

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Superintendent's Report

As the new Superintendent of Plainfield, I have had the opportunity in these short seven months to witness the wonderful sense of community in this school and town. While many might take this sense of community for granted, I find the high level of commitment and involvement to be so impressive. Right from the start of the summer, I observed the tremendous involvement of townspeople in the parking lot project, the exceptional ongoing commitment of the school's Facilities Committee and School Board, the care and bond of the school staff, the active volunteering and involvement of parents and residents, and the desire by all to increase communication. In order to serve Plainfield best, I am trying to get to know Plainfield in as many ways as possible. In reaching out to the community, I have felt encouraged. Whether talking with the town offices, folks at Kimball Union Academy, or individual residents or staff, there has been a genuine welcome.

This has been such a challenging 2008 in all large and small governmental groups, including Plainfield. Here we have been asked to work within budget guidelines that will preserve and grow the excellence of the Plainfield School while making reductions that will recognize the current and future enrollment patterns. While not an easy task, we believe that our research and foundation support the direction.

My work in support of the School Board has meant working with the Board to find new ways of communicating and reaching out to Plainfield-Meriden, including our book study discussion, and planning changes to the website for clearer communication. The growing School Board vision for technology has supported the administration's role on the new Technology Committee and in articulating the technology needs for students and staff. In recognizing the Board's goal for growth in the professional staff, I am working closely with Ellen Langsner on supervision and evaluation. By joining the Facilities Committee this year, I believe I am able to represent the school's needs and contribute to the planning for the District. As the Board has focused on three year planning for the District, I believe the enrollment projections have enhanced the Board's ability to forecast with as much accuracy as possible. As part of my own goal setting and evaluation process, I have instituted a goal setting and self-evaluation process for all members of the administrative team. I know that this annual process will advance our goals for excellence for this District.

Principal's Report

The past year has been a very productive one here at Plainfield School. There has been extensive work on all the curriculum committees. The Professional Development Master Plan has been entirely re-written. The 7/8 Vision Team held a parent work meeting at that meeting it was decided to work toward including Advisories into the junior high program.

Advisories are small groups of students who meet regularly with one consistent adult. Groups undertake a variety of tasks such as setting and monitoring progress toward personal goals, community building including community service, and just having fun together. The goal is for each child to have a supportive group of peers to depend on and

one adult who knows him/her well. This adult serves as an advocate for the student. Teachers are currently doing some reading on advisory programs and more formal training for staff will begin in March.

As the junior high moves toward more middle school practices including electives, collaborative planning, and team teaching, the students have an improved school experience. There are many fewer discipline problems, more support structures in place for students who are struggling, and more opportunities for student choice.

During the 2007-2008 school year, professional staff examined test results and determined areas on which to focus our efforts. One big push teachers have been involved in is revising our curriculums to meet the new state standards. In some areas, like science, the changes are significant. The science curriculum committee has been working hard to adjust our curriculum by adding or adjusting units at each grade level. They determined that we needed to add more instruction in the physical sciences to each grade level and to adjust or modify units in earth and life sciences. The ultimate goal will be to provide students with instruction in each of the three scientific genres at each grade level. These changes mean that teachers will be involved in professional development while they work to incorporate the new content into their classes. We will also have to purchase new materials and resources for student use. The transition to the new content will take place over the next two years.

The social studies curriculum is being revised as well. Upon examining our curricular content, we realized that we needed to increase the amount of time our students spend studying the history and cultures of countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and South America.

Another area of significant focus for our school has been the use of reading and writing in the content areas. Our NECAP scores in both areas have improved, with writing showing a dramatic increase over last year's assessment results. As students make progress in reading, they shift away from "learning to read" toward "reading to learn." They learn additional strategies in order to understand more complex text and differing text structures such as non-fiction and reference materials. A similar shift occurs in writing as well. Students write to extend or demonstrate learning. Students are asked to communicate thoughts and opinions, to summarize their new understandings, and apply their knowledge to new situations.

Teachers are also actively involved in looking at math programs that meet our newly revised math curriculum. The program that is currently being used is outdated and no longer meets state or district expectations. While no individual program will meet all of our goals, the math curriculum committee feels it is important to have a core program that supports most of our curriculum, provides adequate resources, and offers sufficient professional development to teachers. Teachers will continue to extend, modify, and supplement any program selected to best meet the needs of individual and groups of students.

The C.O.W., or "Computer On Wheels," is being used extensively by teachers and students to improve learning. It is rolled into class, students each get a laptop computer which they use to do research, write papers, and create projects that allow them to demonstrate learning. It has been pretty incredible to see students so focused and excited.

As we become more proficient in the use of the software and capabilities of this tool we will increasingly be able to individualize instruction to meet students' interests, skills, and learning styles.

Special Education Report

Nancy Brogden, Director of Special Services, reported to the Board about services provided to Plainfield students under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) and Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. She indicates a decrease in the special education budget for the coming year and commends the special education staff for working collaboratively with general education staff to provide necessary and excellent services to students, while being thoughtful about fiscal constraints. Although special educators have always spent much time in general education classes, this year special educators are beginning to co-teach classes with general educators, and next year will be taking on more responsibility for general education instruction, as well as their direct work with children with disabilities.

Following is a chart of Special Education and Section 504 services provided to students, as of December 2008:

<u>School</u>	<u>Students with IEPs</u>	<u>Students with 504 plans</u>
PES (Pre- Grade 8)	33	12
LHS (Grade 9-age 21)	12	10

Percent of PES students on IEPs: 12.6% (NH State average is 14.6)
 Percent of PES students on 504 plans: 5.8%
 Total percent of students at PES that receive direct support services: 18.4%

Other information:

Number of out of district placements:	2
Number of students receiving speech services:	22
Number of students receiving occupational therapy services:	23
Number of students receiving physical therapy services:	3

Federal funds of \$57, 242 will supplement the 2008-2009 special education portion of the budget.

We are pleased and proud to represent such a fine school district and to work with an excellent school board and staff.

Noelle G. Vitt, Superintendent
Ellen Langsner, Principal
Nancy Brogden, Ph.D., Director of Special Education