



**Holyoke Public Schools**

# Long-range district plans on agenda

By David Dupont  
 Superintendent of Schools

As it is mid-school year already, so much has been accomplished and there is still much more to do within and for the Holyoke Public Schools. The working district goals we have set for this school year, including our response as a Level 4 school district, are the following:

- Creating a new District Improvement Plan (DIP) that will contain a manageable number of goals
- Developing individual School Improvement Plans that will be directly related to the district plan
- Formulating a district Professional Development Plan that will be directly related to the District Improvement Plan
- Creating a budget that focuses directly on the District Improvement Plan

We want these district and school plans to be "living" and annually adjustable documents that will not be collecting dust while uselessly sitting on shelves. We are committed to making these plans work for the betterment of our schools. With so many of our students not reaching the appropriate reading

level by third grade, early childhood literacy is going to be one of our chief focal points. No one can argue the importance of reading in everything that students will be exposed to in their grade school and higher education lives, and beyond. Research shows that effective reading skills should be established by grades four or five, and if they are not, then related literacy problems could be life long. It is understood that a significant aspect of the literacy issue is related to very early exposure to parental communication, especially reading to children daily. The efforts that we will be undertaking to improve the reading skills of our students will include parental outreach and education dealing with the importance of reading to, and communicating with, their very young children at home. We have also begun to review the mathematics curriculum to determine how we might be able to improve content and assist teachers in providing more flexible delivery of instruction, while maintaining a commitment to teaching the required standards. Another of our goals will be the establishment of effective data teams in each of the schools so that we can develop valid responses to what the data uncovers, especially with regards to student achievement. The district data team will work closely with the schools with the intent of providing support and maintaining consistency in the use of data and response to the data. Input from everyone is always encouraged and appreciated. By working together, we can make a considerable difference in the lives of our school children. I sincerely appreciate your hard work and support.



*McMahon School eighth-grader Jason Sanchez and kindergarten buddy Ethan Ramoth collaborate once a month and complete a literacy*



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## Monthly student awards

**H** Not all students get "A's" but all students can be a "H" student. Started last month, this program invites each school to choose one student per grade per month to receive an "H" Award for effort and improvement, primarily in reading and/or math. At the end of each month, there will be a raffle to choose the one student who, along with his or her family, will have lunch with Mayor Elaine Pluta. "We want to instill pride in Holyoke and pride within each K-12 student," said Andrew Melendez, Homework House Program Director. This project of the Holyoke Family Literacy Coalition is one way to show children that hard work pays off and that education is very important in reaching their goals for their future. Over the school year, about 700 students will receive this award. The "H" award winners will be announced on cable TV, in the newspapers, and on bumper stickers.

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### Mission Statement

The mission of the Holyoke Public Schools is to provide educational opportunities for all students to reach their full potential in a safe, secure, healthy learning environment while valuing diversity and promoting responsible citizenship.

### Holyoke School Committee

Mayor Elaine Pluta  
William Collamore  
Yvonne Garcia  
Margaret Boulais  
Gladys Lebron-Martinez  
Howard Greaney  
Dennis Birks  
Michael Moriarty  
Cesar Lopez  
Devin Sheehan

## Discovery Day at Kelly School

The smell of the Island of Puerto Rico hit you in the face as soon as you entered the corridors at **Kelly School**. Good smells from bacalalitos and empanadas frying filled the air tempting your taste buds and nose. The beat of the congas and excited clapping shook the space and beautiful ladies in vibrant and colorful dresses swayed to the music. Handsome gentlemen offered their hands respectfully to the beautiful señoritas for a dance. People of all walks of life unify in the spirit of food, music, and fun. This scene was reminiscent of a scene from an Island get together among friends



Students prepare to perform during Latin Heritage night.

and family, but this lively gathering was n't on an island- it recently happened at Kelly School. Under the guidance of Norma Rodriguez and Margarita Montanez, two long-time employees of Holyoke Public Schools, Kelly School celebrated



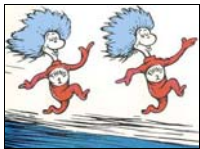
Kelly School Vice Principal Maritza Carballo and Mayor Elaine Pluta enjoy the night.

the Latin Heritage. Students and staff worked together to create a Latin atmosphere that felt real and celebrated all the things that make the students, parents, and staff members unique. From the traditional dances like the Bamba and the Plena, to the mock pig-roasting on faux open fire, the atmosphere made the school community feel like they were on the island. In addition to the many staff members and students who participated, the talented *Cache*, a Latin band from Springfield, performed for the parents, staff, and students. The energy from the band kept the parents moving and their excitement at seeing their children perform was contagious. When asked why she would take on such a large production, Rodriguez responded, "We are here for our students and families and tonight is about them!"

## McMahon School

# Literacy brought to life

Imagine having a science class taught by Harry Potter! This was the experience of **McMahon School** students when story book characters came to life as part of the kick-off for McMahon's 25 Book Campaign. A strong commitment to literacy was demonstrated when students and faculty participated in the day's events dressed in an array of disguises that delighted students of all ages. The kindergartners' eyes were wide with disbelief as the Chicka Chicka Boom Boom tree appeared alive in the middle of their classroom. Meanwhile, the students in the library were greeted by Thing One (Miranda Smith, school librarian) and Thing Two (Kim Weir, Read 180 Teacher) of the beloved Dr. Seuss collection. The days' events were facilitated by the infamous substitute teacher Viola Swamp from



Thing One and Thing Two from Dr. Seuss

the all-time favorite book Miss Nelson Is Missing. Classrooms and hallways bustled with activities as students were given an opportunity to participate in a school-wide book swap and costume contest. Lucy Longstreth, dressed as an I Spy book, volunteered her time to help students in signing a binding contract that renewed their commitment to read 25 books or 1 million words throughout the school year. Parents and faculty took part in the activities by reading aloud to classes while Elizabeth Pretel, the

school math coach, took full advantage of the opportunity to integrate math into literacy.

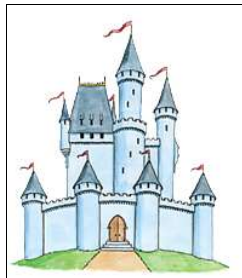
Dressed as Rani, the main character in One Grain of Rice, Pretel danced and swayed her way into classrooms to read and connect her story to the concept of doubling (or exponential growth). The day was wrapped up by tallying the votes and announcing the winners of both adult and student costume contests. The cute and cuddly Care Bears team won the adult contest by a nose, while Viola Swamp stepped up for what appeared to be a sinister second place. One student from each classroom was awarded a certificate and a nicely dressed gift bag, some donated by Barnes and Noble of Holyoke and containing literacy materials and a book. Viola Swamp, otherwise known as Kathy Alderman, the school literacy coach, reflected on the day and explained, "The support from staff and parents helped to make the event successful. It sends a strong message to our students that reading is fun and important. It was especially rewarding to see students thoroughly engrossed in their new books from the book swap. That's what it is all about, motivating our students to Read, Read, and Read!"



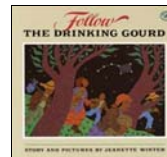
Viola Swamp

## Kelly School News...

**Kelly School's** eighth-grade English Language Arts class celebrated the end of a unit with kindergartners after working on a unit called Fractured Fairy Tales. The students took classic fairytales and made changes to the setting, plot, and/or characters to create a new version of their favorite childhood stories. To share these stories, the kindergarten classes were invited to listen as students read their stories aloud.



On a cold January day, students in grades 6-8 at **Kelly School** traveled to the Academy of Music in Northampton to see a performance of Theaterwork's "Freedom Train." The trip, organized by sixth grade English Language Arts teacher Jamilla Jones, was a way for the students to further experience the themes in the book Follow the Drinking Gourd, which they had already studied. Filled with music, history, and well-played performances, the show illustrated what it was like for Harriet Tubman as she began to work on the Underground Railroad. "I think it's important for our students to experience the arts in this way, as many of them aren't usually afforded the opportunity to do so," said seventh-grade ELA teacher Mary Doyle.



### What's New on the Web

By Judy Taylor

#### District Homepage

<http://www.hps.holyoke.ma.us>

#### NEW

- Visit the Literacy page <http://www.hps.holyoke.ma.us/literacy.htm> accessible from the "Programs" menu. This page contains updated Book of the Month listings, Reading Resource links, and Connections Newsletters.
- The curriculum page <http://www.hps.holyoke.ma.us/curriculum.htm> includes links to updated curriculum maps.
- Professional Development Course offerings available through Endicott, Holyoke Community, and Ribas can be viewed on the Professional Development page <http://www.hps.holyoke.ma.us/professionaldevelopment.html> that is accessible via the Curriculum page.
- **Peck Full Service Community School New Website** – users can either navigate to Peck through the "Schools" menu of the HPS website or access the site directly via the following url - <http://www.hps.holyoke.ma.us/peck/index>
- **Holyoke High School** <http://www.hps.holyoke.ma.us/hhs/index.html>  
Click on the **Guidance/Career Center** link to view weekly announcements, updated scholarship information, college representative visits, testing information, and transcript request forms.

- The guidance department at Holyoke High School is pleased to announce a new program to help students prepare for higher education and their future careers. Click the "Your Plan For College" link to access this wonderful tool that will help students prepare for tests such as the SAT, MCAS, and Accuplacer. The "Your Plan for College" site also compares different colleges, uses assessment tools, and helps students create their academic resume needed for senior year. Parents/students will need to contact their guidance counselor for log-in information.

## Math incentive program



Maureen Ross-O'Connell, of Ross Insurance Company, a longtime supporter of Holyoke Public Schools and **Morgan School** in particular, recently donated \$1,000 in support of Morgan's math program. Students log on to the Aleks math program online, and are given goals to reach based on hours spent working on the math program. Students who have completed 10 hours receive a homework pass; 50 hours wins a homework pass and a \$10 gift card to the Holyoke Mall; and 100 hours wins a season pass to Six Flags. Pictured above are the winners on completion of most hours online so far are Mercedes Cabrera, sixth-grade; shown with Stephanie Roszko, Math Coach; Adela Bernard, seventh grade; shown with Principal Paula Fitzgerald, and Ross-O'Connell.

# Morgan School

## Student Council

At **Morgan School**, an eighth-grade student council has been created by Emily Temple, Morgan's middle school counselor. Based on good grades, attendance, and behavior, students were invited to become members. Regular meetings are held in Temple's office, and first on the agenda was to create a list of objectives and activities. Among the events organized by the students thus far were gift-wrapping for Toys for Tots, and the creation of "Spirit Friday" including Twin Day when students and teachers had to find a partner and dress alike. The event was a huge success and pictures of "twins" were displayed on the bulletin board outside the office. Future Spirit Fridays include "Backward Day" and "Pajama Day."



"Twins" Mary Ellen O'Connor and student Alejandro Ramos

## Mentored by the best

**Morgan School** string students were invited to attend a workshop with the Boston String Quartet this winter. John Foley, one of the community partners on the Redesign Committee, offered the use of his transportation company to bring students to the event so they would not miss out on this amazing opportunity. After the concert, members of the Quartet went to Friendly's with the students and chatted about life and music for over two hours!



## Interactive Math!

In Lorie Banks' eighth-grade math class at **Morgan School** it didn't even seem like work as students studied the Pythagorean Theorem. On the floor, they constructed right triangles out of polystrips, then used the Pythagorean Theorem to see how accurate they were. The students enjoyed getting down to work and learned once again that math can be fun. In the photo, Lisbeth Colon and Julianette Davila are writing, while Sarinil Rivera is sitting on her knees.



# McMahon School

## Catching air in Germany



*Joey McPherson, 14, is airborne during a 360-degree flip at the CYS Services skateboard competition, held Aug. 21 at the Böblingen skatepark. McPherson was one of 16 competitors.*

Joseph McPherson, a former McMahon student, is now living and attending school in Germany. Last August, Joey participated in an International Skateboard Tournament, where he got "serious" hang time. Joey is now a 10th-grader and recently stopped by **McMahon School** during his winter break to greet his former teachers. He is the son of Ann McPherson, a paraprofessional at McMahon School.

-Newspaper clipping courtesy of Ann McPherson

## Reading Buddies

A group of **McMahon School** seventh and eighth grade students are collaborating with students from McMahon's kindergarten classes on a literacy and community-building project. Every month the middle school students visit the kindergarten classrooms, where they work with their younger partners to write and illustrate an autobiographical book. "During each visit they create two pages, one about the Big Buddy and one about the Little Buddy," says Read180 teacher Kim Weir, who, along with school librarian Miranda Smith, is overseeing the collaboration. Smith says, "The older kids do a wonderful job working with the younger ones; they are patient, kind, and helpful. It is great to see them be such positive role models." The group is hoping to self-publish their books and do a community reading at the end of the school year.

## A "Yellow Submarine?"

This winter, the Music Department at **McMahon School**, led by vocal music teacher Ray Crooks, conducted two separate performances of a *Beatles/John Lennon Tribute Concert*. All students in grades 1-8 participated in the event. The performances were a culmination of their recent school-wide unit of study on the music and history of John Lennon and The Beatles. The two concerts featured performances of songs made popular by The Beatles and John Lennon as a solo artist. The performance date of December 8, marked the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of former Beatle John Lennon's death. Approximately 250 parents and family members combined were in attendance for the two shows.

## Dean MCAS Rally

Recently, **Dean Technical High School** held a MCAS rally for its 10th-graders. Pat Kmon, the coordinator of the MCAS After-School Tutoring Program, organized the event to help students get prepared and psyched for the MCAS tests. Principal Linda Rex told the students to work hard all year to prepare for the MCAS tests. Maureen Lyons and Andrea Bryla, guidance counselors at Dean, encouraged the students to do their best, to answer every question, and to show up on time on test days. Several students who participate in the after-school program addressed the 10th-graders.

Erik Lopez, Christian Sanchez, and Ivelis Vasquez told the students that the after-school program at Dean had not only helped them on the MCAS tests, it also helped them in their classes. Krystofer De La Cruz, a senior, is a John and Abigail Adams Scholarship recipient.

He spoke to encourage and inspire students. Gladys Lebron Martinez, a member of the Holyoke School Committee, encouraged students to work hard to pass the MCAS tests and to receive a diploma. Luis Johnson, a 2004 graduate of Dean, told students to never give up and to work hard so they can reach their dreams. The 10th-graders all made a pledge to do their best and to work hard each and every day so that they can achieve proficient scores on all the tests.



*Luis Johnson with School Committee member Gladys Lebron Martinez*

## Say "NO" to gangs

The eighth-graders at **Morgan School** attended a school assembly on the dangers of gang involvement, presented by Officer Jessica Athas and Lt. Thadius Carter from the Hampden County Sheriff's Department. Students reported that it was extremely interesting, and made them think about aspects of gang membership they had not considered before, such as early deaths of gang members and accidental shootings of innocent people. They were shown pictures and given examples of gang activity, and encouraged to avoid the temptations of gang membership.



# E.N. White

## Student Council



Right after the country's mid-term elections in November, the campaign season swung into full gear at **E.N. White School**. For the past seven years, the sixth-eighth graders at E.N. White have seen their student government grow, improve, and take on more responsibilities within the school and throughout the community. This year 16 middle school students ran for elected offices, each creating campaign posters and proudly speaking in front of their peers about why they would be the best choice for the school and the community as a whole. This year's elected officers are Garrett Lemieux, President; Emma Price, Vice President; Madysen H. Lawrence, Secretary; Jack Maspo, Treasurer; while Amelia Vega, Maura McAndrew, Michael Vargas, Elba Rodriguez, Kiara Rivera, and Matt Bevan were elected as representatives. Together with the E.N. White staff and the Tiger Pride Community Organization, the student council has been working to achieve its three goals; fund raising, leadership development, and creating an atmosphere of engagement within the school. Presently, the student council is supporting the Tiger Pride Community Organization in the Bag2School clothing drive and at the same time is sponsoring a monthly eighth-grade assembly that focuses on developing civic leaders and setting career goals. Speakers from Police Chief Anthony Scott, to School Committee Member Cesar Lopez, to local lawyers, veterinarians, and engineers have given the eighth-graders at E.N. White life lessons they will take with them as they prepare to enter high school.



Students enjoying the new reading lab at E.N. White School

## Reading Lab opens

With help from Lynn Lajoie, District Systems 44 and Read 180 Coordinator, and Alecia Pettengill, newly appointed Read 180 Teacher, **E. N. White School** now has a brand new Reading Lab to offer extra support in reading to students in grades 4-8 at White School. Presently, the school offers a before school Systems 44 Program for a group of grade 4 and 5 students. The school also offers two groups of middle school students the Read 180 Program during the school day. Additionally, the school is presently organizing an after school program for students in grades 4 and 5, who qualify for either the Systems 44 or Read 180 Programs.



**Tune into HPS Channel 12 for school news and information**



**Metcalf Pre-School**

## Bringing teddy bears to school!

The **Joseph Metcalf Pre-School** hosted a Title I Teddy Bear Parade. Children worked on various activities with their parents. An artist from Enchanted Circle Theatre also provided an interactive story activity in the library for students and their families.

## On the Fringe inspires



Sullivan School sixth-graders proactive against bullying

By Maya Birks and Josie Moriarty

When we read the book On The Fringe, the November book of the month, we took action. The book mainly talked about bullying and how to overcome it, which inspired our sixth-grade to do a project on bullying. What we did was to first write paragraphs about positive things we can do to help prevent bullying. Then, we wrote about the negative side, about how bullying makes us feel and things which can happen to us because of it. Next, we made raindrops representing how bullying makes us feel. Finally we made a sun that represents the things we can do to help prevent bullying in our school. Each student in the sixth-grade received a raindrop and ray of sun and began writing their phenomenal ideas. Not long after this was completed, it was hung up in our lobby for all students who attend Sullivan School to see. We hope it makes an impact on bullying not just for the sixth-grade but the entire school. We, the sixth-graders, feel proud of all the hard work we have done throughout this project. Now we are one step closer to preventing bullying at **Sullivan School**.

For 13 consecutive years, the staff at Lt. Clayre P. Sullivan School has donated money to a Special Santa Fund. The contributions were used to buy Christmas gifts for needy families in the Sullivan School community. Due to the generosity of the Sullivan School staff and friends, gifts were purchased for 14 families during the 2010 Christmas season.

# Sullivan School



Students in the Family Literacy Program perform a Juan Bobo story.

The Family Literacy Program at **Sullivan School** is for parents and children. Parents are their children's first and most important teachers. Parents help their children learn. Parents have a starring role in showing their children how important it is to learn during their whole lives. So, through a collaboration between Sullivan/HPS, the Community Education Project and the Pathways to Family Success program, an English class for parents of Sullivan students and a homework help class for their children was started. For three days a week after school, parents and children attend their classes from 3-6 p.m. which includes a family dinner. Additionally, one day a week, for an hour, parents visit and participate in their child's class during the school day to help build a good relationship with the teacher and increase their understanding of what and how their children learn at school. Recently, the Pathways grant brought a theater consultant to work with the children and they developed a play from a Juan Bobo story. The children painted scenery and collected costumes with the help of their families and then they presented the play to their parents. If you are a Sullivan parent and are interested in improving your English, contact Aida Gomez at 534-2060 for more information.



## School's library is expanding

Linked to Libraries came to the **Joseph Metcalf Pre-School** twice so far this school year to read stories aloud to students and to help students create a craft project related to the story. Metcalf also received a large number of new books to add to its library.





### Donahue School

## The Garden Club

Meeting five days a week, both before and after school, the Garden Club at **Donahue School** has harvested a group of more than 25 dedicated and enthusiastic stu-



Garden Club members Keishmarie Valles, treasurer (L); and Madison Choinard, president proudly show the healthy plants.

Open for students in grades 1 – 7, the club meets on a daily basis. Facilitated by Caleb Snow, Donahue's upper elementary science teacher, students are learning the basics of gardening and botanical science. Using both an indoor grow table and outdoor space in the courtyard, students are focusing on rehabilitating damaged plants donated by teachers and students, and also propagating new ones. Some vegetables being grown will find their way to the cafeteria with a crop of carrots having already been served. The Garden Club is looking forward to expanding into the greenhouse just acquired by the Home Depot's Building Healthy Communities Grant. The club's hard-working officers are Madison Choinard, president, and Keishmarie Valles, treasurer.

####

The **Maurice A. Donahue** learning community is pleased to announce a grant that has been awarded this school year in the amount of \$2500 from Home Depot's Building Healthy Communities Grant program. These funds will be used to purchase an 8' by 16' greenhouse.

####

With the after-school Connections program being moved from **Maurice A. Donahue**, teachers are stepping forward to provide programming before and after school for motivated students. Besides the STEP program after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays, the Donahue School currently enjoys a STEM club (after school Mondays), the National Junior Honor Society (after school Wednesdays) and a Garden Club that meets before and after school five days a week.

### Morgan School

## S.T.E.M. builders

The sixth-seventh-and eighth-graders who are part of the S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics) Club at **Morgan School** have been very busy building using different items. Students



are working together to learn how the structure of objects is important to the way they function. Kelvin Escalera said, "We got up to 35 levels in Jenga (pictured above) by looking at the strong and weak spots. That way we knew where we could take blocks from to build it higher." Derick Torres mentioned, "I like to build cars out of K'NEX. I learned how to build it myself and it actually moves too!" Sarinil Rivera said, "I love working on my robot! I always want to work on building it and now programming it to do different things and to move. I feel like an engineer! Maybe I can program it to do my homework!"

### Donahue School

## S.T.E.M. helps seniors

The Science, Technology, Engineering and Math club has been a hit with students at **Donahue School**. Each week a different opportunity to explore interests and investigate different concepts is presented. Activities have ranged from compost creation, simple experiments and dissections, to identifying and solving problems in the community through technology and engineering. One group, competing in the Christopher Columbus Awards competition, is working on developing a Skype center in a local nursing home.



STEM club members competing in the Christopher Columbus Awards by creating a Skype center at a local nursing home (left to right) Luis Otero, Giovanni Rios, Imalay Vargas and Natasha Dube.

**Attention**

**For Parents/Guardians of Current 6th Graders:**

In order for a student to enter 7<sup>th</sup> grade in September 2011, documentation of the following requirements will need to be submitted to the school nurse.



1. **PHYSICAL EXAM**  
(COPY OF EXAM OR APPOINTMENT DATE)
2. **TWO DOSES OF MEASLES, MUMPS, RUBELLA VACCINE (MMR)**
3. **THREE DOSES OF HEPATITIS B VACCINE**
4. **ONE DOSE OF TETANUS (Tdap) BOOSTER VACCINE**  
(UNLESS LAST TETANUS BOOSTER WAS WITHIN THE LAST 5 YEARS)
5. **TWO DOSES OF VARICELLA VACCINE**  
(OR PHYSICIAN DOCUMENTED CASE)

Any student not providing proof of the listed requirements to the school nurse will be excluded from entering/attending 7<sup>th</sup> grade in September 2011, until requirements are met.

**Wellness Council members needed at each school**

In January, President Barack Obama signed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, a bill that is sure to reduce our country's overwhelming childhood obesity statistics. This law will promote better eating habits by setting the standards for food that is sold in vending machines in school cafeterias. The bill will also provide free or reduced-price meals to nearly 31 million low-income children and their families. The Holyoke Public School administrators, staff, parents and students will all work together to provide our students with a healthy future. With good food choices come energy and wellness and ultimately success and the self-confidence for students to chase their dreams. If you are interested in joining a School Wellness Council at your child's school, please contact Ana Jaramillo, Child & Adolescent Health & Wellness Coordinator, Holyoke Food and Fitness Policy Council & Holyoke Health Center at (413) 420-2860; (413) 335-7216 (Cell), or by email at: [Ana.Jaramillo@hhcinc.org](mailto:Ana.Jaramillo@hhcinc.org)



**Health and Safety**



**Stop, Drop & Roll**

The Holyoke Fire Department gave a fire safety presentation to the students at the **Metcalfe Pre-School**. After the presentation, students were able to explore the fire truck.

**Dean Tech Blood Drive**

Kevin Willard, English teacher at **Dean Technical High School**, and the students from the Health Services Program, organized and facilitated the recent annual Red Cross Blood Drive. A total of 47 people donated blood and everyone who donated received a Yankee Candle.



# Connections



Communications

## CSI: Holyoke



*E.N. White students with Holyoke Police Officer Edgar Lopez begin to learn some of the techniques of crime scene investigation.*

Students who participate in the Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) club at the EN White Connections After-School Program have had the exciting opportunity to take afternoon field trips to the Holyoke Police Department. All told, around 40 students over the course of the fall, have been able to visit the police station and more students are scheduled to go to the station in the spring.

For these students, who show a strong interest in CSI work, this sort of outing gives an in-depth glimpse into the work associated with a career in the police department. It also provides them with the opportunity to put the skills that they've learned in the CSI club to the test. These skills include use of simple chemistry, identification of "mystery" powders, blood splatter analysis, reading-writing, handwriting analysis, graphing/charting of findings, careful observation and ability to report conclusions as summaries. Indeed, students now know how to analyze a crime scene, identify a suspect and analyze finger-prints.

Kate Dean, Enchanted Circle Theater teaching artist and the CSI teacher, brings a wealth of knowledge to the students. She was the science teacher at Morgan Elementary School before she began her second career with Enchanted Circle. With her tremendous background, she makes every day an engaging and inspiring learning experience for the students. On account of the enthusiasm she generates, the students can often be seen eagerly acting out 'real life' crime scenes and conducting investigations. Such excursions are made possible through a DESE 21st Century Learning Center Grant.

## College Awareness Workshops

During 16 weeks this winter, Kelly School middle school students will have the option to participate in a series of workshops called "Expanding Your Future through College/Career Awareness." The workshops are being designed and implemented by Ruth Tirado and Hillary Reale, students at Holyoke Community College who are being sponsored through a Commonwealth Corps grant meant to advance college awareness and educational achievement among Holyoke youth. Local college students sponsored by the Commonwealth Corps grant have been serving as tutors and mentors to classes of middle-school students in Holyoke since 2008. The main goal of the workshops at Kelly is to promote college and career awareness among middle school students. Tirado and Reale believe that starting higher level education awareness at a young age will increase the number of Holyoke students who pursue a post-secondary education. The series is being offered to students who participate in Connections After-School Programs which are supported through a DESE 21st Century Learning Center Grant and other funding sources. Reale and Tirado have a lot of knowledge about local colleges that they can share with the students. They have both attended Holyoke Community College for two years and are in the process of transferring to four-year colleges. Reale and Tirado want students to know that college is a possibility and that they have a lot of options for their futures. At the end of the program, students will participate in a mock graduation ceremony. On that day, instructors will give brochures in Spanish and English to the students families about higher-level education. They are hoping that parents and other family members of the Kelly middle school students will help keep the interest alive.

## Mt. Holyoke College Trip



Recently, over 60 elementary students from Peck School went to Mt. Holyoke College to learn about college life and the diverse benefits of secondary education as a part of the Connections After-School Program.

# Building & Architecture

By Erika Zekos, LBD Program Director

Nearly 60 students participating in the Connections After-School program at E.N. White, Peck Full Service Community School, Morgan and Kelly Schools had the opportunity to explore ideas about architecture and design in the Building Design Club.

The students spent 16 weeks doing fun, hands-on, multidisciplinary activities and learning about what architects do alongside their graduate student-teachers. The four teachers are themselves learning to become professional architects, but are also interested in teaching the next generation. The Building Design Club began with simple projects to explore individual concepts and skills. Through projects such as building and testing the strength of columns, the students were able to identify this building element, its structural role in building design.



*Building Design Club students sketch architecture during a field trip to Holyoke Community College*

Teacher Jason Newman said, "We used books as weights to test the structural qualities of their columns. We discussed how they failed and changes they could make. Then they got to make changes in their next try." In another activity, students explored the relationship

between two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes by building them with pipe cleaners. They also learned about how to draw in plan, elevation and section as architects do, starting with these simple shapes. As the weeks went by and the skill levels mounted, students were able to take on more complex projects such as designing an apartment and surrounding landscape. The program was structured so that students would be introduced to the Design Process (part of the Science and Technology/Engineering Frameworks) and have the opportunity to follow it through in a series of hands-on, multidisciplinary activities. Students learned to set goals for and define their design problem; research their ideas; brainstorm and choose a design; represent that idea through drawings and models and to evaluate their work.

Students also participated in walking tours of their school neighborhoods, observing the styles, materials and architectural elements of the buildings in their communities. These "walks around the block" helped to build a sense of pride about the city where they live. The walks also provided opportunities for students to draw in their sketchbooks, an activity that they enjoyed.

Students also visited the Kittredge Center at Holyoke Community College and learned about its green building features (including a vegetative roof visible from the fourth floor), materials and size. They used their bodies to measure the width of the courtyard and estimated the height of the three-story column holding up the entrance canopy. All the while they recorded their ideas and drawings in their sketchbooks.

The club is the result of a partnership of Connections and Learning By Design in Massachusetts (LBD:MA), a K-12 architecture and design education program. LBD:MA developed the curriculum and provided training to four graduate students from the University of Massachusetts Amherst Architecture and Design program to lead clubs at the four Holyoke schools.

# Donahue School

## Food Drive

The National Junior Honor Society teaches children the importance of scholarship, leadership and civic duty. Every Wednesday these Donahue students meet to carry out a variety of duties, from running and organizing school-based events and fund-raisers, to projects that affect the greater community. So far, this group of students has run two school dances, a canned food drive for Margaret's Pantry (with the help of Erica Hernandez, Donahue's new family liaison) and is currently planning a talent show. Eighth-grader Shane Taylor was recently elected the club's president.



## Exploring Colonial life

After receiving the Hecksher Foundation for Children Grant, Old Sturbridge Village offered free admission to their grounds for Holyoke students. A group of dedicated teachers, headed up by Caleb Snow and Tom Wyse, decided to take them up on their offer. Snow applied for the Mass Cultural Council's Big Yellow School Bus grant and received the rest of the necessary monies to make the trip a reality.

Earlier this school year, the third and fifth grades of Maurice A. Donahue embarked on an all-expense paid journey to the re-created colonial village. Students were able to experience a wide variety of colonial activities, from logs being sawn in a hydro-powered mill, colonial cooking, blacksmithing and even a musket demonstration. The trip fit in nicely with the colonialism unit being taught.

GRANT MONEY



Library volunteers display the Lowe's Toolbox for Education Grant certificate. These funds are to "reinvigorate" the school library. Pictured L to R: Jordan Kennedy, Wilmarys Vazquez, Bianca Velazquez and Taylor Provost.

# Peck School

Peck Full Service Community School

## Special performances



The **Peck Full Service Community School** hosted the semi-annual Hip-Hop Evolution Event organized by the Student Bridges Program at UMASS. After a free dinner generously provided by Fernandez Restaurant in Holyoke, students and their parents were able to participate in college awareness sessions during which materials were handed out by the Bridges students educating parents on the college application process, financial aid process, and what middle school students and their parents should be thinking about to prepare for college. Bridges was pleased to have 10 performers, all from Holyoke's middle and high schools. With over 200 parents, students, performers, school staff and faculty, community members, and college students in attendance, Chrismery Gonzalez, Student Bridges Facilitator said, "The event had the Peck Auditorium full of adoring fans for the talent on stage!" Music Madness always performs at the Hip Hop Evolution and is an after-school club run through the CHOICES program. Directed by Justin Cotton, Music Madness has been around for five years. Cotton stated, "Music Madness gets kids to join the afterschool program who would not regularly join. Hip Hop Evolution is a great event for our students to showcase their talent and intermingle with high school and college students." Goals of the club include having the students express their feelings about different situations in their lives and become aware of recording technology through the writing and recording of their own songs. "When I am on stage it makes me feel that I am famous already. I smile because I know that one day I will be a famous rapper like Eminem," explained sixth-grader Mark Diaz. There are presently 20 students in the club and 10 students performed at the Hip Hop Evolution. Aidaliz Sandoval, an eighth-grade dancer said, "I felt nervous, but supported, because all my friends were in the audience and they cheered for me!"

## Education officials visit Peck Full Community School

**Peck Full Service Community School** hosted many exciting visitors this school year including Massachusetts Secretary of Education Dr. Paul Reville, UMass President Jack Wilson, HCC President William Messner, Mount Holyoke College President Lynn Pasquerella, and State Senator Michael Knapik. Megan Harding, Full Service Community School Manager said, "It's great to have the opportunity to introduce this model to state and local leaders, not only to share how we are integrating community partnerships into the academic work of our school, but also to hear their ideas about the community school strategy." Dr. Paul Reville, Massachusetts Secretary of Education, visited Peck School with State Board of Education member Beverly Holmes and State Policy Director Saeyun Lee. He was invited by Mary Walachy from the Davis Foundation. The Davis Foundation is a funder of Peck's Case Management Program and is one of Peck's most involved community partners. Dr. Reville and his group met with parents, school faculty and staff, and community partners and learned about their involvement and commitment to Peck School. Throughout the months of November and December UMass President Wilson, HCC President Messner and MHC President Pasquerella visited Peck School. They were able to observe their faculty and students engaged in various initiatives throughout the building. Just a few examples: UMass students from Student Bridges serve as tutors/mentors in Peck classrooms and after-school programs and organize twice annual Hip Hop Evolution events; HCC operates the CHOICES after-school program at Peck; and MHC students and faculty members work as both volunteers and leaders in a wide variety of school-day and after-school initiatives at Peck. Harding noted that it was a great opportunity for the college administrators to "see how their colleges are interwoven in programs that enrich our student's lives here at Peck." Finally, at his own request, State Senator Knapik visited Peck prior to the holiday break. Peck Principal Paul Hyry-Dermith noted, "It was our pleasure to have Senator Knapik talk with us about both our instructional improvement and full-service community school work, then visit classrooms to see students and teachers at work."



(the

• **Peck** hosted its second annual Puerto Rican Heritage celebration event, including a pot-luck dinner and musical and cultural presentations. Students from Marilyn Oquendo and Lillian Norwood's Kindergarten; Korri Tessier's first-grade; and Kristina Daboul and Digna Hernandez's fifth-grade classes performed traditional music and dance. Staff members Vionette Escudero, María Lopez, and Nancy Rosado sang La Borinqueña Puerto Rican National Anthem).

- Second grade students at **Peck** enjoyed a traditional visit from Ms. Healy, a long-time resident of Holyoke. Ms. Healy handed out slipper socks which she singly knits all year long. Armed with a large shopping bag, Ms. Healy visited every second-grade class handing out slipper socks in a variety of patterns and colors. In return for the slipper sock Ms. Healy asked every student for a hug and a promise to read!
- Fifth-grade students at **Peck** had a visit from the Polar Express. Sally Mitson came in and created a train ride for the children, read the story, and the children enjoyed hot cocoa and homemade cookies. The next day the children watched the movie and engaged in a rich conversation about how the movie and book were both different and alike.

Save  
the  
Date

Deadline for  
the spring  
issue of the  
Connections  
Newsletter  
is  
Monday,  
March 21st

Escuelas Públicas de Holyoke

## Distrito de planes a largo plazo en la agenda



Por David Dupont  
Superintendente de Escuelas

Como es de medio año de la escuela ya, por lo que se ha logrado mucho y todavía queda mucho por hacer en y para las Escuelas Públicas de Holyoke. Las metas del distrito de trabajo que hemos establecido para este año escolar, incluyendo nuestra respuesta como un distrito escolar de nivel 4, son los siguientes: -Creación de un nuevo Plan de Mejora de Distrito (DIP) que contendrá un número manejable de los objetivos de desarrollo individual-Escuela de Planes de Mejora que estará directamente relacionado con el distrito de plan-Formulación de un distrito de plan de desarrollo profesional que estará directamente relacionado con el distrito de plan-Creación de un presupuesto que se centra directamente en el plan del distrito Queremos que estos planes de distrito y la escuela para ser "vivo" y al año documentos que ajustable que no será la recogida de polvo, mientras que inútilmente sentado en las estanterías. Estamos comprometidos a hacer estos planes de trabajo para el mejoramiento de nuestras escuelas. Con tantos de nuestros estudiantes que no alcanzan el nivel de lectura apropiado en un tercio de grado de alfabetización, de la primera infancia va a ser uno de nuestros centros de coordinación

principal. Nadie puede discutir la importancia de la lectura en todo lo que los estudiantes serán expuestos en su escuela primaria y una mayor vida de la educación, y más allá. Las investigaciones muestran que las habilidades de lectura efectivas deben ser establecidas por los grados cuatro o cinco, y si no es así, entonces los problemas relacionados con la alfabetización puede durar toda la vida. Se

entiende que un aspecto importante de la cuestión de la alfabetización se relaciona con la exposición temprana a la comunicación de los padres, especialmente la lectura a los niños todos los días.

Los esfuerzos que vamos a tratar de mejorar las habilidades de lectura de nuestros estudiantes son de alcance de los padres y la educación sobre la importancia de la lectura a, y de comunicarse con sus hijos pequeños en casa. También hemos comenzado a revisar el currículo de matemáticas para determinar la forma en que podría ser capaz de mejorar el contenido y ayudar a los maestros en la prestación de la entrega más flexible de la instrucción, mientras que mantiene un compromiso con la enseñanza de las normas exigidas. Otro de nuestros objetivos será la creación de equipos de datos eficaz en cada una de las escuelas para que podamos desarrollar respuestas válidas a lo que revela datos, especialmente en lo que respecta al rendimiento de los estudiantes. El equipo del distrito de datos trabajará en estrecha colaboración con las escuelas para que podamos prestar apoyo y mantener la coherencia en el uso de los datos y la respuesta a los datos. Las aportaciones de todo el mundo está siempre animado y apreciado. Trabajando juntos, podemos hacer una diferencia considerable en las vidas de los niños de nuestra escuela. Sinceramente apreciamos su trabajo y apoyo.



*Durante una investigación de sonido en la clase de ciencias, estudiantes de cuarto grado Edwin López Cruz(L) y Ramón Rivera comparan los campos realizados por diferentes bares en un xilófono.*

# H

## Premios Mensuales Estudiante

No todos los estudiantes obtener una "A", pero todos los estudiantes puede ser una "H" de estudiantes. Comenzó el mes pasado, cada escuela elige a un estudiante por cada grado por mes para recibir una "H" premio para el esfuerzo y mejora, principalmente en la lectura y / o matemáticas. Al final de cada mes, habrá un sorteo para elegir el estudiante quien, junto con su familia, almorzar con el alcalde Elaine Pluta. "Queremos inculcar el orgullo en Holyoke y el orgullo dentro de cada una K-12 estudiantes", dijo Andrés Meléndez, Director del Programa Casa de la tarea. Este proyecto de la Coalición Holyoke Alfabetización Familiar es una forma de mostrar a los niños que el trabajo duro vale la pena y que la educación es muy importante para alcanzar sus metas para su futuro. Durante el año escolar, unos 700 estudiantes recibirán este premio. La "H", ganadores de los premios serán anunciados en la televisión por cable, en los periódicos, y en el tope-pegatinas.

## Día del Descubrimiento en la Escuela de Kelly

El olor de la Isla de Puerto Rico te golpea en la cara tan pronto como entró en los pasillos de la Escuela Kelly. Buena olores de bacalitos y empanadas para freír llenó el aire tentador su paladar y la nariz. El ritmo de las congas y aplausos emocionados agitar el espacio y bellas damas con vestidos de colores vibrantes y se balanceaba con la música. señores Hermoso ofrecer a sus manos con respeto a las señoritas hermosas para un baile. Personas



Asistente de maestro

Diane Baez

nas de todas las caminatas de la unificación de la vida en el espíritu de la comida, música y diversión. Esta escena es una reminiscencia de una escena de una isla se reúnen entre amigos y familiares, pero este encuentro no era festivo en una isla-que recientemente ocurrió en la Escuela Kelly. Bajo la dirección de Norma Rodríguez y Margarita Montañez, dos empleados de larga data de las Escuelas Públicas de Holyoke, Kelly celebró la Escuela de Patrimonio de América. Los estudiantes y el personal trabajaron juntos para crear un ambiente latino que se sentía real y celebra todas las cosas que hacen los estudiantes, padres, y muchos miembros del personal único. Desde las danzas tradicionales como la Bamba y la Plena, de la chimenea se burlan de cerdo para asar en la imitación, la atmósfera hizo la comunidad de la escuela se sienten como si estuvieran en la isla. Además de los muchos miembros del personal y los estudiantes que participaron, el talento de caché, una banda latina de Springfield, realizado por los padres, el personal y los estudiantes. La energía de la banda mantuvo a los padres el movimiento y su emoción al ver a sus hijos realizar era contagiosa. Cuando se le preguntó por qué se llevaría a cabo en dicha producción a gran Rodríguez respondió: "Estamos aquí para nuestros estudiantes y familias, y esta noche es de ellos!"

## Titulo I - Noches de Familia Title I ~ Family Nights

Los acontecimientos comienzan a las 6:30

Events start at 6:30 p.m.

### MARCH

March 2 ~ McMahon ~ Dr. Seuss (K – 2)

March 3 ~ Morgan ~ Dr. Seuss (K – 2)

March 8 ~ Kelly ~ Bingo for Books (all grades)

March 16 ~ Morgan ~ Bingo for Books (all grades)

March 23 ~ E.N. White ~ Bingo for Books (all)

March 28 ~ Donahue Career Night (5 – 8)

March 31 ~ McMahon Open MIC Night

### APRIL

April 4 ~ Donahue ~ Bingo for Books (all grades)

April 5 ~ McMahon ~ Bingo for Books (all grades)

April 12 ~ Kelly ~ Family Game Night (all grades)

April 13 ~ E.N. White ~ Bingo for Books (all grades)

## Programa de Alfabetización Familiar en la Escuela Sullivan

El Programa de Educación Familiar en la Escuela Sullivan es para los padres y los niños. Los padres son los maestros de sus hijos los primeros y más importantes. Los padres ayudan a sus hijos a aprender. Los padres tienen un papel protagónico en mostrar a sus hijos lo importante que es para aprender durante toda su vida. Así que a través de una colaboración entre Sullivan / HPS, el Proyecto de Educación Comunitaria y Rutas del programa de éxito a la familia, una clase de Inglés para los padres de los estudiantes de Sullivan y una clase de ayuda con las tareas de sus hijos se inició. Durante tres días a la semana después de la escuela, los padres y los niños asisten a sus clases de 3 a 6 pm que incluye una cena familiar. Además, un día a la semana, durante una hora, los padres de visitar y participar en la clase de sus hijos durante el día escolar para ayudar a construir una buena relación con el profesor y aumentar su comprensión de qué y cómo sus hijos aprenden en la escuela. Recientemente, la concesión de Rutas trajo un consultor de teatro para trabajar con los niños y desarrollaron una obra de teatro de un cuento de Juan Bobo. Los niños pintaron paisajes y trajes conseguidas con la ayuda de sus familias y, a continuación se presenta la obra a sus padres. Si usted es un padre Sullivan y están interesados en mejorar su contacto Inglés, Aida Gómez al 534-2060 para más información.



Un estudiante en el Programa de Alfabetización de la Familia lleva a cabo en un

## Voluntarios bienestar quería

En enero, el presidente Barack Obama firmó la Salud, Nutrición Niños Libres de la Ley, un proyecto de ley que es seguro para reducir nuestro país las estadísticas de abrumadora la obesidad infantil. El proyecto de ley también se ofrecen comidas gratis oa precios reducidos o casi 31 millones de niños de bajos ingresos y sus familias. Los administradores de las escuelas Públicas de Holyoke, personal, padres y estudiantes trabajarán en conjunto para ofrecer a nuestros estudiantes con un futuro saludable. Si usted está interesado en unirse a un Consejo de Bienestar Escolar en la escuela de su hijo, contactar con Ana Jaramillo, Niños y Adolescentes Salud y Coordinador de bienestar, alimentación Holyoke y buena condición física del Consejo de Políticas y Holyoke Centro de Salud (413) 420-2860, (413) 335 - 7216 (la célula), o por correo electrónico a: Ana.Jaramillo@hhcinc.org

# Three Kings Day



*Photos courtesy of Ewlises Gonzalez & Olga Escalera*

El 7 de enero de 2011, la 7th entrega anual de los Tres Reyes Celebración del Día se celebró en la Escuela Superior de Holyoke. El evento es patrocinado cada año por las Escuelas Públicas de Holyoke y coordinado por el Departamento de Educación del Idioma Inglés. Muchas personas de la comunidad, las escuelas e incluso los estudiantes voluntarios para ayudar con este evento cultural maravilloso. Este año los Reyes Magos eran estudiantes de la Escuela Superior de Holyoke. Los estudiantes de ROTC Decano de la Escuela Secundaria Técnica dirigida a las familias a las mesas, buffet y, finalmente, para ver los Reyes Magos. Los himnos nacionales de los Estados Unidos y Puerto Rico fueron cantadas maravillosamente por tres estudiantes de Holyoke High. El evento contó con la asistencia de más de 700 personas, entre ellas el alcalde de Elaine Pluta, HPS Superintendente David Dupont, y varios miembros del comité escolar. DJ Jaime Cotto jugado la música latina, mientras que las familias y los niños visitaron y se comió un cerdo tradicional arroz y frijoles y ensalada de la cena proporcionada por Salsarengue restaurante. Como de costumbre, el evento fue un gran éxito. Todo el mundo tuvo la oportunidad de mezclarse, disfrutar de la música y la comida, y cumplir con los Reyes Magos que le dio los regalos donados por los niños Toys for Tots y otras organizaciones comunitarias.



# Atención!

## PADRES/GUARDIANES DE LOS ACTUALES ESTUDIANTES DE 6TO GRADO

En orden de que un estudiante entre a 7mo grado en septiembre del 2011, tiene que haber enviado a la enfermera de la escuela la documentacion de los siguientes requisitos:



1. **EXAMEN FISICO**  
(COPIA DEL EXAMEN O CITA)
2. **2 DOSIS DE LA VACUNA DEL SARAMPION, PAPERAS, RUBEOLA (MMR)**
3. **3 DOSIS DE LA VACUNA HEPATITIS B**
4. **LA VACUNA DEL TETANO (Tdap)**  
(ENTRE LOS ULTIMOS 5 ANOS)
5. **2 DOSIS DE LA VACUNA DE LA VARICELA**  
(O CASO DE VARICELA DOCUMENTADO)

Cualquier estudiante que no presente prueba a la enfermera de la escuela de los requisitos arriba mencionados sera excluido de entrar al 7mo grado en septiembre del 2011, hasta que estos requisitos no sean cumplidos.



## Connections

Holyoke Public Schools  
Media Center  
c/o Kelly Doktor  
500 Beech Street  
Holyoke, MA 01040

