- Linden Spotlight, 1, 2
- Let's Chat With, 2
- Good News, 3
- Adult Ed, 3
- MSP Spotlight, 4

Happy New Year from Plainville Community Schools and your Plainville Board of Education; the Plainville community has much to be proud of. Our schools have been recognized on a national level with Plainville High School, the Middle School of Plainville, Louis Toffolon Elementary School and Frank T. Wheeler Elementary School all receiving top rankings from the U.S. News and World Report's 2023-2024 "Best Schools" recognition program, as well as Linden Street School being recognized as a "School of Distinction" by the State of Connecticut. Additionally, our school district's Career Pathways Alumni Video Series was recognized as a 2023 Bronze Winner in the international *Telly Awards* program—a premier award honoring video and television across all screens. Adding to the many exciting programs, recognitions and activities districtwide, this winter our Plainville High School Band and Choir groups performed at Disney World in Florida, proudly marching in the parade through Magic Kingdom, and our Plainville Cheerleaders won the title of *2023 New England Champions*. These out-

standing accomplishments and many more happen due to the support of the Plainville community and the hard work of our faculty, staff, students and families. As we move forward into 2024, our community will be offered another opportunity to keep Plainville schools on the right course towards continuous improvement; this spring voters will have their say regarding the middle school's "Building Project." This plan will update and make major repairs to the over 30 year old middle school building, while accessing the highest state reimbursement funding. More information about the project and opportunities to have questions answered will be provided prior to the referendum vote in the spring. We hope you will take advantage of these opportunities to learn about the middle school renovation project and make an informed decision that will result in the continued support of Plainville Community Schools.

## The Linden After School Program Fashion Show



*"On the last day of the After School Program, the Fashion Club and Music Club hosted a fashion show. All of the clubs went in the gym to watch the members of the Fashion Club walk across the stage in their upcycled outfit. Each member of the Music Club created a song for their fashion model to walk across the stage to. The After School Program was so much fun and everyone should try it!"*

*Read the full article on page 2, please see "Student Spotlight"*

## Let's Chat With Brian Reas, Superintendent



**What attracted you to this position?** The perfect district is the one that values the same things I do. Plainville's commitment to all of our students is a value that appealed to me from the beginning. PCS is the kind of district I would want for my children with a diversity of students, a comprehensive program, and a small community feeling.

**What is your top priority?** The middle school renovation project began approximately four years ago and now a referendum for it appears to be imminent. This is a priority for the district and the superintendent to ensure the project successfully improves our programs for students, enabling them to meet the demands of our Portrait of the Graduate model.

**What professional accomplishment are you most proud of?** My career has involved several opportunities to build programs for students that meet several objectives. Programs that exceed expectations, impact a

large community of students, and are cost effective by their structure, are some of my proudest accomplishments.

**What do you see as your most difficult challenge?** A few weeks ago, I would have said that learning the Plainville community names is one of the most difficult challenges. While names are still a challenge, the budget is a significant challenge every year and being new to the district exacerbates it. While it is significant, it is also a welcome challenge as the budget reflects what the PCS community values.

**What are you enjoying most about your new position?** I really enjoy the variety of activities within a day. One recent day started with time in classrooms talking about pedagogy, followed by a meeting about the strategic plan, and the day wrapped up with a healthy discussion about budget planning for the next year. One of the best parts of the role is the interaction with the entire organization, from the Board to the students, as one moves through the day.

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## Student Spotlight: The Linden After School Program

The Linden After School Program is a chance for kids to be part of a club and learn new things like crafts, fashion, music, and jewelry. You can discover new passions and discover new skills that might even help you in the future. In addition, you can make new friends who aren't in your usual class. In Fashion Club, Mr. Springer taught us how to make old clothes into new ones and wear them on a day to day basis. This is called upcycling. We each made a fashion collage with the clothes and accessories that we like. We also each had a sketchbook and colored pencils where we got to sketch our own designs. Mr. Springer helped us host a fashion show. We created outfits and we even picked out fabric to create our own matching scrunchie. Fashion Club and Music Club worked together to put on a fashion show for the other clubs. We all liked the Fashion Club and had a good time! In Music Club, Mr. Farrell taught us how to make music with soundtrap, have a drum circle, use boomwhackers, and we even had "Taylor Swift Thursday" where we listened to her music. Our favorite part of the Music Club was Soundtrap. We each got to make our own music and we even partnered with someone from Music Club to create music together. We also enjoyed singing and playing musical chairs. We all had so much fun! On the last day of the After School Program, the Fashion Club and Music Club hosted a fashion show. All of the clubs went in the gym to watch the members of the Fashion Club walk across the stage in their upcycled outfit. Each member of the Music Club created a song for their fashion model to walk across the stage to. The After School Program was so much fun and everyone should try it! (See photo page 1)



This article was written by  
Linden fourth graders  
Milena Bak, Sophia Mann,  
and Lexie Sharma.



## Good News! Great things are happening in our school district.

### LINDEN STREET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**Linden fourth graders** sponsored a Toy Drive from November 27th-December 11th. **Students and staff** collected toys to benefit the United Way of West Central Connecticut...**Linden fifth graders** held a successful food drive to support the Plainville Community Food Pantry...**The Linden school community** has been named a School of Distinction by the State of Connecticut...**Linden Kindergarteners** celebrated Grinch Day before the holiday break...thanks to many **family and student volunteers**, the PTO Holiday Shopping event was a huge success.

### LOUIS TOFFOLON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**Toffolon's Choir**, comprised of 66 **fourth and fifth graders**, and led by **faculty member Greg Wilfrid**, hit the road for their annual caroling field trip, traveling to several local convalescent homes and the Plainville Senior Center...**Allison Pascucci's Toffolon students** welcomed **Marissa Freitas (Plainville High School student)** to their **second grade class** for a job shadow as part of the high school's Career Focused Learning Adventure Day...**Fourth graders** made holiday decorations for the Plainville Senior Center...**The Toffolon community** partnered with the New Covenant Church in Plainville to add donated hats and gloves under the Toffolon Giving Tree, where items were made available to those in need.

### FRANK T. WHEELER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

On December 2nd, the **Wheeler fourth and fifth grade chorus** performed on the ice at the Hartford Wolf Pack hockey game. Additionally, **Wheeler faculty members Sarah Miller and Samantha Woodward** were recognized as "Educator's of the Game" and made an appearance on the arena's Jumbotron...**Students in the Wheeler School Kindness Club**, led by **Paraprofessional Gina Joiner**, created holiday cards for the Pediatric Unit at the Hospital for Special Care in New Britain, Connecticut...**Wheeler faculty and staff members** shared "Happy Anniversary" wishes and a celebratory breakfast with **Wheeler School Principal, Andrew Batchelder**, to recognize his 10th anniversary as **Wheeler's Principal**.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PLAINVILLE

**Participants from the Middle School Kids In the Middle (KIM) Program** collected hygiene items to help families in Plainville over the holidays...**The Middle School's Counseling Department** held a "New Student Celebration" in November to recognize all **middle level students** who were new to the school district...**Nine students from the Middle School** along with **Faculty Member/Advisor, Camille Westfall**, traveled to Cabela's in East Hartford, CT to participate in a leadership training event, hosted by the Connecticut TSA (Technology Student Association).

### PLAINVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

**The Plainville High School Physical Education Department** hosted a "Breakfast Of Champions" for all **ninth and tenth grade students** who passed all four sections of the Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment. **Students in Faculty Member Jonathan Dunlap's Culinary classes** catered breakfast for this special recognition event...Approximately **40 Plainville High School National English Honor Society student members** visited the **Linden and Toffolon schools** to read to **first and second graders** and facilitate literacy activities that the **high school students** designed...**PHS students Phillippe Brochu and Zoe Weimer** were named recipients of the fall semester **Student Rocks Award**...**The PHS Band and Choir** entertained guests at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida where the groups recently performed...**PHS** earned the title "Connecticut Champion" for the national Vocabulary Bowl, Fall 2023 season! **PHS students** mastered 10,986 words to come in first place in CT.

### DISTRICT

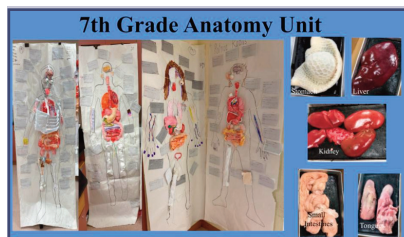
The November Plainville Community Schools "All-Star" award winner, **PHS Custodian Dan Caron**, was recognized at the November 13th Plainville Board of Education meeting, the December "All-Star" award winner, **PHS Faculty Member Emily Wasley**, was recognized at the December 11th Plainville Board of Education meeting, and the January "All-Star" award winner, **PHS Paraprofessional, Shannon Rivera**, was recognized at the January 8th Plainville Board of Education Meeting...**Plainville elementary school students** who participate in Reading Partners Program, together with **PHS students**, made over 100 holiday cards for local veterans to be handed out at the Veterans Hospital in Newington, CT for the holiday season...**Plainville Community Schools** raised over \$7,800 in support of the CT Children's Medical Center's "PJ Day for the Kids" fundraiser to support pediatric cancer research...**The Plainville Board of Education** received the CT Association of Boards Of Education **CABE Board Leadership Award** and Plainville Community Schools received a total of 12 **CABE Bonnie B. Carney Award of Excellence for Educational Communications** awards...Students, staff, parents and community members visited with new **Plainville Superintendent of Schools, Brian Reas**, at the "Superintendent's Meet & Greet" event held on November 28th ...**The Plainville Family Resource Network (PFRN)** collaborated with the Plainville Social Services Department to distribute donations collected from the Plainville Police Department's "Stuff a Cruiser" event and **PFRN's** own toy drive... A national Adult Education magazine, *The Change Agent*, recently published articles by **Xhuljana Met Hoxha and Nicholas Herdzik**, who attended **Plainville Adult Education ESL and GED programs** respectively, in 2023.

## Adult Education

- Plainville Adult and Continuing Education will offer evening programming, free of cost, this winter/spring in the following areas: Adult Basic Education (Math and Reading/Writing), Adult High School Credit Diploma Program, Citizenship Preparation, English as a Second Language, and GED® Preparation. Most programs are offered mornings too, with cost-free child care provided by professionals from the Plainville Family Resource Network, at Linden Street School. Adult enrichment (fee-based) programs will be available also. The Program Guide will be mailed to all Plainville residents in February. Registration is required for all programs.
- Plainville Adult Education received a grant to support a FREE "English Conversation Club (ECC). The ECC will provide English Language Learners (ages 16 and over ) with time devoted to speaking English at the Plainville Public Library this spring. The ECC is inclusive, meeting the individual needs of English language learners, while providing volunteers with an opportunity to learn about individuals and diverse cultures. ECC participants will meet over 6-sessions, March 16-April 20, 2024 from 10am-11:30am. Volunteers will join each session during the last half hour. Call Plainville Adult and Continuing Education to enroll (860) 793-3209.
- **NEW! A Roadway Work Zone Flagger National Certification Course** will be held at Plainville High on May 23, 2024 from 4pm-8:30pm. Tuition is \$165 per person. No Diploma is required to participate. Those who register must be at least 18 years old.



Please call  
**860.793.3209**  
for further  
information



In December, seventh graders experienced the Anatomy Unit where they learned about the human body and how it functions. Their first project was building 3D organs collaboratively to create a multidimensional 3D human body. They did this by tracing a classmate, constructing the 3D organs by outlining the organs on paper from the computer with a pencil, cutting them out, coloring them, and finally stuffing them with paper towels to assemble their person. We asked our teacher, Mrs. Piper, "What was your favorite part of the 3D organs?" She said, "I liked watching the students getting excited about making the organs and in previous years we did it in 1D, and this year was 3D." In addition to the 3D human body, students got to experience an "Organ Walk." The Organ Walk had animal organs and was super informative and interesting to see what the organs really looked like. Students were able to handle and even touch the organs. The organs were slimy, sticky, and wet. We also asked our teacher Mr. Duva, "How did you come up with the idea to do the Organ Walk?" He said, "We tried to make things come alive for the students, so if we showed the paper organs first, and then showed the real ones, it would make it more interesting for the students." All in all, this unit was an engaging and exciting way to learn about the human body. **Article by: Middle School of Plainville seventh graders, Grace Muldoon and Gianna Rossi**

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## 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 democratic society
- 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 well-being of each student
- Communication and collaboration serve to increase knowledge, trust, and respect, and are the responsibility of everyone in the community
- Professional Learning Communities foster teamwork that results in the continuous improvement of teaching and learning outcomes