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August 2013



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ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY, #3

Dear Holyoke Community,

It is hard to believe that it is time for a new school year, but here we are with summer in our rearview mirror moving forward into what we expect to be a positive and productive new year.

On behalf of the Board of Education and the entire Holyoke School District, it is my pleasure to present our third annual report on our strategic plan. We are very fortunate to have the support of many businesses, organizations, and individuals. We intend to keep that support by demonstrating progress toward our goals, providing transparency, and sharing the good work that happens each day in our district.

I hope you enjoy this copy of our annual report. Please consider this an open invitation to ask more questions and get involved.

- - - Dr. Jeff Tharp, President of the Holyoke Board of Education

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Para recibir una copia de este informe en español, por favor, vaya al edificio de administración en 435 S. Morlan Avenue o a la escuela de su hijo.



NEW TEACHER EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

If you were following news coverage of School Board meetings last year, no doubt you heard about the work of teachers and administrators as they developed policy for the new teacher evaluation law.

This fall, Colorado will be implementing a law that significantly changes the teacher evaluation process. Changes include:

- 50% of the teacher's evaluation must be based on student achievement,
- Teachers can lose non-probationary status (tenure) if they underperform two years in a row, and
- All teachers are evaluated each year using a new state evaluation system.

Last year's work primarily centered around choosing the types of student achievement results to be used in the evaluation.

Teachers were directly involved in creating the draft policy. Then the District Accountability Advisory Committee reviewed the work and gave its approval to the Board of Education, where it was finally put into policy.

While this is a huge shift in how we do business as a school, we are very optimistic about implementation due to the extensive amount of involvement our teachers had in the process. Stay tuned this year for several reports at Board meetings on the implementation.

NEW STATE STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTED

IN A 10 DISTRICT COLLABORATIVE

The Colorado Legislature passed Senate Bill 212 back in 2009. This new law put in motion several changes we are seeing today including the end of CSAP and the start of a new era of testing we will call PARCC. However, the biggest change in SB212 was the State adopting new standards. After several years of development the State Board of Education adopted the new standards in December of 2011.

State-wide Sample Curriculum

As school districts across the state started to work with the new standards to update their curriculum, the State responded with an unprecedented show of support by creating a sample curriculum document. Teachers from across the state came together to create a curriculum that is aligned to the new standards. This saved schools countless hours of work doing this themselves.

Collaborative Effort

Knowing that all districts would need to create new curriculum, several districts in the NE corner of the state made plans to come together to update curriculum with the new standards. Holyoke, Haxtun, Fleming, Ovid, Julesburg, Wray, Akron, Otis, Lone Star, and Merino teachers will work together to best implement the new standards and to create classroom assessments for these standards.

Collaborative Team Time

Once a month, teachers will come together in grade level and subject level groups to collaborate on the new curriculum, new standards, and to share expertise in building classroom assessments. We believe that this collaboration will lead to better classroom instruction as the best teachers in the area share strategies, materials, and expertise with each other. We believe that students will benefit from this collaboration and therefore we have dedicated time to it this year.

Stay tuned throughout the year for updates on this unprecedented collaborative effort.



LONG-AWAITED TRACK PROJECT A REALITY

For many active track team supporters in Holyoke, the project is now over a decade old, but it is finally a reality due to many dedicated community members and great partners.

In 2009, the track project gained new momentum when the Holyoke Education Foundation named it as their targeted project for their Wellness Fund. Funds raised by the former citizen's track committee were given to the Foundation and other money was soon to follow. The Foundation did its own fundraising campaign and was also supported by generous donations from the Heginbotham Trust and the Leland Trust. With renewed emphasis, the next step was to go after a GOCO (Great Outdoors Colorado) grant.

The County Commissioners supported the idea of a grant and agreed to be the grantee on behalf of the District. The District put in two applications in 2012, and found out that on the second try that our project just missed the cut of being funded. So the District and supporters went back to work on the grant. At this time the District received another generous donation from the Jack Pettys Foundation for the track and money from the Phillips County Recreation District to add exercise equipment. The additional money for the local match and the addition of community exercise equipment proved to make a difference on the grant. After three applications for GOCO Funds, in May of 2013, the District found out we would be a funded project.

June was filled with contracts, survey work and finally rough grading. Concrete was poured in the first couple weeks in July which then required a 28 day curing period before additional work could be done. At the time of publication of this newsletter, the surfacing was scheduled to go on between August 20 and September 6. Home football games scheduled in late August and early September will go on as planned without changes as the construction crews will work around our schedule.

With the help of the City of Holyoke and Highline Electric Association, new lights were installed for the project. The City and Highline were helpful in digging holes, trenching, sizing the wire, setting the concrete bases, and eventually lifting the poles into position. The restroom upgrades, installation of exercise equipment and final landscaping will all start in the fall and be ready for use in time for track season.

The District is very fortunate to have such great support from this community and the track will be a long-standing reminder. Thank you to everyone who contributed and we look forward to seeing a lot of community use in the near future.

OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND FOR HOLYOKE STUDENTS

Students in the Holyoke School District have many opportunities to shine. In addition to academics, the District offers a wide variety of activities for nearly all interests.

Students interested in athletics have three seasons in grades 7-12, with at least two choices for a sport each season in high school for the most complete athletics in the area.

For those who enjoy the arts, complete K-12 art and music programs are in place with concerts, shows and competitions. Elementary students have art and music weekly from kindergarten through 6th grade. Students can start band in 5th grade and continue through graduation. For grades 7-12, choir is also available. In addition to the band and choir classes in the schedule, jazz band and select choir programs meet prior to school for students who try out for this opportunity. The high school also performs a play and a musical each year.

Elementary students have participated in the regional brain bowl for several years. Academic competitions continue in the Jr./Sr. High with the NJC Math/Science Contest.

There are a variety of extra-curricular organizations in the school, many of which travel and compete at the state and national level. The Spanish Club members compete at the World Language Day in Greeley and have done quite well.

Some organizations travel a bit further like FFA. The FCCLA (Family Career and Community Leaders of America) and the FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) have qualified at state level competitions to travel to nationals for 29 years in a row. Students in these programs have had the opportunity to travel to Chicago, Anaheim, San Antonio, Orlando and more. Not only do our students compete each year nationally, we often have students place.

The Holyoke School District is interested in providing a niche for all students to excel and to have experiences they will remember for a lifetime.

GOAL 1.1

ALL SCHOOLS & THE DISTRICT ARE ACCREDITED WITH DISTINCTION

The State of Colorado has a system for Accrediting its schools and districts based on the mandatory state wide testing. Schools that perform in the top 25% of the State will fall into a category called Accredited with Distinction. Therefore, this has become Holyoke's goal.

The Board, administration and staff all understand that moving from our current achievement scores into the top 25% in the State won't happen overnight. However, it is the expectation that we get there by 2016.

In order to accomplish this goal, the schools study the current achievement data and create their Unified Improvement Plans which outline the obstacles and the strategies to reach the goal. You can find the most current UIPs for each school on the Department of Education's website, www.cde.state.co.us.

Even though half of the students in the District are impacted by poverty, and one quarter of the school population receives services from our English as a Second Language program, the District is committed to work hard to overcome these obstacles and reach the goal. We believe quality instruction, a focused curriculum, motivated students and good school-home partnerships are our best chances to overcome these obstacles.

The 2013 results are evidence that we are headed in the right direction to meet our 2016 goals.

2013 TCAP RESULTS

TCAP (Transitional Colorado Assessment Program) is the new name for the mandated State testing system that was known as CSAP (Colorado Student Assessment Program) since its inception in 1996. The new name is a result of a transitional phase as the State adjusts to its new standards adopted in December of 2011.

TCAP results come in two forms: Status and Growth. Status results (page 5) are typically presented as a comparison to the State Average and in the percent of students who scored Proficient and Advanced. Students who score in the Proficient or Advanced categories are viewed as being on grade level or meeting the standards. Growth results (below) are designed to show how much improvement students are making from year to year. Students are compared to other students across the state who had the same score one year ago. Then they see how all of those students did the following year, thus demonstrating who grew more than others who started at the same place. Growth scores are measured against a bell curve so being at the 50th percentile is the state average and distinguished growth is viewed to be at the 67th percentile.

Celebrations in the Status scores include having 20 out of 27 tests improving over last year, up from 15 last year. There were also 12 tests at or above the state average, another increase from last year when we had 9 tests. The District did very well with struggling students too, with 22 of the 27 tests showing a decrease in unsatisfactory scores. Celebrations in the Growth scores include 12 of the 21 growth measures for Holyoke exceeded the State average, an increase of 2 over last year. Ten grade levels met the District Growth 1st Target, which is an important first step to our high goals.

Each year prior to classes starting, teachers conduct a process of analyzing the student achievement results and working with their curriculum to determine if adjustments need to be made for the new year. This will be the fourth year to conduct this analysis which gives teachers the best chance to modify instruction to help with the results.

Holyoke Re-1J	Growth				% Change 12 to 13	Compare to State 2013	Distance to 1st Target	Distance to 67% Growth	Growth 1st target
TCAP Test	2010	2011	2012	2013					
3rd Grade Reading	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A				N/A
4th Grade Reading	44%	60%	27%	52%	25%	2%	-6%	-15%	58%
5th Grade Reading	55%	47%	47%	62%	15%	12%	2%	-5%	60%
6th Grade Reading	22%	64%	64%	63%	-1%	13%	13%	-4%	50%
7th Grade Reading	34%	31%	15%	48%	33%	-2%	-2%	-19%	50%
8th Grade Reading	33%	40%	45%	34%	-11%	-16%	-16%	-33%	50%
9th Grade Reading	33%	38%	60%	45%	-15%	-5%	5%	-22%	40%
10th Grade Reading	38%	38%	52%	53%	1%	3%	8%	-14%	45%
3rd Grade Writing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A				N/A
4th Grade Writing	41%	45%	28%	50%	22%	0%	-6%	-17%	56%
5th Grade Writing	39%	50%	31%	68%	37%	18%	8%	1%	60%
6th Grade Writing	23%	67%	60%	73%	13%	23%	23%	6%	50%
7th Grade Writing	26%	45%	36%	42%	6%	-8%	-3%	-25%	45%
8th Grade Writing	38%	46%	39%	37%	-2%	-13%	-13%	-30%	50%
9th Grade Writing	38%	26%	58%	53%	-5%	3%	-5%	-14%	58%
10th Grade Writing	35%	56%	53%	55%	2%	5%	5%	-12%	50%
3rd Grade Math	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A				N/A
4th Grade Math	46%	48%	35%	32%	-3%	-18%	-26%	-35%	58%
5th Grade Math	27%	47%	62%	74%	12%	24%	24%	7%	50%
6th Grade Math	35%	71%	60%	77%	17%	27%	27%	10%	50%
7th Grade Math	31%	43%	35%	43%	8%	-7%	-7%	-24%	50%
8th Grade Math	37%	48%	48%	30%	-18%	-20%	-20%	-37%	50%
9th Grade Math	56%	61%	64%	60%	-4%	10%	0%	-7%	60%
10th Grade Math	63%	79%	64%	48%	-16%	-2%	-12%	-19%	60%

2013 TCAP STATUS RESULTS

Holyoke Re-1J	Proficient/Advanced %							COHORT 12 to 13	% Change 12 to 13	Compare to State 2013	Distance to next Target	Distance to 75th % ile	P&A 13 Target	P&A Distin- guished
	CSAP Test	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012							
3rd Grade Reading	69%	58%	76%	79%	87%	77%	79%	N/A	2%	6%	-1%	6.7%	80%	85.7%
4th Grade Reading	76%	76%	63%	69%	71%	60%	71%	-6%	11%	3%	-1%	10.1%	72%	81.1%
5th Grade Reading	65%	74%	70%	69%	73%	74%	83%	23%	9%	10%	8%	1.3%	75%	84.3%
6th Grade Reading	69%	63%	68%	58%	80%	82%	89%	15%	7%	16%	5%	-1.1%	84%	87.9%
7th Grade Reading	71%	50%	54%	60%	53%	55%	62%	-20%	7%	-6%	-10%	18.5%	72%	80.5%
8th Grade Reading	56%	69%	50%	62%	58%	50%	51%	-4%	1%	-16%	-19%	29.3%	70%	80.3%
9th Grade Reading	65%	67%	71%	55%	59%	64%	52%	2%	-12%	-16%	-21%	29.9%	73%	81.9%
10th Grade Reading	63%	65%	62%	80%	49%	60%	59%	-5%	-1%	-11%	-16%	24.0%	75%	83.0%
3rd Grade Writing	56%	50%	56%	76%	64%	59%	71%	N/A	12%	20%	6%	-2.1%	65%	68.9%
4th Grade Writing	57%	68%	50%	38%	66%	46%	54%	-5%	8%	1%	-6%	12.5%	60%	66.5%
5th Grade Writing	55%	64%	57%	45%	57%	57%	77%	31%	20%	20%	17%	-2.2%	60%	74.8%
6th Grade Writing	64%	61%	49%	33%	59%	63%	72%	15%	9%	14%	4%	6.3%	68%	78.3%
7th Grade Writing	56%	55%	49%	51%	45%	48%	62%	-1%	14%	1%	-3%	12.4%	65%	74.4%
8th Grade Writing	51%	50%	48%	53%	39%	40%	40%	-8%	0%	-13%	-20%	27.9%	60%	67.9%
9th Grade Writing	60%	56%	67%	43%	44%	42%	50%	10%	8%	-5%	-7%	14.7%	57%	64.7%
10th Grade Writing	48%	41%	44%	51%	44%	49%	44%	2%	-5%	-5%	-8%	19.5%	52%	63.5%
3rd Grade Math	76%	54%	73%	72%	81%	70%	82%	N/A	12%	10%	2%	2.7%	80%	84.7%
4th Grade Math	80%	76%	60%	77%	70%	73%	68%	-2%	-5%	-4%	-5%	17.3%	73%	85.3%
5th Grade Math	65%	74%	54%	41%	67%	57%	83%	10%	26%	18%	15%	-2.9%	68%	80.1%
6th Grade Math	51%	63%	49%	42%	59%	71%	67%	10%	-4%	5%	-6%	7.4%	73%	74.4%
7th Grade Math	54%	45%	56%	31%	36%	36%	48%	-23%	12%	-7%	-12%	16.7%	60%	64.7%
8th Grade Math	56%	42%	38%	53%	44%	36%	31%	-5%	-5%	-20%	-21%	31.9%	52%	62.9%
9th Grade Math	35%	54%	35%	31%	32%	24%	31%	-5%	7%	-8%	-7%	18.9%	38%	49.9%
10th Grade Math	34%	41%	31%	41%	36%	37%	21%	-3%	-16%	-13%	-19%	21.5%	40%	42.5%
5th Grade Science	40%	53%	41%	33%	65%	40%	45%	N/A	5%	-3%	-5%	15.0%	50%	60.0%
8th Grade Science	42%	44%	38%	35%	42%	36%	40%	N/A	4%	-12%	-10%	18.0%	50%	58.0%
10th Grade Science	39%	41%	47%	46%	44%	46%	46%	N/A	0%	-5.00%	-4%	6.0%	50%	52.0%

Colorado ACT

All Juniors (11th grade) in Colorado take the ACT each year. ACT is a college entrance exam designed to determine if a student is ready for a college or university which typically sets its own cut scores. Like other State tests, districts are compared to a State Average. While there is some fluctuation from year to year, districts typically look at past years to see if there is improvement over the long haul as well as the relationship with the State Average. The Junior ACT results at the lowest level in the past four years. Teachers have dug into the results and will be looking at instructional adjustments for this year and we will see if this was a one year anomaly with the school back on track with the next set of students.

ACT	English		Mathematics		Reading		Science		Composite		
	Year	Holyoke	State	Holyoke	State	Holyoke	State	Holyoke	State	Holyoke	State
2010		16.8	19.2	19.3	19.9	18.2	20.2	18.6	20.1	18.4	20.0
2011		18.7	19.0	19.6	20.0	20.2	19.9	20.3	20.2	19.8	19.9
2012		17.4	19.4	19.7	20.1	18.7	19.8	19.0	20.1	18.9	20.0
2013		16.2	19.4	17.8	20.1	17.9	20.4	18.2	20.1	17.6	20.1

Goal 1.2: Enhance the use of technology in the classroom to increase student achievement.

The goal to improve our technology as a strategy to increase student achievement began with an ominous report. Back on April 30, 2009, the Holyoke Enterprise reported on a school board meeting where the State Facilities Assessment said that there was no technology score given for Holyoke Elementary noting it was “one of the most lacking schools in the state.”

We have come a long ways since that time. As a result of a Board goal, a re-energized Technology team of staff, along with the support of our local PIE and RE-1J Foundation, and a local mill levy override, students in Holyoke Schools have much greater access to technology.

Each building has two functional labs, we have three mobile computer labs, document cameras and a Promethean Board (interactive white board) in every academic classroom, and a new wireless internet system. New this year, every teacher also has an iPad to learn how to use as an educational tool.

One Friday morning a month is dedicated to professional development on technology. We bring in trainers or have teachers train each other so that all teachers are getting the support they need to integrate technology into their classrooms.

We are proud of the investment our District and entire community has made in technology. Today’s student expects to use technology daily and we are up to the task in Holyoke.

IPADS GIVE TEACHERS MORE FLEXIBILITY

Technology has clearly been a focus for the District over recent years and huge advancements have been made so far. The District has added computers, purchased mobile computer labs, and put an interactive white board in every classroom.

The interactive white boards function like a combination chalkboard and computer screen. Teachers project information on the board and can write on it too. The boards are used throughout the day and have proven to be a worthy investment.

In order to get even more use out of the interactive white boards, all teachers were given an iPad this May. With the iPad, teachers will be able to control their interactive white board from anywhere in the room.

Teachers can write on the iPad and it appears on the board. This is particularly

important in terms of classroom management. This year, teachers will be able to use their boards without turning their backs to the students, or use their boards while positioning themselves in strategic locations in the classroom as a classroom management strategy.

The world of technology changes so quickly and we will continue to strive to have effective tools in our teachers’ hands.



ONE-TO-ONE DEVICES BEING STUDIED

It has been talked about for quite some time that the ideal technology program is having a personal device with every student. We see more schools trying one-to-one programs and our staff has an interest. Members of the Technology Committee visited Goodland, Kansas last year to see their school which has an iPad for every student. In addition, the committee started to do more research and eventually had a work session with the Board of Education to share their findings.

With the start of the new year, the Technology Committee will pick up where it left off and continue to study a possible one-to-one device future. They will evaluate several types of devices (tablets and computers) as well as look at other factors such as infrastructure needs, Internet capacity and costs, training needs, impact to budget, and of course the need for additional tech support with many more devices. Stay tuned throughout the year for progress reports from this committee. It is a very exciting prospect indeed.

TOOL FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The key to any learning environment is how well engaged the student is in the learning process. A lesson can be very engaging, but if a student sits on the sideline passively watching classmates answer all the questions, it is hard to tell if all the students get it. That is where our Active Expressions come in.

Active Expressions are individual remote controls, the size of a calculator, at each student’s desk. When the teacher poses the question to the whole class, all the students enter their own answers into the expressions. Then as the class looks at the right answer together and discusses it as a class, every kid had to take a shot at answering the question. Engagement just jumped from one student being called on to all 25 being called on.

The Active Expression even keeps a record for the teacher so they can see how the kids are doing. They have been used for tests as well, giving the teacher instant feedback on what students know and what they don’t know. Another great use of technology.

ELEMENTARY COUNSELOR

The District was very pleased that it could add an elementary counselor position last year. It had been a decade since the elementary had a full-time counselor. The District had seen an increase in the number of students struggling with poverty and the number of cases with Human Services. In recent years, students and families have also increased their awareness of bullying and other social issues.

Our new counselor was quite busy this first year helping students and families with a wide variety of concerns. When a school has a good counselor, another advantage is being able to separate the discipline and support responsibilities. In addition, classrooms received direct instruction this year on a variety of topics requested by teachers.

Bullying of course was a topic of conversation with the counselor and the students. The main strategy for dealing with bullies is to get the other students not directly involved to rally around a student being bullied and to convey a message to everyone that we have an environment where that type of behavior will not be tolerated. There were also a few events for students. The NJC Basketball players came to town to talk with our students about treating each other right. It was very well received.

We look forward to building consistency and support with this critical position.



Goal 1.3: Foster an environment of mutual respect and support in the classroom.
Because kids need to feel safe and a sense of belonging before they can learn.

STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS CONTINUE

The Board of Education has utilized the perceptions survey data each year to learn more about the District. The Board felt the need to find a way to get additional insights from our students beyond the survey, so in 2012 student focus groups were created. This spring, the Board engaged students directly for the second annual student focus groups.

This year's perception survey showed a small dip in responses when students were asked about their willingness to ask questions in class. We got great insight by having this conversation learning that in most cases, kids are much more concerned with how their peers might react rather than how the teacher may react. Students also shared thoughts on the Academic Opportunity Center, facilities, sports and recent technology upgrades to name a few topics.

The Board of Education indicated that it would like to expand student focus groups into the elementary school next spring including the 5th and 6th grade students. After two years, the benefits of visiting directly with students are clear.

POSITIVE RESPONSES IN EXIT SURVEYS

Each year as seniors are ready to leave our school system, we ask them to participate in a survey run by LifeTrack Services, Inc. Students answer a variety of yes or no questions or respond to prompts with Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average and Needs Improvement. Some responses are highlighted below.

HHS provided a safe learning environment.	92% Excellent and Good
Did school make learning engaging?	86% Yes
Teachers demanded quality work	81% Excellent and Good
Did you experience significant harassment?	84% No
Did you have a positive experience at HHS?	92% Yes



LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR OWN RE-1J FOUNDATION

The Holyoke School District is lucky to have so many supporters and partners, many of which are listed on this page. One such partner has recently been re-energized and is already making a difference.

The Holyoke Re-1J Foundation is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to enrich and improve the quality of the educational environment in the Holyoke School District.

The Foundation's mission is to advocate, promote and fund initiatives designed to partner with the District to improve student performance and advance quality educational opportunities for all children.

The Foundation accepts donations only for the projects approved by the Foundation Board or into the General Fund to be used at the Foundation Board's discretion. The Foundation maintains four funds: Academic, Technology, Health and Wellness, and the General Fund.

The Foundation Board meets regularly. You can learn more about the Holyoke Re-1J Foundation and its projects at www.holyokeeducationfoundation.com. Each school and the District Administration Building have Foundation brochures full of information about what the foundation does and how you can support the mission of the Foundation. You can also email the Foundation at re1j@holyokeyeducationfoundation.com or send mail to:

RE-1J Foundation, Inc.
PO Box 433
Holyoke, CO 80734

Thank you...

The Re-1J Foundation for its continuous support of the track project, the science room remodel and technology upgrades,

First Pioneer National Bank for sponsoring the programs for the fall and winter sports teams and **Grainland** for the programs in the spring.

Fontanelle Hybrid for a donation to create a livestock starter fund for FFA students to use to buy animals for their projects,

Pioneer Seed for providing popcorn and popcorn bags to the concession stands for all of our sporting events,

The **Lillis Fund** for supporting students with school fees and other necessities,

PC Telecom/Radio Shack for donating 6 two-way radios to Holyoke Elementary,

The **PIE Group** for putting Carnival proceeds toward a classroom teacher grant program this year with 6 winners,

Dennis Keasling and **Jessie Ruiz** for donating a piano to the music department,

Holyoke Marketplace for providing the meal for our fall athletic banquet and other supplies throughout the school year.

Seaboard Foods and Omimex Petroleum for providing food for the smorgasbord concert,

Jeremy Thompson for baseball equipment,

Kellie Race for books to the Elementary library,

Rusty and Sandra Triplette and Aaron and Pam Worley for supplying sweet corn to the FFA Chapter as a fundraiser again this summer,

Stephen Balog for a cash donation to the football team,

The Holyoke Enterprise for being the District's partner and organizing the annual *Emerald Awards*. This special evening would not be possible without so many other sponsors: Abts Express; Bank of Colorado; Brandt Chiropractic; City of Holyoke; Colver, Killin & Sprague, LLP; First Pioneer National Bank; Flower Garden; Holyoke Credit Union; Holyoke Marketplace; Holyoke Pharmacy; Holyoke Veterinary Service; Inklings Bookstore; MV Equipment; PC Telecom; and Regent Park & Carriage House.

The **Weight Room** was made possible through several gifts from businesses and individuals. An aerial photo of the football field given by Ag Power Equipment was auctioned off. Several others gave cash donations as well including: Ag Power Equipment, Rick and Jessica Cumming, Shawn and Marcia Dalton, Jeff and Theresa Tharp, Computers Etc., Holyoke Credit Union, Vieselmeyer Seed, First Pioneer National Bank, Grainland Cooperative, Bank of Colorado, Holyoke Wrestling Club, RJ's Simple Spending, Erik and Michelle Vieselmeyer, Jeremy and Brooke Dirks, and Pat Healy.

Melissa Memorial Hospital for an equipment donation to the weight room.

Community members and **families** who buy our products and look forward to our fundraisers each year.

We are also fortunate to have many **Local Scholarships** available for our graduating seniors each year.

These were the gifts and donations formally accepted by the Board of Education this year. The District strives to maintain a list of donations but we know many give without recognition and all contributions are greatly appreciated. Please accept our apologies in advance for anyone who was inadvertently left off the list.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

The old adage "It takes a village to raise a child." certainly is evident in the way that our entire community takes an interest in Holyoke students and the school district. The entire District is grateful for the support that pours in from this community and we realize that not every community has it so good.

This past year, we have seen many examples of this generous support. In the spring, our local **PIE** organization (Partners in Education) held its annual school carnival fundraiser. The fundraiser happens because of the donations of baskets being auctioned and the 85 volunteers that worked the carnival. Over \$3000 in funds were raised that evening which resulted in \$3000 of classroom grants awarded to teachers in May. PIE awarded one \$1000 grant, 2 \$500 grants, and 4 \$250 grants directly to teachers.

RE-1J Foundation also had another active year. In February the Foundation held its first open house at the school where they showcased past projects. This year the Foundation will be contributing to the science lab remodeling this past summer and of course the track. The Foundation has held much of the community money for the track project.

Several individuals and businesses made contributions to the **weight room** project this past year. There were direct donations, an auction for a picture of a home football game, and a lift-a-thon fundraiser by FCCLA members. The District also made a contribution for a large machine. The result is a totally remodeled weight room with safe, up-to-date equipment. We are pleased to report that student use has skyrocketed and we started a community use program this summer.

The **Holyoke Wrestling Club** and the **Hoopsters** did some fundraising this year that went directly to the students. Travel costs, equipment and money for team camps are examples of how these clubs supported kids this year.

Our local Ag businesses made big contributions this year. **Ag Power** and **Pioneer Seed** helped update the tools in the ag shop and **Fontanelle** got a new program started to help kids with start up costs of raising an animal for a project.

Family Education Services continued to work with students after school at the fair grounds, providing a safe environment and homework help to many kids.

Our **Wellness Committee** continued with the Walking School Bus again this year. They also sponsored a new event, the Bike to School Day. The work of the wellness committee has impacted kids lives showing them how fun it can be to develop healthy habits like walking or biking to school whenever possible.

There are too many examples of how our community rallied to provide for our school and our students this year. We are fortunate our village cares so much!



School Security *A Community Effort*

School Safety continues to increase as a topic in schools across the nation. Holyoke is no different. During the 2012-13 school year, the District published its second edition of the Crisis Response Plan. The District also adopted policy to require first aid and CPR training for staff bi-annually.

As the new school year begins, staff will review the Crisis Response Plan and participate in table-top exercises and frequent drills. Students will not only practice for fire and tornado drills, but also for evacuations and lockdowns if an intruder should ever be in the building.

LOCAL SUPPORT

The Crisis Response Plan was created with local police, sheriff, fire department and school district support. Thank you for sharing your time and expertise.

BUZZING INTO SCHOOLS

During the summer of 2013, the District added the capability of requiring all visitors to buzz into the office before the door is unlocked for them to enter.

Mid-year, the District began using the new tools and modified the safety procedures to require all visitors to buzz in during the day. While some parents have noticed that busy secretaries sometimes need a few minutes to answer the door, everyone is being very patient.

In addition to the buzz in system, all visitors are required to wear visitor badges which helps make sure we are getting everyone to sign in and out. The elementary now has parents waiting outside rather than in the entry way at the end of the day as part of the safety plan.

The District has been so pleased with the amount of support from parents as we implemented these safety procedures. While we can't prevent every crisis, the District continues to refine procedures to make school as safe as possible.



GOAL 2: HIGH QUALITY PERSONNEL

Goal 2.2 Improve the quality of instruction through support and accountability.

Accountability of staff has been described in other sections of this report, whether it be updates on the new teacher evaluation law or the public reporting of the TCAP and ACT scores. There is another side of improving staff and that is professional development. The implementation of the late start Fridays proved to be valuable time for teachers. It allowed them to meet together to discuss students and content. It also provided time for consistent professional development on integrating technology into the classroom.

For the upcoming year, Holyoke teachers will meet with teachers from nine other school districts one day per month to work in collaborative teams focused on implementing the new state standards and our new curriculum. Teachers from ten districts will be working together to create classroom assessments to measure progress of students, which is a great example of both accountability and support.

Goal 2.3 Utilize compensation and recognition to reward employees for meeting and supporting high goals.

In this current environment of shrinking State funding for Colorado's public schools, making changes to compensation is a particular challenge. Despite the challenges, having fair and comparable compensation is a goal of the Board. The reality is that the District needs to look at what can be done each year, knowing that it is difficult to address more than one or two needs a year.

This year marks the 7th year without increasing the base pay. Employees did receive their years of service step increase totaling just over \$39,000. In addition, the District did increase the employer's contribution to cover the health insurance increase again this year. The District contributed \$551 per month for health insurance last year. It was increased to \$603 per month this year for a 9.4% rate increase for a total of \$46,908. That means the total increase to personnel costs over last year, including the PERA retirement account, was \$122,252.

While the state contribution to the school has been decreasing, the District is trying to find ways to keep staff from negative pay increases until such time we can address the district salary schedules.

QUALITY INSTRUCTION

Goal 2.1 Foster a work environment most conducive to meeting needs of all students.

The Board of Education and Administration understand that in order to reach our goals, our employees need to work in an environment that is best suited for those outcomes.

One strategy for achieving an optimum work environment is to provide employees with the ability to contribute to the decisions that directly affect them. Employees have many opportunities through the District's Shared Leadership model to impact the direction of the District and to influence the support they need to reach the goals.

The District Leadership Team is made up of teachers and administrators and they take the lead in all curriculum decisions, plan the professional development, and will take on the role of creating the District's evaluation policy with the new law.

The Standard of Excellence Team surveys the students, parents and staff each year to learn their perceptions of the District. This group also sets and monitors student achievement targets.

The Budget & Facilities Committee makes recommendations as to budget priorities and facility improvements that are needed.

The Technology Committee plans for equipment purchases and training necessary for teachers to successfully implement new technology.

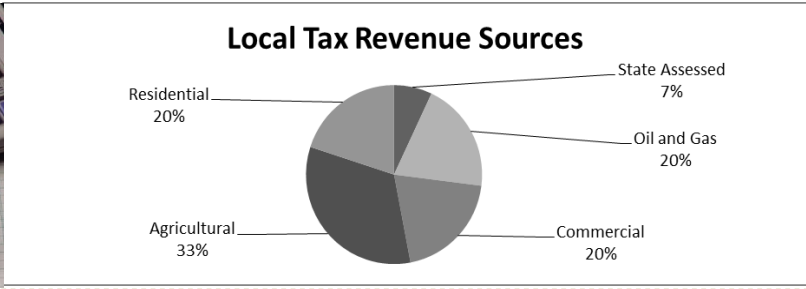
The Superintendent's Advisory Committee allows employees to bring forward concerns or ask questions about district issues.

This Shared Leadership Model is one way that the District strives to create an optimum work environment for its employees by making sure they have up to date information and input into key decisions affecting their work.

HOW IS THE SCHOOL DISTRICT FUNDED?

There are several sources of revenue that make up the local share. Each community is unique in its composition of property tax revenue. Our district gets the largest amount of local tax revenue from agriculture. Revenue from three other sources: oil and gas, residential, and commercial, are all about equal. State assessed

property includes utilities and railroads. The 2012 assessed value of the school district increased to \$50,805,482 last year. The increase had a positive effect, but did not cover the decrease in per pupil revenue from the State.



“Holyoke’s negative factor is over \$750,000 in the last three years.” Initiative 22 could bring over \$1.1 million to the Holyoke School District.

COLORADO VOTERS WILL DECIDE

You have seen the impact of what the State called our “Negative Factor,” the amount a school district is funded under the Constitutional requirement. As a state, our negative factor has grown over \$1 billion. Holyoke’s negative factor is over \$750,000 in the last 3 years.

This November, voters across Colorado will weigh in on Initiative 22. This ballot measure is expected to generate \$950 million for K-12 Education in Colorado with a change to the income tax structure.

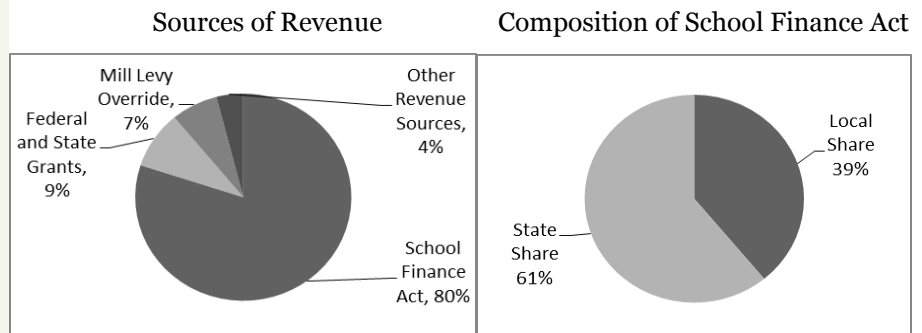
There will be a great deal of information coming out soon about the election. The formula shows that Holyoke would receive an increase of over \$1.1 million, which would make up for the negative factor’s cuts in the last three years.

Voters will learn more as the election nears about how this ballot measure affects them, the state, and our schools. Stay informed.

DISTRICT SPENDING FOR 2013-14

\$ 3,725,514	Instructional Costs Salary and benefits of staff assigned to instruction, textbooks, technology, capital projects, insurance costs, license fees, and other costs that support instructional needs
\$ 163,054	Instructional Support Library, counseling, and technology support
\$ 250,258	Building Administration Principals, secretaries, some equipment, and the supplies for running the building and supporting all staff
\$ 545,930	Operations and Maintenance Utilities, custodial supplies, along with custodial, grounds, and maintenance personnel
\$ 390,901	District Administration District office staff salaries, benefits, and expenses of the Board of Education including legal fees, phones, postage, financial audit and more
\$ 264,580	Transportation Salaries of the drivers, mechanic and supervisor, as well as fuel and maintenance of the fleet

Where does the money come from?





MILL LEVY OVERRIDE REPORT (MLO)

In November of 2010, voters generously approved a mill levy override. A citizen's committee organized a campaign telling the story of reduction to per pupil funding at the state level due to revenue shortfalls. The mill levy override was for 7.5 mills to be collected for the first five years, and then 4.5 to be collected for the remaining five years. The mill levy override has a sunset of 10 years.

This money was targeted in three areas: critical repairs, technology, and general operations. The Board of Education tracks this money separately and is pleased to report to the community once again how this money was utilized during the 2012-2013 school year.

LEVERAGED FUNDS

The Holyoke School District set out to take District money and use it on projects with other grant funding to stretch the dollars given by the community. The BEST (Building Excellent Schools Today) Grant projects are a great example. The District was awarded two grants in June of 2011 where the state paid 58% of the project and local MLO dollars made up the other 42% stretching our dollars farther.

The District went back for a BEST Grant again in the spring of 2013. District officials reworked the 2011 grant for security upgrades. Once again, the power of the local dollars from the MLO targeted to capital projects was persuasive with the BEST Board. The result was another grant that will pay for more than half of the upgrades to each of the school offices for better visibility as part of the District's safety plan.

The Budget and Facilities Committee will be reviewing the Master Facility Plan at the conclusion of the summer projects to determine the next set of priorities.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION ON WEBSITE

For interested community members, you can follow the finances of the Holyoke School District all year long by visiting our website. A special area has been set up on the Board of Education page where you can find several critical documents. The District Budget Book, financial audits for the past two years, the check register, and financial reports to the Board of Education can all be found here.

Start out at <http://holyoke.schoolfusion.us>. On the left side of the page click on "Board of Education." Under the picture of the Board you will find "Financial Reports." Click there and you will find updated information about the District's finances.

MILL LEVY OVERRIDE BREAKDOWN TOTAL REVENUE GENERATED IN 2012-2013

\$377,248

60% Critical Repairs

\$ 226,349

The majority of the critical repairs budget, \$210,443, is used to make the payment to the bank for the \$3 million of construction completed in the summer of 2012. The remainder, \$15,906, was used toward the refinishing of the two gym floors.

15% Technology

\$ 56,587

Building Technology supply budgets, \$4,000

iPads for teaching staff, \$18,950

New security / firewall software, \$16,206

Contracted labor for website management, \$16,206

25% Operations

\$94,312

Elementary teacher classroom supply budgets, \$7,800

Jr./Sr. High teacher classroom supply budgets, \$6,600

Applied toward salaries and benefits, \$79,912

MANAGING A BUDGET IN TOUGH TIMES

Goal 3.1 Keep the District financially strong by developing and monitoring a budget that meets both short and long-term goals.

This has been no easy feat in recent years with the negative factor impacting all school districts. An organization is only as strong as the people who make it. Therefore the Board and administration have set a priority on funding increased staff costs. Step increases and health insurance increases have been covered by the District at a time when schools across the state are utilizing furlough days and salary freezes. To accomplish this, the District has reduced the amount spent on capital projects. Because of the large number of capital projects being completed with the BEST Grant, it comes at a good time to shift some general fund money away from capital projects and over to employee costs.

The past two budgets have been approved with revenue being supplemented by a portion of the ending fund balance. Even with the passage of the 2013-14 budget which includes using the reserves as revenue, the ending fund balance will remain above \$1.2 million. This allows the district flexibility into the future should school funding not improve. In addition to the necessity of having cash on hand for an emergency, a strong reserve also presents an opportunity for investments. The Board of Education will continue to monitor the reserve and will wrestle with the question of when it is appropriate to use this money during our unprecedented cut to K-12 funding.



“...the ending fund balance will remain above \$1.2 million.”

INPUT AND TRANSPARENCY IS OUR RECIPE

Goal 3.2 Build trust with employees and community in the school's budget.

The Board of Education wants the community and employees to have access to our financial records and to know that the budget-building process is open and transparent to all involved.

Early on in the budgeting process, the Board votes each year to approve a budget calendar. This outlines the budget development process for the employees and community to see, making them aware of the opportunities to learn more about the budget

and to offer comment on the budget choices. The Board also approves quarterly financial reports in its meeting and posts them on our website.

The primary strategy for this goal has been the creation of the Budget and Facilities Committee which is comprised of instructional staff, classified staff, parents and community business people. This group meets to provide input to the budgeting process, as well as to have first-hand information about the decisions that affect the budget and facilities in the District. This group is starting its fourth year this September.



REVENUE OF ALL SIZES MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Goal 3.3 Enhance the general fund budget with additional revenue through an increase of educational choice or through sources of revenue outside of the School Finance Act.

Whether it's the GOCO grant at \$350,000 or the classroom grants of \$250, any opportunity to supplement our general fund expenditures is greatly appreciated.

The District applied for and received some additional revenue in the form of a high-cost special education reimbursement based on having students who need expensive services and equipment.

In addition to grants, the local mill levy override provides funds for local priorities such as technology and facilities improvements.

In the coming school year the District will continue to look for grants and partnerships that can supplement our own revenue.

BEST GRANT LEVERAGES \$\$\$

Once again, the District capitalizes on a BEST Grant, bringing much needed improvements to the District with over half of the costs covered by a state grant.

Last summer we saw several large projects completed due to the support of the highly competitive grant program.

Roof Project \$ 1,429,037

New, 30 yr. warrantied, surface on 1975 High School area and entire Elementary School

BEST Grant (58%) \$ 828,842

District Share (42%) \$ 600,195

Boiler/Fire/Electrical \$ 484,229

New boilers in the elementary, upgraded fire protection system in both buildings, and upgraded electrical outlets in the Elementary.

BEST Grant (58%) \$ 280,853

District Share (42%) \$ 203,376

This summer the District received another BEST Grant. Back in 2011 when the first work was completed, the District also submitted a security grant which was unfunded. This summer the District reworked the grant, submitted it, and was approved.

Security Upgrade \$ 105,248

Alterations to the two school offices to provide better visibility to the front door as well as additional locking controls for an emergency.

BEST Grant (55%) \$ 57,886

District Share (45%) \$ 47,362

The District is very pleased that we can continue to leverage our local dollars from our mill levy override with state funds to get more work completed.

GREAT PEOPLE — GREAT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Board of Education set another ambitious goal. **Goal 4.1 The District will establish a reputation with employees, students, community and surrounding communities as the District with the premiere facilities in Northeastern Colorado.**

We all know that setting out a goal about establishing a reputation as having the premiere facilities in the area takes more than money and construction. It takes dedicated and caring people.

At the April 23rd meeting of the Board of Education, the Standard of Excellence Committee delivered its report on the Annual Staff, Student and Parent Climate Survey.

<u>"The School is Clean"</u>	% Agree or Strongly Agree
Elementary Staff	84%
Elementary Students	77%
Elementary Parents	98%
Jr./Sr. High Staff	100%
Jr. /Sr. High Students	74%
Jr./Sr. High Parents	97%

The responses from staff, parents and students met or exceeded the high marks in the four years of conducting the survey. The District will be striving to maintain this level of satisfaction and improve on it in the upcoming year.

THANK YOU TEAM

Robert Jacobs has been Director of Facilities for just two years now and facilities have seen great improvements. We also believe we have a stellar custodial staff in both buildings right now. Thank you so much Jack and Darcy Garretson, Albino and Lupe Nunez and Maria Montes. Dusty McConnell with grounds and Stan Kreider in maintenance have also made noticeable contributions to the appearance of our buildings and grounds. When teachers, parents and students all see an improvement, that is very special. We appreciate you and we look for even more improvements this year. Thanks.

LONG-TERM IMPROVEMENTS KEEP COMING

Goal (4.2) Keep a consistent plan on the books that addresses the long-term capital needs of the District. With the passage of the 2011-2012 Budget, the Long-term Capital Projects Plan was also approved. This plan utilizes information from the Master Facility Plan completed in August of 2010. Later that fall, the November election gave the District a mill levy override which targeted facility improvements for the next ten years.

During the summer of 2012, we had several long-term improvements addressed including a new boiler in the elementary, a new roof on each school, updated fire alarm system, upgraded electrical capacity at the elementary, new lights district wide, a new backbone for our Internet, and new security cameras and keyless locks. The money from this project came from the combination of our mill levy override funds dedicated to facilities in combination of a BEST Grant.

After the first round of projects were completed, the District still had money generated from the mill levy override targeted specifically for facility improvements. The District worked with its Budget and Facilities Committee to identify the next set of priorities for Phase 2 projects. This summer we began the next list of facility improvements which included: more restroom upgrades, new classroom doors, air conditioning unit for our computer server room, more security doors, snowmelt in the sidewalk on the north side of the old gym, metal siding on the gables, additions to our HVAC controls system, and much more.

The Board and entire District Staff understand that these long-term improvements are only possible because of the support of our local community and the mill levy override.

COMMUNICATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Goal 5.1 states that we expect to increase opportunities for, and the effectiveness of the District's internal and external communications. One strategy is this annual report outlining progress on our goals. The District is emphasizing the need to create and maintain a high quality website with current and relevant information as well as special interest stories highlighting the amazing accomplishments of our staff and students. Also included on the website is a special section for financial transparency. You can see budgets, audits, and even checks when you visit our website. You can also follow the happenings of the District through coverage by The Holyoke Enterprise or get School Board Meeting summaries on Star 92.3 FM the day following meetings.

Goal 5.2 for the District is to expand partnerships for the District that support increased student achievement. We are proud of the accomplishments made with our local Holyoke Re-1J Education Foundation, local PIE Chapter, and so many private businesses who have supported the District in a variety of ways, many of which are highlighted on pages 8 and 9.

This 2013-2014 school year begins another partnership. Ten school districts in north-eastern Colorado will be collaborating together on curriculum, assessments, and classroom lesson design. The end goal will be a wider supportive network for each teacher to use to enhance his or her instruction. A wonderful side benefit will be the support a student may receive when switching schools in our region finding out that the curriculum is very similar meaning it is less likely the kids miss out on instruction when their parents move them in the middle of a school year.



RE-1J FOUNDATION, INC

Our mission is to advocate, promote and fund initiatives designed to partner with the school district to improve student performance and advance quality educational opportunities for all children.

“The end goal will be a wider supportive network for each teacher to use to enhance his or her instruction.”

WHAT CAN YOU FIND ONLINE?

The Holyoke School District has developed its website with you in mind. We are continuously looking for ways to enhance the website to provide you the information you need.

Infinite Campus (IC) Portal

Students and parents can access critical information such as grades and attendance records through the IC Portal. IC is the District's student management system and it is where all student information is kept. Request a password and you can follow your student's account whenever you have time to log in.

Policies and Finances

If you are interested in district policy or district finances, look under the Board of Education page and you will find what you are looking for.

Teacher Pages

Assignments, spelling lists, upcoming events and more are on teacher web pages. First go to your child's school and then click on the teacher's pages.

Urgent

From time to time, you will see a scrolling banner across the top of the page for an urgent message such as no school.

New Stories

The front page of the website has special stories highlighting students, classes, clubs or special events. Check them out.

Calendar

Check here for updated activity dates and times. You can also call the school and get on an email list for athletic activities.





Our mission is to graduate every student with the necessary knowledge, skill and character to find success in life.

District Vision

The Holyoke School District provides a positive, safe and stimulating learning environment under the guidance of a knowledgeable and dedicated staff with high expectations for all students. The District offers an innovative curriculum and flourishes due to strong partnerships with parents and the community. The District graduates students who have developed into self-sufficient, highly motivated, independent critical thinkers who respect cultural differences, are adaptable to change, have positive self-esteem, and who have secured the necessary skills to succeed as productive citizens.

DISTRICT VALUES

ACCOUNTABILITY	The District leads with integrity, accepts responsibility for its outcomes, and works to instill these values into our students.
KNOWLEDGE	The District provides each student what he or she needs to grow academically, and supports the overall physical, social and emotional growth necessary for our students to be functioning members of society.
COMPASSION	We all learn and perform best when we feel safe and accepted, and therefore, we are obligated to extend that feeling to others.
ZEAL	When we are passionate about our work, dedication, determination, innovation and respect flourish.
EXCELLENCE	The continuous journey toward our personal and organizational best keeps us striving for more.

2013 Emerald Awards

The Emerald Awards were created in 2010 to have an opportunity to recognize excellence among our teaching staff. Meeting high goals requires **Leadership** at all levels. Great teachers are also **Innovators**. We all remember teachers who demonstrated tremendous **Heart** giving so unselfishly to others. Each year an award is given to represent each of these teacher values. Previous winners include:

Leader Among Us

- 2010 Lynn Schneider
- 2011 Kyle Stumpf
- 2012 Luke Thomas

Innovator of the Year

- 2010 Nancy Kennedy
- 2011 Summer Maloney
- 2012 Christina Martinez

The Heart Award

- 2010 Nancy Pillard
- 2011 Veronica Nunez
- 2012 Marcia Dalton



The 2013 Emerald Award winners are pictured above at the ceremony held on April 25, 2013. (Pictured right to left) Susan Ortner (Jr./Sr. High Principal) was nominated by several of her staff and selected for the Leader Among Us award due to her supportive leadership style. Ashley Clayton (Jr./Sr. High Science) was selected as the Innovator of the Year for her creative science projects and her ability to connect with her students. Mary Austin (Reading Specialist) received the Heart Award which was fitting after a career of caring for students, most recently as a Kindergarten and Title I reading teacher. In addition to the 3 winners, 11 others were recognized as nominees for their contributions. This year's program was held at the Peerless Theatre where it will be again on Thursday, April 24, 2014.