



Plainville Board of Education's Community Letter

SPRING 2022

Plainville Community Schools inspire and prepare lifelong learners to follow their passion, engage in their communities, and positively impact our global society.

Message from the Board of Education

Our students, faculty and staff returned from spring break on April 18, and spring is now upon us. Everyone was very excited for the Superintendent's Showcase which was held at Plainville High School on April 21. The program began in the high school auditorium with a short introduction from Superintendent LePage welcoming all attendees and introducing our Plainville Blue Devil Cheerleaders who performed for us on stage! They did an amazing job and we can surely see why they hold the Central Connecticut Conference South Division Championship and the Central Connecticut Conference Grand Championship titles. We then moved into the cafeteria where there were many hands-on activities for those in attendance. Some of these activities included MakerSpace, the VEX Robotics Team, Lego Robotics presented by the middle school, and Windmills, Robotics, and SeaPerch presented by the high school. Other participating groups that had tables to visit included the PHS Backers Club, the Plainville Family Resource

Network, PCS Cultural & Linguistic Diversity, Plainville Coalition for Positive Youth Development, Career Pathways, and much more! Everyone treasured all there was to do by visiting each station. Additionally, there were performances by the PHS Chamber Choir and Jazz Band, and the middle school's drum and saxophone ensembles. These student musicians were both amazing and proficient, exhibiting such talent and keeping the audience engaged. Our school district is dedicated to the development of all aspects of education and the Superintendent's Showcase provides a window to all of the incredible things happening each day in Plainville schools.

The goal of this event is to highlight several of the wonderful opportunities and successes our students enjoy as members of the Plainville Community Schools. The Superintendent's Showcase is a huge highlight in our community and we thank all of the students, faculty and staff for their hard work and dedication in putting this together once again.

College and Career Pathways



Plainville High School students Peyton Stehle, Katherine Gibson, Noor Abbasi and Nick Kafka, together with Assistant Superintendent of Schools Dave Levenduski, discuss the students' Fieldwork Experience internships at the "Career Pathways" exhibit during the annual Superintendent's Showcase.

One of our Plainville Community Schools district goals related to college and career pathways development and expansion is to provide engaging, rigorous learning opportunities for all of our students in varying areas of interest. Part of this process is to ensure our instruction and experiences have relevance to the future goals and aspirations of our students. To this end, we continue to connect and collaborate with industry professionals and post-secondary institutions to align student learning opportunities to real world experiences that will better prepare our graduates for success in their college and career goals. One of our connections is through dual enrollment coursework with Goodwin University. This partnership allows Plainville High School students to take Goodwin University Advanced Manufacturing Pathway coursework during their normal high school day. The course is taught by our own teachers, but students receive both high school credit as well as credit at Goodwin University. **Continued on Page 3, see "Pathways"**

Student Spotlight...Jaylen Thigpen, PHS Class of 2023

**MR. CARL JOHNSON, PRINCIPAL
INTERVIEWS JAYLEN THIGPEN**

What are some of your most memorable experiences at PHS?

Being a freshman, I had just come to this new school; I didn't know everything that was going on. All my teammates helped me through those first months of transitioning to high school and having those juniors and seniors there as mentors helped me become more accepting or open to these new experiences at PHS. They probably didn't even realize they were helping out, but they did a lot.

You are an accomplished musician; what are some of your most memorable experiences in that area?

There have been so many memorable moments. Participating in regionals as a freshman, it was a completely different atmosphere at the high school level. It was a whole different level, a whole different level of preparation that had to go into getting ready. It ended up being online due to Covid. Putting in that amount of time to prepare and the work it took was exceptional and incredibly memorable.

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What was it like to play for the Secretary of Education, Dr. Miguel Cardona?

It was an incredible experience. I never thought, along with my peers, that we would be able to play for someone of such high stature. I am here and have so much room to grow, but knowing I am playing for someone so important was incredible. If I can do that right now as a 16-year-old it makes me wonder what I will be able to do in the future, who I will be able to play for, and where I will be able to play. I am just very thankful that I got to play for someone like that so early in my career as a musician.



Jaylen and the Plainville High School Jazz Band performed for United States Secretary of Education, Dr. Miguel Cardona during his visit to Plainville Community Schools.

Let's Chat With...Sue Bradley, Career Center Coordinator



What are your primary responsibilities in your current role as Career Center Coordinator? My primary responsibilities include working with students to help them explore career pathways that are aligned with their interests, passions and strengths and to build partnerships to provide a personalized experience and opportunity for students such as an in-person or virtual conversation with a business professional, a job shadow, or an internship in a career field of their choice.

What resources are available to PHS students through the Career Center? Opportunities to experience a job shadow or an internship, build a resume and explore employment opportunities, learn and sharpen interview skills, attend field trips and workshops, and the ability to connect with military recruiters and take the ASVAB test. The Career Center website also provides additional information and resources.

Can you explain what the Fieldwork Experience internship program is? The Fieldwork Experience internship program provides a wonderful opportunity for students to earn credit through career exploration. Students engage in 50 hours of vocational exploration on site with a host organization during their placement. This real world exposure is a hands on experience that provides a sneak peak into a career field they are considering pursuing after graduation.

What professional accomplishment are you most proud of? I'm proud of the many business partnerships we have created to offer and provide real world experiences for our students.

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

LINDEN STREET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Linden parent and singer songwriter, Bonnie McGee, led **Linden students** in the creative process of songwriting...In celebration of "Music in Our Schools Month," **Linden students** enjoyed a live piano performance of Bach, Mozart and The Beatles, from award winning student Katherine Tang of the Ethel Walker School. The **Linden community** participated in Project ACES—All Children Exercising Simultaneously

LOUIS TOFFOLON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The **Toffolon Student Council** sponsored their March monthly food drive with a theme of "Wear Green on St. Patrick's Day" collecting items for the Plainville Community Food Pantry...**Toffolon fifth graders** are once again sharing positive messages to those who pass by their school, thanks to their kind and creative artwork on the school's fence...**Toffolon's Choir** performed the National Anthem at Dunkin Donuts Park for the Hartford Yard Goats on April 22.

FRANK T. WHEELER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Students at Frank T. Wheeler Elementary School celebrated the 100th day of school with a variety of activities. **First graders in Emma Bartley's** class celebrated 100 days of learning while making necklaces containing 100 beads. The project connected students to the math curriculum, honing their sorting skills. **Students in Kelly Mocarsky's first grade class** created 100-day hats and also practiced being innovative, collaborative and creative in building structures with 100 cups!

MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PLAINVILLE

As one of their many volunteer projects, the **MSP Art Club** made beautifully decorated spring chickens as a gift for the residents of Apple Rehab in Plainville...**Kids in the Middle (K.I.M.) student participants** made notes of appreciation for each staff and faculty member at the middle school and delivered them to their mailboxes...**The middle school's Robotics program, lead by faculty members/advisors Camille Westfall and Laurel Schwartz**, hosted the statewide VEX Robotics tournament on March 5. More than 70 student teams from across Connecticut participated in the day-long event.

PLAINVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

Plainville High School Theater Unlimited members joined in a virtual meeting with Tim McArthur, author of the play "A Word for Mother." McArthur learned that the PHS theater group performed his show in March, and reached out to congratulate the cast...**PHS Seniors Garret Millette and Peyton Stehle** have been recognized by the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) for excellence in the arts...For the second year in a row, **PHS Senior Garret Millette** has made the Connecticut All State Band...The **PHS Cheerleading Squad** won the CCC (Central Connecticut Conference) Grand Championship.

DISTRICT

The March Plainville Community Schools "Portrait Pioneer" award winner, **Plainville High School Student and Residency Monitor, Lowell Humphrey**, was recognized at the March 14 Plainville Board of Education meeting and the April Portrait Pioneer award winner, Plainville High School **Nurse Tricia Rapacky**, was recognized at the April 18 Plainville Board of Education meeting...The Elizabeth H. Norton Trust Fund generously donated to the **Plainville Community Schools "Adopt A Pet" Reading Partners program** as they continue with the pen-pal style this year. The Adopt A Pet program pairs an adult with a third-grade student to share the love of reading...The **Superintendent's Showcase** was held on April 21, featuring performances, exhibits, hands on learning, resources and displays highlighting students, teaching and learning...Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont visited **Plainville High School** on April 22, where he met with a **group of students** to discuss a variety of topics including making Connecticut a positive place for youth to remain after graduation...**Plainville Community Schools** held a district-wide fundraiser on April 22 raising more than \$2,500 in support for Ukrainian refugees...**Plainville Adult and Continuing Education** launched *Boot Camp for New Dads®*, a community-based workshop, that supports the transition to fatherhood, funded by the Men & Boys' Fund of the Main Street Community Foundation in Bristol...On May 3, **parents, faculty, staff, administrators, students, Board of Education and Town Council members, and community members** gathered for the first large group meeting for the district's Strategic Planning initiative.

Pathways

Continued from Page 1 We are currently working with Goodwin University Administration to offer an additional Advanced Manufacturing Pathway course at Plainville High School, which would allow our students who are interested in pursuing a career in Advanced Manufacturing to get a head start on completing Goodwin University's program. In addition to our partnership with Goodwin, we have also established partnerships with Tunxis Community College, the University of Connecticut, Central Connecticut State University and the University of Hartford to offer coursework for college credit while students are attending Plainville High School. This coursework is also expanding our offerings and experiences for those students interested in careers in the fields of education, business, health, STEM and computer science. Our college and career pathway efforts are aimed at changing how we connect student learning experiences with what our students are interested in pursuing after graduation. These types of learning experiences will better prepare our students for life after Plainville High School, and hopefully will make each student's school experience more relevant to their individual goals.

Spotlight (Continued from Page 2)

What are your plans for the future after PHS?

I plan to major in communications with a minor in music. Music will always be a part of my life. I want to see where I can go with it. I have already started creating a podcast and posted a few episodes. I want to pursue my own interests outside of school while also learning everything possible at PHS. My podcast is me talking or talking with a guest, no specific subject right now, looking for things to happen and go with it where it goes. I want it to be something that people can relate to, just going along with it and having a conversation, not forced or made up. I want to have a real genuine conversation on that medium.

Advice for other students?

Never give up. There will be times when it seems like every-

thing is falling apart or you can't dig yourself out of a hole. I know it is cliché, but there is nothing you can't do if you put your mind to it. If you keep consistent hard work, you can accomplish any goal you have in life.

Other activities?

I love art and drawing as well. One of my pieces made it into a show, the Connecticut Regional Scholastic Art Awards. It was a charcoal drawing of injustice that I created that people can interpret however they want. I made it myself, and it came from the heart. Many things are happening in the world that are not right and shouldn't be happening, and I wanted to put my emotion into it. I also write music and poetry. I love to do that in my free time.

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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