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September 2014



Destination 2016

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY, #4

Dear Holyoke Community,

On behalf of the Board of Education and the entire Holyoke School District, it is my pleasure to present our fourth annual report on our strategic plan that we call *Destination 2016*.

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.

This report contains highlights of the past year, an update of ongoing work in the district, as well as financial and student achievement information. I hope you enjoy this copy of our annual report. Please consider this an open invitation to ask more questions and get involved.

- - - Mr. Kris Camblin, 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 SCHOLARSHIP TRUST



The Holyoke Scholarship Trust is a new non-profit 501c3. It has been established and organized exclusively for educational purposes, more specifically to hold, maintain and invest funds in order to award and administer scholarships to fund higher education for graduates of Holyoke High School and Holyoke Alternative School located in Holyoke, Colorado.

The School District has restrictions under the law that would allow flexibility in investing scholarship dollars. With the extremely low interest rates on investments, scholarship awards have been reduced or in some cases, the scholarship principle has been used to award scholarships. At the same time, some independently invested scholarships had returns that protected the principle and kept up the awards.

The Holyoke Scholarship Trust will hold the scholarship donations. The Trust's Board of Directors will establish investing policies and monitor the returns. Even with a conservative investment strategy, the Trust will be able to do more for students than the District can currently do with the money.

Members of the Trust's Board include Dennis Herman, Kim Killin, and John Schneider. Bylaws state that only one seat on the Board can be a sitting School Board Member to ensure the Board's independence from the school.

The District is working with existing scholarship providers and new donors will be directed to the Trust. We believe this will be yet another example of a supportive community working hand in hand with the school for the benefit of our students.

NORTHEAST COLORADO CURRICULUM PROJECT SECOND YEAR

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 TCAP (Transitional Colorado Assessment Program) and the start of a new era of testing we will call PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers). 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. This past year, ten area school districts came together to implement the Colorado Academic Standards.

Curriculum

As part of implementing the Colorado Academic Standards, schools in Northeastern Colorado have come together to identify the knowledge and skills students need for each grade level and subject area as well as the order in which they will be taught. Therefore, students in our area schools will be learning the same content at roughly the same time.

Instruction

While teachers will be teaching the same content in the same order, it does not mean that all students will be instructed the same way. We want teachers who are creative to use their unique talents to engage students. Therefore, teachers are not expected to teach the same way, only to get their students the same content and skills.

Collaboration Continues

The monthly collaboration will continue this year as well. Teachers from area schools will come together usually on the last Monday of the month to work with each other. Teachers will be collaborating to create classroom tests based on the standards, rather than only relying on one-shot state-mandated testing to see how students are doing. Teachers will also be reviewing test results together and sharing practices that resulted in successful students. In only our first year of working together, Holyoke teachers reported that they have appreciated the time to work with other teachers and see benefits already in their classrooms impacting how they approach lesson planning and instruction.

Several Holyoke teachers have been identified as group leaders based on their contributions during the first year. We are very proud of our staff and how they have worked to make their groups successful.



TRACK WELL USED IN FIRST YEAR

In its first year in use, the new track was very busy. First of all, Holyoke was able to host three track meets. The school hosted an invitational meet for the High School and one for the Junior High. Holyoke was also the site for the League Track Meet at the end of the season. In addition, even during a wet spring, track practice was held indoors fewer days than in recent years. The elementary Field Day was held on the track this May as well.

Observers can clearly see that the track is getting widespread community use. Mornings and evenings bring several runners and walkers of all ages.

Pictured left to right: Frank Paloucek, community member and frequent track user, and Brook Prottzman of the HS track team

INNOVATION ZONE PURSUED

Public Education is full of reform efforts and consistently passes new mandates. The Holyoke Board of Education recognizes that some of these mandates are intended to solve problems we don't have in Holyoke or that they don't match our local needs or values.

Colorado has an Innovation Schools law that was created to allow local school districts flexibility with mandates and the ability to have local values drive policy. After a year of discussion, the Board of Education has asked the superintendent to complete an innovation schools plan.

The school will be demonstrating that the new law requiring extensive testing of kindergarten students is not a good fit for Holyoke. In a small community with low class sizes and a good relationship with the preschool, gathering extensive data is unnecessary and takes too much time away from instruction. The District consistently out-performs the State on 3rd grade reading and feels strongly we already have good data on our youngest readers.

The School will also demonstrate that adding student test scores to teacher evaluations takes too much administrative time, pulls principals out of the classroom, and is unnecessary considering there is already a great deal of accountability in place.

The District will formalize a plan and then will need a majority vote of teachers before applying. The District Accountability Committee and Board of Education also need to vote to support the plan before it can be presented to the State Board of Education for final approval. The plan will be finalized and presented to staff in the fall with an intent to go before the State Board of Education before the end of the year.

The Holyoke Board of Education believes we can best meet the needs of our students with input from our teachers and local decisions, not through state level mandates. The Board also sees that this innovation law was put in place for situations like ours and that we owe it to our staff and students to utilize this flexibility.

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 30 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 2014 results are evidence that we are headed in the right direction to meet our 2016 goals.

DISTRICT AND SCHOOLS ACCREDITED

The State places all school districts into one of five categories based on a percentage of points achieved in the State's Accreditation system.

The Holyoke School District is Accredited again this year with a score of 68.9%. This is an improvement from last year when the District's score was 67.2% and a steady increase from five years ago in 2010 when the District was Accredited with an Improvement Plan.

Accredited with Distinction	80% or more of points possible
Accredited	64% to 79.9% of points possible
Accredited with Improvement Plan	52% to 63.9% of points possible
Accredited with Priority Improvement Plan	42% to 51.9% of points possible
Turnaround District	below 42% of points possible

There is a similar rating system for schools. Both Holyoke Elementary School and Holyoke Jr./Sr. High School are Accredited with Performance Plans. The Performance Plan category is the highest for schools in the State.

2014 TCAP RESULTS

The Holyoke School District's 2014 TCAP (Transitional Colorado Assessment Program) results for reading, writing and math have been released. The subjects of science and social studies are part of the CMAS tests (Colorado Measures of Academic Success) given for the first time in the spring of 2014. Those results are not available at this time.

The District met or exceeded the state average of Proficient and Advanced students on 10 of the 24 tests released. In recent years, the District has fluctuated between 9 to 12 of 27 tests given so the 2014 scores are very much in line with results in recent years.

Results come in two categories: status and growth. The status scores are the percentage of students who score at the proficient or advanced levels. Students also receive growth scores which show the amount of improvement from one year to the next compared to other students who started at the same point. Superintendent Bret Miles said, "There is a great deal to celebrate this year. Four out of seven of our reading growth scores are the best we have ever had in the district since growth scores were introduced in the state six years ago."

Holyoke Re-1J	Growth Scores				% Change 13 to 14	Compare to State 2014	Distance to 1st Target	Distance to 67% Growth
TCAP Test	2011	2012	2013	2014				
4th Grade Reading	60%	27%	52%	62%	10%	12%	62%	-5%
5th Grade Reading	47%	47%	62%	40%	-22%	-10%	40%	-27%
6th Grade Reading	64%	64%	63%	64%	1%	14%	64%	-3%
7th Grade Reading	31%	15%	48%	29%	-19%	-21%	29%	-38%
8th Grade Reading	40%	45%	34%	58%	24%	8%	58%	-9%
9th Grade Reading	38%	60%	45%	50%	5%	0%	50%	-17%
10th Grade Reading	38%	52%	53%	65%	12%	15%	65%	-2%
4th Grade Writing	45%	28%	50%	44%	-6%	-6%	44%	-23%
5th Grade Writing	50%	31%	68%	42%	-26%	-8%	42%	-25%
6th Grade Writing	67%	60%	73%	58%	-15%	8%	58%	-9%
7th Grade Writing	45%	36%	42%	48%	6%	-2%	48%	-19%
8th Grade Writing	46%	39%	37%	47%	10%	-3%	47%	-20%
9th Grade Writing	26%	58%	53%	56%	3%	6%	56%	-11%
10th Grade Writing	56%	53%	55%	49%	-6%	-1%	49%	-18%
4th Grade Math	48%	35%	32%	40%	8%	-10%	40%	-27%
5th Grade Math	47%	62%	74%	46%	-28%	-4%	46%	-21%
6th Grade Math	71%	60%	77%	40%	-37%	-10%	40%	-27%
7th Grade Math	43%	35%	43%	30%	-13%	-20%	30%	-37%
8th Grade Math	48%	48%	30%	39%	9%	-11%	39%	-28%
9th Grade Math	61%	64%	60%	44%	-16%	-6%	44%	-23%
10th Grade Math	79%	64%	48%	62%	14%	12%	62%	-5%

2014 TCAP STATUS RESULTS

Holyoke Re-1J	Proficient/Advanced %							COHORT 13 to 14	% Change 13 to 14	Compare to State 2014	Distance to next Target	Dist to 75th %ile
TCAP Test	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014					
3rd Grade Reading	58%	76%	79%	87%	77%	79%	83%	N/A	4%	11%	83%	2.7%
4th Grade Reading	76%	63%	69%	71%	60%	71%	77%	-2%	6%	10%	77%	4.1%
5th Grade Reading	74%	70%	69%	73%	74%	83%	68%	-3%	-15%	-3%	68%	16.3%
6th Grade Reading	63%	68%	58%	80%	82%	89%	80%	-3%	-9%	9%	80%	7.9%
7th Grade Reading	50%	54%	60%	53%	55%	62%	62%	-27%	0%	-7%	62%	18.5%
8th Grade Reading	69%	50%	62%	58%	50%	51%	57%	-5%	6%	-9%	57%	23.3%
9th Grade Reading	67%	71%	55%	59%	64%	52%	65%	14%	13%	-1%	65%	16.9%
10th Grade Reading	65%	62%	80%	49%	60%	59%	64%	12%	5%	-5%	64%	19.0%
3rd Grade Writing	50%	56%	76%	64%	59%	71%	71%	N/A	0%	20%	71%	-2.1%
4th Grade Writing	68%	50%	38%	66%	46%	54%	61%	-10%	7%	9%	61%	5.5%
5th Grade Writing	64%	57%	45%	57%	57%	77%	49%	-5%	-28%	-6%	49%	25.8%
6th Grade Writing	61%	49%	33%	59%	63%	72%	73%	-4%	1%	16%	73%	5.3%
7th Grade Writing	55%	49%	51%	45%	48%	62%	62%	-10%	0%	1%	62%	12.4%
8th Grade Writing	50%	48%	53%	39%	40%	40%	52%	-10%	12%	-4%	52%	15.9%
9th Grade Writing	56%	67%	43%	44%	42%	50%	48%	8%	-2%	-6%	48%	16.7%
10th Grade Writing	41%	44%	51%	44%	49%	44%	34%	-16%	-10%	-15%	34%	29.5%
3rd Grade Math	54%	73%	72%	81%	70%	82%	81%	N/A	-1%	9%	81%	3.7%
4th Grade Math	76%	60%	77%	70%	73%	68%	82%	0%	14%	10%	82%	3.3%
5th Grade Math	74%	54%	41%	67%	57%	83%	59%	-9%	-24%	-6%	59%	21.1%
6th Grade Math	63%	49%	42%	59%	71%	67%	70%	-13%	3%	9%	70%	4.4%
7th Grade Math	45%	56%	31%	36%	36%	48%	43%	-24%	-5%	-12%	43%	21.7%
8th Grade Math	42%	38%	53%	44%	36%	31%	43%	-5%	12%	-9%	43%	19.9%
9th Grade Math	54%	35%	31%	32%	24%	31%	30%	-1%	-1%	-10%	30%	19.9%
10th Grade Math	41%	31%	41%	36%	37%	21%	30%	-1%	9%	-3%	30%	12.5%

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. However, in Colorado we give the test to all Juniors to see who is on track for being accepted into colleges and for our State Accreditation system. The overall composite score remained the same from last year. In a year when the Jr./Sr. High saw its best overall score on TCAPs in the last two years, the ACT has been dropping. TCAPs are based on State Standards and the ACT is a college readiness exam. Regardless it is puzzling to see an improvement trend on TCAP and a downward trend on ACT. The Jr./Sr. High Staff are creating a separate improvement plan focused on ACT scores. The staff will be setting specific goals to address the college readiness skills that are not part of the TCAP so we can see a boost in ACT scores next year.

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
2014	16.4	19.7	17.8	20.1	17.3	20.5	18.6	20.4	17.6	20.0

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.

ONE-TO-ONE DEVICE MOVING FORWARD

In May of 2013, the District Technology Committee gave a presentation to the Board of Education about the values of moving toward a one-to-one device environment, which means that every student would be assigned a computer or some sort of tablet that he/she would use all day long. At that time, the District felt more research was needed.

Throughout the 2013-2014 school year, the District Technology Committee continued to study one-to-one. They researched types of devices (computers, chrome books, tablets), infrastructure needs, training, personnel and of course sustainability.

As part of the research, a survey of staff was conducted. We found that a majority of the staff are ready to adjust instruction in a one-to-one environment, but that we

still needed more time to have enough teachers ready for this transition.

Great progress was made. This year, the District Technology Committee is charged with developing an implementation plan. They will work this year to have a plan ready by March 2015 that can be presented to the Board of Education. It is clear that finding the best way to use technology is part of the future of schools and Holyoke intends on being ready.



STATE TESTING ON COMPUTERS

Technology has been a district goal and has been a focus for the District and many of our involved parents. Over the past few years, we have greatly improved our technology even as it continues to change. As a community, we have chosen to make technology a focus for our district in order to give our students advantages in college and the work place as well as to keep them interested and engaged in the lessons.

This past school year brought a new reason to need quality technology in the district. The State of Colorado has shifted its state-mandated testing to computer based assessments. This past spring, 5th and 7th grade students took the new social studies test on computers. The 6th and 8th grade students took the new science test on computers. Having enough computers is a concern for schools across the state so that testing can be completed in a reasonable amount of time. This year we will have our new reading, writing and math tests for grades 3-10 on computers also.

ELEMENTARY TECHNOLOGY CLASS

Holyoke Elementary School is the only school in our area that provides a full-time technology teacher at the elementary level. We are proud of this distinction and feel that it is necessary to give our students the skills they need to be successful in today's world.

Students progress through this K-6 program with age appropriate skills. Students begin some informal keyboarding skills as early as kindergarten and start formal keyboarding instruction in second grade. Most students have solid keyboarding skills by 6th grade with many typing 40+ words per minute. Students are introduced to common programs including word processing and spreadsheets. Students also add to classroom projects by making Powerpoint presentations or composing papers with this class. Internet Safety is yet another content focus for students in the classroom.

As students begin taking more of the high-stakes testing online, students will need to be familiar with technology and have keyboarding skills to perform well on these tests.

BACKPACK PROGRAM SUCCESSFUL

Holyoke Jr./Sr. High Student Council decided they were ready to make a difference in their community and they should start with their own school. The Backpack Program was born.

Students learned about the significant research that shows when a school has half of the students qualifying for a free or reduced price meal, then the students are likely in need of support with meals outside of school too. The Student Council started researching what could be done to help the students in our school district and eventually the Backpack Program of Holyoke came together.

The Backpack Program provides 2 breakfast items, 2 lunch items, 2 snack items, and a fruit or vegetable to each student enrolled each weekend. Last year, we provided backpacks for 115 students. In order to fund the program last year, Student Council held a couple of fundraisers but also got numerous monetary donations from the community and outside sources. The budget for the Backpack Program consists of \$2.25 per student each week, which is about \$9.00 a month, over the course of the school year it costs about \$9,000 for 100 students. Last year, 28 backpacks were provided to each student in the program for a total of 3,220 backpacks being distributed.

With the start of the 2014-15 school year, the program is already up and running.



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. After students take the annual perception survey, the Standards of Excellence Team (a group of staff and community members) identify some survey questions that could use some follow-up. Then groups of students are selected to visit with administrators and school board members about these areas.

This past year was the first year elementary focus groups were added. Groups of fifth and sixth graders were added to the schedule along with the usual 7th –12th graders.

Changes to the homework grading policy and Academic Opportunity Center came directly out of the student focus groups. After hearing what students had to say, the staff came together and implemented some of their ideas. The District believes it is critical to listen to the students and use their information as part of the decision-making process, and focus groups help us do that.

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.

Did you have a positive experience at HHS?	91% Yes
HHS provided a safe learning environment.	94% Excellent and Good
I was challenged to experience academic growth.	76% Excellent and Good
Did you experience significant harassment?	82% No
Did school make learning engaging and encourage you to continue your education?	88% 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 rej1@holyokeeducationfoundation.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 promoting and supporting our school programs,

The **PIE Group** for putting Carnival proceeds towards their classroom teacher grant program this year with 9 winners,

First Pioneer National Bank for sponsoring the programs for the fall and winter sports teams as well as donating a Fellowes Power Shredder to the High School,

Grainland for donating the programs in the spring for the sports teams,

Rusty and Sandy Triplette and Tee Box Seeds for donating bottled water to the concession stands for all of our sporting events,

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

Annette and Steve Balog for the donation toward the Jr./Sr. Student Council's Backpack Program,

Seaboard Farms LLC for the donation towards the Jr./Sr. Student Council's Backpack Program,

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

Laura Loutensock for books given to the Elementary Library,

Bonfils Stanton Foundation for new local scholarship for graduating seniors in Honor of Dorothy Horrell, their longtime director and HHS graduate,

Delta Kappa Gamma in memory of Velma Bidde for the new staging microphones in the HS Auditorium,

Holyoke Enterprise for coordinating the program for the musical *Grease* supported by advertising from local businesses which in turn help purchase the staging microphones in the HS Auditorium,

Holyoke Marketplace for providing food for the fall athletic banquet and other events throughout the school year,

Seaboard Food for providing food and **R & B Catering** for preparing the food for the smorgasbord concert,

Hoopsters for donating additional resistance bands for the weight room,

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; Grainland; PC Telcom; and Regent Park & Carriage House, and

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 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.

PIE (Partners In Education)

This past year, we have seen many examples of this generous support. In the spring, our local **PIE** organization held its annual school carnival fundraiser. The fundraiser is made possible by the 140 volunteers that worked the carnival. The Carnival was very successful bringing in over \$5000 that evening, which resulted in \$5000 of classroom grants awarded at the Teacher Appreciation Breakfast in May. PIE awarded two \$1000 grants, five \$500 grants, and two \$250 grants directly to teachers. We also appreciate the meals provided by PIE during Parent-Teacher Conferences and the great Teacher Appreciation Breakfast they provide every year.

RE-1J FOUNDATION HIGHLIGHTS MUSIC

The Foundation has been particularly helpful supporting technology, our science lab upgrade, and the track project over the past few years. Moving forward, the Foundation is working with the District to promote music and develop a long-term plan to help provide updated equipment and other accessories which will take our music program above and beyond what we have now.

PHILLIPS COUNTY FAMILY EDUCATION SERVICES

The District and Family Education Services have many similar goals. Our partnership has helped students secure a GED when circumstances prevented them from finishing high school. Parents of several of the school’s English Language Learners are taking classes to learn English from Family Education Services. We know that our students will benefit from having their parents acquire a second language. We look forward to more collaboration this year.

SUPPORT FOR ATHLETICS

The **Dragon Hoopsters** and the **Holyoke Wrestling Club** working together with the **Holyoke Swim Team** all 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. This summer, a newly formed **Dragon Fan Club** has also begun fundraising in order to support the baseball and football programs. Also, the community has responded to the **Dragon Softball** team’s fundraiser and turned out seven teams to participate in a slow-pitch softball league with proceeds benefitting the team.

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!

Weight Room Heavily Used

Last year the District teamed with organizations and individuals to significantly upgrade the weight room. Coaches report that participation has drastically improved this past year due to the combination of new equipment and an organized effort to build a schedule for kids to use the room.

This past year, an afterschool time was even created for 5th and 6th grade students. This summer, morning and evening student workout times have had on average 40-45 students per day with 26 individuals attending over 85% of the available days. Access is available for students after school as well. There has been free community access after the students’ evening time. Thank you to all who made this a positive experience for students.



School Security

A Community Effort

School Safety continues to increase as a topic in schools across the nation. Holyoke is no different. School Safety is very broad and takes many forms. The District wishes to provide a safe environment for students and staff and wants the community to know all the steps taken in this effort.

CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN

During the 2012-13 school year, the District published its second edition of our Crisis Response Plan. Emergency protocols in this plan are aligned with work done by the “I Love You Guys” Foundation which works with schools statewide.

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 and working with us to conduct drills.

FIRST AID / CPR TRAINING

The District also adopted policy to require first aid and CPR training for staff bi-annually.

BUZZING INTO SCHOOLS

In January of 2013, the schools began buzzing visitors into the building during school hours and requiring guests to sign in and take a visitor’s badge. This process will be continued and remodeling of the offices have added extra security.

PUBLIC CONDUCT POLICY

Most recently, the Board has revisited its Public Conduct on School Property policy. Language was added to clarify consequences for adults who do not meet the expectations of the policy including being banned from school property for all events if necessary.



GOAL 2: HIGH QUALITY PERSONNEL

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

Student achievement for all students is our number one goal. That goal can only be accomplished with high quality staff. The District employs several strategies to support our teachers as they constantly work to refine and improve instruction. **Late Start Fridays** are invaluable for our staff. They have provided training with technology, given teachers time to collaborate to meet the needs of students, and increased communication in the building which also impacts overall teacher effectiveness. The **Teacher Inservice Days** on our calendar at the end of each month allow teachers to implement new standards with the support of area teachers in the same grade levels or subject areas. Revising our **Teacher Evaluation Instrument** will also help support teacher development. This year the District will be increasing the number of hours principals are required to spend with teachers as part of formal evaluations.

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

Coming into this year, employees in the District received annual step increases for their years of service in the district. The District also increased its contribution to the employee's health insurance costs so that employees did not have a negative net gain after their step increase.

However, the base pay for teachers has not been adjusted for 9 years. At its summer retreat, the Board of Education asked that the District begin planning for revisions to the salary schedule as it has been too long without a cost of living adjustment. The superintendent will begin working with staff to build potential options for compensation that fit within budgetary constraints but are incentives to staff for retention and recruitment. Watch for updates throughout the year on this work and the Board hopes to have solid proposals by March prior to building the budget next year. Of course, no final change will be made without seeing what the Legislature does with school funding first.

A Story of Recruitment and Retention

Having a competitive salary for retention and recruitment of high quality staff is of the utmost concern to the Board and District. While we must pay well to get high quality applicants, there is more to recruitment and retention. Our teachers were recently featured in Chalk Beat, an online education newspaper about the challenges and joys of teaching in a rural district. It was published July 18, 2014. See what they had to say by visiting <http://co.chalkbeat.org>.

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.

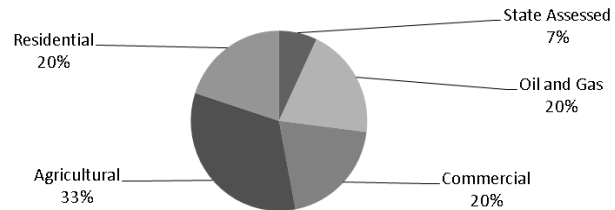
HOW IS THE SCHOOL DISTRICT FUNDED?

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 2014 assessed value of the school district increased to \$59,716,306 last year. The increase had a positive effect, but does not impact the decrease in per pupil revenue from the State.



Local Tax Revenue Sources



“Therefore, the District is asking voters to consider a mill levy override of 2.5 mills while having an overall decrease of 2.5 mills from the year before.”

VOTERS TO DECIDE MILL LEVY

The Holyoke Board of Education will place a mill levy override ballot question on the November 2014 ballot. In 2010 voters approved a mill levy override with three mills for 5 years and 4.5 mills for 10 years.

With the expiration of 3 mills, local voters will be asked if they will continue a mill levy override again. This time, for 2.5 mills instead of the 3 mills in 2010.

The Board of Education is refinancing its bond payments in order to lower the bond mill by 2 mills. Therefore, the District is asking voters to consider a mill levy override of 2.5 mills while having an overall decrease of 2.5 mills from the year before.

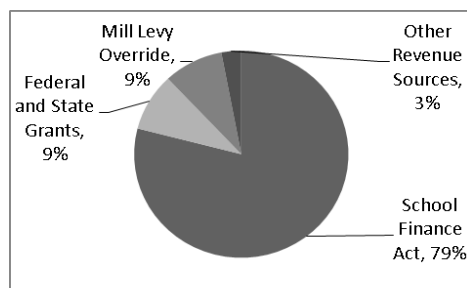
A citizen's committee will be promoting the election and sharing the details of how this ballot question impacts each taxpayer. Look for information soon from the citizen's committee.

DISTRICT SPENDING FOR 2014-15

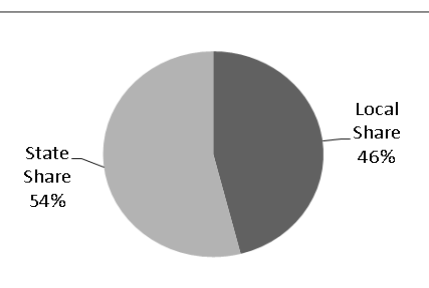
\$ 3,690,938	Instructional Costs	Salary and benefits of staff assigned to instruction, textbooks, technology, capital projects, insurance costs, license fees, and other costs that support instructional needs
\$ 313,579	Instructional Support	Library, counseling, and technology support
\$ 256,654	Building Administration	Principals, secretaries, some equipment, and the supplies for running the building and supporting all staff
\$ 567,331	Operations and Maintenance	Utilities, custodial supplies, along with custodial, grounds, and maintenance personnel
\$ 411,639	District Administration	District office staff salaries, benefits, and expenses of the Board of Education including legal fees, phones, postage, financial audit and more
\$ 268,346	Transportation	Salaries of the drivers, mechanic and supervisor, as well as fuel and maintenance of the fleet

Where does the money come from?

Sources of Revenue



Composition of School Finance Act





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 2013-2014 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 "District Financial Reports." Click there and you will find updated information about the District's finances.

MILL LEVY OVERRIDE BREAKDOWN TOTAL REVENUE GENERATED IN 2013-2014 **\$438,248**

60% Critical Repairs

\$263,274

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. \$52,831 was added to the capital projects budget. Some of the major purchases included:

- Specialty student equipment, \$13,974
- Carpet a classroom, \$9,206
- Concrete repair, \$7,150

15% Technology

\$ 65,818

Technology purchases come in many forms such as:

- Building Technology supply budgets, \$4,000
- Laptop computers for student use, \$34,700
- Upgrades to our server to backup files, \$7,198
- Contracted labor for website management, \$5,824
- Two Promethean Boards in classrooms, \$6,518

25% Operations

\$109,697

The majority is used in the general fund and applied toward salaries and benefits, \$95,297. Other uses:

- Elementary teacher classroom budgets, \$7,800
- Jr./Sr. High teacher classroom budgets, \$6,600

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. The Negative Factor is the gap between what the State should fund the District according to the Constitution and what has actually been funded. During the 2013-2014 school year, Holyoke's Negative Factor was \$768,436. Unfortunately, to stay financially secure, the District has made cuts over the past four years, many of which have resulted in a reduction of personnel.

This spring, we saw the first attempt by the State to reduce the Negative Factor. However, with a statewide Negative Factor of \$1.2 billion, the \$100 million of new money did not change much for most school districts. We have added back two positions cut over the last few years, but we are far from made whole. For the 2014-2015 school year, Holyoke will still operate with \$738,782 less than we are due from the state.

The Board of Education has taken a conservative approach with these new dollars, and has once again reduced the use of our reserve. Over the past three years, we have used \$150,000, \$130,000, and now \$60,000 of reserve. However, we are budgeted to have \$1,267,733 in reserve in June 2015, which is the target set by the Board of Education as a minimum reserve level. The District continues to meet the financial goals of the district while striving to retain and recruit quality staff to meet student achievement goals.



The ending fund balance in June 2015 is projected to remain above \$1.2 million, which is the goal set by the School Board.

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 fifth year and always looking for volunteers.



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, a BEST Grant at over 50% of the cost of the construction, or the classroom grants of \$250 from our PIE organization, 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 again this year based on having students who meet spending requirements.

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 \$\$\$

Whenever possible, the District works to leverage local dollars with grant dollars to accomplish big projects.

The District saw \$3 million in improvements in the summer of 2012 with new roofs, Internet upgrades, and lights for both schools and new boilers and electrical upgrades at the elementary. The State paid for over half of the improvements through the BEST program (Building Excellent Schools Today).

The summer of 2013 brought the track project. About half of the \$680,000 project came from a GOCO grant and most of the rest came from other foundations and local contributions with just \$25,000 from the District.

Also in the summer of 2013 the District secured another BEST Grant. This time for security upgrades. The construction was completed this summer, 2014. Again the BEST grant paid for 55% of the project stretching our local dollars even further. We are excited about our upgrades and believe they will contribute to our overall safety plan.

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%) \$ 47,632

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 23, 2014, 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	79%
Elementary Students	74%
Elementary Parents	90%
Jr./Sr. High Staff	93%
Jr. /Sr. High Students	87%
Jr./Sr. High Parents	99%

The response from staff, parents and students was not quite as strong as last year, but still good marks overall. New custodians have been hired at the elementary and the District is still very focused on meeting this goal.



MORE FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS

Goal (4.2) Keep a consistent plan on the books that addresses the long-term capital needs of the District.

At the conclusion of the first BEST Grant, some of the District's share was left over. The District Budget and Facilities Committee helped to identify other projects. Over the course of the 2013-14 school year, many of these projects were also completed which included: new sinks in elementary restrooms, 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, and additions to our HVAC controls system.

This fall, the work continues with new restroom stalls going into several restrooms. Sprinkler upgrades are also in the works as well as landscaping after all the track construction last year. Of course the largest project is the security upgrade remodel of the school offices. The new reception counters shown above are part of the security plan.

The 2014-2015 Capital Projects budget is still lean as a result of the cuts from the Negative Factor. This year, 80% of that budget will be spent in the transportation department with the replacement of a vehicle and a school bus.

This fall the District will be updating the 2009 Facilities Master Plan with all of the upgrades over the past four years. The plan will serve as a record of work accomplished as well as a blueprint for future facility improvements.

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.

Last year began a new partnership when area schools came together to implement the Colorado Academic Standards in our schools with a common Northeast Colorado curriculum with the goal of creating a wider network for each teacher to use to enhance his or her instruction. This collaboration will continue this year. While teachers told us last year that they appreciated the partnerships with their fellow teachers in the region, we expect that benefit to increase again this year.

We are also looking forward to more work with the Phillips County Family Education Services as we have similar goals and some of the same clients.



What's Going On?

Follow the work of the Board of Education, District, and all of our students by checking out The Holyoke Enterprise each week. You can also hear updates twice a month on STAR 92.3 FM with the Superintendent's Report and a new interview twice a month with the Athletic Director to keep you up to date with all our Dragon Teams.

“the goal of creating a wider network of support 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.



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.

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



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
- 2013 Susan Ortner

Innovator of the Year

- 2010 Nancy Kennedy
- 2011 Summer Maloney
- 2012 Christina Martinez
- 2013 Ashley Clayton

The Heart Award

- 2010 Nancy Pillard
- 2011 Veronica Nunez
- 2012 Marcia Dalton
- 2013 Mary Austin



The 2014 Emerald Award winners are pictured above at the ceremony held on April 24, 2014 at the Peerless Theatre. Along with the award recipients, all nominees were recognized for their contributions. Angela Clayton was the Leader Among Us for her work as the chairperson of the Leadership Team, her willingness to volunteer and take on projects at the Jr./Sr. High and her willingness to mentor and support others. Chandra Parker was our Innovator of the Year. Chandra has a wonderful track record of being one of the first to implement new technology and was recognized for her work differentiating student assignments to meet their individual learning needs. Kristie Pelle was presented The Heart Award with numerous stories of how she creates a caring environment and how her students visit with her years after being in her class. Bret Miles was presented an award not on the program. It was from the Leadership Team and was called the Dragon Visionary Award for his work in the district and around the state on behalf of students. Please make plans to join us next year on April 23rd for an inspiring evening.