PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 6, 2015

Holyoke Public Schools Announces Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Award Winners

The prestigious Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching (PVEIT) Award from the Harold Grinspoon Charitable Foundation was presented on Thursday, March 5, 2015 to seven Holyoke Public Schools teachers. Excited family members and district administrators surprised the teachers with balloons, flowers and award certificates.

This year’s Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Award winners include: Peter Rego, Kelly Full Service Community School; Julie Griffin-Pluta, E.N. White School; Catherine Hebert, Maurice A. Donahue School; Militiza Semedei, Metcalf School; Jeremiah Barrett, Peck Full Service Community School; Zaida Cruz, Holyoke High School; and Maureen Dupont, Lawrence Full Service Community School.

The prestigious award, sponsored by the Harold Grinspoon Foundation celebrates teacher dedication and excellence. Winners are nominated by their colleagues based upon the following criteria: demonstrated professionalism through excellence in teaching practices, professional development, good attendance on the job and enthusiasm for teaching and/or working with children. According to Superintendent of Schools Dr. Sergio Paez, “Selecting the candidates is the difficult part of this process since so many of our teachers are deserving of recognition. I’m very proud of their work and their contributions towards the transformation of the Holyoke Public Schools.”

The Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Award provides recipients with:

- a $500 cash award and an engraved plaque.
- a three month YMCA and Springfield JCC membership
- two tickets to a celebratory dinner at the Log Cabin.
- an invitation from WGBY to take an online course.
- a $100 scholarships provided by Western New England University, Springfield College, Bay Path College, Elms College, and Westfield State University to take a graduate course.

For photos of the award distribution and recipient biographies, visit: http://www.hps.holyoke.ma.us/grinspoon.htm
“A community working together to prepare our students for their future”