



HOLYOKE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
A PATHWAY FOR EVERY STUDENT

HOLYOKE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Family Handbook
2018-2019

Dr. Stephen Zrike

Receiver/Superintendent of the Holyoke Public Schools

Policies and other information contained in this book are subject to change at the discretion of superintendent/receiver. Parents and guardians are encouraged to consult with their students' school administration for more information.

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Vision Statement

Our students:

- ✓ Graduate with an additional credential that provides for college and career options

And Are:

- ✓ Effective Communicators
- ✓ Critical Thinkers
- ✓ Engaged and Productive Community Members
- ✓ Mindful Individuals

Mission Statement

To be the 1st educational choice for Holyoke families by designing **multiple pathways** where all students graduate prepared to **excel** in college, career and in community leadership.

District Values

We Believe.....

- **Innovation** and bold-thinking lead to progress
- In exploring **all possibilities** for students to succeed
- All of our **children** and **families** should be embraced as our own
- **Feedback** is necessary for professional growth
- School **teams** make impactful and sustainable change

Message from the Superintendent/Receiver

Dear Parents, Legal Guardians, Students and Community Members:

This handbook was prepared for you so that you will have first-hand knowledge of policies, procedures and expectations that guide our work in the Holyoke Public Schools.

We are committed to partnering with you to ensure that these practices are upheld and that our children receive the educational experience that they rightly deserve. With a collective commitment to respect, dignity and civility we can create a school environment that will allow our students to thrive. We are confident that the 2018-2019 school year will be one of excellence in the Holyoke Public Schools!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephen Zrike".

Dr. Stephen Zrike, Receiver of Holyoke Public Schools

The Holyoke Public Schools is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to the provision of quality educational programs for all students. The Holyoke Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, genetic information, sexual orientation, disability, age, veteran or marital status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Holyoke Public School Directory

Holyoke High School Dean Campus
1045 Main Street
Phone: 413-534-2071

Holyoke High School North Campus
500 Beech Street
Phone: 413-534-2020

Holyoke STEM Academy
1045 Main Street
Phone: 413-534-2071

Veritas Prep Holyoke
1916 Northampton Street
Phone: 413-535-0345

Dr. William R. Peck School
1916 Northampton Street
Phone: 413-534-2040

Maurice A. Donahue School
Whiting Farms Road
Phone: 413-534-2069/70

Dr. Marcella R. Kelly School
216 West Street
Phone: 413-534-2078

Lawrence School
156 Cabot Street
Phone: 413-534-2075

Lt. Elmer McMahan School
75 Kane Road
Phone: 413-534-2062

Morgan School
596 S Bridge St,
Phone: 413-534-2083

Lt. Clayre P. Sullivan School
400 Jarvis Avenue
Phone: 413-534-2060

E.N. White School
1 Jefferson Street
Phone: 413-534-2058

Joseph Metcalf School
2019 Northampton Street
Phone: 413-534-2104

Success Center/Opportunity Academy
206 Maple Street
Phone: 413-552-2990

Transitions Academy
560 Dwight Street
kpoole@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-420-2233

Student Attendance and Enrollment

Attendance

Success in school requires students actively participating and highly engaged in learning. Regular class attendance and arriving to school on time and ready to learn enable students to benefit from classroom and school activities. These shared academic experiences are integral to the learning process and cannot be re-created or replicated.

Massachusetts law requires compulsory attendance for all students. Chapter 76, section 1 of the Massachusetts General Laws states that all children between the ages of six and sixteen must attend school. Parents can help their children by not allowing them to miss school except when absolutely necessary. Going to school every day and on time builds character and prepares students for success in their careers and in life.

We understand there are times when illness or emergencies cause students to be absent. However, students should strive not to be absent more than five (5) days in the school year to maintain satisfactory attendance. This applies for both excused and non-excused absences. Holyoke Public Schools considers from six (6) to fourteen (14) total absences as warning signs that absenteeism may affect a student's academic performance. Students with more than fourteen (14) absences in the school year are close to being considered chronically absent, and consequently their academic performance may be seriously affected. In the case of high school students, absenteeism can lead to loss of credit.

A student will be considered absent for the day if they miss more than half of the school day, regardless of when they arrive or leave school. A student will be considered tardy if they are not in their first-period classroom ready to begin the school day at bell time.

Notification of Student Absences

If a student will be absent on a given day, parents/guardians must call the school to inform of the student's absence and the reason for such absence. If the school does not receive a message from the parent/guardian, then the school shall call the contact telephone number or numbers provided at the beginning of the school year to inquire about the student's absence.

After three (3), five (5), and nine (9) absences, parents will receive letters from the school in the language of the home with the student's attendance record and a request to partner with school staff to address attendance challenges, regardless of whether the absences are excused or unexcused. The school will continue to contact the family by phone, mail and home visits to address the student's absences if the parent(s) or guardian does not contact the school. (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Sections 1A-1B)

Excused Absences

Students will be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons after presenting satisfactory official documentation:

1. Documented illness or quarantine;
2. Bereavement (a maximum of five (5) days for services taking place out of state);
3. Observance of major religious holidays.

A student may also be excused for a limited number of days for other extraordinary reasons with approval

of the Principal and after presenting official documentation, such as:

1. School sponsored activities or functions;
2. Out of school suspension;
3. Documented court appearances;
4. DYS confinement;
5. Displacement by natural disasters.
6. Challenges with transportation services offered by the district

Only school principals, assistant principals or deans are able to excuse absences. The following reasons cannot be used to excuse frequent or chronic absences or tardiness from school:

1. Illness or injury not documented by a doctor or other medical professional
2. Truancy
3. Family vacations
4. Non-emergency family situations

Parents or guardians may still be contacted by school staff if and when a student accumulates a high number of excused absences.

Medically-Excused Absences

A note from a health care provider needs to be presented as an excuse for not being in school due to illness, treatment or procedure:

1. Providers in our area should indicate when the student is able to return to school, as appropriate (similar to what adults do for returning to work)
2. If the provider is within the Pioneer Valley, then the provider's note will only excuse tardiness (if the note indicates the student can return to school the same day) or an early dismissal in the case of appointments late in the day
3. If the provider is located in Worcester, Boston and beyond, then the note will excuse an absence. There are cases of students who are absent when their siblings have an appointment outside the Pioneer Valley. It is recommended these absences are excused as well for the sake of emotional stability of all of the children in the family.
4. Provider's notes need to be presented within 3 days of the appointment for the excuses to be recorded in the student information system School Brains. Parents are advised to keep copies of these notes for their records.
5. Blanket notes from providers that parents can use to excuse absences at any time will not be accepted.

If the child is sick but the illness does not warrant taking him/her to a health care provider (see *Health Guidelines for School Attendance*), then the parent/guardian should send a note for the school nurse upon the child's return to school explaining the reasons for the absence. The nurse will then share with front office staff the names of students that should be excused for medical reasons on the form created for this purpose.

In the case of head lice, up to 2 days can be excused if the condition is verified by the school nurse or a health care provider. After a third episode within a 3-month period, the student should be referred to the nurse so that a more aggressive course of action can be prescribed.

In cases of chronic asthma, after 3 absences that the parent indicates are due to asthma, the student should be referred to the school nurse who should follow up with family regarding compliance with the student's asthma action plan.

Unexcused Absences

Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact school staff and work collaboratively with them to address the reasons that the student is missing school. For students that reach five (5) or more unexcused absences in the school year, a meeting will be scheduled with the building Principal (or his/her designee), the Parent(s)/Guardian and the student to develop an action plan to improve the student's attendance.

Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) need to respond within a five-day (5) period. If the student is under sixteen (16) years of age, it should be expressly understood that failure of the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) to respond will result in the case being referred to the Attendance Officer who will make a follow-up visit to the home. Regardless of age, each student is expected to make every effort to attend school each day school is in session.

It is the policy of the Holyoke Public Schools to file a 51A Report with the Department of Children and Families on the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of any child over six (6) years of age (or a student of any age with special needs) who accumulates six (6) unexcused absences to warrant an educational neglect complaint against the parent or guardian. A referral to the local Family Resource Center at Enlace de Familias will also be attempted with the family's consent.

If the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are unresponsive and unexcused absences continue to accumulate, school officials may file a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) petition with the Juvenile Court due to truancy which could result in a hearing before a Juvenile Court Judge. When a CRA Petition is to be filed, the school will submit information requested by the court and documentation of its contacts with the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) to the Attendance Officer. The school will continue to closely monitor the student's attendance.

Massachusetts General Laws defines a habitual truant and a repeated school offender as a child that "persistently and willfully fails to attend school, is truant, or persistently violates the lawful and reasonable regulations of his or her school." The focus of the courts and school department with these offenders, regardless of age, is on early intervention. Under M.G.L. c.76, §2, parents/guardians are required to cause a child to attend school, and, if he/she fails to do so for more than seven day sessions or fourteen half-day sessions within any period of six months, the parent/guardian shall on a complaint by the supervisor of attendance, be punished by a fine. Additionally, schools may seek a CRA application for any child between the ages of 6 and up to 18 who is habitually truant because she/he has eight or more unexcused absences in a school quarter, or because the child has repeatedly failed to obey school rules. When internal school intervention efforts fail to resolve a chronic absence or tardiness, habitual truancy or repeated violations of school rules, the school department may initiate a CRA action with the court. Under the law, the Juvenile Court has access to all school information relative to these cases.

Frequent Tardiness

Being frequently tardy for school interrupts the educational process for your child as well as for other students in the classroom. We encourage parents and tutors to work collaboratively with school leaders to

address the causes of frequent tardiness.

Parent(s)/Guardians should expect the following actions as consequences for tardies:

- After the 6th tardy- Phone call home
- After 8th tardy - Letter sent home
- After 10th tardy – Request for conference with the parent(s)/guardians
- Subsequent tardies- May result in the child being referred to the Attendance Officer

*Schools may determine other consequences for students with frequent tardies, such as detention.

Early Dismissal

Students may be dismissed during the school day for medical reasons, for documented medical appointments, and in the event of emergencies. If your child will need to leave school before the end of the day, he/she should bring a note to the classroom teacher. All dismissals during the day will take place at the school's main office. Please know that in order to avoid being marked as absent, students need to be present in school at least half of the day. We encourage parent(s)/guardians to work with medical and other professionals to avoid appointments during the school day.

Family Vacations

The Holyoke Public Schools strongly discourage family vacations when school is in session and such absences will not be excused. Please plan ahead appropriately and consult the district calendar in order to take vacation days only during weeks that school is not in session. In addition to not adhering to Massachusetts' laws regarding school attendance, vacations taken during school time interrupt the student's educational process which can't be reclaimed by make-up work. Teachers are not required to provide work in advance of a family vacation.

Review or Appeals

A student, parent or guardian may appeal what is accounted for as an excused or non-excused absence by contacting a school administrator. The student, or parent(s)/legal guardian(s), may appeal the decision on the school-level review to the Superintendent. The appeal must be submitted in writing within ten (10) days of the receipt of the review decision.

Suspensions

Days out of school due to external suspensions are absences that do not count toward a lack of academic credit (see Code of Conduct). Students who are absent due to external suspensions will be expected to make up missed assignments, homework and tests.

General Information Regarding Attendance

The Attendance Officer (413-534-2000 x1130) will support schools in addressing attendance to prevent and intervene in chronic truancy cases.

Families that face demonstrable hardships or challenges to attend their assignment zone schools may submit a written Assignment Zone Appeal throughout the school year and the summer. These appeals are approved only in very special cases of extraordinary circumstances that may warrant a particular student attending a school outside the Attendance Zone (for example: need to keep siblings together in one school when one has been assigned to a school outside of the family's zone, etc.). Please consult the District website or contact the Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center (413-534-2000 x1100, 1102, 1103) for more information on [filing an appeal](#).

Students Permanently Leaving School

No student who has not graduated from high school shall be considered to have permanently left public school unless an administrator of the school which the student last attended has sent notice within a period of 5 days from the student's tenth consecutive absence to the student and the parent or guardian of that student in both the primary language of the parent or guardian, to the extent practicable, and English. The notice shall initially offer at least 2 dates and times for an exit interview between the superintendent, or a designee, and the student and the parent or guardian of the student to occur prior to the student permanently leaving school and shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview. The notice shall indicate that the parties shall agree upon a date and time for the exit interview, and that interview shall occur within 10 days after the sending of the notice. The time for the exit interview may be extended at the request of the parent or guardian and no extension shall be for longer than 14 days. The superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with any such interview without a parent or guardian if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. The exit interview shall be for the purpose of discussing the reasons for the student permanently leaving school and to consider alternative education or other placements.

The superintendent or a designee shall convene a team of school personnel, such as the principal, guidance counselor, teachers, attendance officer and other relevant school staff, to participate in the exit interview with the student and the parent or guardian of the student. During the exit interview, the student shall be given information about the detrimental effects of early withdrawal from school, the benefits of earning a high school diploma and the alternative education programs and services available to the student.

Student Enrollment

Our Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center is the main entry point for families to HPS and a key gateway for information about HPS programs and initiatives. The Center is located on the first floor at 57 Suffolk Street, Holyoke.

- Department Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
- Department Phone: (413) 534-2000 Ext. 1100, 1102, 1103

The Center provides support with the following:

- [Registration](#) for Pre-K through 8th grade (high schools process their own enrollment)
- School [Attendance Zone](#) assignments
- Transfers between School [Attendance Zones](#) due to change of address
- [School Choice](#) policy
- [Home Schooling](#) applications
- Support for [families experiencing homelessness](#)
- [School attendance](#) challenges
- [Work permits](#) for students in HPS middle schools, charter and private schools
- Drop off site for children who couldn't be dropped off at home by school buses
- Parent concerns and complaints
- Information about [specialized programs](#), new initiatives, family resources and family engagement opportunities

School Admissions

All children of school age who reside in the town will be entitled to attend the public schools, as will certain children who do not reside in the town but who are admitted under School Committee policies relating to nonresident students through the School Choice program or by specific action of the School Committee.

Every student seeking admission to school for the first time must present a birth certificate or equivalent proof of age acceptable to the Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center and proof of vaccination and immunizations as required by the State and the School Committee. Proof of residency and legal guardianship will also be required by the school administration. However, students experiencing homelessness will be promptly enrolled even if they cannot present proper documentation or records, according to the McKinney Vento Act guidelines.

Families registering students in Holyoke Public Schools must submit proof of residency to demonstrate they reside in Holyoke (unless they are applying through the School Choice program). "Residency" is defined as the place where a person has his/her permanent home. For minor children, this is presumed to be the legal residence of the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) who has physical custody of the minor child and where the child sleeps every night. By providing residency information and the required documentation, parent(s)/legal guardian(s) certify this is the address where the child engages in most of his family and social life during the entire week. The district reserves the right to verify residency through the Attendance Officer or Holyoke Police Department.

For families who have submitted a Caregiver Authorization Affidavit (based on M.G.L. c.201F), the authorizing party understands that a caregiver affidavit cannot be used solely for the purpose of attendance at a particular school, to circumvent any state or federal law, or to re-confer rights to a caregiver from whom those rights have been removed by a court of law.

Advance registration for prospective pre-k and kindergarten students will take place between April and May. Pre-K and other special programs have limited capacity or particular eligibility requirements or application procedures.

All public schools in the Commonwealth shall admit students without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, disability, sexual orientation or national origin. This includes, but is not limited to regional vocational-technical schools, elementary, secondary, trade, and selective academic high schools.

1. No school shall discourage in any express or implied manner, applicants for admission because of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, disability, sexual orientation or national origin. Written materials used by a school to recruit students shall not contain references suggesting the predominant sex of the students presently enrolled or the anticipated sex of the students to be recruited. Reference to only one sex in the name of schools, programs or activities shall not be retained.
2. The national citizenship of any applicant shall not be a criterion for admission to any public school nor shall national citizenship be a factor in the assignment or availability of courses of study or extracurricular activities.
3. Any standards used as part of the admissions process to any public school, including but not limited to testing, the use of recommendations, and interviewing shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, disability, sexual orientation or national origin. Limited English-speaking ability shall not be used as a deterrent to or limitation on admissions.
4. If admission to any school, including but not limited to selective academic high schools, regional

vocational-technical schools and trade schools, is dependent upon the participation or completion of courses or programs which were previously limited to students of one sex or if close scrutiny reveals that access mechanisms or other administrative arrangements have limited the opportunities of any racial, ethnic or religious group of students to participate in such programs, then such criteria must be abolished.

5. Nothing in 603 CMR 26.00 shall be construed as to control the interpretation of or interfere with the implementation of St. 1965, c. 641, as amended by St, 1974, c. 636, providing for the elimination of racial imbalance in public schools, all rules and regulations promulgated in respect thereto and all court and administrative decisions construing or relating thereto.

Assignment of Students to Schools

1. Entrance Age:
 - a. A child must be at least 3 years old by September 1st to enter a Pre-K program.
 - b. A child must be five years of age by September 1st to enter Kindergarten.
2. New students entering HPS in grades PK-8 will be assigned to schools based on designated School Attendance Zones.
3. Students who leave and re-enter during the school year will be assigned to their Attendance Zone School upon re-entry.
4. New or re-entering students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for special education services will be assigned to schools by the Pupil Services and Special Education Department.

Attendance Zones

Using the HPS [website](#), families can enter their address to determine their School Attendance Zone. Families without access to a computer can contact the Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center or call any one of the school offices and request that information.

Transportation within Attendance Zones

The School Department will provide bus service under the current eligibility criteria for all students attending their Attendance Zone Schools.

Students who are on waiting lists for their Attendance Zone schools because space is not yet available, may receive transportation if they are forced to attend a non-Attendance Zone school that calls for bus transportation under the current eligibility criteria.

Transfers to Attendance Zone Schools

Under the Attendance Zone Plan, students who move to a residence outside their current Attendance Zone may request a transfer to their new Attendance Zone School. Transfer requests for the following school year may be filed at the Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center. Depending on space availability and reasonable class size, transfers may be immediately approved, or in some cases, waiting lists must be established. Priority will be given to students who have siblings already attending the school.

Moving During the School Year

Students who move from one Attendance Zone to another before the start of school in January should transfer to their Attendance Zone School (pending space availability). Those students who move from one Attendance Zone to another after January have the option of remaining at the school to finish out the current school year (providing all parties can agree on transportation arrangements).

The ongoing transfer of students throughout the school year can be very disruptive to students, teachers, and classroom climate and school schedule. In light of MCAS and other testing schedules, the transfer of any student after December would generally be discouraged.

If a student moves out of Holyoke after April 1st, he/she may remain enrolled at HPS for the remainder of the year. For the following school year, the student needs to enroll in the district where he/she resides or apply for a seat through the School Choice program to try to remain at HPS.

The Assignment Zone Appeals Process

An Appeals Committee is in charge of reviewing the Assignment Zone Appeal applications several times a year to address special cases of extreme and/or extraordinary circumstances that may warrant a particular student attending a school outside his/her Attendance Zone. The Appeals Committee is comprised of HPS staff and administrators. There is a set schedule of committee meetings. Parents need to be aware of the cut-off dates for submitting an appeal. The Appeals Committee is responsible for making a recommendation for the approval or denial of the appeal. Decisions of the Appeals Committee will be reviewed by the Superintendent or his designee before final approval is made. Call the Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center at 413-534-2000, ext. 1100 if you have questions or require additional information. Please note that Zone Appeals are not available for PK and the parents of students with an approved zone appeal are responsible for transporting students to school every day and on time.

Assignment Zone Appeals should not be used to try to resolve issues pertaining to academic, discipline or bullying challenges a student may be facing at a particular school by trying to have them switch schools. We advise parents to establish regular communication with the school leaders and staff at your zone school to explore all alternatives to contribute to the student's success. If you have concerns related to your child's progress or safety at a particular school, you should contact teachers and school leaders first. If there are issues that remain unresolved at the school level, you may file a complaint at the Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center (57 Suffolk Street, First Floor Right).

School Choice

All school-age children who live in Massachusetts are entitled to attend a public school free of charge. Most children attend school in their home district, which is the school district in which they reside. The School Choice Program at Holyoke Public Schools (HPS) allows parents an opportunity to have their children attend our schools while residing in a surrounding town. This program is made possible by the provisions of the M.G.L. Chapter 76: Section 12, otherwise known as the "School Choice Law," which allows HPS to claim a tuition reimbursement from the home district of every student enrolled in the program. As a result, HPS is able to have additional resources to better serve all students in our district.

It is the policy of this School District to admit non-resident students under these terms and conditions:

1. That by May 1 of every school year, the administration will determine the number of spaces in each school available to choice students.
2. That by June 1 of every school year, if consideration is being given to withdraw from the provisions of the choice law, a public meeting will be held to review this decision.
3. That the selection of non-resident students for admission be in the form of a random drawing when the number of requests exceeds the number of available spaces. There will be two drawings for this purpose. The first will take place during the last week of the current school year but no later than July 1st. The second will be conducted during the week immediately preceding the opening of the next school year and will be based on the possibility of unexpected additional openings.

4. Any student who is accepted for admission under the provisions of this policy is entitled to remain in the District until graduation from high school except if there is a lack of funding of the program.
5. The School Committee affirms its position that it shall not discriminate in the admission of any child on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, athletic performance, physical handicap, special need, academic performance or proficiency in the English language.

For more information about the School Choice policy, procedures and deadlines, visit our [website](#) or contact the Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center at (413) 534-2000, ext. 1100, 1102, 1103.

Student Records

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school system to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to the student's parents or legal guardian and/or the student in accordance with law, and yet be guarded as confidential information.

Below is a summary of parent and eligible student rights under state law and the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) regarding student records.

Definitions

Student Record: The **student record** consists of the transcript and the temporary record, including all information recording and computer tapes, microfilm, microfiche, or any other materials regardless of physical form or characteristics concerning a student that is organized on the basis of the student's name or in a way that such student may be individually identified, and that is kept by the public schools of the Commonwealth as defined under state law.

Parent shall mean a student's father or mother, or guardian, or person or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of the student in place of or in conjunction with the father, mother, or guardian. Any parent who by court order does not have physical custody of the student, is considered a non-custodial parent for purposes of M.G.L. c. 71, § 34H and 603 CMR 23.00. This includes parents who by court order do not reside with or supervise the student, even for short periods of time.

Eligible student: Under state student record regulations, an **eligible student** is any student who has reached 14 years of age or who has entered 9th grade.

Authorized school personnel shall consist of three groups:

- (a) School administrators, teachers, counselors and other professionals who are employed by the school committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the school committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching counseling, and/or diagnostic capacity. Any such personnel who are not employed directly by the school committee shall have access only to the student record information that is required for them to perform their duties.

(b) Administrative office staff and clerical personnel, including operators of data processing equipment or equipment that produces microfilm/microfiche, who are either employed by the school committee or are employed under a school committee service contract, and whose duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student record. Such personnel shall have access only to the student record information that is required for them to perform their duties.

(c) The Evaluation Team which evaluates a student

Confidentiality of Student Record

With few exceptions, no individuals or organizations other than the parent, eligible student, and school personnel working directly with the student may access information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent/eligible student.

Inspection of Student Record

A parent and an eligible student may inspect their own student record. The record must be made available to the parent/eligible student within ten (10) calendar days of the request, unless the parent/eligible student consents to an extension of this timeframe. If the parent/eligible student requests copies of the student records, the district may charge the parent/eligible student for said copies.

Third Party Access

Authorized school personnel, to include: (a) school administrators, teachers, counselors and other professionals who are employed by the school committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the school committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching, counseling, and/or diagnostic capacity; (b) administrative office staff and clerical personnel, employed by the school committee or under a school committee service contract, and whose duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student record; and (c) the evaluation team which evaluates a student, shall have access to the student record of students to whom they are providing services, when such access is required in the performance of their official duties. The consent of the parent or eligible student shall not be necessary.

Amendment of Student Record

The parent and eligible student have the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written materials to the student record. The parent and the eligible student also have the right to request in writing that information in the student record be amended or deleted. The parent and student have a right to a conference with the school principal to make their objections known. The principal must issue a written decision within one week of the conference. The regulations provide the parents/eligible student with a right of appeal if they are dissatisfied with the decision.

Transfer Students

A student transferring into the Holyoke Public Schools must provide the District with a complete copy of the student's student records from the student's previous school or school district. This record shall include, but not limited to, all disciplinary records.

Transfer of Student Record

Holyoke Public Schools will forward the student record of any student who seeks or intends to transfer to another public school district, upon request of the receiving school. The written consent of the parent or eligible student shall not be required prior to the forwarding of the student's record to a receiving school or school district.

Release of Information to the Military

Under federal legislation, the No Child Left Behind Act provides all branches of the military the right to receive names, addresses and telephone numbers of all secondary school students. Parents must submit written notification to the school if they do not want their child's name provided to the military.

Directory Information

HPS designates the following information as directory information: student's name, date and place of birth, address, phone number, electronic mail address, grade level, (e.g. undergraduate or graduate, full-time, or part-time), dates of attendance, enrollment status, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, degrees, honors and awards received, and major field of study. Directory information may be disclosed at the discretion of the school system without the consent of a parent of a student or an eligible student.

Parents of students and eligible students have the right, however, to refuse the release of this information. Any parent or eligible student refusing to have any or all of the designated directory information disclosed must file written notification to this effect with the Principal on or before the 15th day of each September. In the event that a refusal is not filed it is assumed that neither the parent nor eligible student objects to the release of the designated directory information.

Rights of Non-Custodial Parents

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions. A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless:

- The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
- The parent has been denied visitation, or
- The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
- There is an order of a probate and family court judge that prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal. Upon receipt of the request, the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access. The school

must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.

Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

Destruction of Records

A student's temporary record (all information in the student record which is not contained in the transcript) will be destroyed no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from the school system. "Written notice to the eligible student and his/her parent of the approximate date of destruction of the record and their right to receive the information in whole or in part, shall be made at the time of such transfer, graduation, or withdrawal." 603 CMR 23.06(3).

The student's transcript will be maintained by the district and will only be destroyed 60 years following the student's graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school system.

Complaints

A parent or eligible student has a right to file a complaint regarding student records with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5920, 800-8 72-5327; or with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148, 781-338-3300.

School Weather Closure and Delays

While we are hopeful that winter weather will not have a significant impact on our schedule, the following describes our communication efforts about delays and closings. We will do our best to make decisions by 5:30 am.

We will use email and the phone message system to alert families and staff about delays or closings.

The announcement will also be posted in the following locations on the web and television:

- The HPS district web site: www.hps.holyoke.us
- The HPS Facebook www.facebook.com/holyokepublischools
- On Twitter: @szrikehps
- TV news stations: Channels 40, 22 and 3.

If you do not receive an automated call or email from Connect-ED, it is because your updated phone number and/or email address is not in our system. In the event that this occurs, please contact the main office at your child's school and provide your updated contact information.

When weather conditions warrant, we may delay the start of school by one to two hours. If school is delayed, we ask that students report to school no sooner than fifteen minutes before the adjusted start time in order to ensure safe and proper supervision.

Ultimately, decisions about school cancellation and/or delays are made in conjunction with the Holyoke Department of Public Works, neighboring communities and our Chief of Finance and Operations. In assessing the forecast, student safety is always the most important consideration. At the same time, we believe that students should be in class whenever possible and hope to avoid as many interruptions as we can.

This year the Holyoke Public Schools will be piloting *weather work* in which students will be assigned work to complete in lieu of having to make up cancelled school days.

Parental Right Policies

Parental Notification of Rights under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

1. *Consent* before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (DOE): political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent; mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family; sex behavior or attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships; legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers; religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
2. *Receive notice* and an opportunity to opt a student out of the following: any other protected information survey, regardless of funding; any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law; and activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
3. *Inspect* upon request and before administration or use: protected information surveys of students; instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum. These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under state law.

Specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement include: the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution; the administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by DOE; and any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above. Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

Parents' Right to Know

The No Child Left Behind Act regards parents as consumers who play a vital role in the education of their children. As consumers, they are entitled to have information about their child's program and teachers.

Parents should also know if their child is in a failing school and what they can do about it. This law contains many parent “right to know” provisions, and all communication with parents must be in an understandable format and, if practicable, in a language the parents understand.

Right to Know Child’s Achievement

At the beginning of every school year, the school district must notify each parent of a child attending a Title I school the achievement level of the child on the state’s tests. This information must be an individual, descriptive and diagnostic report that allows parents (as well as teachers and the principal) to understand and address the specific needs of the student. This information must be understandable; that is, it can’t be meaningless numbers or phrases. The information should describe – that is, diagnose and interpret – in words, using samples of student work if possible, what achievement levels and numbers mean.

Right to Know Personnel Qualifications

At the beginning of every school year, the school district must notify all parents of children attending Title I schools that they may request information about their child’s teachers. That information must be provided “in a timely manner.” At a minimum, parents must be told:

- Whether the teacher has met state qualifications for the grade and subject she/he teaches
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional credentials because the state
- has waived normal qualifications
- The teacher’s college major and any graduate certification or degree and the discipline in which it was taken, and
- Whether paraprofessionals provide services to the child, and if so, their qualifications

In addition, and without request, the Title I school must give parents “timely” notice when their child has been assigned to and has been taught by a teacher who has not met the state’s highest qualifications for four or more consecutive weeks.

Right to Know for Parents of Limited – English Proficient Children

Parents of these children have an automatic right, without asking, for information about their child’s placement, or possible placement, in a language instruction program. And they have the right “to opt out” of any placement and to choose another method or program of instruction.

Within 30 days of the beginning of the school year (or within two weeks of the child’s program placement), each local school system that uses Title 1 funds for language instruction, must provide certain information to parents of limited–English proficient (LEP) children who are in a language instructional program or who have been identified for placement in such a program.

The notice must give:

- The reasons for identifying the child as LEP and in need of a language instruction program
- The child’s level of English proficiency, how it was determined, and the “status” of the child’s
- achievement
- The instructional methods of the program in which the child is participating or might be
- assigned to, and other available language programs that differ in content, use of English and a native language

- How that program is meeting (or will meet) their child’s educational strengths
- How the program specifically will help the child learn English and meet standards for grade promotion and graduation, and
- The specific exit requirements for the program and the expectation for transition into an all-English classroom. (Secondary schools using Title 1 funds for language instruction must also provide the expected rate of high school graduation).

If an LEP child has an IEP, the parental notification must include information on how the language instructional program meets the objectives of the child’s individual education plan.

The notification must include written guidance explaining:

- The parent’s right to request that the child immediately be removed (“opt out”) of a language instructional program
- The other possible programs or methods of instruction available
- How parents will receive assistance in selecting another program, if offered by the school district.

In addition to these requirements, parents must be told if the child’s language instructional program (or the one proposed for enrollment) supported by Title I funds, is not meeting its annual goals for English proficiency.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Public schools have the responsibility to overcome, insofar as possible, any barriers that prevent children from achieving their potential. The public school system will do its part. This commitment to the community is affirmed by the following statements that the School Committee intends to:

1. Promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the State and Federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
2. Encourage positive experiences in human values for children, youth and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups.
3. Work toward a more integrated society and enlist the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.
4. Use all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and reduce the grievances of individuals and groups.
5. Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school system, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspects of all segments of society.
6. Initiate a process of reviewing policies and practices of the school system in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

The Holyoke Public Schools is committed to maintaining a school environment free of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy/pregnancy-related condition, genetic information, military status, or age in accordance with all state and federal non-discrimination laws, including: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; the Age Act; 42 U.S.C. § 2000ff-1; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act; M.G.L. c. 76 § 5; M.G.L. c. 151B; M.G.L. c. 151C; and 603 C.M.R. § 26.00. Discrimination or harassment by administrators, staff,

students, vendors, and other individuals at school or at school-sponsored events is unlawful and strictly prohibited. The Holyoke Public Schools requires all employees and students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect to their fellow employees, students, and members of the school community.

The Holyoke Public Schools has adopted the following Grievance Procedure for any complaints of discrimination or harassment.

Grievance Procedure for Discrimination/Harassment Complaints

This Grievance Procedure is adopted to assist school staff to respond to claims of discrimination and/or harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy/pregnancy-related condition, genetic information, military status, or age, including those claims brought under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Age Act; 42 U.S.C. § 2000ff-1; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act; M.G.L. c. 76, § 5; M.G.L. c. 151B; M.G.L. c. 151C; and 603 C.M.R. § 26.00. This grievance procedure is available to all students, staff, and members of the general public.

Definitions

For the purposes of these procedures:

- A. A “Complaint” is defined as an allegation that a student, employee or other individual has been discriminated against or harassed on the basis of a protected category (race, color, national origin, sex, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy/pregnancy-related condition, genetic information, military status, or age).
- B. “Discrimination” means discrimination or harassment on the basis of a protected category (race, color, national origin, sex, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy/pregnancy-related condition, genetic information, military status, or age) by which an individual is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of the school.
- C. “Harassment” means unwelcome conduct on the basis of a protected category (race, color, national origin, sex, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy/pregnancy-related condition, genetic information, military status, or age) that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive to create a hostile environment for the individual at school. Harassment may include insults, name-calling, off color jokes, threats, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct which rises to the level of a hostile environment.
- D. “Sexual Harassment” means unwelcome, sexually offensive or gender-based conduct which is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive to create a hostile environment for the individual at school. Additionally, under M.G.L. c. 151C, § 1, the term “sexual harassment” may also include, but is not limited to, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (i) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the provision of the benefits, privileges or placement services or as a basis for the evaluation of academic achievement; or (ii) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s education by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive educational environment. Under M.G.L. c. 151B, § 1, the term “sexual harassment” shall mean sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (i) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either

explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions; or (ii) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment.

When determining whether an environment is hostile, the school district examines the context, nature, frequency, and location of the sexual or gender-based incidents, as well as the identity, number and relationships of the persons involved. The school district must consider whether the alleged harassment was sufficient to have created such an environment for a reasonable person of the same age, gender, and experience as the alleged victim, and under similar circumstances.

Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Prohibited

Discrimination and harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes discrimination or harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. Retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to the attention of school officials or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this policy is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Holyoke Public Schools.

Persons who engage in discrimination, harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school administration and/or School Committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

How to make a complaint

- A. Any student, employee or other individual who believes that they have been subject to discrimination or harassment should report their concern promptly to either a school principal or the designated District Civil Rights Coordinator. If the school principal receives the report, the principal will notify the Civil Rights Coordinator of the Complaint. Students, employees or other individuals who are unsure whether discrimination or harassment has occurred are encouraged to discuss the situation with the school principal.

School Principals:

Dr. Stephen Mahoney
Holyoke High School Dean Campus
1045 Main Street
smahoney@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-534-2071

Dr. Stephen Mahoney
Holyoke High School North Campus
500 Beech Street
smahoney@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-534-2020

Ms. Katie Demars
Holyoke STEM Academy
1045 Main Street
kdemars@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-535-0345

Mr. Rue Ratray
Veritas Prep Holyoke
1916 Northampton Street
Rratray@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-535-0181

Ms. Sarita Graveline
Dr. William R. Peck School
1916 Northampton Street
sgraveline@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-534-2040

Mr. Marc Swygert
Maurice A. Donahue School
Whiting Farms Road
mswygert@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-534-2069/70

Mr. Luis Soria
Dr. Marcella R. Kelly School
216 West Street
lsoria@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-534-2078

Ms. Catherine Hourihan
Lawrence School
156 Cabot Street
chourihan@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-534-2075

Ms. Noreen Ewick
Lt. Elmer McMahon School
75 Kane Road
newick@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-534-2062

Mr. Steven Moguel
Morgan School
596 S Bridge St.
smoguel@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-534-2083

Mr. John Breish
Lt. Clayre P. Sullivan School
400 Jarvis Avenue
jbreish@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-534-2060

Ms. Jacqueline Glasheen
E.N. White School
1 Jefferson Street
jglasheen@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-534-2058

Ms. Amy Burke
Joseph Metcalf School
2019 Northampton Street
aburke@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-534-2104

Mr. Mickey Buhl
Opportunity Academy/Success Center
206 Maple Street
mbuhl@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-552-2990

Ms. Kelsey Poole- Transitions Coordinator
Transitions Academy
560 Dwight Street
kpooles@hps.holyoke.ma.us
Phone: 413-420-2233

The District's Civil Rights Coordinators are:

For student complaints:

Mary Anne Morris
Student Support Director
Holyoke Public Schools
57 Suffolk Street
Holyoke, MA 01040
(413) 534-2000 x 1207

For employee and non-student complaints:

Beth Gage
Chief Talent Officer
Holyoke Public Schools
57 Suffolk Street
Holyoke, Ma 01040
(413) 534-2000

The Civil Rights Coordinators' responsibilities include, but are not limited to, responding to complaints and inquiries related to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Age Act; 42 U.S.C. § 2000ff-1; M.G.L. c. 76, § 5; M.G.L. c. 151B and 151C; and 603 C.M.R. § 26.00.

- B. District staff are expected to report incidents of discrimination or harassment of students and fellow employees. Parents and other adults are also encouraged to report any concerns about possible discrimination or harassment of students, employees or other individuals which have allegedly occurred on school grounds, at school related events, or actions which occurred outside of school but possibly create a hostile environment for a student or employee while he/she is at school.
- C. Students, employees and other individuals are encouraged to utilize the District's Complaint Procedure. However, individuals are hereby notified that they also have the right to report complaints to: The United States Department of Education; Office for Civil Rights, 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor; Boston, Massachusetts 02110-1491, Telephone: (617) 289-0111, Fax: 617-289-0150, TDD: 877-521-2172; or Program Quality Assurance Services, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906, Telephone: 781-338-3700, TTY: N.E.T. Relay: 1-800-439-2370, FAX: 781-338-3710. Employees also have the right to seek a remedy at any time at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), John F. Kennedy Federal Building, 475 Government Center, Boston, MA 02203-0506; 1-800-669-4000 or 1-800-669-6820 (TTY) and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) at One Ashburton Place, Suite 601, Boston, MA 02018; 617-994-6000 or 617-994-6196 (TTY).

Complaint Handling and Investigation

- A. The school principal shall promptly inform the relevant Civil Rights Coordinator and the person(s) who is the subject of the Complaint that a Complaint has been received.
- B. After notifying the appropriate Civil Rights Coordinator, the school principal or designee may pursue an informal resolution of the Complaint with the agreement of the parties involved. Informal resolution is optional, and the Complainant may elect to proceed according to the formal resolution procedure at any time prior to the completion of the informal resolution.
- C. Under the formal resolution procedure, the Complaint will be investigated by the school principal or other individual designated by the school principal or Civil Rights Coordinator. Any Complaint about an employee who holds a supervisory position shall be investigated by a person who is not subject to that supervisor's authority. Any Complaint about the Superintendent should be submitted to the School Committee Chair, who will consult with legal counsel concerning handling the investigation of the Complaint.
 - 1. The Complainant shall have the opportunity to identify witnesses and other relevant evidence to the investigator.
 - 2. The person who is the subject of the Complaint will be provided with an opportunity to be heard as part of the investigation including the opportunity to provide relevant information and identify witnesses for the investigator's consideration.
 - 3. The privacy rights of all parties to the Complaint shall be maintained in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.
 - 4. The investigator will keep a written record of the investigation process.

5. The investigator may take interim remedial measures to reduce the risk of further discrimination or harassment while the investigation is pending.
 6. The investigation shall be completed within fifteen (15) school days of the date of the receipt of the Complaint.
 7. The investigator may extend the investigation period beyond fifteen (15) school days because of extenuating circumstances, including but not limited to availability and cooperation of witnesses, complexity of the investigation, school vacation periods, and the involvement of law enforcement and other outside agency investigations. If the investigator extends the investigation, he or she will notify the Complainant of the extension.
 8. If a complaint or report of discrimination or harassment is received after June 1 of a given school year, the investigator will attempt to complete the investigation by the end of the school year. In the event that the investigation extends beyond the last day of school, the District will make reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within the above-referenced time frame, but may extend the investigation period to account for the availability of witnesses during the summer vacation period. If the investigator extends the investigation, he or she will notify the Complainant of the extension and make reasonable efforts to interview the witnesses during the summer vacation period.
 9. Nothing in this procedure will preclude the investigator, in his or her discretion, from completing the investigation sooner than the fifteen (15) school days described above.
- D. If the investigator determines that discrimination or harassment has occurred, the District shall take steps to eliminate the discriminatory hostile environment, which may include but is not limited to:
1. Determining what disciplinary action should be taken against the person(s) who engaged in discrimination or harassment, if any;
 2. Determining what steps are necessary to prevent recurrence of any discriminatory behavior, including but not limited to harassment, and to correct its discriminatory effects if appropriate; and
 3. Informing the Complainant and the person(s) who was the subject of the Complaint of the results of the investigation (in accordance with applicable state and federal privacy laws) within twenty (20) school days of receipt of the Complaint, unless the investigation is extended under the provision described above.
- E. If the Complainant or, in the case of a student, the student's parents/legal guardians, is/are dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, an appeal may be made to the appropriate Civil Rights Coordinator within ten (10) school days after receiving notice of the outcome of the investigation. In the appeal, the appellant should identify any specific alleged factual or legal errors and explain why the errors should result in a different conclusion. The Civil Rights Coordinator shall review the investigation and may conduct further investigation if deemed appropriate. Within seven (7) school days of receipt of any such appeal, the Civil Rights Coordinator shall decide whether or not to reopen the investigation, uphold the principal or designee's determination, or reverse the principal or designee's determination. The Civil Rights Coordinator shall provide written notification of that determination to both the Complainant and the accused. The Civil Rights Coordinator's decision shall be final, subject to further appeal to the Superintendent.
- F. If the Complainant or, in the case of a student, the student's parents/legal guardians, is/are dissatisfied with the decision of the Civil Rights Coordinator, an appeal may be submitted to

the Superintendent within seven (7) calendar days after receiving notice of the Civil Rights Coordinator's decision. The Superintendent will consider the appeal. The Superintendent's decision shall be final.

Student Discipline and Safety

Each school has its own set of rules - known as school-based rules - that its students are expected to follow. If a student breaks a school-based rule, he or she may be disciplined. School-based rules are written by a committee at each school and are reviewed annually. In addition to following its own school-based rules, every school also must follow the *HPS Student Code of Conduct* established by the school district. *HPS Student Code of Conduct* is based upon the laws, rules, regulations and policies that seek to allow access to education for all while protecting the due process rights of the individual. **For the full text of this document, please visit our website.** Both school-based rules and the *HPS Student Code of Conduct* apply to behavior of students while they are in school, at a school-sponsored activity, and on their way to and from school.

Student Lockers

Many HPS schools have lockers for students. Lockers are a privilege. Students who are assigned lockers must abide by the following conditions: Every effort should be made to keep the lockers secure and allow for the privacy of its contents. Students should not share lockers unless authorized to do so by the person in charge. Writing graffiti or failure to keep lockers neat and clean will not be tolerated. Lockers are for the students' clothing and instructional materials such as books, notes, projects, supplies, lunches, etc. Students must comply with their school's locker regulations, including scheduled times for access, etc. Students should take what they need from their lockers at the end of the school day. Since lockers are property of the school department, the schools maintain the right to search lockers and students are on notice that they do not have an expectation of privacy in school lockers. The schools will conduct announced and unannounced locker inspections. HPS is not responsible for the loss of property during the school year. HPS also is not responsible for the loss of property left in a locker after the last school day. These rules and regulations along with the school's school-based procedures also apply to students' desks.

Hazing

Hazing means any conduct or method of initiation into a student class or group, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any other student. All high school students will be required to sign a statement from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding hazing. Hazing is a violation of school policy. Students involved in hazing may be suspended. A criminal complaint will be filed. Information regarding this subject is distributed to all students at the opening of school.

Crime of Hazing; Definition; Penalty

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term hazing as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or person, which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Duty to Report Hazing

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime, shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine or not more than one thousand dollars.

Statutes to be Provided to Student Groups; Compliance Statement and Discipline Policy

Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operating on or in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebe, pledge or applicant for membership in such group or organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. An officer of each such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen shall sign an acknowledgment stating that such group, organization or individual has received a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each secondary school and each public or private school or college shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education, certifying that such institution has complied with the provisions of this section and also certifying that said school has adopted a disciplinary policy with regards to the organizers and participants of hazing. The Board of Regents and, in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such a report.

Vandalism

No one is to injure, destroy, deface or trespass on school property. All students and staff are urged to treat school buildings with care and respect. The school department will take the parents/guardians to court. People with any information about damage done to the building or its contents shall report it to the school's principal. Writing or spraying inappropriately on or around the school - graffiti, carving on a desk, mishandling a book, breaking a window, destroying equipment, or damaging materials are all infringements on the right of the school community to have a clean environment. Students who have vandalized and the parents/guardians will be held responsible.

Bullying

The Holyoke Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyberbullying. Pages 1-8 of this document focus on developing and creating a safe, positive and productive school climate and culture. Pages 9-17 focus on procedures for reporting and responding to incidences of bullying.

Definitions

Bullying may take a variety of forms. It is unacceptable in a school or work environment. As a result, no student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyberbullying in the Holyoke Public Schools:

- **“Bullying”** means the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of an unwelcome written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage the target’s property; student or employee, (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyberbullying.
- **“Cyberbullying”** means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo-electronic or photo optical system, including but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communication. Cyberbullying shall also include (i) knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creator or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or persons. Cyberbullying may occur through the use of data, telephone or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network or any public education institute. As used in this Section, “electronic communication” also means any communication through an electronic device including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular phone, computer or pager.
- **“Aggressor”** is a student or member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.
- **“Target”** is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.
- **“Retaliation”** means any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation about bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Prohibition Against Bullying, Cyberbullying and Retaliation

Bullying and retaliation are strictly prohibited in the following ways:

- On school grounds

- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds
- At school bus stops
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the Holyoke Public Schools.

Bullying and cyberbullying and retaliation are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the Holyoke school district if the act or acts in question include any or all of the following criteria:

- create a hostile environment at school for the target
- infringe on the rights of the target at school
- materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school

Reporting Bullying or Retaliation

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member will be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. The Holyoke School district makes a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, a **Bullying Reporting Form**, a dedicated mailing address, and an email address.

Use of a Bullying Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school or district:

- includes a copy of the Bullying Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians
- makes it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the principal or designee; and
- posts it on the district's website.

The Bullying Reporting Form is made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

At the beginning of each school year, the school or district provides the school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal or designee, is incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school or district website, and in information about the *Bullying and Intervention Implementation Plan* that is made available to parents or guardians.

Reporting by Staff

A staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others

The Holyoke Public Schools expect students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students are provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee.

Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee takes steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan (see attached sample plan); pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

In determining the steps necessary to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents, the principal or designee shall consider that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

The principal or designee is responsible for implementing appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation

Each school building administrator establishes a safety plan for target(s) of bullying and retaliation/harassment. This includes strategies to protect students who report bullying and retaliation, provide information during an investigation, and/or who witness or provide reliable information about an act of bullying and retaliation.

The safety plan may also be used for an aggressor, or even a bystander, in order for them to more effectively manage troublesome times/areas of the school, such as unstructured play and less supervised places.

The safety plan includes the following elements:

- Selection of a “safe zone”- an area identified by the target where he or she can go to get help from a trusted adult
- A mechanism for informing all relevant adults (teachers, coaches, bus drivers, counselors and other support staff) of the situation between the aggressor(s) and target(s)
- A plan for monitoring of less structured areas of the school environment, such as buses, lunchroom and playground
- Follow-up with parents/guardians of all involved to inform them of actions being taken
- Protection of the confidentiality of the reporter and witnesses wherever possible

- Assessment of effectiveness of the above interventions on a regular basis making necessary adjustments and revisions in order to meet the safety needs of the target

Obligations to Notify Others

- **Preliminary Notice to Parents or Guardians.** There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to investigation or an investigative determination. Any such Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00. Parents are provided information about action steps that will be put in place during the investigation process.
- **Notice to another School or District.** If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, nonpublic school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.
- **Notice to Law Enforcement.** At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the Holyoke Police Department. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the Holyoke Police Department if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor. In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Implementation Plan* and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer (if any) and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

Investigation

Upon receipt of a report or complaint that would, if true, constitute bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, the principal or principal's designee promptly commences an investigation. In investigating any such complaint, the principal or designee interviews students, staff, and any witnesses to the alleged conduct. To the extent practicable and consistent with the principal's obligation to act promptly and to thoroughly investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee maintains confidentiality during the investigative process and does not disclose unnecessary or confidential information to interview subjects. During any such interviews, the principal informs the target, aggressor, and all witnesses that retaliatory treatment of any individual for reporting or lack of cooperation with an investigation of bullying will result in disciplinary action that may include suspension or expulsion from the school.

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee is required to maintain confidentiality during the investigative process.

The principal or designee will remind the alleged student aggressor, target, and witnesses of the following: the importance of the investigation; their obligation to be truthful; and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation. Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation are consistent with school or district policies and procedures for bullying investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee consults with legal counsel about the investigation.

At any point after receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, the principal notifies the Holyoke Police Department and School Resource Officer if the principal has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor. Notice shall be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. The principal documents the reasons for his or her decision to notify law enforcement. Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to require reporting to a law enforcement agency in situations in which bullying and retaliation can be handled appropriately within the school district or school.

Determinations

Within fourteen (14) school days of the principal's receipt of the complaint of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, the principal makes a determination based upon all the facts and circumstances. If, after the investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal determines what remedial action may be required, if any, and determines what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary. The principal's findings and determinations are documented in writing on the Bullying Reporting Form.

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the student's teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

Notice of Investigative Findings

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee promptly notifies parents or guardians of the target and aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. While prior notice of an investigation shall not be required, the principal shall not be precluded from notifying the parents of a target or aggressor prior to completion of the principal's investigation. This communication will be done in the primary language of the home.

If the alleged target and alleged aggressor attend different schools, the principal receiving the report will inform the principal of the other student's school, who shall notify the student's parent of the report and procedures.

In notifying the parents of a target or aggressor of an investigation or the principal's findings thereon, the principal maintains the privacy and confidentiality of any individual or child who is not the child of the parents to whom the notice is provided. The principal ensures that any notice to the parents complies with applicable state regulations including, but not limited to, 603 CMR 49.00, and shall not report specific information to the target's parent(s) about the disciplinary action taken against an aggressor unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

The notice to the parents or guardians of the target must include information about the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's ("DESE") problem resolution system and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the problem resolution system.

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information is also available at the Superintendent's office.

Domestic Violence

HPS is committed to providing a learning environment in which dating violence is not tolerated. Consistent with this philosophy, we are committed to promoting an environment free from dating violence. Accordingly, we seek to increase awareness of teen dating violence and help in responding to the needs of victims and children who are witnesses to such violence. Teen dating violence occurring in any setting is unlawful and teen dating violence occurring in any school setting will not be tolerated. Further, retaliation against an individual who has complained about teen dating violence or cooperated in an investigation of teen dating violence will not be tolerated. HPS will respond promptly to complaints and reports of teen dating violence or retaliation and corrective action will be taken where necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate. The definitions used in this policy are as follows:

Domestic Violence/Interpersonal Violence

Domestic Violence is a pattern of coercive behavior in which one partner attempts to control another through threats or actual use of tactics, which may include any or all of the following: physical, sexual, verbal, financial, psychological abuse and/or through the use of technology (i.e. cyberbullying). Domestic Violence affects every community across the country, regardless of ethnic group, culture, or background. People of all ages, income levels, faiths, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and education levels experience domestic violence.

Teen Dating Violence

Dating violence (or relationship abuse) is a pattern of over-controlling behavior that someone uses against their girlfriend or boyfriend. Dating violence can take many forms, including mental/emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse and/or through the use of technology (i.e. cyberbullying). Someone may experience dating violence even if there is no physical abuse. It can occur in both casual dating situations and serious, long-term relationships.

Child Witness/Exposure to Domestic Violence

Witnessing violence can affect every aspect of a child's life, growth, and development. Exposure can include seeing or hearing the abuse, discovering the effects of abuse (their parent/guardian's injuries or broken furniture, etc.) and/or being injured/hurt defending a parent/guardian against the abusive behavior.

Family Violence

Family Violence is a broader definition, including child abuse, elder abuse, and other violent acts between family members.

Victim/Survivor/Battered

Interchangeable terms to refer to the person who has been hurt, abused or threatened with harm, whether or not there has been actual physical abuse.

Abuser/Perpetrator/Batterer

Interchangeable terms to refer to the person inflicting the abuse and causing harm, whether or not there has been actual physical abuse. Additionally, such conduct may also constitute harassment, a form of discrimination that is prohibited by federal and state law; and/or such conduct may constitute bullying, including without limitation, cyberbullying, which is prohibited by state law. Such conduct also is

prohibited by HPS' Non-Discrimination Policy and Grievance Procedure for Discrimination and Harassment Complaints, Anti-Violence Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Recognizing Warning Signs

Signs of abusive behavior include: acting really jealous if his/her girlfriend/boyfriend talks to others, trying to decide what the other should do, blowing disagreements out of proportion, constantly threatening to break up, losing his/her temper verbally, blaming the other for their own problems, physically and emotionally hurting their partner, or acts of cyberbullying.

Signs of victimization

Signs include constantly cancelling plans for reasons that do not sound right, always worrying about making their boyfriend/girlfriend angry, giving up things that are important to them, showing signs of physical abuse, such as bruises or cuts, getting pressured into having sex or feeling like a sex object, having a boyfriend/girlfriend that wants them to be available all the time, and becoming isolated from family or friends, or been cyberbullied.

Procedure for Reporting Teen Dating Violence

A student who believes that he/she has been a victim of teen dating violence, believes that he/she is in danger of teen dating violence, or has a restraining order against an individual, may report the matter to any of the following individuals: (1) principal, (2) assistant principal, (3) dean, (4) teacher, or (5) school nurse. The person who receives the report must immediately notify the principal of school. Additionally, any employee who observes an incident of teen dating violence on school property or at a school related event, must immediately notify the principal. The principal must immediately do the following: (1) notify the parents/guardians of the victim, and (2) notify the Police. The principal must also refer the student and/or the student's parents/guardians to HPS Non-Discrimination Policy and Grievance Procedure for Discrimination/Harassment Complaints which addresses procedures for informal resolution and filing of formal complaints and HPS Anti-Bullying Policy and provide copies of the same upon request.

When a report of teen dating violence is received, whether it occurred off school property or has occurred on school property, on the way to or from school or at a school related event, or a violation of a restraining order on school property, on the way to or from school or at a school related event is received, HPS will act promptly to notify the appropriate authorities of the alleged incident. Reporting of any such incident will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. It is important to take third party information seriously where teen dating violence is concerned. It is recommended that an appropriately trained member of the school staff approach the student to discuss what has been heard and potential concerns. If abuse is acknowledged, a "safety plan" should be worked on, in addition to recommending and sharing referrals for counseling, support groups, and police/court assistance. Additionally, school staff must remember to comply with all statutory reporting obligations for suspected abuse and neglect (51A reporting). Filing of 51A complaints should be done by following HPS' Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Guidelines, including notifying the principal of the suspected abuse and neglect. Furthermore, school staff also must remember to report all crimes to the police. Reporting of any such incident will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

Searches

The right of inspection of students' school lockers is inherent in the authority granted to school committees and administrators. This authority may be exercised as needed in the interest of safeguarding children, their own and school property. Nevertheless, exercise of that authority by school officials places unusual demands upon their judgment so as to protect each child's constitutional rights to

personal privacy and protection from coercion and to act in the best interest of all students and the schools. Searches by school officials of students' automobiles or the student will be conducted in a way that protects the students' rights consistent with the responsibility of the school system to provide an atmosphere conducive to the educational process.

Search of School Lockers, Desks and Computers

Students may be issued lockers, with or without private combinations, desks, computers, etc., at the opening of school or thereafter. Students should have no expectation of privacy in their school-issued lockers, desks, computers, etc. Lockers, desks and computers are for the use of students but remain the property of HPS. Students are advised that their lockers, desks, computers, etc., may be inspected without notice by school administrators to insure cleanliness, safety, and adherence to federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Search of Student, Clothing, Personal Possessions, Automobile

The legality of a search of a student, his/her clothing, possessions, and/or automobile depends simply on the reasonableness, under all circumstances, of the search. The search by a school official is "justified at its inception" when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that a student or students have violated either the law or the rules of the school. Such a search is permissible in its scope when the measures adopted are reasonably related to the objectives of the search and are not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student(s) and the nature of the infraction.

Student Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities

HPS Administration reserves the right to deny admission to extracurricular activities to anyone who poses a potential threat to the safety and security of spectators and participants. Students who fall under the conditions listed below will be excluded from athletic, drama, music, dances, prom, field trip and other extracurricular activities that have spectators:

- Students serving a suspension;
- Former students who have been expelled;

Any student who falls within the above categories who feels that his/her behavior warrants consideration for admittance must submit a request to his/her Principal. HPS also reserve the right to exclude from any athletic, drama, music, dances, proms, field trips, and other extracurricular activities that have spectators, members of the community who:

- Have been involved in a serious incident in the community;
- Have a history of violence; and/or
- Have been disruptive and/or disrespectful to staff.

Gang Activity/Secret Societies

The goal of the School Committee is to keep District schools and students free from the threats or harmful influence of any gang. For purposes of this policy, gang is defined as any group, secret society, organization or association that advocates drug use, violence, ethnic intimidation, or disruptive or illegal behavior. The Principal or his/her designee shall maintain supervision of school premises to deter intimidation of students and confrontations between members of different gangs.

The Superintendent shall establish open lines of communication with local law enforcement agencies so as to share information and provide mutual support in this effort within appropriate legal guidelines.

The Superintendent shall provide in-service training to help staff members identify gangs and gang symbols, recognize early manifestations of disruptive activities, and respond appropriately. Staff members shall be informed about conflict management techniques and alerted to intervention measures and community resources that may help students.

Symbols

The Holyoke Public Schools finds that gang symbols are inherently disruptive to the educational process, and therefore prohibits the presence of any insignia, apparel, jewelry, accessory, notebook or other school supply, or manner of grooming which by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute denotes membership in gangs. The School Committee further prohibits any demonstration of gang membership through the use of hand gestures, graffiti, or printed materials. This policy shall be applied by the Principal or his/her designee as the need for it arises individual school sites. A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

Prevention Education

The Holyoke Public Schools recognizes that students may become involved in gangs without understanding the consequences of such membership. Early intervention is a key component of efforts to break the cycle of such memberships. Therefore, gang violence prevention information shall be made available in the elementary, middle, and high schools as appropriate.

Secret Societies

Fraternities, sororities and/or secret societies shall not receive District or building recognition in any manner. A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

Gun-Free School Act

Any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school or to a school-related function shall be excluded from the HPS for a period of not less than one year, except as determined by the Superintendent on a case-by-case basis. The definition of “firearm” for purposes of this section includes, but is not limited to, guns (including a starter gun), bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines, and similar devices.

Laws Re: Drugs and Alcohol,

In addition to school disciplinary measures regarding drugs, alcohol and gang-related activities, the following state laws are currently in effect:

Use of Fake I.D. to Purchase Alcohol—6 months to 1 year loss of license. Use of a fake I.D. to purchase alcohol or providing false information to obtain a liquor I.D. or duplicate license from the Registry of Motor Vehicles will result in the loss of driver's license for 6 months to a year. Also, fines and a jail sentence may be imposed by the courts.

Any Drug Conviction, Including Possession—up to 5 years loss of license. Conviction for a drug offense, including possession of even a small amount of an illegal drug, will result in the loss of driver's license for up to 5 years in addition to court ordered penalties. If younger than 18, the issuance of driver's license may be delayed until age 21.

Dealing Drugs Near Schools—Mandatory 2-year jail sentence. A conviction for selling drugs within 1,000 feet of school property in Massachusetts will result in a minimum mandatory two-year jail sentence plus a fine of up to \$10,000.

Police Department/School District Memorandum of Agreement (MOU)

A Memorandum of Agreement is signed annually between the Holyoke Public Schools and the Holyoke Public Students. The purpose of this Agreement is to formalize and clarify the partnership between the District and the Police Department to implement a School Resource Officer (“SRO”) program in order to promote school safety; help maintain a positive school climate for all students, families, and staff; enhance cultural understanding between students and law enforcement; promote school participation and completion by students; facilitate appropriate information-sharing; and inform the Parties’ collaborative relationship to best serve the school community.

Student Dress Code

By law, the rights of students as to a personal dress and appearance may not be abridged except if school officials determine that such personal dress and appearance violate reasonable standards of health, safety, cleanliness, and propriety.

Personal dress and appearance which is vulgar or plainly offensive or which disrupts or substantially interferes with the educational process or with another student's ability to receive an education is prohibited.

Hats, bandanas and sweatbands in school are inherently disruptive and are not allowed, with an exception for religious headwear. Students should remove these items when entering the school building and place them in their lockers or book bags for the remainder of the day.

Footwear, full shirts/tops, and pants, shorts, dresses, or skirts must be worn while a student is attending school.

In addition, a student’s personal dress and appearance must comply with all OSHA and safety regulations while attending a lab or shop.

Security Cameras

The Holyoke Public Schools reserves the right to utilize security cameras in common areas across its schools in order to maintain safety and security.

Emergency Plans

Each school in HPS is required to maintain an Emergency Response Plan and annually train its staff on these plans. These plans are kept for the purposes of our staff members given the sensitivity of the information intended to keep students and staff safe during a crisis.

Transportation

Transportation Eligibility

Students will be entitled to transportation to and from school at the expense of the public schools when such transportation conforms with applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws. State law requires that Districts provide transportation for: (a) students living at least two miles from school, (b) K-6 students who live more than one mile from the nearest bus stop, and (c) students with transportation provided per an Individualized Education Program.

Additionally, the District will provide transportation for students as follows:

- GRADES K - 5: Students living more than one mile from school;
- GRADES 6-8: Students living more than one and one-half miles from school;
- GRADES 9 -12: Students living more than two miles from school.

Exceptions to these guidelines may be made at the discretion of the Superintendent or his/her designee. This will apply particularly to any student who must travel in a hazardous area to and from school.

School Bus information

Students should arrive at the bus stop at least ten minutes prior to the time listed at the location closest to the home. Bus arrival times may change due to traffic and weather conditions.

***Students in Pre-K through 1st grade must be met by a parent or authorized adult. Bus drivers will not drop off these students without an authorized adult present.**

If your child rides a bus and you are unsure of when he/she will arrive because the bus is delayed, you should call Durham Transportation at **(413) 315-4119 with your route # information handy to assist with them getting you answers.**

Students that receive transportation through Van Pool and you are unsure of when your child will be arriving because of a bus delayed, you should call Van Pool at (413) 599-1616.

If you suspect your child was not dropped off as expected, he or she might have been dropped off at the Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center, located at [57 Suffolk Street](#), First Floor (Latchkey Program). You should call Durham first to determine if the bus routes have been completed. If they have, we ask that you call **(413) 534-2000 ext 1130 or 1103** to verify if your child has been dropped off at our Latchkey Program (see below). For all other questions that aren't answered by Durham or by our Latchkey staff, please contact Maria Roman, Transportation Manager for the Holyoke Public Schools at: (413) 534-2000 x1640

Latch Key Program

Students are brought to the Latch Key Program located at the Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center (57 Suffolk Street) for the following reasons:

- Parent is not present at drop off for a Prek-Grade 1 student
- A driver feels uncomfortable leaving students off at a stop when no familiar adult is present
- Poor weather conditions and/or road closures may prevent a bus from getting to the regular bus stop
- Other special circumstances that require a parent to be present

Once delivered to the Latch Key Program, trained staff members are there to supervise the students. Staff record the students' names, school, time of drop off and the reasons why they could not be released from the bus that day in the daily sign-out log. Staff will attempt to make immediate contact with the parent/guardian and notify them to come to the Latch Key Program and pick up their child. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, staff will then try to notify one of the student's emergency contact persons.

Transportation Safety & Discipline

School Leader Responsibilities

The school bus is considered to be an "extension of the classroom" in terms of expected student behavior and appropriate follow-up by school administrators. This policy reinforces behavior standards for Holyoke Public School students (District Code of Conduct). The Principal is responsible for addressing incidents that occur on school busses as they would be addressed had they occurred at the school. The principal will also communicate student/parent obligations at the start of the school year via student presentations and notification to parents. The Principal will apply all approved Holyoke Public Schools policies and procedures to matters of regular transportation service as well as field trips, athletic and late bus runs.

Incident Reporting and Response

The principal will report all incidents, maintain all records and take appropriate action. If an incident is to occur that reaches the principal and requires an incident report be filed they should fill out the incident report and get a copy to the bus company and transportation manager. Whenever the bus driver/bus company writes incident reports or complaints they will send a copy to the principal of the building and a separate copy to the Transportation Manager. The expectation is that the building principal is dealing with whatever complain has been filed that suggests students or school staff were causing the complaint or incident. In the event of a school transportation incident resulting in student injury, the school principal or designee will contact the parent(s) and provide appropriate information informing them of the incident. The principal will maintain copies of all incident reports filed by drivers and utilize reports for remedial purposes.

Safety Education and Evacuation Drills

The Principal will support all safety education efforts relative to transportation and initiate programs within the first month of the school year. The majority of the work is done by the transportation company but some coordination and cooperation from Principals is required. School bus evacuation drills are to be conducted in accordance with M.G.L., Chapter 90, Section 9B, which mandates school bus evacuation instruction and drills. Evidence of completed instruction and drills must be kept on file by the Principal. HPS Transportation and the transportation vendor will assist school administrators conducting bus evacuation drills as required by M.G.L. Chapter 90, section 9B.

Video Cameras

All buses have been equipped with videotape for the primary purpose of preventing disciplinary problems and vandalism on the bus.

School Bus Rules and Expectations:

1. If a student is unable to get on a bus due to being physically, verbally, or otherwise aggressive, the student should be brought back into the school building and de-escalated until he/she is safe to board the bus to ride home.
2. If the student is unable to de-escalate with trained staff and Administration, then parents should be called to come to the school to assist with the situation.
3. All rules of conduct that apply on school property also apply on the bus.
4. Students should not create any disturbance on the bus that may distract the driver's from his/her driving.
5. Students should not throw anything in or out of the bus at anytime.
6. Aisles should be kept clear at all times
7. No part of the body should be extended from the window at any time.
8. The emergency door and emergency window should ONLY be used in emergencies.
9. The driver is delegated the same authority as the teacher to make and enforce rules for those whom she/he is responsible.

Initial concern

1. The bus driver will talk with the student and ask for appropriate behaviors.
2. The bus driver may also choose to let administration know of the behavior to have administration contact the parents to notify them of the concern.
3. Bus driver will complete bus incident form and send to central office.

First Referral

- The school administrator will meet with the student and discuss the problem.
- A plan to correct the problem will be established.
- The school Administrator will send a copy of the referral home to the parents, identifying the plan of action and warning the students and parents of the consequences of future referrals.
- A copy of the referral and related information will be sent to the family and kept on file at school.

Second referral

- The school administrator will meet with the student and discuss the bus incident/concern.
- A meeting may be scheduled between the school Administration, parent and student to revise the plan of action to ensure bus safety.
- The school administrator will send a copy of the referral home to the parents, identifying the plan of action and warning the students and parents of the consequences of future referrals.
- A copy of the referral and related information will be sent to the family and kept on file at the school.

Third referral

- The school administrator will meet with the student and family to discuss the recurring policy problem that has been presented.
- In most cases, the school administrator can issue a school based detention for the bus infraction or depending on the severity of the situation a bus suspension.

Personal Property Loss or Theft

School personnel should strongly encourage families to be sure that children do not bring valuable items to school. If the presence of such items at school causes a disruption, school based rules may allow school personnel to take a student's personal property away from that student while at school. The School-Based Rules also may state that certain items should not be brought to school in the first place. School personnel should make every reasonable effort to return all personal property to the student or parent that was taken away from the student by administration. However, school personnel are not responsible for replacing a student's lost or stolen personal property or compensating the family for the value of that property.

Student Services and Special Education

Child Requiring Assistance

The focus of the courts and school department with these offenders, regardless of age, is on early intervention. Massachusetts General Laws defines a habitual truant and a repeated school offender as a child that "persistently and willfully fails to attend school, is truant, or persistently violates the lawful and

reasonable regulations of his or her school.” Under M.G.L. c.76, §2, parents/guardians are required to cause a child to attend school, and, if he/she fails to do so for more than seven day sessions or fourteen half-day sessions within any period of six months, the parent/guardian shall on a complaint by the supervisor of attendance, be punished by a fine. Additionally, schools may seek a CRA application for any child between the ages of 6 and up to 18 who is habitually truant because she/he has eight or more unexcused absences in a school quarter, or because the child has repeatedly failed to obey school rules. When internal school intervention efforts fail to resolve a chronic absence or tardiness, habitual truancy or repeated violations of school rules, the school department may initiate a CRA action with the court. Under the law, the Juvenile Court has access to all school information relative to these cases.

Child Abuse

Section 51A of Chapter 119 of the Massachusetts General Laws requires that certain persons who in their professional capacity have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen (18) years is suffering serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse, including sexual abuse, or neglect, including malnutrition, inflicted upon him or her shall immediately, via telephone, report this abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families (“DCF”). Professionals who must report cases of child abuse or neglect to the DCF include: physicians, medical interns, nurses, teachers, educational administrators, guidance counselors, family counselors, probation officers, school attendance officers, social workers, psychologists, and policemen. The telephone report should be made either to the appropriate area office or via the 24-hour reporting hotline: 1-800-792- 5200. Within forty-eight (48) hours, these professionals are required under Massachusetts law to notify DCF in writing using a standard DCF report form. A new report form must be completed for each new injury or re-injury. Staff who have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen is suffering from serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse, including sexual abuse, or neglect, including malnutrition should notify their school principal/head of upper school immediately in order for a 51A report to be filed. Child abuse and neglect is any incident in which there is reasonable cause to believe that a child’s physical or mental health or welfare is harmed or is threatened with substantial risk of harm through abuse or neglect by a person (or persons) responsible for the child’s health or welfare, including personnel in the public school system must be reported. Truancy, by itself, is not a reportable matter.

Abuse includes:

- physical, mental, or emotional injury by other than accidental means, i.e., beatings, cuttings, burns, broken bones, multiple bruises;
- physical dependency on an addictive drug at birth;
- any sexual act against another person either by force, or by threat of force or bodily injury, or against the person’s will. This includes a sexual act against another person who is incapable of giving consent either because of her/his temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity or because s/he is a minor. Such crimes as indecent assault and battery, rape, rape with force, rape and abuse, assault with intent to rape and unnatural and lascivious acts constitute a sexual assault.
 - Indecent assault and battery includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate and unwanted touching of private body parts. A person under the age of 14 is legally unable to consent to this type of sexual activity.

- Neglect is deemed to exist when the person or persons responsible for a child’s care, although financially able to do so, fail to provide the child with: adequate food, clothing, shelter, education or medical care and/or proper supervision and/or guardianship.

Restraint Prevention and Behavior Supports

Overview

The Holyoke Public Schools (“the District”) seeks to ensure that every student is free from the use of physical restraint that is inconsistent with the requirements of 603 C.M.R. 46.00. Physical restraint is an emergency measure of last resort. It may be administered only when necessary to protect a student and/or school community member from assault or imminent, serious physical harm. When, based on this standard, physical restraint is necessary, staff will strive to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint. The District will annually review its Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures, provide it to all District staff, and make it available to parents of enrolled students.

Definitions

Mechanical Restraint: the use of any device or equipment to restrict a student’s freedom of movement. The term does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel, or utilized by a student that have been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related services professional, and are used for the specific and approved positioning or protective purposes for which such devices were designed. Examples of such devices include: adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance, or alignment to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports; vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle; restraints for medical immobilization; or orthopedically prescribed devices that permit a student to participate in activities without risk of harm.

Medication Restraint: the administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior. Medication prescribed by a licensed physician and authorized by the parent for administration in the school setting is not medication restraint.

Physical Escort: a temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location.

Physical Restraint: direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student’s freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

Principal: instructional leader of a public school education program or his or her designee.

Prone Restraint: a physical restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student’s body to keep the student in the face-down position.

Seclusion: involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time-out as defined below.

Time-Out: a behavioral support strategy, developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1), in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff

member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed.

DESE's *Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2016-1*, issued on July 31, 2015, provides the following additional definitions pertaining to time-out:

Inclusionary time-out: when the student is removed from positive reinforcement or full participation in classroom activities while remaining in the classroom.

Exclusionary time-out: the separation of the student from the rest of the class either through complete visual separation or from actual physical separation.

Prohibitions

Chemical restraint, mechanical restraint and seclusion are prohibited in all public school education programs.

Specific Rights

Neither 603 C.M.R. 46.00 nor this policy prohibits: (1) any teacher, employee or agent of the District from using reasonable force to protect students, others or themselves from imminent, serious, physical harm; (2) any individual from reporting to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or other individual; (3) law enforcement, judicial authorities or school security personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including the physical detainment of a student or person alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk; or (4) an individual from reporting neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 119 § 51A.

DESE Technical Assistance on use of Time-out

DESE's *Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2016-1*, issued on July 31, 2015, explains the differences between "inclusionary time-out" and "exclusionary time-out" as follows:

- "Inclusionary time-out": when the student is removed from positive reinforcement or full participation in classroom activities while remaining in the classroom. The use of "inclusionary time-out" functions well as a behavior support strategy while allowing the student to remain fully aware of the learning activities of the classroom. "Inclusionary time-out" includes practices used by teachers as part of their classroom behavior support tools, such as "planned ignoring," asking students to put their heads down, or placing a student in a different location within the classroom. These strategies, used to reduce external stimuli in the student's environment while keeping the student physically present and involved in learning, have proven to be useful tools for classroom management. If the student is not "separated from the learning activity" or the classroom, the student will be in "inclusionary time-out" and the requirements that accompany the use of "exclusionary time-out," listed below, do not apply. A student is not "separated from the learning activity" if the student is physically present in the classroom and remains fully aware of the learning activities. "Inclusionary time-out" does not include walled off "time-out" rooms located within the classroom; use of those is considered to be "exclusionary time-out."
- "Exclusionary time-out": the separation of the student from the rest of the class either through complete visual separation or from actual physical separation. The following requirements apply to the use of "exclusionary time-out":
 - "Exclusionary time-out" may be used only for the purpose of calming;
 - During "exclusionary time-out," the student must be continuously observed by a staff member;

- The staff member will either be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times;
- The space used for “exclusionary time-out” must be clean, safe, sanitary and appropriate for calming;
- Unless it poses a safety risk, a staff member must be physically present with the student who is in an exclusionary time-out setting;
- If it is not safe for the staff member to be present with the student, the student may be left in the time-out setting with the door closed. However, in order to ensure that the student is receiving appropriate support, a school counselor or other behavioral support professional must be immediately available outside of the time-out setting where the individual can continuously observe and communicate with the student as appropriate to determine when the student has calmed;
- Students must never be locked in a room;
- For students displaying self-injurious behavior, a staff member must be physically present in the same setting with the student;
- An “exclusionary time-out” must be terminated as soon as the student has calmed; and
- An “exclusionary time-out” may not extend beyond thirty (30) minutes without the approval of the Principal. A Principal may grant an extension beyond thirty (30) minutes based only on the individual student’s continuing agitation.

Requirement for Use of Physical Restraint

Physical restraint is considered an emergency procedure of last resort. This means that it may be used only when the student’s behavior poses a threat of assault or imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others; *and* the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances.

Physical restraint may never be used for punishment. Physical restraint may not be used as a response to a student’s property damage, disruption of school order, refusal to comply with rules/directions, or verbal threats, unless the above harm standard is also met.

Brief physical contact to promote safety is not considered a restraint. DESE’s *Question and Answer Guide to Implementation of 603 CMR 46.00, The Regulations for the Prevention of Physical Restraint and Requirements if Used*, issued on July 31, 2015, states that “brief physical contact to promote safety refers to measures taken by school personnel consisting of physical contact with a student for a short period of time solely to prevent imminent harm to a student, for example, physically redirecting a student about to wander on to a busy road, grabbing a student who is about to fall, or breaking up a fight between students.”

Physical restraint may not be used as a standard response for any student. No IEP or written behavioral plan may include physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior.

To ensure student safety, staff will review and consider a student’s medical and psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavior intervention plans. Physical restraint will not be used when it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, communication-related disorders, asthma, seizures, cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, or risk of vomiting.

Safety: During a physical restraint, staff will continuously monitor the student’s physical status, including skin temperature, color and respiration, and make certain that the student is able to breathe and to speak. Staff will use the safest physical restraint method available and appropriate for the situation, and will use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm.

Whenever possible, another adult who is not a participant in the restraint will witness the administration of the restraint.

Duration: A physical restraint must be terminated as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others, or the student demonstrates or expresses significant physical distress (e.g., difficulty breathing, sustained or prolonged crying, sustained or prolonged coughing). If a student demonstrates or expresses significant physical distress, staff will release the restraint and seek medical assistance immediately. **For any student to be restrained for more than twenty (20) minutes, staff must obtain the Principal's approval.** This approval must be based on the student's continued agitation justifying the need for continued restraint.

Follow-up: Follow-up procedures will be implemented after the release of the student from physical restraint. These will include reviewing the incident with the student to address the precipitating behavior, reviewing the incident with staff who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed, and considering whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.

Prone and Floor Restraints: Prone restraints are prohibited, except on an individual basis and when all of the following conditions, which require specific documentation, are met: (1) the student has a documented history of repeatedly causing serious self-injuries and/or injuries to other students or staff; (2) all other forms of physical restraint have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or others; (3) there are no medical contraindications, as documented by a licensed physician; (4) there is psychological or behavioral justification for the use of prone restraint and no psychological or behavioral contraindications, as documented by a licensed mental health professional; (5) the program has obtained consent to use prone restraint in an emergency as set out in 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), and the use of prone restraint is approved in writing by the Principal; and (6) the program has documented all of the above before using prone restraint and maintains the documentation. The only staff authorized to administer a prone restraint are staff who have received in-depth restraint training in accordance with 603 C.M.R. 46.04(3).

Floor restraints are prohibited unless the staff administering the restraint have received in-depth training in accordance with 603 C.M.R. 46.04(3), and these trained staff members determine that such method of restraint is required to provide safety for the student or others.

Reporting Physical Restraint Use

- All physical restraints, regardless of duration, will be reported.
- The reporting process within the school and to the student's parents is as follows: The staff will immediately verbally inform the Principal, and the Principal will make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student's parents within 24 hours of the restraint. The staff will file a detailed written report no later than the next school day, and the Principal will e-mail or mail the written report to the parents within three (3) school days of the restraint. There are no individual waivers permitted for these reporting requirements.
- The report will include: names and job titles of those involved, including observers; date and time the restraint began and ended; the name of the administrator who was verbally informed; the name of the Principal or designee who approved extending the restraint beyond twenty (20) minutes, when such approval was obtained; what was happening before the restraint; the efforts staff used to prevent escalation of the student's behavior, including the specific de-escalation strategies that the staff used; the alternatives to restraint that staff attempted; the justification for initiating the restraint; a description of the holds used and why they were necessary; a description of the student's behavior and reaction during the restraint, and any medical care given; information regarding any further actions the school has taken or may take; and information regarding opportunities for the student's parents to discuss the restraint with the school.

- The reporting process to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is as follows: The District will report to DESE all restraints that result in an injury to either a student or a staff member within three (3) working days of the restraint. The District will also send DESE a copy of the record of physical restraints maintained by the principal pursuant to 603 CMR 46.06(2) for the thirty (30) day period prior to the date of the reported restraint. Additionally, the District will provide DESE with an annual report of its physical restraint use.

Administrative Reviews of Physical Restraint Use

Two types of administrative reviews will be conducted in regards to the use of physical restraint. The Principal will conduct a Weekly Individual Student Review and a Monthly School-Wide Review.

Weekly Individual Student Review: A Weekly Individual Student Review will be conducted in regards to any student who has been restrained multiple times during the week. The Principal will convene a review team to assess the progress and needs of any such student, with the goal of reducing or eliminating future restraint. This team will review and discuss the written restraint reports, analyze the factors that led to the restraint, consider the factors that may have contributed to the escalation of the student's behavior, and develop a written action plan.

Monthly School-Wide Review: A Monthly School-Wide Review will also be conducted by the Principal. In this review, the Principal will consider patterns of restraints, number of restraints, duration of restraints and any injuries caused by restraints. The Principal will assess whether the restraint prevention and management policy needs to be modified and/or whether there is a need for additional staff training on restraint reduction and restraint prevention strategies.

Training Requirements

General Training: The Principal will ensure that all staff receive training on the District's Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures and the requirements for the use of restraint. This training will comply with the requirements of 603 C.M.R. 46.04(2).

In-Depth Training: The Principal will identify and authorize certain staff to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring the proper administration of physical restraint. These identified staff will participate in an in-depth training that complies with the requirements of 603 C.M.R. 46.04(3) and 603 C.M.R. 46.04(4).

Specific Procedures

The Holyoke Public Schools has developed and implemented specific procedures regarding appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention. The Holyoke Public Schools' restraint prevention and behavior support position is driven by the statement below:

It is the position of the Holyoke Public School Department is fully committed to eliminate all physical restraints in school settings. Physical restraint of a student is only used to ensure the immediate safety of the student and/or the school community. Restraint is only used when a student presents serious, imminent harm to self or others situations, using extreme caution and only by trained personnel. No type of restraint is used as a punishment or to control a student's behavior. All incidents where physical restraint and other interventions such as holds or escorts are used, staff will follow district procedures and reporting mandates.

Methods to prevent student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide

The District utilizes a range of techniques in an effort to prevent student violence, self-injurious behavior and suicide, including, but not limited to: individual crisis planning, de-escalation techniques...

Alternatives to physical restraint

Alternatives to physical restraint that may be used in the District include, but are not limited to: verbal prompting, re-directing students, physical escort, time outs, de-escalation techniques, positive behavior support plans, etc.

Description of physical restraints used in emergency situations

The following are the types of restrains that are allowed in an emergency:

- Only use the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm
- Use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation
- Floor restraints, including prone restraints, are prohibited unless an in-depth trained staff member judges that such a method is required to provide safety for the student or others present AND prior consent is obtained for this type of floor restraint procedure.

Restraint information and complaint procedure

Parents are welcome to contact Student Support Director, Dr. Mary Anne Morris at any time to discuss the District's Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures. Additionally, any individual with a concern or complaint regarding the use of a physical restraint should report it to the attention of Dr. Morris. An investigation of the incident leading up to the physical restraint including a full review of the physical techniques utilized and of the space in which the physical restraint occurred will follow. The Complainant will be notified of the results of the investigation.

Student Support Team (SST)

The Student Support Team (SST) process emphasizes that early intervention for struggling students is a function of the general education program and not of special education. The SST is a school-based problem solving team composed primarily of general educators who provide support to teachers to improve the quality of the general education program and reduce the underachievement of students. The team is a common sense approach that offers a systematic process to successfully close the gap through which students have traditionally fallen. The team is not so much a "new" service, but rather it builds on existing services and efforts in order to upgrade the school's ability to respond effectively to student needs. The SST has a vital role in creating a high achieving school as expressed in the following goals: 1) enable teachers to teach students more effectively, 2) enable students to acquire academic and social competencies, achieve standards, become independent learners for life, and 3) create a collaborative culture among all staff. The SST should not be viewed as a gatekeeper to the special education process.

Special Education Referral/Evaluation (603 CMR 28.00)

Students suspected of having an educational disability that may impact their ability to make "effective progress" in general education may be referred for a special education evaluation by a school professional or parent. If someone other than a parent refers the child for evaluation, the parent will be notified of the referral and asked for consent to evaluate. Upon request, a Pre-school Team provides screening and/or evaluation for children ages 3-5 years old. Contact the Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center at (413) 534-2000 Ext. 1100, 1102, or 1103 to make a screening appointment for your child.

Evaluation Team Leaders (ETLs) are responsible for the facilitation of the special education referral and

evaluation process and serve as a liaison between the parents and the school for special education issues. Students are evaluated in all areas of the “suspected disability” by a team of qualified professionals including the student’s teachers. Parents are important members of the TEAM because they know their children best and can provide important information. The TEAM consists of the ETL, the student’s teacher(s), evaluators, an administrator or someone who can authorize the allocation of services, the parents, a parent advocate at the parent’s discretion and the student (if 14 years of age or older). The TEAM reviews all assessments to determine a student’s eligibility for special education services. An Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) is developed for those students who are found eligible detailing the student’s needs and the services he or she will be provided, with parental consent, through the special education process. Parents may obtain copies of all evaluation reports by requesting them from the ETL. Parents will be given a copy of Notice of Procedural Safeguards by the ETL of their child’s school, advising them of their rights under state and federal law.

Special Education Services

Districts must provide special education services to *eligible* students ages 3-21.

Eligible students are students age 3 through age 21 who, because of a disability, are unable to progress effectively in regular education programs even with accommodations and require specialized instruction.

A disability shall mean one or more of the following impairments:

- Autism
- Developmental Delay (applies to ages 3-9)
- Intellectual Impairment
- Sensory Impairment
 - Hearing
 - Vision
 - Deaf Blind
- Neurological Impairment
- Emotional Impairment
- Communication Impairment
- Physical Impairment
- Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability

Discipline-Related Information for Students with Disabilities

Information regarding discipline of students with disabilities can be found in the *HPS Student Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy* established by the school district. For the full text of this document, please visit our website.

Section 504 Accommodation Plan

The Section 504 regulations require a school district to provide a “free appropriate public education” (FAPE) to each qualified student with a disability who is in the school district’s jurisdiction. Under Section 504, a FAPE consists of the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet the student’s individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled

students are met. A variety of accommodations and services may be offered in accordance with 504 Accommodation Plans. The 504 Coordinator for the District is Dr. Mary Anne Morris, Director of Student Services.

Homeless Students

The goal of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act is:

- To ensure that each child or youth experiencing homelessness has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths.
- In any State that has a compulsory residency requirement as a component of the State's compulsory school attendance laws or other laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youths, the State will review and undertake steps to revise such laws, regulations, practices, or policies to ensure that homeless children and youths are afforded the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths.
- Homelessness alone is not sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment.
- Homeless children and youths should have access to the education and other services that such children and youths need to ensure that such children and youths have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held.

Definition of Homeless Children and Youth

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education adopted Section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act regarding the definition of homeless children and youth.

Homeless children and youth are defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes children and youth living in the following situations:

(i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;

(ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human;

(iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and

(iv) migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).[CR2]

Homeless Education Liaison

HPS provides various types of support for students experiencing homelessness in order to help them attend school consistently. Eligible families may be living in shelters or may not have their own lease because they are temporarily staying with family members or acquaintances due to economic hardship or similar reason. Contact the district's Homeless Education Coordinator, at 413-534-2000, ext. 1140 for more details.

Enrollment and Dispute Resolution

The HPS will immediately enroll students experiencing homelessness in school, even if they do not have the documents usually required for enrollment – such as school records, medical records or proof of residency. The Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center staff will assist students who arrive without records by contacting the previously attended school system to obtain the required records. Students identified as experiencing homeless have a right to remain in their school of origin or to attend the school where they are temporarily residing. Students who choose to remain in their school of origin have the right to remain there until the end of the school year in which they become permanently housed. However, once permanently housed, transportation becomes the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) for the following school year.

Should a parent/guardian disagree with the school placement decision of the Homeless Education Coordinator or other District staff, the parent/guardian has the right to appeal. The parent/guardian will be provided with written notification in the language of the home of the placement decision and the paperwork to complete the appeal process. While the placement decision is under appeal, the student will be allowed to attend the school of the parent/guardian's choice and receive transportation (according to the District Transportation Policy) while the dispute is under review by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Access to Comparable Services

The HPS will provide students experiencing homelessness with services and education programs comparable to those received by other students and for which they meet eligibility criteria, such as services provided under Title I or similar state or local programs; programs for students with disabilities; programs for students with limited English proficiency; vocational or technical programs; gifted and talented programs; and school nutrition programs. The Homeless Education Liaison will expedite the delivery of nutritional benefits by working directly with the food services department.

Student Marriage, Pregnancy and Parenthood

Students who are pregnant, parents or married shall be encouraged to continue in school. Such students are permitted to remain in their regular academic classes and to participate in extracurricular activities with other students. Additionally, pregnant students, after giving birth, are permitted to return to their same academic classes and extracurricular activities as before giving birth. No student who is pregnant, a parent or married shall be denied access to classroom instruction or extracurricular activities, nor be suspended, expelled, excluded or otherwise disciplined because of marriage, pregnancy or parenthood.

Restraining Orders

It is the responsibility of the student/parent(s) to inform the principal if he/she has obtained a restraining order against an individual. Once the principal is notified of the restraining order, he/she, or his/her designee, may meet with the student and his/her parents to review the order and its implications. An appropriate safety plan will be developed in collaboration with the school psychologist, guidance counselor, and faculty. The principal, or his/her designee, may also meet with the defendant to review the terms of the order, the expectations concerning appropriate behavior and the consequences for violation of the order. Violation of a restraining order is a criminal offense, and must be reported to the police.

When complaints of teen dating violence that are not related to school or school-sponsored activities are made known to school officials, students will be informed of available services. If the student agrees, a referral(s) to appropriate resources may be made. Parental involvement shall be encouraged.

Homebound Schooling

The schools shall furnish homebound instruction to those students who are unable to attend classes for a period of not less than fourteen days in any school year due to a physical injury, medical situation, chronic illness, or a severe emotional problem. The instruction is designed to provide maintenance in the basic academic courses so that when a student returns to school he/she will not be at a disadvantage because of the illness or the hospitalization.

To qualify for the program the student needs a written statement from a medical doctor requesting the homebound instruction, stating the reasons why, and estimating the time the student will be out of school. This statement needs to be sent to the Director of Student Services. Homebound instruction is offered in basic elementary subjects and in secondary subjects which do not require laboratories and special equipment, subject in all cases to the availability of qualified teachers. Teachers are assigned to homebound instruction by the Director of Student Services with the approval of the Superintendent.

Guidance and Counseling (See Your Principal for Specific School Procedures)

The Counselor's Role

Licensed school adjustment and guidance counselors provide comprehensive school counseling programs that incorporate prevention and intervention activities through school-wide assemblies and activities, classroom student development (guidance) lessons, intentional guidance groups, individual counseling, and collaboration with outside community resources. Counselors also assist students in ensuring they meet high school graduation requirements. Counselors also work in collaboration with teachers in administering career development curriculum, study skills curriculum, violence prevention curriculum, anti-bullying curriculum, and character development programs.

Elementary School Counselor

The elementary school counselor provides academic and social counseling while promoting healthy relationships with peers. The counselor at this level is instrumental in assisting students with identifying their own feelings as well as help students adjust to school. School counselors also work with students in all grade levels to ensure a smooth transition from one grade level to the next. In the elementary school environment, students are taught study and organizational skills that will prepare them for future schooling. As students approach the fifth grade, they are exposed to the prerequisites for middle school success. Students learn about the scheduling differences, the importance of organization, class structuring, and the peer dynamics that they will encounter upon entering middle school. Counselors work in collaboration with teachers, parents, and middle school counselors to make the transition from elementary school to middle school a pleasant experience.

Middle School Counselor

Upon entering middle school, students begin a major transition from the elementary environment to the middle school. From the changing of classes, increase in homework, extracurricular activities, and the physical changes of adolescence and puberty, parents are highly encouraged to become involved. Academically, students operate within teams. School counselors work collaboratively with parents, teachers and students to develop schedules and prepare students for high school. It is during the middle school years that students will meet with their school counselor to review their options for high school and plan for their high school experience. We believe that close monitoring of grades and exploring

career interests is essential for student success.

High School Counselor

The high school counselor is instrumental in preparing students for post high school graduation, as well as college and career awareness. The high school experience is the final level towards graduation. The school counselor will serve as a critical person in establishing a successful high school experience. Academic advisement occurs annually at each level in high school with freshmen, sophomore, junior and senior students. Education plans facilitate the success of students during their high school years.

What if more intensive services are needed?

The school counselor(s) will collaborate with parents and school personnel to make referrals to an outside agency if needed.

Work Permits

Employment of students under 18 is restricted to before and after school and days when school is not in session. Students between the ages of 12 and 16 may sell or distribute newspapers. Students ages 14 and 15 with working permits may engage in certain non-hazardous work, but may not work before 6:30 AM or after 6 PM. Students aged 16 and 17 may engage in certain specified non-hazardous work, but may not work before 6 AM or after 10 PM, except if employed in restaurants until but not after 12 midnight on Fridays, Saturdays, or during school vacation periods.

Holyoke youth in HPS middle schools and in private, charter, alternative or out-of-district schools who are seeking employment may pick up and submit Youth Work Permit Applications for approval at the Student Enrollment & Family Empowerment Center (57 Suffolk Street, First Floor). Students at Holyoke High School and Dean Tech Vocational School should pick up and submit applications in their respective school's front office.

Work permit applications may also be downloaded at www.mass.gov.

Work permits are issued only after a student has proof of an offer for employment. Applications must be filled out entirely before a permit is issued. For 14 and 15 year olds, this includes physician, employer, and parent/guardian signature. A physician's signature is not required for work permit applicants who are 16 and 17.

In addition, a proof of age (birth certificate, Passport, Immigration Record, Massachusetts Identification) is also required.

Teaching and Learning

Admission to Course of Study

- Each and every course of study offered by a public school shall be open and available to students regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, disability, sexual orientation or national origin. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit the use of prerequisite requirements that have been demonstrated to be essential to success in a given program. However, if participation in a course or program is dependent upon completion of a prerequisite which was previously limited to students of one sex, or if close scrutiny reveals that access mechanisms or other administrative arrangements have limited the opportunities of any class of students to participate in such prerequisites, then all members of the previously excluded group shall be given the opportunity to acquire the prerequisites

or be allowed to enter the program without such prerequisites. If it cannot be shown that a prerequisite is essential for success in a given program, the prerequisite shall be abolished.

- The determination of what courses or units of study are to be required of any student shall also be made without regard to the race, color, sex, gender identity, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or religion of that student.
- The scheduling of students into courses or units of study shall not be done on the basis of sex, gender identity, color, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or national origin.
- Each student, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation or limited English-speaking ability, shall have equal rights of access to courses of study and other opportunities available through the school system of the city or town in which he/she resides, along with appropriate second language instruction and programs or other curriculum offerings of a supportive nature such as appropriate remedial programs.
- Nothing in 603 CMR 26.03 shall be construed to prevent particular segments of a program of instruction from being offered separately to each sex when necessary in order to respect personal privacy.

MCAS

MCAS 2.0 (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) is a set of state assessments administered to students to gauge progress on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks assesses all public school students across the Commonwealth, including students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency. English Learners will also be administered ACCESS for EL (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Learners) to gauge progress and next steps in acquiring English in all domains (reading, writing, speaking and listening).

All graduating seniors must score at the proficiency level on the ELA and MATH MCAS to receive a state- endorsed diploma. Students must also pass the Science and Technology /Engineering MCAS in one course (Introductory Physics, Biology, Chemistry, or Technology/Engineering). To be eligible for an appeal or a state-endorsed certificate of attainment, high school seniors must have taken all appropriate MCAS tests at least three times.

MCAS Appeals

Students must take and meet the competency determination for the 10th grade English Language Arts, Math and Science MCAS to receive a high school diploma.

If a student has not met the competency determination for MCAS by the time he/she is otherwise eligible to graduate, he/she must file an appeal in order to receive a diploma.

To be eligible to file an MCAS appeal:

1. A student must have a 95% attendance rate for both 11th and 12th grade years.
2. The student must satisfactorily attend and participate in MCAS prep classes (students must have 66% participation rate in the prep classes or in tutoring).
3. The student must take the MCAS three (3) times.
4. To receive a State Endorsed Certificate of Attainment, students must meet the state attendance requirements (#1 above).
5. Student/school may submit evidence of extenuating circumstances

Report Cards and Progress Reports

Report cards are prepared for all students and distributed to parents at regular times during the academic year. Report cards are a vehicle for monitoring the progress, activities, and conduct of students. Parents should study the report card carefully, sign it, and return it promptly to the school. Parents are invited to discuss report cards with teachers at parent/teacher conferences; if a parent has a question of immediate concern, he/she should make an appointment to meet with the teacher or counselor at the school.

**DATES FOR REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS
(Academic Year 2018-2019)**

The dates for grades K-5 are as follow:

Trimester #	Dates	Grades Close	Report Cards Distribution	# of Days
1	August 28 – November 28	November 28	December 5	60
2	November 29 – March 12	March 12	March 20	60
3	March 13 – June 13*	June 13*	Last Day of School	60

The dates for grades 6-12 are as follow:

Quarter #	Dates	Grades Close	Report Cards Distribution	# of Days
1	August 28 – October 31	October 31	November 7	45
2	November 1 – January 22	January 22	January 30	45
3	January 23 – April 2	April 2	April 10	45
4	April 3 – June 13*	June 13*	Last day of school	45

**June 14 could be the last day of school. Additional days may be required due to inclement weather. Senior report card dates should be adjusted at the high schools to reflect graduation dates.*

Progress Reports

The dates for grades for progress reports for grades 6-12 will be as follows:

Quarter	Closing date for Progress Report	Progress Report Distribution	# of Days
1	September 28	October 5	23
2	December 7	December 14	22
3	March 3	March 8	23
4	May 10	May 15	22

Alternative Schools/Programs

It is the philosophy of the District to provide programs and pathways for all of its students. Where additional programs and/or environments could facilitate meeting the needs of students and the philosophy and objectives of the District, alternative programs may be established. Any project shall have been discussed with the administration and must receive its endorsement prior to development. Alternative programs shall observe all policies and regulations that govern all of the schools and programs of the district unless specifically waived by the board. Proposals for alternative programs must include a design for evaluating the effectiveness in achieving the purposes of the program and determining the extent to which it is successful in achieving the philosophy and objectives of the district.

Homework Policy

HPS recognizes that a reasonable amount of study and preparation is necessary for the scholastic growth of all students. They are also aware that the amount of preparation should increase as the child progresses through the grades. Teachers will ensure that homework supports the district's curriculum. Meaningful homework is connected to district expectations for accelerating academic performance, college readiness and career readiness. Parents/guardians are important partners. They can support student success when they:

- ensure that students complete homework
- check work to assure quality
- stress importance of systematic study

- supervise and assist when necessary and,
- provide a suitable place to study.

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating, plagiarism and forgery are considered to be academic dishonesty. For any work containing any information improperly submitted as one’s own, or completed by means of academic dishonesty or deception, including information obtained from the Internet and not properly cited, students will receive appropriate consequences which may include suspension and require that the student redo the assignment for credit. Violation of this policy may result in discipline ranging from a student receiving a failing grade for the assignment to suspension from school.

Summer Programs

The school system will conduct summer sessions as a supplement to the instruction offered during the school year, when funding for such programs is available.

Students at all instructional levels may attend approved summer schools for remedial, enrichment, or make-up purposes. Credit towards graduation requirements for high school students, as well as grade to grade promotion, may be granted in line with regulations of the School District.

Promotion and Retention Policy

Grade Level Placement/Retention

Consistent with laws prohibiting discrimination based on race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion or handicap, the principal, acting reasonably and in good faith, has the final decision in accordance with School Committee policy regarding: the promotion or retention of a student the placement of a student with a particular teacher; the placement of a student in a designated course at a specific level of academic sophistication and/or one that has specific prerequisite requirements.

While principals are encouraged to involve parents whenever feasible in significant decisions that affect their children, the ultimate authority concerning promotion, retention, and placement of students rests with the school officials.

Flow of Response: Before retention candidacy

In order for a student to be considered for retention, it is expected that the following steps have been completed:

- Student must be presented to the Student Support Team (SST)
- Explicit interventions for Tier 2 and Tier 3 (as needed) are identified, implemented, and evaluated for impact
- Parent notification of sustained concern regarding student progress
- STAR assessment progress monitoring, Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) progress monitoring (as needed)
- Analysis of data on additional assessments (STAR, ACCESS, On-Track)
- Principal or designee interview with student and family

Potential Qualifying Indicators for Retention

The best-fit candidate for retention would meet ALL of the following criteria:

- Off-track in ELA AND Mathematics
 - Grades 1-5: student earns 1 or 2 in “key skill” areas

- Grades 6-8: student earns a D or F
- STAR Assessment: Below the 25th percentile - Reading (or Early Literacy)
- STAR Assessment: Below the 25th percentile - Mathematics
- STAR Assessment, End-of-year: Student does not meet SGP (prediction score)

English Language Learning Program

Mission Statement

The mission of the HPS programs for English Learners is to enable students of diverse language backgrounds to develop the linguistic, cognitive, cultural, and self-concept skills necessary for success in college and career. Our goal is to provide a culturally and linguistically responsive education with the supports needed to ensure equitable access to opportunities that promote language acquisition, bilingualism, bi-literacy and lifelong learning.

Educational Philosophy

1. The ability to speak more than one language is a valuable asset, and one that should be recognized as such.
2. Linguistically diverse students require ample opportunities to understand, speak, read, and write English to realize their full potential within the context of schooling and the greater dominant English speaking society.
3. The most successful programs are those that develop a positive self-concept in each student, while they continue to develop their English proficiency.
4. Teachers have high expectations of all students, regardless of the student's background or academic preparation.
5. Teachers value students' linguistic and cultural background and assist them in their transition to school and district norms.
6. Students in heterogeneous groupings learn from each other as well as from the teacher.
7. Students must have access to multiple pathways through which they can experience success and teachers have the responsibility of ensuring they are awarded those opportunities.

Identification and Definition of English Learners

An English Learner (EL) is defined as a linguistically and culturally diverse student whose native language is other than English and who has an overall English Language Proficiency (ELP) level of 1-4 on the [WIDA Screener](#) or the [ACCESS for ELLs™2.0](#), English language proficiency tests for students in grades 1–12. EL students receive services that help them develop their English language proficiency while developing content knowledge in order to be academically successful. Students who reach an ELP Level 5 or above may be considered English Proficient students and may no longer be identified as EL students. EL students may also be referred to as “limited English proficient” (LEP) in legal documents.

To be eligible for EL status, a student must score the following on the WIDA Screener:

At or below:

- an Overall Score of **Level 4.0**; and
- A Composite Literacy Score of **Level 4.0**

Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE)

A SLIFE student is one who is an English language learner, is between the ages 8 to 21 years, has entered a United States school after grade 2 or exited the United States for six months or more. The student's prior exposure to formal schooling is characterized by no formal schooling or interruptions in formal schooling, at least two or fewer years of schooling than their typical peers, or consistent but limited formal schooling. The student is functioning two or more years below expected grade level in native language literacy relative to typical peers and two or more years below expected grade level in numeracy relative to typical peers.

State and National Terms Used for English Learner Programs

- English Language Education (ELE) - department name
- English Learner (EL)/English Language Learner (ELL)- student in English Language Education program
- English as a Second Language (ESL)- teacher licensure and name of program service provided to EL students
- Limited English Proficient (LEP)- state student classification
- Formerly Limited English Proficient (FLEP)- student who received ELE services and has exited the program; student will be monitored for two years after exiting the program
- Rethinking Equity in Teaching English Language Learners (RETELL)- a DESE initiative to improve and support the academic achievement of English Language Learners
- World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA)- ELE state standards
- ACCESS for ELLs - annual state English language proficiency assessment administered to English Learners in K-12 to monitor students' progress in acquiring academic English. Testing window typically is January-February.

Proficiency Levels

Level	Name	Description
1	Entering	Knows and uses minimal social language and minimal academic language with visual support.
2	Beginning	Knows and uses some social English and general academic language with visual support.
3	Developing	Knows and uses social English and some specific academic language with visual support.
4	Expanding	Knows and uses social English and some technical academic language.
5	Bridging	Knows and uses social English and academic language working with modified grade level material.
6	Reaching	Knows and uses social and academic language at the highest level measured by ACCESS test.

Initial Identification and Program Placement

HPS assesses the English proficiency of all students who have languages other than English spoken in the home to determine proper placement and services within our ELE program.

- Upon registration, all families complete a home language survey for students entering the school district. [Home Language Survey/English](#). [Home Language Survey/Spanish](#)
- A trained educator assesses all students whose home language surveys indicate use of a language other than English in the home using the W-APT assessment.
- Parents/Guardians are notified of their child’s test results, program recommendation, and placement options via the [Initial Notification Letter](#). [Initial Notification Letter/Spanish](#)
- Parent notifications are filed in the student’s Cumulative folder (inside an ELL insert) as well as attached to their SchoolBrains account.
- Students who are identified as English Learners are placed in one of the ELL programs (either SEI or Dual Language) where they will also receive English as a Second Language instruction from a licensed ESL teacher.
- Parents are informed of their right to “opt out” of services. Parent notifications are filed in the student’s ELL folder as well as the ELE office.

SLIFE Criteria

Once a new student is determined to be an English Learner, HPS will determine if the student is a SLIFE student (definition above) which includes:

- Administering a SLIFE Pre-Screener
- Administering a Literacy and a Numeracy Assessment
- Establishing a School-Based SLIFE placement team
- Develop SLIFE program placement and an EL Individualized Learning Plan
- Record SLIFE designation on SIMS data collection and cumulative folder
- Parents/Guardians are notified of their child’s test results, program recommendation, and placement options [Initial Notification Letter](#). [Initial Notification Letter/Spanish](#)

Opt-Out

If a family believes that their child should be placed in a program other than one of Holyoke Public Schools’ English Language Learner programs, the family has the right to decline ELE services (opt out of the program) for their child.

- If, parent decides to opt their child out:
 1. The Parent/Guardian is to contact their child’s school to inform them of their decision to opt their child out of ESL services. Parents are invited to request a conference where program objectives will be explained. They are also welcome to observe the classroom to better understand their child’s instruction.
 2. Once the parent/guardian has provided indication they would like to opt their child out of ESL services, an “Opt-Out PT OUT Letter” is sent to them to sign which details the entirety of their decision and the fact that their child will still need to be tested with the *ACCESS for ELLs* assessment per State and Federal laws. [Opt- Out Letter English](#) [Opt- Out Letter Spanish](#)
 3. Once the parent has signed the letter, they are to return it to the school. The school will file the original signed form in the student’s cumulative folder at the school.

4. The school is then to indicate in the student information system (SchoolBrains) that the student has opted out of ESL services.

Although a family has the right to opt out of services, the student will continue to be assessed annually (ACCESS for ELLs) in accordance with state law until proficiency is demonstrated.

English Language Education Program Options

The English Language Education programs in Holyoke are dedicated to providing equitable access to all aspects of our school district to students whose dominant language is be something other than English. All programs include English Language Development (ELD) and teaching strategies differentiated for each student's level of English language proficiency. These strategies are used to help each student reach proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing English, and succeed academically in all core subjects. The program options consist of:

Sheltered English Immersion (SEI)

SEI Programs in grades K-12 consist of two components, Sheltered Content Instruction (SCI) and English as a Second Language (ESL) Instruction.

- **SCI** includes approaches, strategies and methodology to make the content of lessons more comprehensible and to promote the development of academic language needed to successfully master content (science, math, social studies) standards. It must be based on district-level content area curriculum that is aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (Frameworks) and that integrates components of the WIDA ELD Standards. Sheltered content instruction must be taught by qualified (SEI Endorsed) content area teachers.
- **ESL** instruction provides systematic, explicit, and sustained language instruction, and prepares students for general education by focusing on academic language. The goal of ESL instruction is to advance English language development and to promote academic achievement Effective ESL instruction supports student success in school, including long term goals such as college and career readiness. ESL instruction, with its own dedicated time and curriculum, is a necessary component of any program serving ELs.

Dual Language Education

Students in this bilingual instructional program develop literacy skills in their native language while simultaneously learning a second language. Instruction occurs in both of the languages (English/Spanish) supported by the program. Students enter the program in the early years and develop reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in a second language over the course of a number of years. The long-term goals of Dual Language education programs are: Bilingualism, Biliteracy, High academic achievement, and Cultural Competency.

Recommended Periods of Instruction (full-day Kindergarten through grade 12)

ACCESS for ELLs Overall (Composite) Score	Recommended Periods of ESL Instruction
Foundational (Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3)	At least two to three periods (a period is not less than 45 minutes) per day of direct ESL instruction, delivered by a licensed ESL teacher
Transitional (Level 3, Level 4 & Level 5)	At least 1 period (a period is not less than 45 minutes) per day of direct ESL instruction, delivered by a licensed ESL teacher
Reaching (Level 6)	Students at level 6 <u>should no longer be classified as ELLs</u> and should participate in the general education program alongside fluent or native English speaking peers. Their progress must be monitored for two years after their ELL classification is removed. Such students should also receive additional supports and services if needed.

Reclassification (Exit) of ELLs

The goal of the English learner program is for students to become fully proficient in English and to master state standards for academic achievement as rapidly as possible. To those ends, districts must annually assess English Learners’ language proficiency and academic achievement to determine whether such students are able to do regular school work in English, and to *remove* the English learner classification once ELs demonstrate the ability to do regular school work in English (G.L. c.71A § 4, 7). The process of removing a student’s EL classification is also known as “**reclassification.**”

After evaluating the available student data (including ACCESS for ELLs results), school-based teams should determine whether there is sufficient evidence of the student’s English language proficiency and the student is able to perform ordinary classroom work in English without additional support.

The district’s **reclassification criteria** are listed below:

- ACCESS for ELLs Results (required)
- Scores on locally administered diagnostic reading, language, and other academic assessments
- Performance on MCAS content-area tests
- Classroom performance and grades
- Written observations and recommendations documented by the student’s classroom teachers
- Parental Opinion and Consultation

If there is such evidence that the student is ready to exit the EL program, the school must:

- Notify parents/guardians of the student’s reclassification [Reclassification Letter English/Spanish](#).
 - A copy of the letter signed by the Principal of the school is placed in the pink insert of the student’s cumulative folder.
 - Update all school/district records (SchoolBrains).
 - Reclassify the student as non-LEP (i.e., proficient in English) and remove the student’s coding as LEP on the SIMS data collection (SIMS: DOE 25 – record 00 under “LEP”).

Typically, this decision will be made in time for the October SIMS data collection.

- Implement routine monitoring of the student’s academic progress for four years

Students designated as ELL in Pre-K and Kindergarten will continue to be designated as ELL until they complete grade 1 (at a minimum), in order to gather more substantial data on their literacy skills and other data needed to support a reclassification decision.

Language Classification Recommendations (based on ACCESS for ELLs results)

<i>ACCESS for ELLs Overall (or Composite) Score</i>	<i>Language Classification Recommendations</i>
<i>Level 1 – Entering Level 2 – Emerging Level 3 – Developing</i>	Students performing at Levels 1–3 require significant support to access content area instruction delivered in English. Such students should remain classified as ELLs.
<i>Level 4 – Expanding</i>	Students performing at Level 4 typically require continued language and instructional support to access content area instruction delivered in English. Student at this proficiency level must still remain in the program and be provided services to reach higher levels of English proficiency.
<i>Level 5 – Bridging</i>	<p>Students performing at Level 5 may have acquired enough English language skills to be considered English proficient. Level 5 students who demonstrate the ability to perform ordinary class work in English, as indicated by one or more of the measures should no longer be classified as ELLs.</p> <p>However, increasingly complex and varied language demands on ELLs in late elementary, middle, and high school may support the decision by school-based teams to maintain the ELL classification of a Level 5 student. Should the student remain in the program s/he must still be provided services as designated as appropriate for any ELL student.</p>
<i>Level 6 – Reaching</i>	By the time a student reaches Level 6, he or she should no longer be classified as an ELL. Students in Level 6 have achieved English language proficiency comparable to that of their English- proficient peers functioning at the “proficient” level in state assessments and can be expected to perform ordinary class work in English.

Monitoring

English Language Education staff at each school, in collaboration with the district ELE Office, will monitor Formerly English Language Proficient students for two years as follows:

- 1) Collaborating with current classroom teachers routinely at progress report and report card time, documenting student grades and anecdotal notes; student work samples may be collected and filed

for evidence of growth

- 2) Filing monitoring reports in the student's cumulative ESL folder as well as in the ELE office [FLEP Monitoring Form](#)
- 3) Conducting informal oral interviews using WIDA rubrics
- 4) Reviewing progress reports
- 5) Reviewing report cards

If a formerly LEP (FLEP) student fails to make academic progress after reclassification, as measured by grades and assessments, and if a school-based team familiar with the student determines that this failure is due to lack of English proficiency, the student must be reclassified as LEP and the instructional programming redesigned consistent with this guidance.

Home Schooling

The Massachusetts General Law requires the School Committee to determine that a homeschooling program meet with the minimum standards established for public schools in the Commonwealth prior to approving such a program. When a parent or guardian of a student below the age of 16 wants to establish a homeschooling for his/her child, the following procedures shall be followed in accordance with the law.

Prior to removing the child from public school: The parent/guardian must submit written notification of establishment of homeschooling to the Office of Teaching and Learning 14 days before the program is established, and re-submit notification on an annual basis as long as the child or children are being homeschooled. The parent/guardian must certify in writing, the name, age, place of residence, and number of hours of attendance of each child in the program.

Factors to be considered in deciding whether or not to approve a home education proposal may be:

1. The proposed curriculum and the number of hours of instruction in each of the proposed subjects;
2. The competency of the parents to teach the children;
3. The textbooks, workbooks and other instructional aids to be used by the children and the lesson plans and teaching manuals to be used by the parents;
4. Periodic standardized testing of the children to ensure educational progress and the attainment of minimum standards.

A student being homeschooled within the District may have access to public school activities of either a curricular or extracurricular nature upon approval of the Superintendent.

A student, with the approval of the School Committee, may be awarded a high school diploma if he/she has satisfied the Department of Education's competency requirements and has met the District's educational standards for graduation.

Field Trips

The School Committee recognizes that firsthand learning experiences provided by field trips are an effective and worthwhile means of learning. It is the desire of the Committee to encourage field trips as part of and directly related to the total school program and curriculum.

Specific guidelines and appropriate administrative procedures have been developed to screen, approve, and evaluate trips and to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken for the safety of the participants. These guidelines and appropriate administrative procedures shall ensure that all field trips have the approval of the Principal and the list of participating students is reviewed by the school nurse four weeks prior to the

trip, and that all overnight trips have the prior approval of appropriate personnel.

Field Trip Procedures

The Superintendent/Receiver will establish regulations to assure that:

- All students have parental permission for trips.
- All students' names are provided to the school nurse 4 weeks in advance
- All trips are properly supervised.
- All safety precautions are observed.
- All trips contribute substantially to the educational program.

All out-of-state or extended (overnight) trips and excursions, except those required for student participation in tournament competition or contests, must have advance approval of the Receiver. Fundraising activities for such trips will be subject to approval by the appropriate Administrator.

Parent and Community Involvement

We believe that Holyoke Public Schools and Holyoke families are partners in our children's success, while we recognize and support that families are their children's first teachers.

We encourage families to establish regular communication with teachers and school leaders and together explore all possibilities to contribute to student success. Families are encouraged to: (a) become aware of what their child is learning; (b) ask questions about their child's education; and (c) support their child's learning. In addition, HPS encourages and embraces the active participation and contributions of parents to improve and support our schools and the district.

The Family & Community Engagement team has a point person at each school who works to support families in different ways, from building and strengthening their relationship with our schools, and helping them access information and resources, to developing their leadership and voice in our schools. Contact the point person at your school to learn how to get involved.

HPS supports different vehicles for parents to support their students, schools and the district:

- The **HPS Parent Power Academy** delivers educational and informational workshops for families to acquire new tools and skills. These workshops are also vehicles for parents to make connections with other families as well as with community organizations and service providers. School-based or district-wide events are offered year round on the following topics:
 - Parents as first teachers (includes partnering with teachers, early literacy practices, and supporting your child at home)
 - Family health and nutrition
 - Financial education and career advancement
 - Social and emotional learning
 - School leadership and voice
- **Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO's)** at each of our schools are independent, critical vehicles for parents to exercise leadership and voice in support of their children's education. Participation

in the PTO should be open to all parents and guardians of children in a school. School PTO's are encouraged to work with school leaders and the Family Engagement staff at the schools to identify key needs in the turnaround plan or in the schools where they can focus part of their efforts during each year.

- **Parent Leader Groups or Parent Volunteer Teams** – Parent leaders in some schools have formed volunteer teams or groups of parents to support the school or particular grades or classrooms. Contact the Family Engagement staff in your school to learn how you can join or contribute as a parent volunteer. Volunteers are required to have a criminal background check, and in some cases, fingerprinting.
- **School Site Councils** are organized by the principals at each school as an advisory group pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws. The councils assist principals with identifying student needs, establishing educational goals for the school, developing improvement plans, and reviewing the school budget. School site councils include teachers elected by their peers, parents selected by a recognized parent organization or elected by school families, as well as students at the high school level. The meetings are open and its minutes are available to the entire school community. Contact your school principal to get information on your school council's meeting calendar.
- **Districtwide Parent Advisory Group** consists of parent leaders representing each school that meets with the Receiver/Superintendent every month to provide input and receive updates on the district's turnaround process. Information obtained at these meetings is shared with parents at their schools. Contact your school to learn who your parent representative at these meetings is.
- The **Special Education Parent Advisory Council** and the **English Language Learner Parent Advisory Councils** provide input to the school district and engage parents of students in these programs to identify needs, review policies or programs, and address concerns. These councils are usually constituted at the beginning of the school year. Contact the Special Education Department or the English Learning Program Director for more details on how to get involved.
- The **Holyoke Early Literacy Initiative (HELI)** is a citywide effort founded in 2013 that brings schools, families and community partners together to dramatically improve the reading proficiency of our youngest children. Everyone is being asked to do something and we all have something to do to reach our GOAL: rapid and sustained improvement in reading proficiency by the 3rd grade. As a coalition we have deployed multiple strategies that are proving successful, from engaging families with children from 0-8 years old in early literacy practices, to strengthening the program design of literacy programs across the city, and developing citywide collaborative workgroups. We want more families to join the Holyoke Early Literacy Initiative (HELI) and increase the frequency of what they do at home to support their child's literacy. Contact Family Engagement staff at your school to learn how to access HELI tools to use at home with your child as well as how to get involved.
- The **Holyoke Education Equity Coalition** is developing and implementing a community-led plan to address issues of equity and diversity in our school district so ALL school community members feel included and engaged. Starting as a series of community dialogues in the fall of 2017, the coalition includes HPS staff, students, parents and community partners. Contact Family Engagement staff at your school to learn about the coalition's meeting calendar and how to get involved.

Community Outreach

We welcome opportunities to engage with Holyoke residents and community partners and participate in community events or neighborhood meetings across the city where we can meet and talk to families about our programs and initiatives. The Family & Community Engagement Department is available to join community events or make a presentation on a particular topic.

HPS also welcomes partnership opportunities in support of student learning and our families. Please contact our Family & Community Engagement Department to learn about opportunities for collaboration.

School Volunteers

It is the policy of the School Committee to encourage volunteer efforts in the schools. Parents/ guardians, business representatives, senior citizens, and other community volunteers are recognized as important sources of support and expertise to enhance the instructional program and vital communication links with the community. The volunteer program will be coordinated in cooperation with building administrators. All volunteers are subject to a criminal background check (CORI). In addition, any parent volunteer who works directly with students and is unsupervised requires fingerprinting

School Visitors

To maintain safety and security, all visitors are expected to report to the main office of the school before going elsewhere in the school building. If a visitor disrupts or interferes with the work of students, teachers or other employees by behaving inappropriately or insisting on visiting at inappropriate times, the principal may place limitations on the individual's ability to visit the school, including but not limited to, requiring appointments to be made before visiting, being accompanied by school staff when in the building, or being barred from entering the building. If you have questions about the school's policy on visitors, speak to the principal.

Access to Students during School Hours

The following persons may be granted access to students during school hours:

- The custodial parent (the parent with physical custody more than 50% of the time) or guardian or personnel or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of the child in place of or in conjunction with the father, mother, or guardian. According to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, §34H, the noncustodial parent must submit a written request to the school principal for such access. For further information, contact your child's principal.
- A student, age 14, or upon entering grade 9, may consent to meet with an individual.

The following personnel may be granted access to students in the performance of their official duties:

- School administrators, teachers and counselors who work directly with the students.
- Administrative office staff and clerical personnel who process information for the students' records.
- The Evaluation Team which evaluates the students.
- School health personnel when such access is required in the performance of official duties.
- Appropriate parties including the local police department, and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) in connection with a health or safety emergency, including weapons reports, if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

- Employees of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) who are investigating child abuse cases may be allowed to interview a child without parental consent if it appears that the child may be placed at risk of further abuse by parental notification. This interview may take place in the presence of a teacher or other school professional to provide help and reassurance to the child.
- Probation Department employees, Department of Youth Services employees, or an employee from the Bureau of Special Investigation on welfare fraud. If you have any Court restrictions regarding your child, it is imperative that the Holyoke Public Schools have a copy on record so that we can implement the wishes of the Court.

Interpretation/Translation Services

Holyoke Public Schools is committed to ensuring that all parents and guardians are able to meaningfully participate in their child's education through effective communication with school staff. When parents first enroll their child in the HPS, we will provide the parents with the Family Language Preference Survey (attached). This Survey will provide us the opportunity to learn what the parents' preferred language is for communications regarding their student's education. In addition, HPS will conduct a survey of all parents at the beginning of each school year using the Survey to learn what about the parents' needs for interpretation or translation services. Parents may complete the Survey at any time to request interpretation or translation services.

Documents posted on the HPS website relating to education programs, opportunities and services will be posted in English and Spanish. Documents that will be translated for parents include:

- Language assistance programs and notices of nondiscrimination
- Registration and enrollment in school and school programs
- Student discipline policies and procedures
- Parent handbooks
- School and program choice options, including gifted and talented programs
- Turnaround Plan
- Information regarding other education opportunities and/or HPS sponsored or produced school activities
- Notices of education-related meetings
- Consent forms
- Disciplinary notices
- Parent permission forms
- Special education related documents

HPS will provide interpretation services for scheduled parent-teacher conferences, IEP meetings, and other scheduled meetings or events. HPS will use its best efforts to provide interpretation services for unscheduled communications. Feel free to reach out to your child's school with any question or concern that you have about any communication that you receive.

Title I School – Home/School Compact

The Holyoke Public Schools makes every effort to comply with the regulations and requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a federal law enacted in 2015. This legislation requires school district personnel to notify parents/guardians of a variety of issues regarding their children's education. Among them is a requirement to notify parents/guardians of students attending Title I schools of their right to know about the qualifications of the teachers and instructional assistants who work with their children. In a Title I school, parents/guardians have the right to know the professional qualifications of

classroom teachers who instruct their children. ESSA allows parents/guardians to ask for certain information about a student's classroom teacher and requires that the district provide the parents/guardians with the requested information in a timely manner if a parent/guardian asks for it. Specifically, parents/guardians have the right to ask for the following information about each of their children's classroom teachers in a Title I school:

- Whether the teacher has met the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which DESE qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
- Whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether any instructional assistants or other paraprofessionals provide services to their child, and, if they do, their qualifications.

*If parents/guardians would like to receive any of this information, they must contact the principal of their child(ren)'s Title I school. In addition, districts are required to provide to each individual parent/guardian information on the child's level of achievement and academic growth of the student, if applicable and available, on each of the state academic assessments required under Title I and to notify parents/guardians in a timely manner when their child has been assigned, or has been taught four or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who does not meet applicable DESE certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.

Media Information

The HPS will use media outlets to film, interview and/or photograph students for television, newspaper, photo, web, Internet and/or movie use. The purpose for interviewing/ photographing/ filming students is to represent and promote the good qualities of the HPS.

If a parent/guardian does not wish his/her child to be interviewed, photographed or filmed, the parent/guardian must complete notify the child's principal within ten (10) days of receipt of this handbook utilizing the media release opt out form included at the end of this handbook.

Parent Guide to Address Concerns

Holyoke Public Schools is committed to responding to parent concerns and complaints in a timely manner in order to strengthen the school-family partnership and keep students engaged in school. When a parent determines that there is a school related concern that needs to be addressed with school officials, the sequential steps outlined below should be followed. The Holyoke Public Schools seeks to work collaboratively with families to ensure student success. If a parent has an issue or concern that they would like to address, please follow the guidelines below, which are aimed at improving communication and responsiveness:

1. **Level I-** Parent should address the concern (academic, behavior, etc.) with the staff member most directly involved.
2. **Level II-** If the matter is not resolved at the first level, the parent may bring the concern to the attention of the appropriate building administrator- principal, assistant principal or Dean.
3. **Level III-** If the matter continues to remain unresolved, the parent may bring the concern to the attention of the Family Empowerment Center who will refer the matter to the School Supervisor

responsible for overseeing the school (only after steps 1 and 2 have been exhausted). The school supervisor will consult and collaborate with the appropriate school administrator.

4. **Level IV-** If the matter still remains unresolved, the parent may bring the concern to the attention of the Superintendent/Receiver.

***Suspension** dispute issues require parents/guardians to follow the Appeals Process. School Supervisors will function as Appeals Officers for these issues.

Technology

Internet and Computer Acceptable Use and Safety

Internet and computer access through the HPS is a privilege offered to enhance your learning. It is not a right. Therefore, student access may be limited or revoked by school officials if this privilege is abused or violates acceptable use. Students engaged in unacceptable use of the Internet and computers will also be subject to disciplinary action in conformity with the HPS Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy. All student use of computers and the Internet is to be conducted under faculty supervision. Nevertheless, students are responsible for acceptable use of a computer network. The computer network is provided for students to conduct educational research and support educational endeavors. HPS believes that the benefits to students from access to information resources and opportunities for collaboration exceed any potential for abuse. HPS maintains tools that blocks access to inappropriate sites. Ultimately, however, parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using computers and the Internet.

Student Access

All students in Pre-kindergarten through Grade 12 will take part in an annual grade-level appropriate discussion of the HPS Acceptable Computer and Internet Use Policy with their teachers before being authorized to use the computer and the Internet.

Access to Student Files

Students should have no expectation of privacy in the use of computers and the Internet. Pursuant to local, state, and federal laws, administrators and staff may provide access to student files and records to law enforcement authorities. All files will be subject to the HPS Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy and local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

Personal Safety

The HPS, in its commitment to promote a safe and secure learning environment, has high-end filtering software to filter inappropriate sites. However, the filtering software cannot ensure that all inappropriate sites are blocked. Students are expected to adhere to the HPS Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy. Any deliberate destruction, modification, and tampering of technology equipment will be subject to disciplinary action and/or referral to law enforcement authorities. Any activity which inhibits or interferes with the normal operation of the hardware and software which comprise the HPS computer network system is also subject to disciplinary action.

Acceptable Uses

1. Using e-mail for educational purposes is only allowed using the Gmail account provided by HPS
2. Abiding by generally accepted rules of network etiquette including but not limited to; being polite, using appropriate language, respecting the privacy of other's work, and demonstrating courtesy

toward others

3. Documenting and obeying copyright laws
4. Reporting misuse of technology to appropriate school authorities
5. Using technology resources to ensure fair access to all students
6. Using computing and communications facilities in a manner consistent with local, state, and federal laws and policies
7. Notifying your teacher immediately if there is a problem with your computer

Unacceptable Uses

1. Providing private or personal information about yourself or others
2. Viewing or sending obscene or patently offensive material
3. Accessing another person's file or account
4. Giving out your password to other students
5. Moving or unplugging other devices
6. Eating or drinking near or around the technology equipment
7. Violating the HPS Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy, engaging in racial or other forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment, hazing, plagiarism, cheating, or interfering with the rights of reproduction or transmission of material that is protected.
8. Connecting to any HPS computer any device that will circumvent the district firewall or filtering is strictly prohibited.
9. The only allowable Internet access on school property is through the HPS network system.
10. Downloading copyrighted material such as songs, movies, or other types of files.
11. Any conduct that can be considered cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is defined as willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices. Cyberbullying includes but is not limited to sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behavior, in which case proper authorities will be notified.

Students and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be expected to familiarize themselves with this policy, and to sign the Acceptable Computer and Internet Use Policy Agreement Form, which will be provided to them by school staff on an annual basis.

Connecting Personal Devices to HPS-Wifi

The steps listed below will allow HPS Staff and Students to access our wireless network using personal devices for up to 120 days at a time. After 120 days you will be prompted to login again using the same steps. Each user is allowed to have up to 3 devices on our network.

1. Navigate to your wireless network connections and select HPS-WiFi.
2. Open a new web browser page (Chrome, Safari, Explorer, etc.) and the guest registration page will automatically open if it has not already opened automatically.
 - a. If you are not redirected, type <http://hps-technology> into your browser's address bar and click enter. You should be redirected to the registration page.
3. Enter your HPS username and password (used to login to HPS computers) in the "Network Login" fields, then click "Login."
*Never share your username and password with anyone else.
4. Check the box to accept the acceptable use agreement and then click "Complete Registration"

All of the acceptable use guidelines listed above apply while connected to the HPS network system regardless of whether the device is personally owned or the property of HPS.

Health Services for Students

Immunizations

State regulations require each child to meet grade entry immunization requirements, as per Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 17, Section 15. School immunization requirements exist to protect students and members of the community from serious vaccine-preventable diseases by ensuring high vaccination rates. According to the Department of Public Health, vaccines are one of the great public health advances of the 20th century, and prevent hundreds of thousands of illnesses in the US every year. Vaccines protect both the person vaccinated and those around them from serious diseases, a concept known as herd immunity. Herd immunity protects other members of the community, such as babies too young to be vaccinated or those who cannot receive immunizations because of a medical condition. Students in kindergarten through 12th grade are required to be immunized with DTaP/Tdap, polio, MMR, Hepatitis B, and Varicella vaccines. Students must receive the immunizations in the correct number and following an acceptable schedule, and other diseases deemed necessary by the Department of Health. School nurses review immunizations, inform parents and refer to a primary care physician if students are not in compliance with state requirements.

In order to attend school, students must provide documentation of immunization according to school requirements, or show a medical or religious exemption. Medical exemptions come from the student's doctor and document a contraindication, which is a reason why an individual cannot medically receive the vaccine. Religious exemptions come from the parent/guardian and state in writing that a vaccine conflicts with his/her sincerely held religious belief. Exceptions are also made in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Administration of Prescription Medication

As per Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 94C, all students requiring medication administration in the school setting are entitled to efficient and proper delivery of all prescribed medication for optimal treatment carried out in a timely fashion. Medication in school must be accompanied by a written provider's order, signed parent/guardian permission, with provision of medication by parent/guardian in a pharmacy container labelled in English. The parent/guardian must deliver the medication directly to the school nurse.

Management of Life Threatening Food Allergies in the School Setting

The goal of the Holyoke Public Schools regarding LTAs is to engage in a system-wide effort to:

- 1) Prevent any occurrence of life threatening allergic reactions;
- 2) Prepare for any allergic reactions; and
- 3) Respond appropriately to any allergy emergencies that arise.

Health and Wellness/Health Education

Our comprehensive health education curriculum, PK-8, *The Great Body Shop*, is sequential, developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive and medically accurate. It is aligned to the National Health Education Standards, the National Sexuality Education Standards, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Characteristics of Effective Health Education Curricular and the core concepts recommended by CDC's HECAT. The curriculum has a unique approach to delivering health education. This is because it is designed primarily for children and their families. The student issue looks like a health magazine and is used like as a periodical or informational text. Teachers and students work with the instructional materials, typically once a week, to provide a solid understanding of the health issues found in the magazine. At the end of the month, students take the Student Issue home and use them for family activities, discussions and homework. When schools and families work as a team to reinforce health knowledge and skills, it can go a long way toward helping children make the kind of decisions about his or her body that will keep him or her healthy, safe, drug free, and ready to meet the challenges of the future.

At the middle school level, our comprehensive health education curriculum remains current and up-to-date using research-based educational pedagogy that has been shown to impact student behavior and achievement during the middle school years. Developmental research on young people ages 11- 14 reveals that students in this period of development have unique social, emotional and cognitive needs. In order to meet those needs, *The Great Body Shop* authors have drawn upon the fields of educational psychology, neuroscience, cognitive and developmental psychology, linguistics and neurobiology to develop the instructional strategies found in the Middle School curriculum. Brain-based learning strategies are deeply embedded in the implementation and design of every lesson and support activity. These activities provide the teacher with an array of learning strategies that meet the diverse learning styles of students.

At the high school level, comprehensive health education is offered at the 9th grade level.

HPS will notify parents in writing of curriculum dealing primarily with human sexuality. Parents will have the right to examine the curriculum that is available at the school by contacting the Director of Health, Wellness, and Nursing. Upon written request to the principal, students will be exempt from any portion of said curriculum. No student shall be penalized by reason of such exemption. Any dispute between the parent and school in regard to this policy will be resolved through the mechanism instituted by the Massachusetts Department of Health.

The School Committee's Family Life and Sex Education policy is based on helping students acquire knowledge and encourages the acquisition of skills and attitudes which will result in behavior that contributes to the well-being of the student, family and society and will allow students to manage their lives in a responsible and healthy way. Lack of information or misinformation about these issues may contribute to an increased risk of sexually transmitted diseases, unintended pregnancy, or sterility. The School Committee supports providing health education in the schools. This policy enhances the already existing School Committee policies, including its Health Education Policy and its Wellness Policy.

For more information, please contact Cynthia Carbone, Director of Health, Wellness and Nursing.

School-Based Health Services

School nursing, a specialized practice of nursing, protects and promotes student health, facilitates optimal development, and advances academic success. School nurses, grounded in ethical and evidence-based practice, are the leaders who bridge health care and education, provide care coordination, advocate for quality student-centered care, and collaborate to design systems that allow individuals and communities to develop their full potential (NASN 2017). Holyoke School Department nurses provide school nursing services to all students to optimize health and facilitate learning. School nurses provide first aid and emergency care to students, and administer and monitor medication and treatments as prescribed by licensed providers. In addition, they monitor immunization status, implement mandated health screenings as per Department of Public Health guidelines and provide comprehensive and appropriate health education as needed for students, parents and staff.

Physical Examinations

All students must have a comprehensive physical examination within one year prior to entrance to school or within 30 days after school entry and at intervals of either three or four years thereafter; our district requires current physical examinations for entry into grades K, 4, 7 and 10. A student transferred from another school system shall be examined as an entering student. Health records transferred from the student's previous school may be used to determine compliance with this requirement. Students under 16 and over 14 years of age requesting employment certificates need a current physical examination. All students participating in competitive, Interscholastic Athletics or Intramural Sports are required to have a current physical examination (valid for 13 months from the date of exam), which specifies medical clearance for activity. Students with special medical problems are required to have an updated physical examination yearly.

Student Health Records

According to 603 CMR 23.07(4)(h) of the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations, school health personnel and local and state health department personnel shall have access to student health records, including but not limited to immunization records, when such access is required in the performance of official duties, without consent of the eligible student (a student who is 14 years or older or who has entered the 9th grade) or parent.

Student health records are part of a student's temporary record and as such are protected from disclosure to third parties without the written consent of the eligible student or parent. These records are accessible to the eligible student, the student's parents or guardians and authorized school personnel.

Massachusetts public health laws provide special confidentiality protections for certain health records. For example, under G. L. c.111, s.70F, a health care provider cannot disclose information about an individual's AIDS/HIV status without specific, informed, written consent of the individual.

Regarding transfer of the student health record, it is considered part of the student's temporary record and must accompany the student record when transferred to the student's new school in accordance with G.L.c.71 Section 37L. Parents are hereby informed that the Student Records Regulations authorize a public school or school district to send student records directly to a school to which a student seeks or intends to transfer, without the written consent of the eligible student or parent (603 CMR 23.07(4)(g)). If a parent requests that the health record not be sent, the school should advise the parent that the student may be refused entry into the new school unless the immunization portion of the health record is provided. To prevent delay in enrolling a student in a new school, the sending school must expedite the

transfer of the student's record.

The school nurse is responsible for ensuring that all pertinent information is recorded in the SNAP electronic health record, including immunizations, physical examinations, and screenings, as well as maintaining the student's paper record.

Lead Testing

Students may not be enrolled in Preschool or Kindergartens until they have proof of lead testing.

Illness at School

If a student becomes ill or injured at school and the school nursing personnel deem the illness or injury serious enough to send the child home, the parent will be notified and asked to arrange for transportation. In the event that the parent cannot make arrangements for the child to be transported home, alternative methods will be explored. No sick or injured child will be sent home without the knowledge that a responsible person will be at home to receive the child. In the event of an emergency serious enough to warrant immediate medical attention when the parents cannot be reached, the school nurse, in collaboration with the principal, will arrange for transfer of the child to the nearest hospital or emergency care. Students 18 years of age or older may be dismissed from school on their own recognizance.

Guidelines for Keeping a Student at Home

Although we want our students to be in attendance at school as much as possible, there are times that students should not be present at school. A student should be kept at home/sent home if any of the following situations occur in the previous 24 hours. The parent/guardian should call the school and follow up with a note to the school nurse, sent with the student upon return to school.

- **Elevated Temperature:** Oral temperature 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. Student needs to stay home for 24 hours after his/her temperature has returned to normal without the help of fever reducing medications such as Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or Acetaminophen (Tylenol).
- **Persistent Coughing:** Students who are unable to participate in classroom activities due to persistent coughing.
- **Vomiting:** during the last 24 hours and the student feels ill, the student should stay home for 24 hours after the last time she/he vomited. The student may stay at/return to school if feeling well.
- **Repeated diarrhea:** Loose or watery stools in a 24-hour period and the student feels ill, the student should stay home for 24 hours after the last watery stool. The student may stay at/return to school if diarrhea is self-limiting and the student is feeling well.
- **Eyes that are draining mucus or pus or that have unusual redness, crust, itchiness or pain not due to injury or allergy,** the student should remain at home. Pink Eye cases may return 24 hours after treatment was begun.
- **Purulent (anything other than clear) Nose Drainage:** which may indicate a possible contagious condition.
- **Unknown/Infected Rashes:** should be checked by pediatrician before returning to school. Students with impetigo (contagious skin infection) or scabies may return 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- **Live Lice:** Students may return to school once treatment has begun and there are no live lice. Student's head must be checked by the school nurse prior to re-entry to school.
- **Strep Throat:** Students must be on antibiotics at least 24 hours before returning to school.
- **If a student was diagnosed with an active infection and prescribed antibiotics,** the student may not

attend school until she/he is fever-free and on the antibiotic for 24 hours. Students with otitis (ear infection), and if feeling well, may return to school without delay. The school nurse should be notified if a student was diagnosed with any type of communicable illness or condition such as, but not limited to chickenpox, strep throat, meningitis, MRSA, scarlet fever, head lice, mononucleosis, norovirus, pneumonia, etc.

Management of Pediculosis (Head Lice)

Pediculosis (head lice) affects approximately 6 - 12 million people each year, affects all races and socioeconomic groups and is not an indication of personal hygiene. The school nurse will determine if a student is in need of treatment and following District guidelines, will provide education on eradication of lice. Any identified student must be assessed by the nurse prior to being allowed to return to school. Up to two excused absences are allowed for the treatment of head lice.

School Lunch Program

All students in the Holyoke Public Schools are eligible to receive a free nutritious breakfast and lunch.

Sports-Related Head Injury and Concussions

Massachusetts regulations require middle and high schools to have policies and procedures on the prevention, management and return to academic and athletic activities for students who sustain a concussion or head injury. These policies are to ensure the recovery of a student, and to prevent further injury to the student. Please notify your health care provider and the school nurse if your child experiences a concussion. HPS has a comprehensive protocol which outlines procedures for staff to follow in managing head injuries, and outlines school policy as it pertains to return to play issues after concussion. School nurses will attempt to reach the family or emergency contact for any injury to a student's head. Each nurse will send home notification if a student sustained an injury to the head while at school and is otherwise showing no symptoms, so that family will be informed of warning signs to watch for. The Athletic Trainer will contact the parents of any athlete who has sustained a head injury/concussion during interscholastic athletics and will coordinate the student's return to participation following our comprehensive athletic concussion protocol. Parents will be given a concussion information sheet, including symptoms and warning signs, as well as the return to participation requirements.

HIV/AIDS

Students with AIDS/HIV infection have the same right to attend classes or participate in school programs and activities as any other student. The student's parent(s) or guardian(s) are the gatekeepers of information relating to the student's AIDS/HIV status. They are not obliged to disclose this information to school personnel. A student who is diagnosed with AIDS or presents evidence of being immunocompromised is at a greater risk of contracting infections. This means there may be good reasons to inform the school nurse or school physician of a student's AIDS diagnosis or HIV infection status. This student's parent(s) or guardian(s) would benefit from information from the school nurse or school physician about the occurrence of threatening contagious diseases (such as chicken pox or influenza) when making a decision regarding school attendance. The school nurse or school physician may also need to attend to the particular needs of HIV-infected students regarding immunization schedules and medications. In consultation with the student's primary care physician, the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may decide to inform certain school personnel about the student's AIDS/HIV status,

particularly the school nurse or school physician. If they so choose, the following guidelines are recommended:

- The student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may inform the, school nurse or school physician directly.
- Alternatively, the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may request that their primary care physician make the disclosure. In this case, specific, informed, written consent of the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) is required.
- Further disclosure of a student's HIV status by the school nurse or school physician to other school personnel requires the specific, informed, written consent of the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).
- As a general rule, a student's health records related to AIDS/HIV should be regarded as confidential. The Massachusetts General Laws, c.111, s.70F, prohibit health care providers, physicians and health care facilities (including school-based clinics) from disclosing HIV test results, or even the fact that a test has been performed, without the specific, informed, written consent of the person who has been tested. This statute prohibits testing persons for HIV antibodies without their permission, and protects against the nonconsensual release of medical records (including school health records) which contain such information.

Teaching and Intervention about Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco and Substance Abuse Prevention

The Holyoke Public Schools is committed to maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment. The District views families as essential partners in its effort to prevent substance abuse.

In accordance with state and federal law, the Holyoke Public Schools shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, culturally competent, evidence-based alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention education programs in grades K-12.

The alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention program shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, with emphasis on nonuse by school-age children. The program also shall include information about effective techniques and skill development for delaying and abstaining from using, as well as skills for addressing peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.

The objectives of this program, as stated below, are rooted in the Committee's belief that prevention requires education, and that the most important aspect of the policies and guidelines of the District should be the education of children and youth on healthy decision-making:

- To prevent, delay, and/or reduce alcohol, tobacco, and drug use among children and youth.
- To increase students' understanding of the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.
- To teach students self-management skills, social skills, negotiation skills, and refusal skills that will help them to make healthy decisions and avoid alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.

The curriculum, instructional materials, and outcomes used in this program shall be recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee.

In addition, the Holyoke Public Schools will implement intervention strategies, which may include staff training and/or parent/guardian education, with a goal of identifying and meeting the needs of students most at risk, while maintaining their confidentiality. The Holyoke Public Schools will establish and make available to students, families, and staff, a resource list of drug/alcohol prevention and treatment services

available through community agencies and organizations. Also, as part of this intervention program, the District will implement reintegration procedures to assist students who have been absent and/or in recovery.

This policy shall be posted on the District's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents in accordance with state law. Additionally, the District shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE. This policy will be subject to periodic review every three (3) years, or earlier, when appropriate.

General Policies

Prohibition on Smoking and Tobacco Products

Smoking and/or the use of tobacco products including chewing tobacco and/or the use of vapor/electronic cigarette devices at school, on school property, or at a school-sponsored activity is strictly prohibited.

No Idling of Motor Vehicles

Under state law, unnecessary motor vehicle idling is prohibited on or within 100 feet from school property

Pledge of Allegiance

It is the policy of the Holyoke Public Schools that the Pledge of Allegiance be recited and be observed at all levels on a daily basis.

Student Publications

Students will enjoy the constitutional rights of freedom of expression. They will have the right to express their views in speech, writing, or through any other medium or form of expression within limitations comparable to those imposed on all citizens but specifically designed for children and youth in a school setting. All student publications will be expected to comply with the rules for responsible journalism. This means that libelous statements, unfounded charges and accusations, obscenity, defamation of persons, false statements, material advocating racial or religious prejudice, hatred, violence, the breaking of laws and school regulations, or materials designed to disrupt the educational process will not be permitted.

Review of content prior to publication is not censorship but part of the educational process as this concerns student publications. It can be pointed out to students, as it frequently is to journalists, that a publisher (in this case, the school system) enjoys freedom to determine what it will and will not publish.

Distribution of Literature

Students have a right to distribute literature on school grounds and in school buildings, except when the Principal prohibits the distribution in school buildings of a specific issue or publication that does not comply with rules for responsible journalism. The Principal shall require that no literature be distributed unless a copy is submitted to him/her in advance. The Principal will reasonably regulate the time, place, and manner of distribution of literature.