



Regular Meeting of the
Holyoke School Committee

Date: 10-18-2021

Place: Fifield Room -
Public Access Virtual Via Zoom

SCHOOL COMMITTEE AGENDA

DATE: _____ **MONDAY, October 18, 2021**

TIME: 6:00 PM

LOCATION: **Fifield Room - Public Access** Via zoom webinar

Governor Baker signed a bill into law on June 16, 2021, allowing public bodies to hold remote meetings through April 22, 2022. Members of the public can access the meeting here:

<https://hps-holyoke-ma-us.zoom.us/j/85266232176?pwd=ci9tWEs3cG81SkQxdXZrWW5GenBXQT09>

CALL TO ORDER ~ ROLL CALL ~ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, s. 20, I am hereby informing all attendees that a video and audio recording is being made of the meeting and the meeting is being live-streamed and run live on the City's community TV channel.

1. STUDENT SHOWCASE -

- a. Holyoke High School Theatre Company
- b. M.A.S.S certificate presentation

2. PUBLIC COMMENT (via the remote link above)

- a. Members of the public wishing to submit public comments can email sagarcia@hps.holyoke.ma.us no later than 3:00 p.m. Monday, September 27, 2021. Comments will either be displayed or read during the meeting.

3. COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS

4. SUPERINTENDENT/ RECEIVER REPORTS

- a. Entry Plan Update
- b. Middle School Update

5. NEW BUSINESS

6. ONGOING BUSINESS

- a. COVID-19 Update
- b. St. Vincent Property- Dean update
- c. Updates from last meeting special education services speech- FYI - Refer to packet

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The listing of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

*The Holyoke Public Schools makes available a public discussion period for persons in the audience to address the Committee on specific agenda items. In order to hear as many speakers as possible, the Committee asks individuals to continue their remarks to two (2) minutes. Any person wishing to submit longer testimony should give copies to the Committee Secretary before the meeting so that it may be distributed to Committee members. The speaker can then summarize this testimony at the meeting within the two (2) minute time period. Persons wishing to speak should register with the Committee Secretary immediately before the meeting begins. Individuals who request specific items to be included on the Committee's agenda should mail a written request fifteen (15) days in advance of a Committee meeting date to Sam Garcia, in care of the Receiver's Office, 57 Suffolk Street, Holyoke, MA 01040.



School Committee Meeting
Superintendent/Receiver Report
October 18, 2021

COVID-19 Update

Since the start of the school year on August 23rd, HPS has had 221 cumulative positive cases as of October 13th. This includes 203 students and 18 staff members. The Total cases in the past 2 weeks include 33 students and 2 staff. The number of cases *potentially* resulting in spread to another HPS student or staff is 25: 23 students and 2 staff. As of Thursday, October 7th, the state reported that the City of Holyoke had a 43.9/100,000 avg. daily incidence rate (the highest rate within Hampden County), 5.07% positivity, 6354 tests performed in the past two weeks, and 250 positive cases city-wide in the past two weeks. There have been a total of 6708 positive cases in Holyoke.

St. Vincent Property Update

St. Vincent Property/Dean Update



Please see additional attachments provided in the appendix.

Special Education Services Update

The Pupil Services Department has contracted with Presence Learning to provide virtual speech therapy services for the district. The anticipated start date is October 29th. The district will be working closely with City Hall to expedite the contracting process. Some of our own HPS therapy staff will be reaching out to families to coordinate the after hours services. As soon as feasible, virtual services will be provided during the school day at the impacted schools.

The district will also use Presence Learning to conduct virtual bilingual psychoeducational evaluations as needed throughout the school year.

Entry Plan Update

My Entry Plan Learning and Listening Tour so far has been a huge success thanks to all of you. I have met with students and staff at the following schools: Metcalf, Sullivan, White, Transitions, Opportunity Academy, and Morgan. I have hosted virtual sessions for community members and family leadership group members (DPAG, ELPAC, SEPAC). I hosted an in-person session for anyone at Heritage Park last Tuesday.

Coming up, I have the following school meetings: Kelly (10/20), Peck (10/27), Donahue (11/4), Veritas (11/9), and more to follow. I will meet with every school before the end of the calendar year. I have two upcoming virtual meetings:

- Virtual Family Meeting: Wednesday, Oct. 20, 5:30-6:45 p.m.
- Virtual Staff Meeting: Tuesday, Nov. 2, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Entry Plan: Our Journey Together

Meetings Completed

- Metcalf
- Sullivan
- White
- Transitions
- Opportunity Academy
- Morgan
- Community Members
- Family Leadership
- All (in-person)

Upcoming Meetings

- Kelly (10/20)
- Families (10/20, virtual)
- Peck (10/27)
- Staff (11/2 - virtual)
- Donahue (11/4)
- Veritas (11/9)

Sign up for Virtual Sessions or
Take the Survey:
bit.ly/sotoentryplan

Finally, for people who aren't able to attend any of those sessions, I ask that they take the [Entry Plan Survey](#) by Nov. 5. With this survey, I will be able to learn even more about what's important to address in Holyoke schools from all of you. It also provides another way to be sure everyone's voices are heard during this process. Finally, during our School Committee retreat in December, I will also be able to hear from each of the School Committee members.

Middle School Update

Middle School Collaborative Study Team

Holyoke Public schools has convened a Middle Grades Collaborative Study Team (MGCST) of 16 people, including district leaders, school leaders, teachers, and parents. We also had someone with a counseling background, someone on the family and community engagement team, and a school committee member. It was supported by Cambiar Education. The team presented to me on Friday, October 8th, and I was impressed with the thoroughness of their work. The MGCST also presented to principals and cabinet leaders on Wednesday, October 13th, and the School Building Committee on Thursday, October 14th. They will present to you on Monday, October 18th, and have already scheduled meetings with the staff of Peck, Veritas Prep, and Holyoke STEM. They will continue to schedule meetings to solicit feedback.

The purpose of the team was to understand the middle school work that has been done to-date in Holyoke and the Holyoke middle school experience today. The team also studied best practices in middle level education across the country and talked with experts in the field. It was important to develop an engagement process that was inclusive and included the voices of those impacted. The team engaged hundreds of people through one-on-one interviews, focus groups, meetings, and surveys in order to solicit their input on what middle school in Holyoke should look like. With all these efforts in mind, they developed a vision and preliminary plan for middle level education.

The proposed vision is: **HPS middle schools equip students with the skills and experiences to excel academically and socially in high school and beyond.**

Based on the American Middle Level Educators's article, 16 Characteristics of Effective Middle Schools, and internal feedback, they recommend five guiding beliefs for our middle school design.

1. Students and teachers are engaged in **active, purposeful learning** to drive academic growth.
2. Educators use **multiple learning and teaching approaches**.
3. Students engage in applied learning and **activities inside and outside the classroom**.
4. The school environment is **inviting, safe, inclusive, and supportive of all**.
5. Adults **value young adolescents** and are prepared to teach them.

Guiding Beliefs

MGCST grounded itself in AMLE's (American Middle Level Educators) 16 Characteristics of Effective Middle Schools.

Surfacing from the data and discussion, there were five recommended as anchors for our middle grades work. Four directly from AMLE and one resulting as an overwhelming theme in the engagement process.

- 1 Students and teachers are engaged in **active, purposeful learning** to drive academic growth.
- 2 Educators use **multiple learning and teaching approaches**.
- 3 Students engage in applied learning and **activities inside and outside the classroom**.
- 4 The school environment is **inviting, safe, inclusive, and supportive of all**.
- 5 Adults **value young adolescents** and are prepared to teach them.

They also have made recommendations across four domains: academic, social emotional learning (SEL), equity, and operations.

Academic

- Ensure readiness for MassCore through high quality curriculum and instruction
 - Schedule needs to allow for accelerated learning in Math and ELA especially, without compromising a well-rounded curriculum
- Provide exposure to enrichment opportunities and career pathways within core curriculum and

advisory

- CVTE, World/heritage languages, arts, music, STEM, theatre, consumer sciences, financial literacy, etc.

Social Emotional Learning

- Implement an Advisory period to support social emotional learning, promote strong relationships and offer opportunities for exploration
- Embed social emotional learning across the curriculum - not separate
- Prioritize and protect time and space dedicated to mental health in schools
- Partner with community agencies to augment services provided in schools

Equity

- Equity ensures all students have a rigorous academic experience so they can take advantage of opportunities in high school and beyond
- Support for specialty programming and exposure to a variety of enrichment, while recognizing that students need to make choices
- Balance the number and needs of special populations (e.g. SPED, EL) across schools
- Ensure all stakeholder voices are heard and represented

Operations

- Develop and implement a plan for middle schools now that works with/without a new building
- Ensure enough students per grade/school to allow for class and programming variety
- Ensure time for educator collaboration
- Identify smart, efficient, sufficient, sustainable staffing levels that work for mid-sized middle schools
- Offer continuity of programming from ES to MS
- Utilize previous MS building work as a starting point in order to save time and money on the new project

The MGCST was unable to come to consensus on whether the HPS middle school experience should be grades 5-8 or grades 6-8. The team had a slight preference for two grades 6-8 middle schools, as opposed to three grades 5-8 middle schools. However, since the sample size is low (n=16), much more discussion on this topic is necessary. I especially want to work with you, the School Committee, on this topic during our December retreat. The MGCST has emphasized that more important than a precise grade span is a commitment to implement a few key priorities well.

Possible Grade Spans and # of Schools

	OPTION 1	OPTION 2
Grade Span	5-8	6-8
# of Middle Schools	3	2
Where is Dual Language?	small standalone	1 strand w/in a MS
# of Students/MS	1 of 400 / 2 of 550	550
# of Students/Grade	1 of 100 / 2 of 140	183
# of Feeder Elem schools per MS	1 into DL MS 2 into each other MS	3 into each MS

The MGCST has submitted [slides for your review](#) in advance of the School Committee meeting. Members of the MGCST will attend the School Committee meeting in order to present and add additional context to what you see on the slides which are attached in the appendix below.

Middle School Building Committee

The Middle School Building Committee met on Thursday, October 14 at 6 p.m. for their second meeting. It was virtual. The zoom link was shared by the City, and it was broadcast live on Channel 15. The topics on the agenda included:

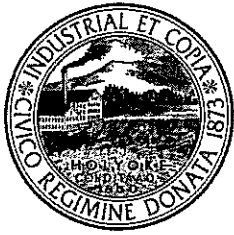
- Understand the role of the Middle School Building Committee
- Review deliverables for Eligibility and possible timeline for entire project
- Listen to presentation from Middle Grades Collaborative Study Team and Ask questions

- Ask questions about draft educational profile and Enrollment Questionnaires for MSBA topics prior to 11/1 deadline submission to MSBA
- Announce the working groups

At the time of writing this update, the meeting had not yet occurred, so a summary can be provided in the next School Committee packet. The next meeting is on Thursday, November 4 at 6 p.m.

The district will be ready to submit the educational profile and Enrollment Questionnaires by the November 1st deadline. If you would like to review the educational profile, please contact Erin Linville, elinville@hps.holyoke.ma.us, Chief of Strategy and Turnaround.

APPENDIX



Mayor Alex B. Morse

Robert Peirent, P.E. City Engineer

City of Holyoke

Department of Public Works

To: Terence Murphy, Holyoke City Council
From: Robert Peirent, P.E, City Engineer
Copy: Michael McManus, General Superintendent
Date January 14, 2021

RE: Development potential of School Department property at the northeast corner of St. Vincent Street and Ingleside Street

This memorandum is prepared in response to an order adopted by the City Council several months ago requesting an evaluation of the development potential of vacant property at the northeast corner of St. Vincent and Ingleside Streets. This property is a portion of Parcel 116-00-016 that contains the Dean School campus and is under the control of the Holyoke School Department. The subject portion of the parcel comprises approximately 1.5 acres of the 10.6-acre parcel

Zoning Requirements

- District RA - agriculture and single-family residence
- Min lot area – 20,000 square feet
- Minimum lot frontage – 100 feet
- Minimum lot depth – 125 feet
- Front yard setback – 40 feet
- Side yard setback – 15/35 feet

Development Constraints

Slope - The most significant development constraint is a very steep slope that drops down to the Dean School parking lot along the entire Ingleside Street side of the parcel. The top of the slope is about 75 feet from the Ingleside Street property line at the intersection and shifts closer to the street as you head to the north along Ingleside Street. This makes most of the subject portion of the property impractical for development.

Utility crossings – there are at least two municipal utilities that cross the property from Ingleside Street to the Dean campus including a 12-inch storm sewer about 100 feet north of the intersection and an 8-inch water line about 500 feet north of the intersection. There also appear to be buried gas and electric utilities lines along the Ingleside Street side of the property. Easements would need to be established for these utilities if the property was no longer under the control of a City agency.

Building setbacks – Any lot created at the St. Vincent St/Ingleside St intersection would be a corner lot. A single-family residence would need to be setback a minimum of 40-ft from both right-of-way lines and a minimum frontage of 100-ft would be required on both streets. This may be feasible, but it would place the residence very close to the top of the steep slope. Driveway access would likely need to be from Ingleside Street due to the very steep slope at the top of St. Vincent St. If a 2nd lot was

created to the north of a corner lot, the residence would be likely be located at least partially on the steep slope.

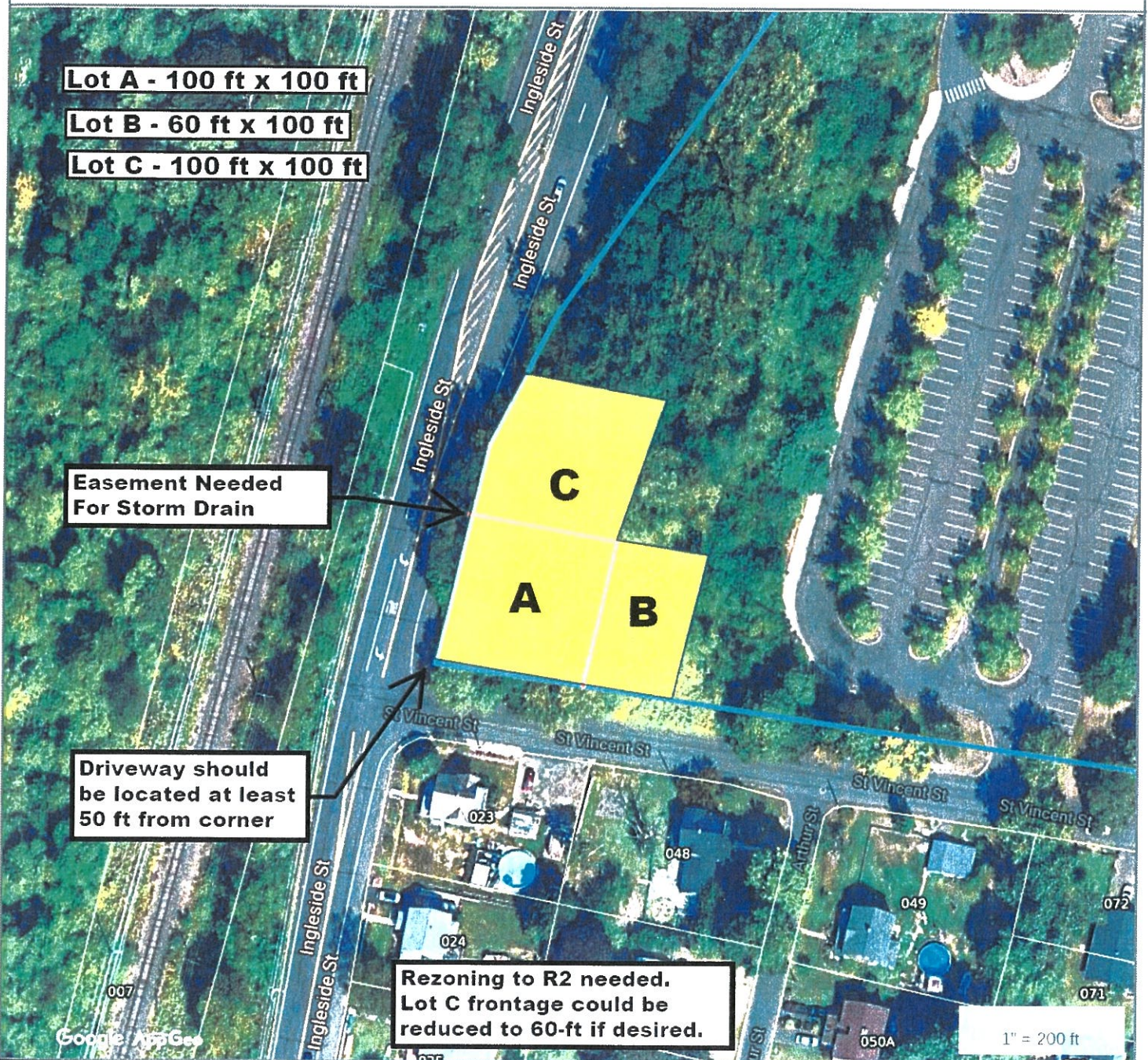
Opinion Regarding Development Potential

It appears feasible that one and possibly two developable lots could be created at this location. However, the lots may not be very appealing to potential developers or prospective residential buyers due to the constraints cited above. Also, the issue of ownership and control of the parcel would need to be resolved before any sale or potential development could be considered.

LIMITATIONS/QUALIFICATIONS

The comments provided above are only intended to respond to the City Council order and should not be provided to any prospective developer as an assurance that the property can be developed. This cannot be determined until such time as specific development plans are provided to City departments for review and approval.

Any prospective purchasers of the property must complete their own assessment of the development potential of the property and should seek the advice of qualified legal, engineering and real estate professionals as part of their evaluation of the potential purchase. If/when the property is offered for sale, prospective purchases must understand that the City has not provided any assurances or guarantees that the property can be developed and that all the risks are to be borne by the potential purchaser.



The sketch shown above is only intended to assist with internal discussions and is not an assurance that the property is suitable for development. Prospective buyers of the property would need to complete their own assessment of the development potential of property. Field survey and filing of an ANR plan to the Planning Board would be required to establish any new lots.



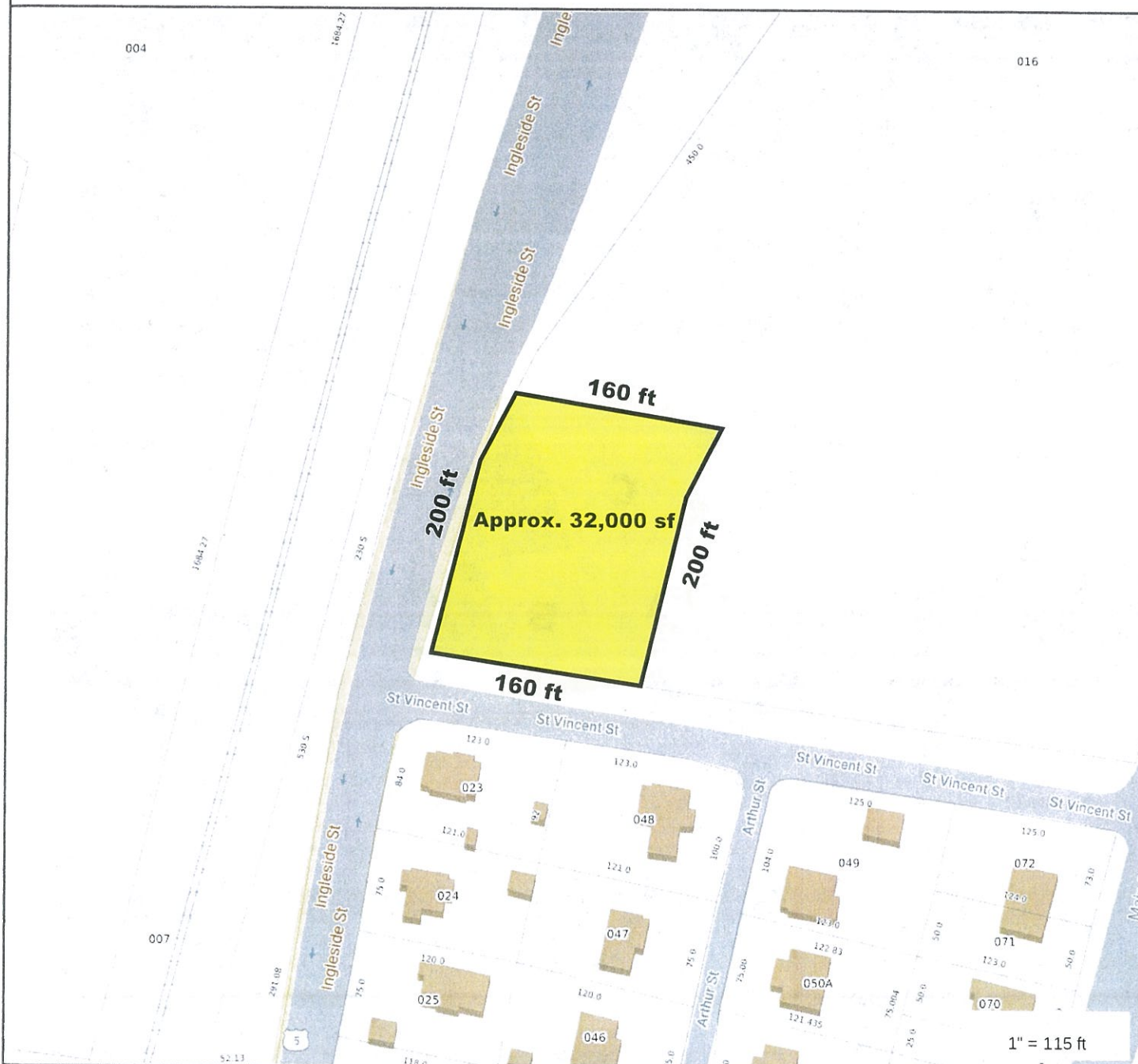
MAP FOR REFERENCE ONLY
NOT A LEGAL DOCUMENT

City of Holyoke, MA makes no claim and no warranties expressed or implied concerning the validity or accuracy of the GIS data presented on this map.

Geometry updated 08/23/2016
Data updated 11/14/2015

Print map scale is approximate. Critical layout or measurement activities should not be done using this resource.

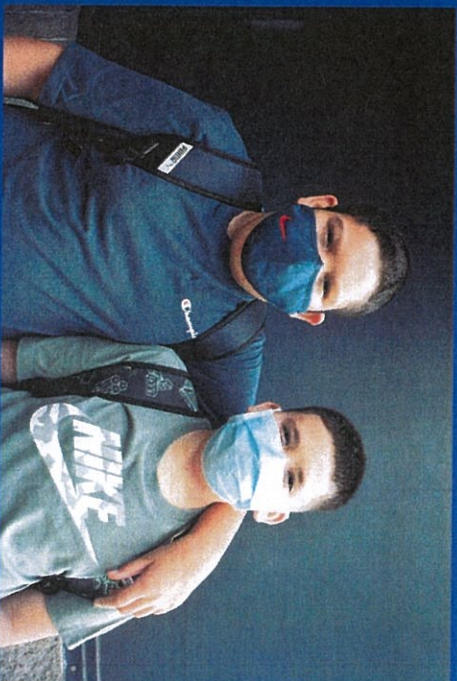
Potential Residential Development of School Department Property at St. Vincent and Ingleside Streets

Property to be Shifted to City Control to Allow for Potential Future Residential Development**MAP FOR REFERENCE ONLY
NOT A LEGAL DOCUMENT**

City of Holyoke, MA makes no claims and no warranties, expressed or implied, concerning the validity or accuracy of the GIS data presented on this map.

Geometry updated 08/23/2019
Data updated 11/19/2018

Print map scale is approximate.
Critical layout or measurement
activities should not be done using
this resource.



Middle Grades Recommendations

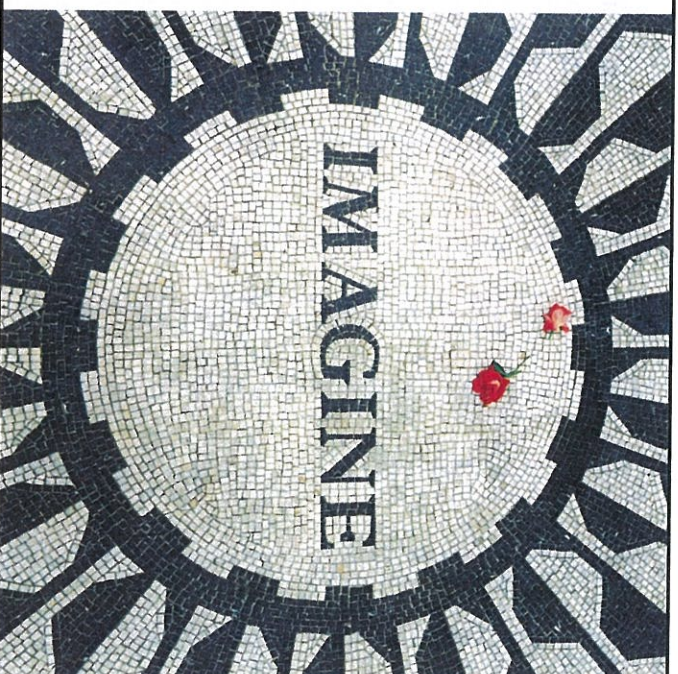
Fall 2021



Background

Agenda

- Background
- Data Highlights
- Recommendations
- Unresolved Issue
- Next Steps
- Discussion





PreK-8 Portfolio

	SY15-16	SY21-22	Ideal
# of ES/MS Schools	9	11	8-9
# of ES/MS School Buildings	9	10*	8-9
Avg Size ES/MS School	412	331	450
Range of School Size	212-568	167-440	360-550
# of Grade Configurations	4	9	2

* Peck/Veritas and Holyoke STEM/Dean Campus are co-located. Metcalf spans two buildings: (the original Metcalf building and the old Blessed Sacrament building (rented space)). Prior to receivership and in the ideal state, schools would not be co-located and a single school would fit into one school building.



Holyoke STEM Academy



VERITASPREP
HOLYOKE



Purpose of Middle Grades Collaborative Study Team (MGCST)

- Understand existing data on the middle grades experience in HPS
- Study best practices in middle level education
- Propose a vision for the middle grades experience
- Discuss implications related to academics, social emotional learning (SEL), equity, and operations resulting from that vision
- Make recommendations on the middle school experience and grades configuration

Outreach by Middle Grades CST

- 30 “empathy interviews” with individuals
- 1 meeting with a high school student group
- 3 family/community input sessions
- 1 staff input session
- 567 survey responses (282 long, 285 short)

Voices			
Student	Staff	Family	Community
138	229	275	82

Data Highlights

Literature and Research Reviewed




Holyoke Data Review

75%	Students say their culture & native language are respected.
61%	Middle school students feel they belong at their school.
<50%	Students on-track in middle school.
<25%	Students at the 50th percentile on STAR Reading or Math
21%	Students feel their school has opportunities activities that meet their interests and needs .



Takeaway: Holyoke middle school students aren't prepared for high school and deserve more from their MS experience.

Data Highlights: Surveys

- 86%** Middle school programming should include an advisory period.
- 83%** Setting students on a path to complete MassCore is important. 
- 81%** Middle school programming should directly connect to the high school programming of academics or career vocational technical ed.
- 63%** HPS should use previous MS building work as a starting point on a single MS building project. 21% think we should start new. (17% are unsure.)
- 54%** Prefer different programming across schools to promote a pathway for every student vs. 30% prefer similar programs to ensure equity. (16% are unsure.)



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Panelists' Quotes

- "Students care how much you care, not how much you know." - Mary Cieplik, Principal, Westfield
- "Grade span isn't the make or break decision. What gets picked isn't that important. It's about how well you implement." - Ron Berger, Senior Advisor, EL Education
- "Every kid must feel safe and welcome. Every kid must feel challenged." - Rachel Romano, Executive Director, Veritas
- "We need to take into consideration the big picture to understand the impact on the whole HPS community."
- Rebecca Thompson, Principal, HPS

Data Highlights: Interviews & Focus Groups

Theme	Insight
Clear, Rigorous Expectations	Individual learning goals must be set, rigorous, individualized, measured, and aligned to standards and students' potential.
Programming, Electives & Extracurricular Activities	Students want to learn beyond core, tested subjects. Classes and activities aligned to students' interests are a motivating factor for students and provide opportunities for exploration of extended learning (i.e., STEM, student council)
Social Emotional Learning (SEL)	Despite how some students may present in school, leaders need to ensure that ALL students benefit from Social and Emotional Learning - not just students who are experiencing trauma or present with needs.
Equity & Access	Decisions need to include those impacted and must be made transparently and equitably.

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Recommendations

Proposed Vision for HPS Middle Schools



HPS middle schools equip students with the skills and experiences to excel academically and socially in high school and beyond.

Leading 21st Century Skills for students to develop by the end of 8th grade



Problem Solving



Decision Making



Critical Thinking



Communication



Growth Mindset

Guiding Beliefs

MGCS grounded itself in AMLE's (American Middle Level Educators) 16 Characteristics of Effective Middle Schools.

Surfacing from the data and discussion, there were five recommended as anchors for our middle grades work. Four directly from AMLE and one resulting as an overwhelming theme in the engagement process.

- 1 Students and teachers are engaged in **active, purposeful learning** to drive academic growth.
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- 4 The school environment is **inviting, safe, inclusive, and supportive of all**.
- 5 Adults **value young adolescents** and are prepared to teach them.

Academic Recommendations

- Most important: Ensure **readiness for MassCore through high quality curriculum and instruction**
 - Schedule needs to allow for accelerated learning in Math and ELA especially, without compromising a well-rounded curriculum
- Also important: Provide **exposure to enrichment opportunities and career pathways** within core curriculum and advisory
 - CVTE, World/heritage languages, arts, music, STEM, theatre, consumer sciences, financial literacy, etc.

Social Emotional Recommendations

- Implement an **Advisory period** to support social emotional learning, promote strong relationships and offer opportunities for exploration
- **Embed social emotional learning** across the curriculum - not separate
- Prioritize and protect time and space dedicated to **mental health** in schools
- **Partner with community agencies** to augment services provided in schools

Equity Recommendations

- Equity ensures **all students have a rigorous academic experience** so they can take advantage of opportunities in high school and beyond
- Support for **specialty programming and exposure to a variety of enrichment**, while recognizing that students need to make choices
- **Balance** the number and needs of special populations (e.g. SPED, EL) across schools
- Ensure **all stakeholder voices are heard** and represented

Operational Recommendations

- Develop and implement a **plan** for middle schools **now that works with/without a new building**
- Ensure enough students per grade/school to allow **for class and programming variety**
- Ensure time for **educator collaboration**
- Identify smart, efficient, sufficient, sustainable **staffing levels** that work for mid-sized middle schools
- Offer **continuity of programming** from ES to MS
- **Utilize previous MS building work as a starting point** in order to save time and money on the new project

Unresolved Issue

Possible Grade Spans and # of Schools

	OPTION 1	OPTION 2
Grade Span	5-8	6-8
# of Middle Schools	3	2
Where is Dual Language?	small standalone	1 strand w/in a MS
# of Students/MS	1 of 400 / 2 of 550	550
# of Students/Grade	1 of 100 / 2 of 140	183
# of Feeder Elem schools per MS	1 into DL MS 2 into each other MS	3 into each MS

2 Grades 6-8 Schools: Select Pros/Cons

Pros

- CCSS content is 1 grade band
- Tighter developmental span
- Sufficient # of students & teachers for teaming, collaboration & more electives
- Integrates DL students

Cons

- Short time span in 1 school for relationship building & academic acceleration during a time of a lot of personal change for students
- Veritas Prep Holyoke - [a proven model in Springfield](#) - relies on the gr. 5-8 structure
- Only 50% of students may experience a new MS bldg
- ES varies more in size, with 3 or 4 classes per grade

Ops/Equity

- No more co-located schools
- Have internal capacity while new building is built
- 2 MS makes collaboration and cohesion more straightforward

3 Grades 5-8 Schools: Select Pros/Cons

Pros

- More time w/ S&F for academic growth & relationships
- Flexible/innovative staffing Ops
- A little smaller # of students/gr. while still enough for variety of programming/electives
- Allows for 1 DL-only school

Cons

- Some people view Gr. 5 as "too young" for MS
- Jump btwn Gr. 5 and Gr. 6-8 standards/curriculum
- Would likely require non-traditional staffing models
- Holyoke & MSBA may expect a gr. 6-8 model
- 3 MS makes collaboration and cohesion less straightforward
- Only 40% of students may experience a new MS bldg

Ops/Equity

- 5 ES will all have ~4 classes/gr, resulting in similar sized ES
- No more co-located schools
- Have internal capacity while new building is built

MGCST Preferences for Schools

3 - gr. 5-8 schools			2 - gr. 6-8 schools	
Strongly Prefer	Prefer	Indifferent / Unsure	Prefer	Strongly Prefer
3 votes	2 votes	4 votes	4 votes	3 votes
31%		25%		43%

Results are inconclusive, with a slight preference for two gr. 6-8 middle schools. Sample size is small.



Takeaway: The implementation of a strong middle school model is more important than the precise grade span.

Next Steps

Recommended Mid-Term Next Steps

- **Develop programs and models for key aspects of middle grades experience**, including world/heritage language and Advisory
- **Engage in a community process** to develop a timeline and transition plan for fully moving to the middle school model, with or without a new middle school building
- **Once the ES/MS plan is set, allow for significant time for planning and implementation at the school level:** staffing, scheduling, teaming, program/academic design, operational (transportation, furniture, etc.)

Recommended Near-Term Next Steps

- **Share this middle grades recommendation** with HPS Leadership, Principals, School Committee, School Building Committee, and City Council
- **Host more input sessions** for staff, student, family and community to solicit feedback on recommendations
- **Then, make important decisions on:**
 - Grades 5-8 vs. Grades 6-8 model
 - Dual language model in middle school
 - Middle school building project - school location, funding commitment to enter feasibility phase, etc.

Discussion

Discussion

- Break-out Questions
 - What resonated with you?
 - What did you disagree with?
 - What do you still have questions about?
- Break-out Groups or Whole Group Discussion
 1. Academics/SEL/Equity
 2. Operations/Grades Configuration
 3. Next Steps
- MGCST Feedback Survey

APPENDIX



MGCST Members

- Dean Santiago++, Family and Community Engagement Coordinator, Peck
 - Erin Brunelle+*@, School Committee Member
 - Erin Linville, Chief of Strategy and Turnaround, HPS
 - Jackie Glashdeen+*@, Executive Director of School Leadership, HPS
 - Jessica Olivares-McBride#, Counselor/SPED Program Coordinator, Peck
 - Lorie Banks#, Middle School Math Teacher, Sullivan
 - Lulu Ekiert, Gr. 6-8 ESL Teacher, Holyoke STEM
 - Melissa Grandison@#, Associate Principal, Veritas
 - Nakaia Smith+*@, Dean of Students, Peck
 - Olivia Rivera*#@, 6th gr. ELA/History Teacher, Veritas
 - Rachel Romano, Executive Director, Veritas
 - Rebecca Thompson, Principal, McMahon
 - Tara Brandt, Director of Mathematics, HPS
 - Stephen Mahoney, Chief of Schools, HPS
 - Valerie Annear, Chief Instructional Officer, HPS
 - Whitney Anderson*@, Facilities Administration, HPS
- *Supported by Cambiar Education (Thank you Ami Magunia & Beau Gallegos!)

Key
 + HPS Graduate
 *HPS parent
 @ Holyoke resident
 # Person of Color

Existing Elementary and Middle School Configurations

- 9 grade configurations across 11 schools
 - PK-4: Morgan, Kelly
 - PK-5: E.N. White
 - PK-5, 8: Donahue
 - PK-7: Metcalf
 - PK-8: McMahon, Sullivan
 - K-3: Lawrence
 - 4-8: Peck
 - 5-8: Veritas
 - 6-8: Holyoke STEM
- SY21-22: 7 grade configurations across 11 schools b/c Donahue will be PK-5 and Metcalf will be PK-8.

Select Middle School moves since 2016

- **2016-17:** Listening tour and analysis confirmed the community's preference for distinct elementary and middle schools
- **Fall 2018: Began conversion of K-8s to elem. and middle schools**
 - Opened 2 new middle schools: Holyoke STEM and Veritas Prep
 - Allowed Morgan and E.N. White to fully and Kelly to partially convert to elementary schools
- **Fall 2020:** Begin to partially convert Donahue to an elem. school, yet Metcalf now has middle school
- **Fall 2021:** Kelly is fully converted to an elem. school, and Veritas has all grades 5-8
- **Fall 2022:** Donahue will be fully converted to an elem. school, yet ENW DL 6th graders need a middle school location

Research and Resources

- Pre-reading Packet #1: Learning from Others
- Pre-reading Packet #2: What We Know About the Middle Grades
- Panelists: (bios)
 - Ron Berger, Senior Advisor for Teaching & Learning at EL Education
 - Mary Cieplik, Principal of Southampton Road Elementary School in Westfield, MA
 - Rachel Romano, Founding Principal of Veritas Prep
 - Rebecca Thompson, Principal of Lt Elmer J. McMahon Elementary School in Holyoke, MA

Challenges we're seeking to Address

1. The HPS portfolio of school buildings is not aligned with enrollment and educational programming. Too many facilities are under-enrolled, resulting in inefficient and less effective staffing models and student/staff supports.
2. There is too much variation in the grade configuration across HPS schools, leading to an inconsistent educational path from PreK-8th grade.
3. Holyoke lacks a middle school experience that prepares students for success in high school and beyond.