

CITY OF HOLYOKE  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE AGENDA**

**DATE:** MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2016  
**TIME:** 6:15 PM  
**LOCATION:** Fifield Community Room Dean Technical High School, 1045 Main Street

1. **CALL TO ORDER ~ ROLL CALL ~ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
2. **SCHOOL SHOWCASE – COACH OF THE YEAR DAVE REINHART AND CROSS COUNTRY TEAM MEMBERS / WESTERN MASS CHAMPS**
3. **PUBLIC DISCUSSION\***
4. **COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS**
  - a. **Student Reports**
  - b. **Receiver's Communications**
    - MMEA Western District Auditions (pages 6-7)
    - HHS to Participate in Game Change: The Patriots Anti-Violence Partnership (pages 8-11)
    - Parent Survey Results
5. **NEW BUSINESS**
  - a. **Minutes of Meetings**
    - Regular Meeting December 14, 2015, (pages 12-19)  
*RECOMMENDATION: That the School Committee vote to approve the minutes.*
6. **OLD BUSINESS**
  - a. **Update on Dean Dress Code Expectations (pages 20-24)**
7. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The listing of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

\*The Holyoke Public Schools makes available a public discussion period for persons in the audience to address the Committee on specific agenda items. In order to hear as many speakers as possible, the Committee asks individuals to continue their remarks to two (2) minutes. Any person wishing to submit longer testimony should give copies to the Superintendent before the meeting so that it may be distributed to Committee members. The speaker can then summarize this testimony at the meeting within the two (2) minute time period. Persons wishing to speak should register with the Superintendent immediately before the meeting begins. Individuals who request specific items to be included on the Committee's agenda should mail a written request fifteen (15) days in advance of a Committee meeting date to the Superintendent of Schools, 57 Suffolk Street, Holyoke, MA 01040.

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

# Holyoke's Dave Reinhart named 2015 Boys Cross Country Coach of the Year



The Holyoke boys cross country team won the 2015 Western Mass. Division I title, the first title in program

history. (DEE McWILLIAMS) By Mark C. Volain | mvolain@masslive.com on December 22, 2015 11:00 PM

## **Holyoke's Dave Reinhart has been named the Western Mass. Boys Cross Country Coach of the Year.**

This November, the Holyoke boys cross country team won the Western Mass. Division I title for the first time in program history. According to Holyoke coach Dave Reinhart, this team was built over years.

"Any team that ends up winning a championship is built on shoulders of the teams and athletes that came before them," Reinhart said. "Nobody is an overnight success."

Reinhart, who has been coaching the Purple Knights since 2008, said the Holyoke cross country team was struggling when he first took over. Reinhart was able to garner more and more interest in the sport, including former standout runners Cody Hodgins and Guillermo Godreau-Rivera and more, as the Holyoke teams improved. In 2010, the Purple Knights qualified for states, an important milestone they replicated in 2014, and this year's squad built on that achievement.

"Last year it was very important to finish third," Reinhart said. "Returning to states, it gave us the belief that we could win this year."

With just two graduates from the 2014 squad, Reinhart's 2015 team seemed primed to at least challenge for the Western Mass. crown.

"This year's team came together like creating a racecar, one piece at a time. **Bryan Dec and Joel Ramos** were from two years ago, then last year **Cameron Correia, Izaien Lugo and Pat Morrison** all joined," Reinhart said. "We built up the six and seven men from last year."

Reinhart, a lifelong runner who competed for American University (where Hodgins also ended up) and ran against Steve Prefontaine three times, said he didn't begin coaching until his 50s. He said creativity has been key for training runners at a city school, with numerous competition techniques keeping the team invested.

"We have to be creative, go to many different places to run - Ashley Reservoir, Whiting Reservoir, the Community Gardens in Northampton, Amherst College," Reinhart said. "Very rarely do we start a workout at our high school, because we don't like them running on pavement. We generally have to separate varsity from the rest of the team."

"We'll take 10 runners to these practices around the region. It's 10 guys fighting for those seven (varsity) spots," Reinhart said. "This year we bought new uniforms for the top 10. They're the

'Holyoke elite uniforms.' Everyone wants to wear the Holyoke elite uniform. It's a different style of uniform."

"I make sure they're very competitive with each other. I rank them every week, talk about who's gaining on who," Reinhart continued. "I do it in a positive, fun way, but they get the message. It's just like life, there's always going to be someone coming up on you."

This year's is Reinhart's first title as a coach, but he already has a formula for success.

"If I had to boil it down, a very successful team has to have a lot of grit. Grit is perseverance, intensity and determination over a long period of time, not just in spurts," Reinhart said. "These guys define grit, putting the long-term goal out there and going for it, in spite of a lot of hurdles this season."

## **The Holyoke Boys Cross Country Team won the 2015 Western Mass. Division I title, the first title in program history.**

By Mark C. Volain | [mvolain@masslive.com](mailto:mvolain@masslive.com)  
on November 18, 2015 5:17 PM

Holyoke boys cross country coach Dave Reinhart celebrated his 50th year of running with a Western Mass. championship Saturday, the first in program history. Through his running career and eight years coaching the Holyoke team, Reinhart has learned a thing or two about motivation and drive.

“No one can have success always if you work hard,” Reinhart said. “But if you work hard enough long enough, good things will come.”

For Reinhart and assistant coach Todd Walker's Purple Knights, this season presented an opportunity the program hadn't seen much before — a chance to win the sectional title.

“We always set goals at beginning of the year, kids need measurable targets. I was blunt, our goal was to win Western Mass.,” Reinhart said. “I put that onus on them. Looking at last year's results, taking out the seniors, we'd be right there.”

With a solid varsity squad, Holyoke looked good coming in, but there were other factors in play: A school system recently placed in a state receivership, school choice taking talent away as opposed to bringing it in, academics as a whole, and – of course – injuries somewhat stalled the Purple Knights' first half of the season. One of their top runners, **Bryan Dec**, injured his ankle in August and another wasn't eligible to participate in meets until Nov. 1.

“Maybe it was a blessing in disguise. We were certainly under the radar, but we knew we could be very good at full strength,” Reinhart said. “But it's one thing to say it, another to do it.”

Thanks in part to the performance of junior **Cameron Correia** and sophomore **Izaien Lugo**, both of whom joined the team in 2014, the Purple Knights stayed more than afloat, winning their first four meets of the season. Reinhart identified Correia and Lugo as two runners who found themselves this season.

“There's a point for every athlete where a light bulb goes off, and they realize they can be really good at the sport. That gives you more motivation,” Reinhart said. “Who doesn't like praise? Who doesn't like recognition?”

The team also came together as a whole, with teammates making sure they were all doing the right thing.

“The team chemistry in that the team – this is critical – they started disciplining each other and holding themselves accountable. It wasn’t me saying keep your grades up, be in school,” Reinhart said. “The most important part was the peer pressure they put on themselves.”

After the four wins, Holyoke faced off against a Valley South rival West Springfield team that featured Dec’s younger brother, Robbie. West Side pulled off the 28-29 victory, all but securing the league title.

“We watched the West Side guys go for their warm down as our bus was pulling away from the school. I said ‘there goes the league champs,’” Reinhart said. “I could see that made them not mad, but more hungry.

“Our loss to West Side after not losing a dual meet in three years was motivating. Four days later, all seven had their personal best at the Twilight Invitational in Falmouth.”

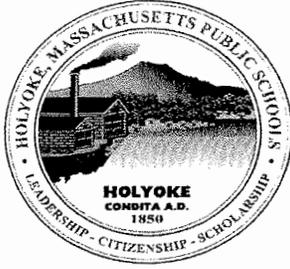
Throughout much of the season, Reinhart reminded his team they had a legitimate shot at winning the Western Mass. Division I title. A weekly reminder, Reinhart stopped repeating the goal about two weeks before the Western Mass. championship.

“By that time it was embedded, I didn’t need to bring it up any more,” Reinhart said. “The last week I didn’t mention it once. I knew I didn’t need to.”

After receiving the news that did indeed win the Western Mass. title, beating out powerhouses Amherst and Northampton, Reinhart huddled his team together.

“I said, ‘Guys, I want the feeling you have for the success today to carry onto all parts of your life. If you work really hard at something, you’ll see great results. Not all the time, but more often than not,’” Reinhart said. “That’s the lesson of more than just running, which is our theme.

“That’s what this sport teaches. When you’re successful, it’s almost addictive, you want to feel it again. That’s what we accomplished, not the trophy, but the feeling of success, which you can carry into the other parts of your life.”



# HOLYOKE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

57 Suffolk Street - Holyoke, Massachusetts 01040

Tel. (413) 534-2005 ♦ Fax. (413) 534-3730

Dr. Stephen Zrike, Jr., Receiver  
Judy Taylor, Web and Print Communications Director

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## **PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 15, 2015

### **Holyoke Middle Schoolers Raise Voices in Song for MMEA District Auditions**

Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015 marked an important day for a group of music students in our district. The annual MMEA Western District Auditions took place at Westfield State University, and six fine young musicians from the Sullivan School braved the odds and gave it their all! Under the guidance and direction of Ms. Amanda Metcalfe, these students spent the last few months preparing for the audition on voice.

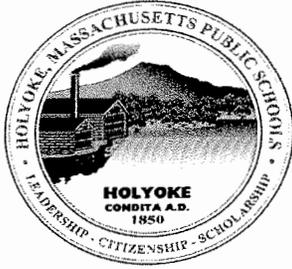
Enthusied students Bridie Bowler, Jalen Cortes, Abigale Febus, Sixto Morera, Kayla Neal, and Destiny Rodriguez gathered together on Saturday afternoon to sing their auditions. Students were asked to perform in front of two judges. Each student had to perform a prepared solo, sing or play a scale, and sight-read new music that he/she had not seen or heard before. Students received a number score and feedback following their audition, indicating areas to improve for future auditions. Amanda Metcalfe, founder and director of the now three year old choral group, Sullivan Singers, commented “It’s really a great start to our students’ musical careers, and a fantastic chance to meet others as well. The more experience you have auditioning and performing, the easier it becomes. As you perform more, you meet more people who share your interests - it’s a direct connection to the outside world.”

Western District Auditions are a highly competitive opportunity for students from the surrounding cities of Western Massachusetts to perform for the chance to be selected for an elite performing ensemble. This year, we are proud to announce that three of our six students made the cut for auditions and will be performing in the Western Massachusetts District Festival. Bridie Bowler, Jalen Cortes, and Sixto Morera will be representing the Sullivan School in the Western District Choral Ensembles this year. This is also Jalen’s second year qualifying for a spot in the male chorus. When asked about his experience last year, he replied “It was great last year! I’m really looking forward to it again this year. I’m also really happy that my score got better!”

The Western Massachusetts District Festival Concert will be held Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM at the Minnechaug Regional High School in Wilbraham, MA. Tickets will be sold in advance for \$7 or can be purchased at the door on the day of the concert for \$10. Anyone interested in supporting our students in their endeavor should contact Amanda Metcalfe at [ametcalfe@hps.holyoke.ma.us](mailto:ametcalfe@hps.holyoke.ma.us) to purchase tickets. Please consider coming out to support our outstanding musicians in one of many experiences as musicians in a global community!

If you have any questions or are interested in visiting the Holyoke Public Schools, please contact Judy Taylor, Web and Print Communications Director at (413) 493-1605, [jtaylor@hps.holyoke.ma.us](mailto:jtaylor@hps.holyoke.ma.us).

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## **PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 15, 2015

### **Holyoke High to Participate in Game Change: The Patriots Anti-Violence Partnership**

HOLYOKE, MA – Attorney General Maura Healey recently announced that Holyoke High School was selected to participate in the first phase of her office’s new anti-violence partnership with the New England Patriots. There are 98 schools from six regions across the commonwealth that will be participating in this initiative that is being funded by a \$500,000 gift from the New England Patriots Charitable Foundation and \$150,000 from Healey’s office.

Game Change: The Patriots Anti-Violence Partnership will train two adult representatives from each school at six regional trainings across Massachusetts. According to a press release from Attorney General Maura Healey’s Office, “The trainings will be conducted by Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP), a nationwide leader in addressing violence prevention. Run by the Center for Sport in Society at Northeastern University, MVP uses a sports-themed curriculum and employs collegiate athletes and former professional athletes as trainers. The program will also include online support tools for schools and an evaluation component to determine the effectiveness of the program in changing attitudes and behaviors.”

Executive Director of the Center for the Study of Sport in Society Dan Lebowitz explained in a recent statement that the purpose of the initiative is “to empower young people, teachers and coaches with the skills and tools they need to promote healthy relationships and to recognize and prevent teen dating violence in their schools and communities.”

Holyoke Public Schools Athletic Director Melanie Martin stated, “Holyoke High School applied for Game Change as a part of a partnership with Womanshelter/Companeras. This is a tremendous opportunity for our staff and students. We are thrilled to be chosen to participate in the first phase and would welcome the chance to be one of the 30 high schools chosen to participate in the second phase of the initiative that will begin in the fall.”

The second phase will provide more extensive trainings to 30 high schools in partnership with local domestic violence and sexual assault advocacy organizations. According to Healey’s announcement, “The organizations will help train school staff and parents and work with school administrators on policies and services for students and families dealing with violence. Students from each of those schools will also be trained to become peer leaders so they can teach younger students about healthy relationships and bystander intervention.”

For more information about Game Change: The Patriots Anti-Violence Partnership, visit [www.mass.gov/ago/gamechange](http://www.mass.gov/ago/gamechange). If you have any questions or are interested in visiting the Holyoke Public Schools, please contact Judy Taylor, Web and Print Communications Director at (413) 493-1605, [jtaylor@hps.holyoke.ma.us](mailto:jtaylor@hps.holyoke.ma.us).

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## **Game Change: The Patriots Anti-Violence Partnership Frequently Asked Questions**

Game Change: The Patriots Anti-Violence Partnership is a first-of-its-kind program. As such, we anticipate that participants may have questions. If your question is not answered below, please feel free to contact Margie Pullo at 617-963-2700 or [Margie.Pullo@state.ma.us](mailto:Margie.Pullo@state.ma.us).

### **1. What is the anticipated timeline?**

- a. Winter/Spring 2016: Phase One – Regional Trainings
  - i. Winter 2016: Schools will send two personnel to participate in a highly interactive three-day training in their area. Participants will be trained as trainers in Northeastern University’s Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) curriculum and will return to their schools equipped to train others in the program.
  - ii. Spring 2016: Applications will be available to participate in Phase Two.
- b. Winter 2016: Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Service Organization Selection
  - i. One domestic violence/sexual assault service organization (DV/SA Provider) will be selected in each of the six regions to provide ongoing support for participating schools.
- c. Fall 2016: Phase Two – Intensive Pilot
  - i. 30 of the original 98 schools will be selected to have MVP trainers travel to the school and train students and staff directly.
- d. Ongoing: Evaluation
  - i. Evaluation of the Game Change/MVP Initiative will be ongoing and will be directed by Dr. Ron Slaby, working closely with Dr. Kim Storey and Dr. Robert Apsler. Dr. Apsler is the co-founder of Social Science Research and Evaluation, Inc. (SSRE), a Massachusetts-based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization ([www.ssre.org](http://www.ssre.org)).

### **2. Is there a cost to participate?**

- a. No. Both phases of Game Change are free to schools.

### **3. My school already has a healthy relationship and/or violence prevention initiative.**

#### **Will participating in Game Change make us change that?**

- a. No. Game Change and the MVP program are meant to supplement and support the good work already happening in many schools across our state. Online resources will be available for MVP trained faculty and staff in how best to adapt and implement the curriculum in their school community.

### **4. My school already has a relationship with MVP. Will that affect our participation?**

- a. If your school already has staff trained in MVP, or has trainings scheduled, please let us know. Game Change is an opportunity to expand your current relationship with MVP.

### **5. How do the Phase One - Regional Trainings work?**

- a. Each school will be assigned to a regional training location and will send two school personnel to participate.

- b. Understanding that gender-based violence is often mistakenly seen as a “women’s issue”, we suggest that schools send both a male and female faculty member to the three-day training. By selecting a male and female to attend the institute, each school will develop a mixed-gender training team that will illustrate the importance of both men and women working together on this issue. Also, by sending a male faculty member to be trained, schools will illustrate the importance of men being role models to boys in addressing gender-based violence.
- c. Regional trainings will be held on three consecutive weekdays from 9:00am to 5:00pm.
- d. During the first part of the training, individuals will complete the program to experience the curriculum, particularly the unique approach to bystander theory, for themselves.
- e. In the second component of the training, participants will practice facilitating MVP’s program with other participants. MVP’s trainers will guide the participants throughout this process and provide examples of situations they will likely encounter when administering this program at their school. Time will also be offered for participants to consider how to adapt MVP’s curriculum so that it best meets the needs of their students, the school, and the community.
- f. Lastly, participants will develop action plans for implementing the curriculum in their school and community.

**6. What are the expectations for our school during Phase One?**

- a. Each school participating in Phase One will be expected to do the following:
  - i. Send two school personnel (such as: educators, guidance, mental health professionals, administrators, coaches) to the regional training in their area.
  - ii. At the conclusion of the training, the school personnel will prepare a plan to implement the MVP curriculum during the 2016-2017 school year, taking into consideration any adaptations necessary to meet the needs of their school.
    - 1. Some examples of where/how the curriculum may be implemented include, but are not limited to:
      - a. English or Health classes (the MVP curriculum is commensurate with state standards in both English and Health)
      - b. Faculty, staff and coach trainings
      - c. Afterschool clubs
      - d. Social science, literature and/or health classes
      - e. Peer leadership initiatives
      - f. Parent awareness events and/or presentations
  - iii. Participate in the independent evaluation process by completing electronic surveys in a timely manner. The electronic surveys will ask participants to rate their satisfaction with the training and its utility, whether or not they experienced an increase in knowledge of particular aspects of the MVP program content, and participants’ likelihood of acting as helpful bystanders.
  - iv. Consider applying for Phase Two.

**7. What happens in Phase Two?**

- a. Once the 30 schools are selected for Phase Two, MVP will help each of the 30 schools develop a timeline for implementation of the MVP action plan for fall 2016.
- b. This process will include a presentation to all school faculty, staff and coaches that will raise awareness of relationship violence and explain the MVP program.
- c. Schools will select 30 students to assist with implementation. These peer leaders will be trained with the goal of preventing physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual assault and heterosexism/homophobia in their school communities.

**8. What will be the role of the DV/SA Provider in Phase Two?**

- a. For a sustainable violence prevention initiative to be successful, schools must be supported as they begin to implement the MVP program. By partnering with local domestic violence and sexual assault service organizations trained in MVP, schools will have additional adults to assist in the facilitation of the curriculum and they will also have access to counseling and intervention services. We also recognize that as schools begin to utilize the curriculum, disclosures of violence will likely arise. Having adults involved in the program who are trained in crisis response and counseling will be critical to student well-being. Whether students require counseling, advocacy or other survivor services, DV/SA providers can be an invaluable resource to participating schools as they seek to implement the MVP curriculum.

**9. Is applying for Phase 2 required?**

- a. No, schools that participate in Phase One are not required to apply for Phase Two but we strongly encourage you to consider applying for these additional school-based support services.

**10. What other supports are available to schools?**

- a. Through the Game Change program, MVP will provide all 98 schools with access to online technical assistance through the MVP Clubhouse, an online learning community for people trained in the curriculum. The MVP Clubhouse is designed for individuals trained in MVP to learn and share their best practices, ask questions, provide answers, promote collaboration and foster innovation in preventing gender based violence. The MVP Clubhouse will be a place for MVP staff to provide technical assistance, offer the latest bystander prevention approaches and share updated curriculum, tips on implementation, best practices, videos and other training materials.

CITY OF HOLYOKE  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2015  
TIME: 6:00 PM  
DEAN TECH HIGH SCHOOL

School Committee Vice Chair Devin Sheehan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Mayor Alex Morse, Devin Sheehan, John Whelihan, Mildred Lefebvre, Rosalee Tensley Williams, Dennis Birks, Irene Feliciano Sims (arriving at 6:02 p.m.), John Brunelle, and William Collamore; absent: Erin Brunelle. Also present: Receiver Dr. Stephen Zrike.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**SCHOOL SHOWCASE – KELLY SCHOOL COQUI DANCERS**

The Coqui Dancers, from Kelly School, founded by Normal Rodriguez of Kelly School, performed for the Committee.

HHS student, Zachary Torres, explained that Norma Rodriguez founder of the group, started having Latino Heritage night about five years ago. He, and others, learned about their culture and where they come from. Many of the participants in the group have problems, but they are helped through learning about music, dance and their culture. Through his experience with the group he has decided that he wants to work with children and he's working hard to get there.

Mayor Morse thanked Zachary Torres for giving back to the younger students at Kelly School.

Dr. Zrike said he has seen this group perform on a number of occasions and each time they were very well received. He thanked the students and their parents for their support. There has been some talk about how this can be expanded to other elementary schools in the city so other students can have a similar experience. It would be great to have other high school students assist in leading the groups because there is a power for younger students in being led by an older student.

**PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

None

**COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS**

**Student Reports**

None

**Receiver's Communications**MASS Certificate of Academic Excellence Awards

Dr. Zrike introduced Edeni Colon, Dean Technical High School's recipient of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents Certificate of Academic Excellence.

Edeni was born in Caguas, Puerto Rico. She moved to Holyoke when she was 12 years old and had limited English skills when she came to Holyoke but was enrolled in the English language learner program and Read 180 at McMahan School and quickly became fully English / Spanish bilingual and rose to the top of her class. She enrolled at Dean as a freshman in the health assistant program and has earned straight As in the most demanding schedule and maintained a 3.95 GPA. Edeni is a John and Abigail Adams Scholarship recipient. Through the health assistant program she earned her Red Cross certifications in nurses aid, CPR and first aid and is working on her home health aid certification. Outside of the classroom she is a member of the girls softball team, cheerleading squad and volleyball team, serving as captain of both softball and cheer. She is an active member of Skills USA, student government, a student ambassador and peer tutor. She is employed 30 hours a week as a cashier. She is hoping to attend a four-year college.

Ms. Colon told members she has applied for a number of colleges. She has received acceptance into the Medical Rehabilitation program at the University of Maine at Farmington, along with a generous scholarship offer.

Dr. Zrike introduced Laura Ernst, Holyoke High School's recipient of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents Certificate of Academic Excellence.

Ms. Ernst is the daughter of Matthew and Allison Ernst and is a lifelong Holyoke resident, and a product of the Holyoke Public Schools since kindergarten. Her grandfather and father served this city as fire fighters. Since her freshman year, Laura has been the valedictorian of the class of 2016. Laura has become a shining example of someone who participates in and treasures the benefits of community service. She assisted with the school's National Honor Society sponsored American Red Cross blood drive as a donor as well as a volunteer. She has been invaluable in the Holyoke High School art and music teachers for the past few years as the stage crew manager during musical and dramatic productions as well as creating murals to advertise the productions and to promote the Arts at Holyoke High School. She spearheaded the concession stand at this year's Holyoke High School home football

games and has volunteered with the Holyoke Fire Department in a number of fire prevention events. She is also a dedicated member of the Holyoke High School Softball team. Laura has chosen to get involved in a variety of unique positions, but they all exemplify her grace under pressure, her reliability and organizational skills as well as her willingness to help others. These traits make her well suited for her desired profession of nursing. She is prepared for this vocation and has the understanding and appreciation of the career thanks to her own research and a summer internship at Holyoke Hospital.

Ms. Ernst told Committee members and Dr. Zrike that she is hoping to attend Worcester State University's nursing program. She has received an acceptance to Keene State as well.

#### Update on DLC Report – Peck

Dr. Zrike read a communication on the DLC Report as follows: *I wanted to take a moment to update our families and the Holyoke community on our response to the Disability Law Center (DLC) report that was issued on Wednesday, December 9<sup>th</sup>.*

*I remain deeply concerned about the allegations shared in the report. Parents send their children to our schools to be educated in a safe and caring learning environment. In light of the concerns raised in the report concerning how the program operated during the 2014-2015 school year, I'd like to update you on the steps we have taken to improve the safety and support of our students at Peck School.*

*As part of our turnaround efforts, at the start of this school year we made multiple staffing changes in the program, replaced the school leadership, secured two outside partners to guide our efforts, worked hard to create a more inclusive environment and developed procedures for conducting restraints, effectively handling crises, and communicating with parents about restraints. While we continue to assess our progress, I can assure families that the TIP at Peck School has made significant improvements that have positively impacted the student experience.*

*However, as a result of the DLC report and information that staff brought to us following the release of the report, we are conducting a thorough internal investigation about last school year's events. The report surfaces many systemic concerns about program design, staff oversight/training, adequacy of resources, and leadership. In launching this investigation, we have taken the following immediate steps:*

- *Reached out to all families with students in the TIP Peck Program during the 14-15 school year and current school year. We have invited them to a meeting this week to discuss their questions and concerns and share information about the current state of the program.*
- *Collaborated with officials from the Office of the Child Advocate and the Department of Mental Health who visited Peck today*

- *Placed the former Peck Principal, and the District's Special Education Director on leave pending the outcome of the investigation.*
- *Asked for a quality review of the TIP programs at Lawrence School and Dean Technical Vocational High School.*
- *Requested that our district special education review partner (Education Development Center) focus the initial portion of their three-year review on the district's TIP program.*
- *Pledged our commitment to the DLC to work closely with them to achieve our common goal of providing all students in the program with a safe and supportive environment that meets all standards.*

*I appreciate the many staff and families who have reached out to provide information and cooperated with the early stages of the investigation. As I have shared since my arrival, we will take all the necessary steps to ensure that our students' interests come first in the Holyoke Public Schools.*

#### Special Education Program Review & Technical Assistance Consultation

The special education program review began last week. Focus groups were hosted today for teachers and for families. There will be additional focus groups for both teachers and families. The review team visited a number of schools in the district and has interviewed central office staff. He expects that they will come to a School Committee meeting in February to present some initial findings and recommendations. He asked for a focus on the TIP programs and some other areas that they think can realistically be addressed in time for the 2016-2017 school year.

#### HHS Teacher, Rulon (Jamie) Anderson Honored with Partners in Excellence Teacher Award

Rulon (Jamie) Anderson was honored with this award for his work with Mass Insight Education as a STEM teacher. He is one of 54 Massachusetts advanced placement teachers who are being recognized for exemplary contributions to student success during the 2014-2015 academic year.

#### PARCC Assessment Update

After consultation with the Commissioner, it was made clear that Holyoke is expected to administer the PARCC this spring. He made the same decision for his prior school district last spring. PARCC is better aligned than MCAS to the standards currently being taught. The hold harmless provision ensures that Holyoke will not be penalized for administering the new assessment. The PARCC testing window is shorter than the current MCAS window so there will be less testing time for students. With the state's adoption of the next generation MCAS for the spring of 2017, the PARCC will better prepare teachers and students for what is likely to be a more PARCC-like exam in the spring of 2017.

Dean School Expectations/Policy Updates

Dean is proposing a shift in their dress code. The change has been proposed by students. He also thinks it's important for parents to have an opportunity to weigh-in and provide feedback. Notification has been sent to families and the principal is available to meet with families before any shifts in the dress code occur. Students wanted to explore a similar dress code to what HHS has.

Mr. Brunelle noted the cell phone policy included in the Dean building-wide expectations document; he said he thought that cell phones were not allowed at all in school. He asked if that would be allowed at HHS as well.

Dr. Zrike said those discussions are taking place with students right now at HHS. He wants schools, students and staff to drive those kinds of issues.

Ms. Tensley Williams asked if the change in dress code is about moving away from uniforms at Dean.

Mr. Sheehan indicated that he had talked with Dr. Zrike about his concerns around the Dean dress code. He is not in favor of school uniforms. He agreed that all expectations should be standard across the district. However, this dress code, called building-wide expectations, is highly misogynistic. There is an obsession with female body parts in it, including multiple references to cleavage. Young people need to be educated around the issues and that just because someone dresses a particular way does not mean they're giving off a certain message. By targeting and mentioning such specifics related to females, this code puts a burden on female students. There are opportunities for education for the young men and young women in the schools. Many young men and women don't even understand some of the things in the document and to include punitive requirements around such expectations is not right. He also questioned who would be monitoring the level of prohibited clothing. There is no mention to young men being held to the same standard of "provocative" clothing, as mentioned in the document. He would prefer to look at how students are being educated and not considering a female body as a distraction in class or looking at how a young woman dresses as in some way making her at fault for the way another person looks at her, or that the female body is a distraction in class. There is no regulation in that regard to the way faculty and staff dress in the schools. It becomes somewhat of a double standard if students have to be covered up to the neck but staff do not follow the same restrictions.

Ms. Lefebvre asked if Dr. Zrike was sure there was student voice in the building-wide expectations document, or was that created by administration's voice.

Dr. Zrike said he would talk with the administration about the points raised and the inclusion of student voice.

Mr. Collamore asked what the consequence would be for any student who was not dressed according to the rules.

Dr. Zrike said students could not be penalized for not wearing uniforms. There are ways to incentivize students to wear uniforms. The recommendation is to remove the uniform policy and to implement the dress code. He would need to have evidence that there is a critical mass of people that felt a certain way before making a shift.

### Fuller School Day

Dr. Zrike explained that he and Erin Linville, the Director of Turnaround Initiatives, are working with schools to provide support in planning extended day proposals.

District priorities are:

1. High Quality Instruction for All Students
2. Structures for Instructional Improvement
3. Climate and Culture
4. Leadership Development & Collaboration
5. Organizational Structure

A longer day is part of the solution to making sure that schools do the kinds of things that all students need to have. Many students don't have access to the kinds of resources and opportunities, inside and outside of schools, that they need to be competitive.

There are minimum requirements that have to be included in school plans, including that all K-8 schools will have a 1330 hour school year, up about 250 hours from current. Each school has a core full school day planning team that includes 5-7 school based staff that must include a principal, teachers from each grade band and ELL and SWD teachers, as well a non teaching staff member. Parents and students also have to be part of the process. By early January each school has to develop a plan to engage students and families, including PTOs, staff and community partners.

Schools are being asked to include social studies and science blocks. There is a minimum expectation that each child gets at least 80 minutes more each week of enrichment, including arts, physical activity, robotics/technology, etc. That can be done through school staff or with a partner. Time has also been built in for social/emotional learning. Expectations for the amount of time teachers collaborate each week are increased as well.

There are a series of required learning sessions for the core teams. The district is working with the National Center for Time and Learning as a partner. The high schools are also sending representation to those sessions, so that they are part of the conversation. High schools are being asked to be partners to the elementary

schools. There will be visits to schools in other districts that have moved to a longer school day.

By January 5<sup>th</sup> schools need to submit their plan to engage stakeholders, a preliminary calendar, and an instructional focus statement.

There will be a meeting with community partners where partners will be asked to think about how they can partner with schools and how their programming can support schools.

Mr. Collamore asked if there would be parental choice so children could attend schools with a particular emphasis.

Dr. Zrike said that at this point choice is not being opened in the district, however, that is something he would like to work towards as a system so families have more choices around the types of programs they are interested in.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Minutes of Meetings**

Regular Meeting of November 9, 2015

Ward III Meeting of December 7, 2015

**MOTION #1:** Mayor Morse made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tensley Williams, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 9, 2015 and the Ward III Meeting of December 7, 2015. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Birks told members that a small number of parents attended the Ward III meeting but it was nonetheless a good meeting with parents sharing information about the schools their children attend. Parents provided valuable input in terms of what they thought the schools needed and talked about some of the positives as well as some of the challenges. The ward meetings are an informal way for parents to have real discussions with School Committee and the Receiver.

Mr. Birks also told members about a meeting held with PTO and parent leaders, hosted by Dr. Zrike. This group will meet monthly and talk about goings on in the district and in specific schools. At the first meeting a number of PTO presidents were present and discussed various strategies for connecting with parents and sharing ideas for fundraising.

### **Weather Emergency Cancellation Policy**

Mr. Sheehan asked what would happen with preK programs run by outside partners if school were to be cancelled.

Dr. Hyry-Dermith said in the case of school cancellation, it is likely that the VOC and Head Start preK programs would remain open.

Dr. Zrike said at times it will be about safety for transportation to and from schools and cold temperatures. It could be possible for the schools to close and for the Head Start and VOC programs to remain open. He said he would need to look a little more closely at how that would work on a weather cancellation day.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**MOTION #2:** Mr. Collamore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Brunelle, to send a letter of congratulations to Natasha Valardo for being selected to the All Western Mass Volleyball Team this year. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Brunelle recognized Nyles Courchesne, Ward 7 School Committee-elect, who was present.

Mr. Brunelle recognized outgoing At-Large member, John G. Whelihan, and thanked him for his commitment and dedication to the Committee, the children and residents of Holyoke.

Ms. Feliciano-Sims said she would talk with Ward IV City Councilor, Jossie Valentin, and the Safe Neighborhood Initiative Program to coordinate a date for the Ward IV meeting in January.

Mr. Sheehan announced that last week Mildred Lefebvre was elected to represent Massachusetts School Committees as a national delegate to the National School Boards Association Delegate Assembly in Boston. Ms. Lefebvre will be able to attend the National School Boards Association Conference free of charge for serving as the delegate for Massachusetts. He congratulated Ms. Lefebvre on being elected as national delegate.

Mayor Morse informed members that the swearing in ceremony would be Monday, January 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. in the City Hall Ballroom. There will be an interfaith service at the United Congregational Church beginning at 8:30 a.m.

**MOTION #3:** Mr. Collamore made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tensley Williams, to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

The Regular Meeting of December 14, 2015 adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

## **STUDENT DRESS**

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.**

The wearing of hats, bandanas and sweatbands in school is inherently disruptive and is not allowed in school. 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.

**\*from current HPS Student Handbook**

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THE 189<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

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PART I ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT

NEXT

TITLE XII EDUCATION

PREV NEXT

CHAPTER 71 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PREV NEXT

**Section 82 Public secondary schools; right of students to freedom of expression; limitations; definitions**

PREV NEXT

Section 82. The right of students to freedom of expression in the public schools of the commonwealth shall not be abridged, provided that such right shall not cause any disruption or disorder within the school. Freedom of expression shall include without limitation, the rights and responsibilities of students, collectively and individually, (a) to express their views through speech and symbols, (b) to write, publish and disseminate their views, (c) to assemble peaceably on school property for the purpose of expressing their opinions. Any assembly planned by students during regularly scheduled school hours shall be held only at a time and place approved in advance by the school principal or his designee.

No expression made by students in the exercise of such rights shall be deemed to be an expression of school policy and no school officials shall be held responsible in any civil or criminal action for any expression made or published by the students.

For the purposes of this section and sections eighty-three to eighty-five, inclusive, the word student shall mean any person attending a public secondary school in the commonwealth. The word school official shall mean any member or employee of the local school committee.

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## Dean Technical High School Building Wide Expectations

### **Dress Code:** (Proposed to take effect in January, collecting parent feedback)

All students are expected to dress appropriately for a high school educational environment. Any clothing that interferes with or disrupts the educational environment is unacceptable. Clothing with language or images that are vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene or clothing that promotes illegal or violent conduct, such as the unlawful use of weapons, alcohol, tobacco, drugs or drug paraphernalia, or clothing that contains threats such as gang symbols is prohibited. Clothing that exposes cleavage, private parts, midriff or undergarments, or that is otherwise sexually provocative, is prohibited. Examples of prohibited clothing include, but are not limited to: low-cut necklines that show excessive cleavage, tube tops, spaghetti strap tops, crop tops, tank tops, halter tops, backless blouses or blouses with only ties in the back and clothing made of see-through material. Shorts, dresses and skirts are acceptable, but must fully cover the student's thigh. Leggings and yoga pants are acceptable only if they are worn with a top that covers the student's thigh. Pajamas and slippers are prohibited during the school day. Any jewelry that could be used/viewed as a weapon will not be permitted. Headwear is acceptable during the school day with the exception of hoods. Hoods may not be worn at anytime while in school. All shops will clarify their specific uniform expectations.

### **Student IDs:** (Effective 1/4/2016 - use 8 days prior to break for soft roll out)

Students are to wear their student identification cards (IDs) on a lanyard, around their neck, at all times during the school day. Students will not be admitted to class without their IDs but will instead be sent to the Guidance Office. Students will not be able to get a school lunch without their school ID. Beginning with the 3rd infraction of a lost or missing ID, the student will be charged \$3.00 for each replacement. Student IDs are issued in the Guidance Office. Students will not wear IDs during shop time but are expected to wear IDs if on a hall pass.

### **Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices:** (Effective 1/4/2016 - use 8 days prior to break for soft roll out)

Students are allowed to use cell phones and other electronic devices in common areas of the school during non-instructional times, for school appropriate use. This includes breakfast, lunch, dismissal, and passing times. Students MAY NOT use cell phones or other personal electronic devices anywhere in the building during instructional time. Students may not have headphones in their ears, on their heads, or otherwise visible during class. The school will provide all necessary electronic devices, student cell phones will never be used during class time. Cell phones are expected to be out of sight at all times during class. Any cell phones or headphones that are observed during instructional time, whether in class or in the hallway, will be confiscated and returned at the end of the period. Failure to comply with teacher confiscation will result in confiscation by school administrator through the remainder of the day. Dean Tech is not responsible for loss or damage to confiscated phones.

### **Food and Drink:** (Effective immediately)

Food and drink MAY NOT be brought into school, other than food that will be eaten for lunch which must be consumed in the cafeteria during lunch. This includes: chips, candy, soda, juice,

HOLYOKE HIGH SCHOOL  
SCHOOL RULES FOR THE 2015-2016 ACADEMIC YEAR

In addition to the Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy stated in the Student Handbook of the Holyoke Public Schools, students at Holyoke High School shall adhere to the following:

1. **HARASSMENT AND/OR BULLYING ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, RELIGION, GENDER, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEXUAL ORIENTATION OR HANDICAP IN ANY FORM SHALL NOT BE TOLERATED.** “Bullying” is the repeated use by one or more students of a 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 to the target’s property; (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. This includes cyber-bullying. Any student found to have engaged in harassment shall be subject to disciplinary and corrective action which may include one or more of the following: apology to the victim; mandatory counseling; detention; short-term suspension; long-term suspension; or recommendation for expulsion.
2. **DRESS CODE:** All students are expected to dress appropriately for a high school educational environment. Any clothing that interferes with or disrupts the educational environment is unacceptable. Clothing with language or images that are vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene or clothing that promotes illegal or violent conduct, such as the unlawful use of weapons, alcohol, tobacco, drugs or drug paraphernalia, or clothing that contains threats such as gang symbols is prohibited. Clothing that exposes cleavage, private parts, midriff or undergarments, or that is otherwise sexually provocative, is prohibited. Examples of prohibited clothing include, but are not limited to: sagging or low-cut pants, low-cut necklines that show excessive cleavage, tube tops, spaghetti strap tops, crop tops, tank tops, halter tops, backless blouses or blouses with only ties in the back and clothing made of see-through material. All tops must cover the student’s shoulder completely and fit snugly around their underarm. Shorts, dresses and skirts are acceptable, but must fully cover the student’s thigh. Leggings and yoga pants are acceptable only if they are worn with a top that covers the student’s thigh. Pajamas and slippers are prohibited during the school day. No chains, spiked jewelry (including necklaces, bracelets and gages) or other jewelry that could be used/viewed as a weapon will be permitted. Headwear (including, but not limited to, hats, scarves, bandanas, hoods) shall not be worn at any time during the school day. All headwear must be kept by students in their lockers. Outerwear (including, but not limited to, coats, jackets, parkas) shall not be worn at any time during the school day. All outerwear must be kept by students in their lockers.
3. All students who drive a car to school must park in the parking lot at the rear of the building. The student must register the car in the main office and receive a decal which permits parking. All cars must be registered no later than September 30. After September 30, the car must be registered prior to using the parking lot. Cars parked on school property may be subject to searches.
4. The use or possession of electronic communication devices (including, but not limited to, beepers, cellular phones, walkmans, iPods, MP3 players) are not allowed without teacher permission. Any student who interrupts class having a cell phone or other electronic device in his/her possession is subject to consequences.
5. **VALUABLE ITEMS: IF IT IS VALUABLE DO NOT BRING IT TO SCHOOL.** Students bring such items at their own risk. Do not expect classes to be interrupted to find an item if it is lost or stolen.
6. Lockers are assigned to students. **USING A LOCK IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED.** Students are responsible for providing their own locks for both assigned and PE lockers. **LOCKERS ARE SCHOOL PROPERTY AND ARE SUBJECT TO SEARCHES. SHARING LOCKERS IS PROHIBITED.**
7. Students are expected to arrive at school on time. Consequences for students with multiple tardies may include: verbal and/or written warnings (to be placed on the students’ discipline record), verbal and written notification to the parent/guardian, parent conference and detention.
8. Students are to wear their student identification cards (IDs) on a lanyard around their neck at all times during the school day. They will not be admitted to class without their IDs but will instead be sent to their assistant principals. Beginning with the 3<sup>rd</sup> infraction of a lost or missing ID, the student will be charged \$3.00 for each replacement. If this debt is not paid within 10 school days, additional consequences may be assigned. See item #11 for possible consequences for delinquent debt(s).
9. Students are expected to be prepared to participate in gym with proper attire. Repeated infractions will result in the imposition of the disciplinary action: