

CITY OF HOLYOKE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE

***SCHOOL COMMITTEE AGENDA**

DATE: MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2011
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. **PUBLIC DISCUSSION***
3. **COMMUNICATIONS & REPORTS**
 - a. **Student Reports**
 - b. **Superintendent's Communications**
 - Holyoke High School – School Improvement Plan
 - Dean Technical High School – School Improvement Plan
 - Center for Excellence – School Improvement Plan
4. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - a. **Minutes of Meetings**
 - Special Meeting of December 5, 2011 (pages 1-15)
RECOMMENDATION: That the School Committee vote to approve the minutes.
 - b. **Holyoke Gas & Electric/UMass/Hyperion Solar Studies Partnership – Donahue and Dean (under separate cover)**
5. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - a. **District Improvement Plan (under separate cover)**
 - b. **Requested Reduction in HPS Appropriation**
6. **PERSONNEL**
 - a. **Appointments (pages 16-17)**
RECOMMENDATION: That the School Committee vote to receive the appointments.

b. **Retirements** (page 18)

RECOMMENDATION: *That the School Committee vote to receive the retirements.*

7. **ANNOUNCEMENTS & ADJOURNMENT**

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.

CITY OF HOLYOKE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2011
SPECIAL MEETING
6:15 PM

School Committee Vice Chair William Collamore called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Elaine Pluta (arriving at 6:24 p.m.), William Collamore, Michael Moriarty (arriving at 6:20 p.m.), Howard Greaney, Gladys Lebron-Martinez, Yvonne Garcia, Dennis Birks, Cesar Lopez, Devin Sheehan and Peggy Boulais; also present: Superintendent of Schools David Dupont, Holyoke High School Student Representative Keishabell Ibarra and Ward I School Committee member-elect Joshua A. Garcia.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

None

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

Student Reports

Ms. Ibarra told the Committee that 14 students were named to Western District and 7 students received All State Chorus recognition. She asked if those students could be recognized again this year by the Committee, as was done last year.

The Junior and Senior girls are working hard, practicing for the Annual Powder Puff Football Game. She encouraged all members to attend the game to be held at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday at Roberts' Field. The cost of admission is \$3.00.

MOTION #1: Mr. Sheehan made a motion, seconded by Mr. Greaney, to send each student named to Western District and All State Chorus a letter of recognition and invite them to a School Committee meeting that fits into the schedules. The motion carried unanimously.

Superintendent's Communications

Mr. Dupont wanted to acknowledge the response to the recent snow storm and the great cooperation amongst city entities, including Police, Fire, Gas & Electric and DPW. Everyone worked hard to get the City back to order and there was always concern about the schools. He acknowledged Whitney Anderson, the maintenance department and staff for their work in the massive cleanup that had to take place. No buildings experienced damage.

Mr. Greaney asked if DESE would waive any of the school days lost because of the storm.

Mr. Dupont said the days would not be waived.

Mr. Sheehan suggested that the Committee have discussions soon about those lost days and any other snow days.

Mr. Dupont recommended having that discussion at an upcoming meeting so he would have time to meet with unions, etc. about the matter.

MOTION #2: Mrs. Lebron-Martinez made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sheehan, to send a letter of thanks to each City department that worked with the schools in the cleanup effort after the recent snow storm. The motion carried unanimously.

Report on Homeless Students

Mrs. Barbara Randall explained that she tracks homeless students and their transportation needs and costs in a number of ways. Many homeless families come to the City to stay with relatives or friends but those doubled-up living situations only last 4 weeks under Section 8 housing rules. Those families then go to look for housing and they are either put into a shelter or a hotel/motel. Once a homeless family is placed into housing, if they are not able to walk to school, the district has to provide bussing. Families sometimes get placed in shelters in other cities and the school district must provide transportation to school in Holyoke. There are currently families living in hotels in Greenfield that want their students to stay in school in Holyoke, so the transportation has to be provided. In these cases, the district where the student resides and the district where the student attends share the cost of the transportation for homeless students. The October bill for vanpool transportation was \$44,917.00. The September bill was \$35,3256.00. Last year the cost for homeless transportation was \$358,000. This year's bills are higher than last year's bills were thus far.

Mr. Moriarty noted that the listing indicates that the families are local. At one time there were families being placed in Holyoke from out of the area. He asked if that is still happening.

Mrs. Randall said that as of now all the families are from the local area.

Mr. Moriarty noted that the cost of transporting the families exceed the rents in many housing units in Holyoke. The transportation is in addition to shelter costs and other emergency costs. The federal mandate creates unreasonable expenses. If the costs represented thus far stay on track, the cost to transport could go over \$500,000 this year.

Mr. Sheehan said that the State Auditor's Office recently issued a press release about McKinney Vento funding. Suzanne Bump is calling McKinney Vento an unfunded mandate. The Commonwealth has chosen to participate and apply to the McKinney Vento program, it is not mandatory. The issue is that local communities should not have to make up any funding for McKinney Vento unless students are placed by DHCD. The Auditor is saying that the legislature needs to provide funding for costs. He suggested that the Committee write to its State Senator and State Representative urging them to support the Auditor's decision that this is a state funded matter rather than the burden being placed on communities so that legislation can be filed and supported.

Mr. Moriarty said this also highlights the issue of transiency within the schools. The Renney Center recently released a report on transiency in Massachusetts which is an important policy piece moving forward. If a child becomes homeless, that child's seat is secured at the school which at which they are placed. On the other hand, if a family moves from one attendance zone to another, that child is only

allowed to stay in the original school if the family provides transportation. If a child can stay in a classroom with one set of teachers for 180 days, that child could probably be educated more effectively than if s/he is moving around. In-district transiency also has an impact on the learning of children and perhaps the Committee would want to look at that piece of the policy. He did note, however, that there would be costs associated with any such change. He asked that administration look at the possibilities around keeping children who move within the district in their original classrooms.

MOTION #2: Mr. Moriarty made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sheehan, to refer the issue of homeless students and transportation to Rules-Policies for further review. The motion carried unanimously.

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

Regular Meeting of October 17, 2011

MOTION #2: Mr. Sheehan made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pluta, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 17, 2011. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Committees

Operations/Maintenance Subcommittee of October 25, 2011

MOTION #3: Mrs. Garcia made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pluta, to approve the subcommittee's recommendation and allow the Holyoke Food and Fitness Policy Council to help the School Department reach out to parents to provide information on free and reduced lunch forms and district policies. The motion carried unanimously.

MOTION #4: Mrs. Garcia made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sheehan, to approve the subcommittee's recommendation to hire a consultant to assist with the Transportation Bid.

MOTION #5: Mrs. Garcia made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sheehan, to name the athletic training facility at Holyoke High School the William R. Collamore Athletic Training Facility. The motion carried unanimously, with Mr. Collamore abstaining.

MOITON #6: Mrs. Lebron-Martinez made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lopez, to approve the subcommittee's recommendation to transfer \$55,469.16 from indirect costs to the summer school revolving account.

School Building Advisory Committee Minutes of October 12, 2011

MOITON #7: Mr. Greaney made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Garcia, to receive the School Building Advisory Committee minutes of October 12, 2011. The motion carried unanimously.

Order

MOTION #8: Mr. Greaney made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lopez, to refer to Operations the order introduced by Committee member Greaney that the Center for Excellence be renamed after Anne H. McHugh. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Greaney said he did speak with the Superintendent about concerns around the school being named after H.B. Lawrence. Mrs. McHugh was a long time supporter of students and education in the City and with the former McHugh School now gone, he wanted consideration given to naming a facility after her.

Mr. Dupont said that Operations can look at this in different ways. The Lawrence School could remain with the center being renamed as the Anne H. McHugh Center. The subcommittee could discuss the various options.

Mr. Moriarty said that, hopefully, someday a new facility will be approved by the Massachusetts School Building Authority, which could be named the Anne H. McHugh Center. That might encourage local advocacy to get that new school moving.

Mr. Sheehan noted that the Center for Excellence was not a name voted upon by Committee; the Center for Excellence is a program that is housed in the H.B. Lawrence School.

Travel Requests

MOTION #9: Mr. Moriarty made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sheehan, to approve the travel requests. The motion carried unanimously.

Other / MASC Conference

Mr. Sheehan recognized Mr. Birks for receiving the All-State School Committee Award and Mrs. Lafond for receiving Lifetime Membership from MASC.

Some points important for Holyoke include the new Educator Evaluation System being put into place. Anyone holding license by DESE will be held to a standard by a new educator evaluation. Former Deputy Commissioner Karla Baher, who is leading the work for the Superintendent Evaluation, which will be numerically tied to scores, said that districts would receive guidance on that evaluation by January 10, 2012, to go into effect for the 2012-2013 school year. The Committee will be using that evaluation in the summer of 2013. There will also be new evaluations for administrators and teachers.

Another big initiative being rolled out is the Governance Project, which is being led by the MASC, MASS and DESE. Bob Gass, a former superintendent, former Executive Director of MASS, and former school committee member is heading up this initiative. Holyoke will be participating in this program as a level 4 district. The concept is to help school committees to work more effectively to tie student achievement into discussions and meetings because the research says that committees who discuss student achievement on a regular basis have students that achieve better.

He learned that Catherine Craven will be leaving MSBA on December 1st to move on to UMass to be in charge of non academic building construction. He did talk with Mr. Gibbons because he was told that if the district's preferential order of building projects is changed that the projects might go back to square one in terms of the waiting list. There was also a lot of discussion on the \$60 million available for science renovations. That initiative is to focus on the STEM area and they are looking for 6 to 8 school districts to implement this program. This is for buildings that are in good shape that just need updated science areas.

Mrs. Lebron-Martinez encouraged the Committee to look at Dean School for the possibility of updating the science facilities.

Mr. Moriarty noted that about \$1 million was spent on the science classrooms at Holyoke High School after much debate. As Dean begins to review shops and the STEM areas, that might be a focal point for the school. Another area to be considered with regard to science upgrades is the middle schools.

Mr. Collamore said he attended the conference as well and had to return early as he was the recipient of the Veteran of the Year award at Holyoke's Veterans Day Ceremonies.

OLD BUSINESS

Davis Foundation Grant Acceptance

MOTION #10: Mr. Moriarty made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sheehan, to accept the Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation grant for \$30,000 in support of the Peck Full Service Community School – Data Management System, with a letter of thanks and recognition of the gift. The motion carried unanimously.

Dean EMO Update

Dr. Joan Schuman, Executive Director, Collaborative for Educational Services, said that on July 27, 2011 a final contract was agreed to and CES was able to begin work outlined in their proposal for the Dean Technical High School. Early activities in August included meeting with as many staff as were willing to come in during the summer, to share their vision and plans for the school with them, while listening to as many stakeholders as they could. They also reached out to the community to inform parents and community partners that Dean was open for business and that students should enroll in the school. Unfortunately, they had a limited amount of time and so did not meet their goal set when they thought the contract would begin last spring of 640 enrolled students. As of this date there are 563 students enrolled at Dean. They discovered upon entering the school at the end of July that a schedule for the 2011/2012 school year had not been established, nor had students been scheduled for either academic classes or vocational-technical shops. Since this is usually done at least six months before the start of school, they found themselves with no other choice but to assign additional Collaborative resources which had not been anticipated or budgeted in order to have a schedule ready for the opening of school. To do what they knew was needed to turn around Dean and to implement the proposed academic and shop scheduling for this first year, as well as to meet the needs of the over 40% special needs students and the over 32% of limited English speaking students, took 24 hours a day for several weeks on the part of CES staff and Dean staff, all of whom worked extraordinarily long hours and did indeed complete the task. Fortunately their data analyst's knowledge of the Rediker scheduling software program that Holyoke uses, and his willingness to work around the clock with Dean staff, enabled them to open school with a schedule in hand. The schedule they designed has an additional 15 minutes per day, as negotiated with the union, and provides more academic time for math and English language arts for 9th and 10th graders, while providing more vocational time in the 11th and 12th grades.

Other issues they faced immediately upon signing the contract were the extraordinary number of openings that had to be filled before school opened. Unfortunately there are still key vacancies, particularly in special education and ELL and, most importantly, in the administrative team for the school. They have begun to use their own contacts and outreach resources to try to fill these critical openings and expect to have a full team in place by the first of the year. Their professional development began immediately to build leadership in the school by setting norms for the school, expectations for staff and for students. Using data to analyze issues at the school, such as, discipline, high rates of

suspensions and drop outs, and poor attendance, their professional development focused on addressing those issues through consistent application of rules and classroom management techniques, to name but a few. More importantly, they immediately focused on creating a welcoming, supportive environment, for students and their families. They are getting to know who the students are and identifying their strengths and, through those strengths, engaging them in the school. The Committee knows the data as well as CES, through the reports received from both outside consultants and the state. Suffice it to say, they are dismal and must be improved if students are going to be in school physically, emotionally and mentally, ready to learn. Hence, their focus these first few months on developing a different school climate than Dean has had these past few years. The second major focus this quarter has been on the two specific sub groups within the schools: students with special needs and English language learners. Dean has close to 32% of its student body who are English proficient students, many of whom know virtually no English at all. Thus, a range of classes and interventions, including sheltered instruction in the content areas is required to be put in place. Over 40% of the Dean student body have special needs and are on IEP's. That includes 158 students in full and partial inclusion and 77 students in substantially separate programs. That number is exacerbated by the fact that Dean is a Chapter 74 school and, therefore, to count the entire student body as Chapter 74 students, those students must be integrated into the regular shop offerings at some point in time.

The third area of need is to ensure that the technical-vocational programs at Dean are providing a 21st Century curriculum and meeting the needs of both students and future employers, otherwise Dean will be viewed as no more than an alternative school rather than a first rate vocational-technical school.

In January, they hope to report on their findings from an in depth, qualitative review of all of the shops. The report and recommendations from that review will influence their plans for the future of the vocational-technical shops and their offerings. Meanwhile, they are reaching out to business and industry in the greater Holyoke community to sit on advisory boards which are required for each shop area.

The fourth area of instruction is on building the instructional quality in the classrooms and the shops. The Collaborative for Educational Services recognizes that a key part of their work is to build teacher capacity to design and deliver quality instruction and access for all learners, to build a common understanding of what is effective instruction and to develop the skills and tools to implement such instruction.

The fifth area of focus has been, since before signing the contract, outreach to the business community, the community human service agencies, the clergy, community leaders and families. There was much apprehension from all the stakeholder groups about what would happen to Dean. At the same time there was a great deal of support and willingness to help the EMO make Dean the first class school it should and can be.

Dr. Schuman believes that most important of all they have focused their attention and resources to developing strong and strategic leadership. Without a strong, progressive and independent leadership team within Dean the EMO cannot be successful by itself. Currently Dean has several key vacancies within its leadership ranks or has acting or interim staff in major roles. Their proposal and the benchmarks they expect to be measured by are built around having a strong leadership team in place to lead as well as to manage the day to day operations of the school and to provide instructional leadership to both the academic and vocational-technical faculty.

Although they conducted an enrollment blitz, only 600 students were enrolled before school opened. Several students had to be transferred out of Dean because of inappropriate placement and others, approximately 20, dropped out. Enrollment, therefore, is down from where they expected it to be, but not surprising given the uncertainty of whether Dean was going to open at all. Although enrollment is down, the good news is that there were fewer drop outs at this time this year than there were last year, 20 compared to 35, during the first 2 months of school.

Other data to look at for the first 2 months of the school year are student attendance, which increased from 80.5% in 2010 to 83.2% in 2011. This rate, while improving, is still unacceptably low, but in September there was 88% attendance and in October the rate was 86%. Out of school suspensions went down to 47.6% in 2011 from 72.2% in 2010. This welcome improvement needs to be expanded to ensure optimal time on learning. They hope to bring suspensions to a minimum and would like very much to not have out of school suspensions at all.

Family involvement has improved. At the first parent night of the year over 300 family members attended. Students are more engaged in school activities as well. Students lead the Pledge of Allegiance and make announcements in the morning, rather than having staff do that. The Student Council is functioning with the election of class officers. There are more purposeful recognitions of students' accomplishments, such as the student of the month and recognition for perfect attendance each month.

While they continue to seek licensed staff for all positions, the percentage of teachers with appropriate ELL and special education licensure is very low. CES staff experts in ELL and special education have developed strategic plans in both areas for the Holyoke Public Schools and will continue to work with Holyoke Public School staff to implement these strategic plans. The CES special education consultant, together with Dean and other Holyoke Public Schools central office staff has also designed an exploratory program that will allow all special education students to get an introduction to all the Chapter 74 shops and a protocol that will allow placement in the shops to be determined by the student's IEP. They continue to seek appropriate licensed staff and hope to have all vacant positions filled by the start of the new calendar year.

Together with the Holyoke Public Schools administration, the Collaborative will implement programs that will try to meet the needs of those students who are on the verge of dropping out. This includes Read 180, summer transition programs, MCAS boot camp and graduation coaches, including free training for the coaches which CES has arranged through Mass Mentoring. These programs began prior to CES becoming the EMO and they will continue them as long they seem to be working, which so far, they are. Meanwhile, CES is in the process of setting up a credit recovery and credit enhancement program for those who are over-aged and under-credited, as well as others who might want to improve their knowledge in certain academic areas.

As mentioned earlier, the qualitative review of the shops will occur at the end of this month and they will report on the findings during the next quarter. Meanwhile, they are reaching out to business and the industrial community to serve on advisory boards to the shops as required by Chapter 74.

Finally, they have to focus on building instructional quality. Perhaps the most important element in the successful school is the quality of instruction in classrooms and shops. The Collaborative recognizes that a key part of their work is to build teacher capacity to design and deliver quality instruction and access for all learners. To build a common understanding of what is effective instruction, and to develop the skills and tools to implement such instruction, the Collaborative has held 5 ½ days of professional

development for the entire staff so far this year. Topics included understanding our students and scaffolding learning based on their backgrounds and strengths, student engagement and investment in learning, using clear and explicit instructions, including unit objectives and daily content, and language objectives, writing across the curriculum and instructional strategies that the research shows are most effective with culturally and linguistically diverse groups. All teachers and counselors are part of interdisciplinary learning teams that they established and facilitated since the beginning of the school year. The teams meet for an hour two times a month and tackle issues of school culture, student engagement and quality teaching and learning. The Collaborative has placed four seasoned instructional coaches at Dean. Each teacher at Dean will receive seven weeks of classroom coaching over the course of the year. Similarly, the Collaborative is working with Dean on strengthening the academic core, both in terms of course offerings and on raising the level of rigor in the classes. They are working with the content, guidance and other staff to develop strategic plans across the curriculum and in specific areas of urgent need, including English learners and students with special education needs. Dean teachers are working on infusing reading and writing throughout the school, for example, using the Collins Writing Methods that they had professional development on this summer and practicing short answer responses in every classroom.

Another major focus is on increasing the integration of vocational and academic learning. The opportunities to infuse academic classes with hands-on examples and infuse the vocational classes with reading, writing, speaking and math, are one of the great strengths of a vocational school like Dean. It is too early in the year to see outcomes, although the current MCAS retesting should show some impact very shortly. Instructional quality, especially in math and English language arts, and especially in preparation for the MCAS, was a key goal for Dean last year before they entered the school. Dean is to be commended for those results in last spring's testing. In English language arts, 38% were in the proficient category or above, up from 28% in 2010 and 23% in 2009. In math the results showed an increase up to 37% from 31% in 2010 and 25% in 2009. CES cannot take credit for that but they will certainly build upon it.

CES has been at Dean for ten weeks this school year. They recognize that they have seen some improvements and identified many more issues. They have barely made a dent in what needs to be done to make this a first class, 21st Century technical high school. They expect to report in January, not only on the status of the vocational-technical shops, but most critical, they hope to have a strong, independent leadership team in place by then.

They are extremely appreciative of the support that Superintendent Dupont has given them the past two months. He inherited, as superintendent, an understaffed and underfunded school and that inheritance has devolved to them as the EMO. They urge the School Committee as budget deliberations begin for fiscal year 2013, to review the Dean budget most carefully to ensure that Dean is getting its intended and fair share of the state, federal and local dollars that go to the Holyoke School Department. Only with sufficient resources and appropriate staffing will Dean be successful in reaching its targeted goal.

Mr. Greaney asked if exit polls had been done on students who have left Dean this year.

Bill Diehl, Deputy Director, Collaborative for Educational Services, said they have done some exit polls and they are still trying to track some students down; some students transferred elsewhere. They know they have to build the enrollment up over the next couple of years, not only students coming from Holyoke but also students coming from out of district and young people who might have dropped out

and can return to school. Right now they are catching up. Last year students were not sure if Dean was going to open.

Mr. Moriarty said it sounds like the school is still grappling with chronic absenteeism; attendance in the 80's is very problematic. He asked what kind of outreach with the home is being done differently. Also, with regard to external suspensions, what interventions are being used and what is being planned to try to address that.

Dr. Lourdes Alvarez Ortiz, Project Manager for Dean Project, said that one of the problems they are encountering is that students move frequently. The attendance worker has difficulty getting someone to answer at the homes. Home visits are taking place, phone calls are being made and letters sent. Often phones are disconnected. There is a need to do a lot of digging and trying to find different options to access the families. The attendance worker has told her that once a student reaches the age of 16 it is difficult to force the student to go to school. Parents say that their children are not listening to them. There is a need for a little more support from the local government on how to deal with that.

Mr. Diehl said there are external factors that influence attendance and suspensions but there are also internal factors. They see part of the whole restructuring of Dean, in terms of building instructional quality to make things more rigorous, interesting and engaging, that there will be an impact on student engagement and consequently acting out and attendance. The suspension issue is an ongoing, chronic problem and they are trying to address it but they don't have good solutions now; they welcome suggestions.

Dr. Schuman said she has a strong belief that there should not be external suspensions except for real health and safety issues but they have to do something as an alternative. One of the things they are trying to do is build up the credit recovery possibilities is for students to be able to accomplish something when they have an internal suspension. Most of that work is done on-line so it sometimes engages students more than having to look at a book.

Mr. Diehl said they are building on a lot of work the Holyoke Public Schools have already done, especially in terms of using the Plato learning system.

Mayor Pluta asked if any additional counseling services have been integrated into the school so that students have someone to talk to when they are having problems.

Dr. Ortiz said they are working closely with the Teen Clinic to develop a partnership. There is a need for more than that though because the students' emotional and social needs are huge.

Mr. Diehl said they are trying to work out a partnership with the Smith College School of Social Work to get student interns. There are discipline issues at the school and the school doesn't have a well formed set of policies or a process for dealing with those things. They are working hard to try to identify an overall behavioral management system that they can support with staff.

Dr. Ortiz said usually behavioral issues are a sign of frustration. They know that engaging students, providing a rich, interesting curriculum is part of addressing the problem. Kids are more likely to be in the classrooms that have a rich and interesting curriculum. They are trying to engage students as much as possible in the classroom and to provide them with innovative ideas on how they can earn credits.

Mr. Sheehan said the Committee had been saying for many months that Dean School would be open. He asked if there was a schedule in place for students or not.

Mr. Diehl said the schedule for Chapter 74 was a work in progress. The schedule for what students would be in what classes at what time period was not fully formed when they came in. There was a committee working on that but it was not fully formed and students had not been assigned to the classes with the Rediker System.

Mr. Sheehan noted the graduation coaches and credit recovery programs cited. He asked what new programs CES has brought into Dean.

Mr. Diehl said they have spent the first ten weeks looking at the systems in the school and where there needs to be more systemic and strategic planning. In concert with the HPS administration they have built some pretty strong strategic plans. They have looked at how to address the fact that all ELL teachers only have minimal certification. That has to be raised and there are plans to do that with on line courses and so on. CES did bring in some staff that are very well versed in on line learning to work with teachers at Dean. They have been working with the graduation coaches and will bring training in for them. Those programs predate CES and they are great programs that they support. They have been looking at and developing ideas in terms of rules and regulations and enforcement at the school. Ten weeks is a little early to say what has been fully secured; there will be some things to look forward to. The most major thing is the professional development CES has brought in. Teachers received 5 ½ days professional development along with coaching and ongoing learning teams.

Mrs. Lebron-Martinez said she has heard about some good things happening at the school. She said that students who are learning English as a second language sometimes struggle to comprehend school work. Many teachers lack the category training. People need to get on board to begin to work on the root causes affecting the community by supporting the school as a community.

Mr. Collamore asked if there would be any recommendations about possible changes in shop offerings.

Dr. Schuman said that there will be a full qualitative review by experts in the field, one of whom is a former director of vocational education for the state; there are also several former and current superintendents of vocational-technical schools, and there is participation by HCC. A thorough study will be done of each of the shops to make sure the shops are preparing students for jobs that are available, that the shops have the equipment they need and that the curriculum is 21st Century curriculum. Once that qualitative review is completed a report will be brought to the Superintendent and School Committee. That report will inform the recommendations that they make to the School Committee about any changes or adaptations that the shops need to make.

Mr. Collamore asked where there is not proper staffing at the school.

Dr. Schuman said there are not enough special education teachers for the number of special ed students assigned to Dean. There are not enough ELL teachers for the number of English language learners at Dean, and both of those areas are very difficult areas to find properly certified, licensed staff in. There is a shortage of those kinds of teachers across the state, not just in Holyoke. They believe that by doing some greater outreach than has been done, hopefully they will find appropriate staff to fill those positions.

Mr. Moriarty said that as the comprehensive review of the shops is done he will be very interested in the work that will take place going forward in terms of recruiting students from lower grades and assessing outcomes for students who graduate. The Committee learned at a meeting last year that both of those areas need a lot of work.

Mr. Moriarty said he served on a task force to try to implement an admissions policy that followed a template suggested by DESE. The district was not successful in implementing that in time for the admissions process last year which had to do with difficulty communicating and resolving issues with the State oversight the district faces. With the lack of an admissions policy there has been a culture in the schools that if a student is not academically inclined he/she would be steered towards Dean. There was a desire to redirect that so there would be intentionality for vocational education. He asked if that would be tried again to have a policy in place for next spring and would the School Committee have an opportunity to see that in advance.

Mr. Diehl said the policy developed last year is a good policy; it is still with the state, partly because a new assistant commissioner for vocational education is being appointed at the state level. He is pushing to get that done because he thinks that is the right policy to have in place for next year. They have to make sure that Dean has the high quality and rigorous occupational offerings that will attract students. For example, with the High Tech Computer Center in town, develop partnerships that would create a very high tech vocational area at Dean that would attract kids.

Mr. Moriarty asked if Mr. Diehl could give a profile of what the freshman class looks like this year, in terms of how students did on the 8th grade MCAS.

Mr. Diehl said he was pretty sure it was about the same as prior years. There is a higher number of special education students. There are a number of students who did not pass the 8th grade MCAS and students who had trouble with the 10th grade MCAS but that has been typical over the past couple of years.

Mr. Greaney said Holyoke has faced those problems as well. Holyoke has spent a great deal of time trying to explain the uniqueness of the community to the State. He said he hoped that the collaborative is in communication with the state and that they will begin to understand some of the problems that the schools face on a day-to-day basis in Holyoke.

Mr. Sheehan said it is well known that there is a shortage of certified special ed and ELL teachers across the Commonwealth. He asked if the school's program is in compliance with special ed laws.

Mr. Diehl said the district has been very careful to be in compliance and the programs are in compliance. In some cases students were not scheduled in the right way initially but they are not and they worked hard with central office to make sure that was the case.

Mr. Sheehan said he had seen the posting for principal and he knew the vice principal position has to be posted because of an unexpected vacancy. He asked what the collaborative is doing in terms of recruiting efforts to find administration and qualified teaching staff.

Dr. Schuman said they did not initially go above and beyond the HPS website and posting process and that was a major error on their part. They did not budget for that kind of outreach but they are now using the channels the collaborative normally uses, such as advertising in papers and many more on-line

postings and making sure the position is posted in minority community venues. There are now a number of applications. The collaborative just got authority to fill the vocational director position.

Mr. Dupont said the timeline for the contract was no one's fault. The bid could not go out until the grant was confirmed. There were clearly scheduling issues, however, he did receive a copy of the schedule as early as August 4th and since then there have been numerous meetings to get the schedule to where it should be. Central office personnel have offered many hours of assistance. With any change there will be morale issues. That is compounded by what the perception of what the leadership is and that has been discussed. What is bothersome is who the staff perceives to be in charge. He said he would guess that if the staff were polled, they would be hard pressed to say who is in charge. That has to get established. Along with that, how leadership, the Holyoke Public Schools and the Collaborative all fit. He believes in shared leadership, but someone has to be in charge. Along with that, teachers and other staff have to feel they are a part of what's happening. It is important to have unity. With the demands of the level 4 status at Dean, and in general, there has to be rigor in the classroom, engagement in the classroom, and high expectations, and someone has to be sure that is happening in the classrooms. There is nothing more important than what is going on behind the classroom doors; are students challenged, and are they getting the best education possible. There are a lot of hardworking people at Dean. Based on visits to the school, there are some concerns. They are in the process of reviewing the first quarter grade distribution. It is not complete yet, but so far they are seeing a lot of F's and D's. There is not an explanation for that yet, but that is something the EMO and the leadership can work on. As a former principal, he would look at grade spans and if there were too many F's coming out of a class he would ask why and look at what was going on. There is a lot going on at the school with all the change and with the response to the change. Everyone has to look at how much more can be done to be sure students are properly scheduled, properly placed, and have the proper interventions. It can be frustrating as to how long this is all taking. He and Bill Diehl have been out trying to get members of the business community concerned and involved with Dean.

Mrs. Lebron-Martinez asked how guidance counselors are being used in terms of challenges students are facing.

Mr. Dupont said there are not enough counselors in the schools, especially with regard to the number of critical situations the students deal with.

Mr. Diehl said that the school district has adopted the comprehensive guidance system and Mr. Arnold has been leading guidance counselors in that. That is designed to help guidance counselors pay more attention to students' needs. It is easy to get side tracked into discipline or scheduling problems. As that rolls out some improvement will be seen. They have asked the leadership of the school to develop an early warning system so that if students are failing, that should be known 2, 3, 4 weeks into the quarter; that is in process now.

Mrs. Lebron-Martinez asked what red flags would be indicators for students at risk.

Dr. Schuman said they should have been looking a month ago at things like attendance, suspension, discipline issues, etc. They will be looking at those things now. They have to look at what's going on in the classroom. There was too much going on at the beginning of this year in terms of making sure that every student has someone following them to make sure they are in class and if not, why not. One of the things they have been trying to do through professional development is to get across the need for consistency in the way discipline is handled. There needs to be consistent expectations for students and

for staff. School climate cannot be changed overnight. It will take more than a year. It might take the full three years of the contract to really turn around school climate.

Mr. Dupont said how staff perceives policy being enforced also has to do with morale. The more consistent, the better.

Mr. Diehl said the high school graduation coaches are significant. At Dean there are 10 high school graduation coaches and 100 students most at risk of not graduating have been identified. Each teacher is responsible for 10 students who they are mentoring and keeping in touch with. They think a lot of good things will come from that and they hope to leverage that into an even larger program involving more students and more staff. That is an excellent program in place at both Dean and Holyoke High School.

Mr. Sheehan asked who is in charge at Dean.

Mr. Diehl said that the collaborative is in charge at Dean. The basic plan was to have a strong leadership team in place managing the day-to-day operations of the school. Because they are building that team now, they need to take more responsibility for areas that they would not have to if strong leadership were in place. In the school the principal is the instructional leader.

Mr. Sheehan asked Dr. Ortiz to explain her role at Dean.

Dr. Ortiz said she collaborates with the principal, they plan together and they are supposed to reflect on things going on in the school, on the data, and they co-chair the instructional leadership team. It is a collaborative relationship with support and recommendations from the collaborative. She came from an over-aged and under-credited school in Hartford, Connecticut. She is sharing her experiences with the staff at Dean.

Mr. Moriarty said that one of the most promising pieces of technology he has seen, as a parent, is Ed Line. He asked if that was being implemented at Dean. The freshman teachers at the High School are using Ed Line extensively. He has the ability to monitor homework and other information on a weekly or more frequent basis which is very helpful. That is a transformative piece of technology and he hopes that can be utilized at Dean.

Mrs. Lebron-Martinez said that while that technology is useful, many of the families don't have access to computers. She said she would like to see some effort put into trying to get access to technology for under privileged students and families. The Holyoke Public Library is being renovated and that might leave a void for some families who access technology there. Some communities are able to give students laptops for use outside of school. She said she would support the work at Dean in any way possible.

District Improvement Plan Update

Mr. Dupont said that at the last meeting with the State Monitor that they would recommend the District Plan, which is still being finalized. They were also told that the Commissioner would not look at approving plans until January. He wants to have the Monitor and someone from the Accountability Office report to the School Committee but it does not sound like that will happen until January. The School Improvement Plans will start to be put on the agendas in December.

Mr. Dupont said he was told last week by Linda Foisey, from the Assistance Office, that the Commissioner, who is on the verge of naming 12 to 20 new level 4 schools, is not going to involve Holyoke.

Holyoke High School Renovation Unveiling – December 13, 2011

Mr. Collamore said that the unveiling of the renovations will take place on December 13th at 4:00 p.m. All are invited to attend and see the work done. Significant work was done on energy conservation measures, including windows, doors and HVAC work. Legislators and officials will have the opportunity to see the work done on that date.

Mr. Sheehan asked that the unveiling be opened up to the public so that residents can see the work that was done.

Mr. Moriarty said this should be as big an event as possible, and as many city officials as possible should be encouraged to attend to look at the improvements made at that school.

Mr. Lopez suggested having the students involved in technology and production at the school put together something for the education access channel to showcase the school.

Mr. Dupont said he did ask Mr. Gibbons to contact the video broadcast department to do a video for that evening that could be run on the public access channel.

Additional Old Business

Mr. Sheehan said there are aspects of the rezoning process that the committee could be talking about now so that the community is aware of what's going on. Rules-Policies should be talking about some of the ground rules in the beginning of the process which will help the process move along more smoothly.

Mr. Moriarty said he did not think there were specific policy questions at the moment. The matter is in Operations and there is sufficient order in that process to carry the conversation forward.

PERSONNEL

Appointments

MOTION #11: Mr. Greaney made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Lebron-Martinez, to receive the appointments. The motion carried unanimously.

Retirements

MOTION #12: Mr. Sheehan made a motion, seconded by Mr. Greaney, to receive the retirements. The motion carried unanimously.

Resignations

MOTION #13: Mr. Greaney made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moriarty, to receive the resignations. The motion carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Pluta congratulated Mr. Collamore for being named Veteran of the Year for 2011 by the United Veterans of Holyoke.

Mr. Lopez congratulated the editors of the Holyoke High School Herald for their work on the school newspaper.

MOTION #14: Mr. Greaney made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lopez, to send a letter to the Herald staff for their work on the school newspaper. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Sheehan said he read in the Sunday newspaper that Holyoke High School’s Stock Market Challenge Team placed third in the Junior Achievement Stock Market Challenge. He asked that a letter of recognition be sent to the team for their accomplishment

MOTION #15: Mr. Sheehan made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moriarty, to send a letter of recognition to the Stock Market Challenge Team for placing in the Junior Achievement Challenge. The motion carried unanimously.

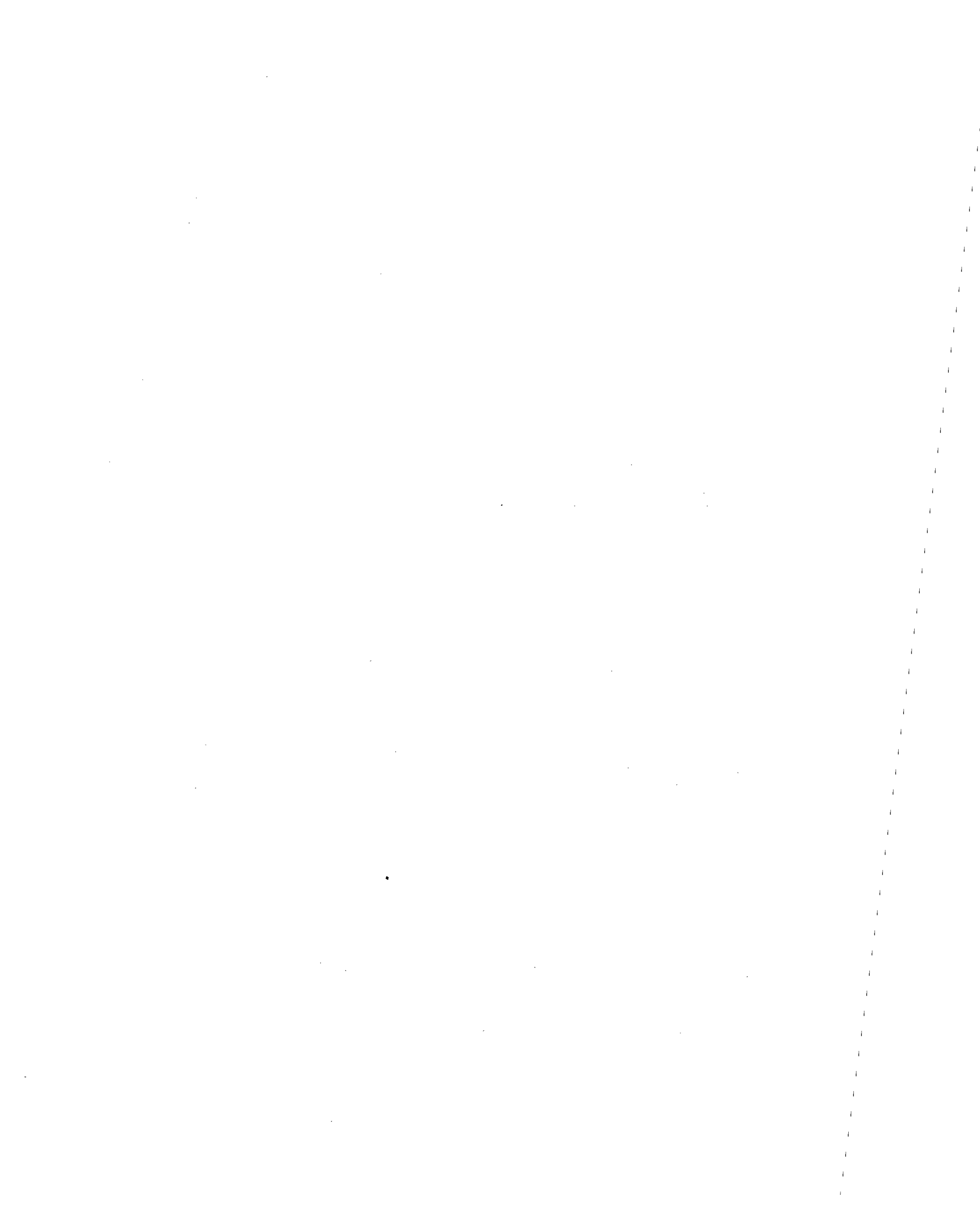
He asked to note on the record that Joshua A. Garcia, School Committee-elect for Ward I was present at the meeting.

MOTION #16: Mr. Moriarty made a motion, seconded by Mr. Greaney, to go into executive session to conduct strategy sessions with regard to a grievance settlement with the Holyoke Teachers Association and to conduct strategy sessions with regard to collective bargaining with the Holyoke Therapists Association. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Roll Call

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Mayor Pluta – yes | Mr. Collamore – yes |
| Mr. Moriarty – yes | Mr. Greaney –yes |
| Mrs. Lebron-Martinez – yes | Mrs. Garcia – yes |
| Mr. Birks – yes | Mr. Lopez – yes |
| Mr. Sheehan – yes | Mrs. Boulais – yes |

The Committee took a brief recess at 8:32 p.m. and entered executive session at 8:38 p.m.



Holyoke Public Schools
MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. David L. Dupont, Superintendent of Schools

FROM: David A. Lawrence, Director of Human Resources

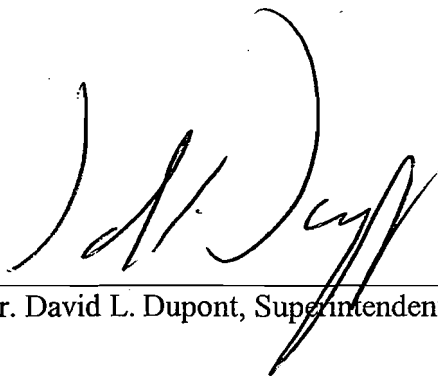
DATE: December 5, 2011

RE: New Appointments

<u>NAME</u>	<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>DATE OF HIRE</u>
<i>Teachers</i>			
Alejandro Perez	CFE	ESL Teacher	November 21, 2011
David Tefft	Dean	Diesel Technology Vocational Instructor	November 14, 2011
Diana Willis-Moriarty	E.N. White	Inclusion Facilitator SPED Teacher	November 15, 2011
Patrick Britton	Dean	ESL Teacher	November 21, 2011

<i>Paraprofessional</i>			
Jennifer Ortiz	Donahue	Special Education Paraprofessional	November 9, 2011
Rachael Burnett	Donahue	Instructional Paraprofessional	November 8, 2011
Rebecca McDonald	McMahon	Special Education Paraprofessional	November 28, 2011
Ruth Santos	Kelly	Special Education Paraprofessional	November 16, 2011

I approve and accept:

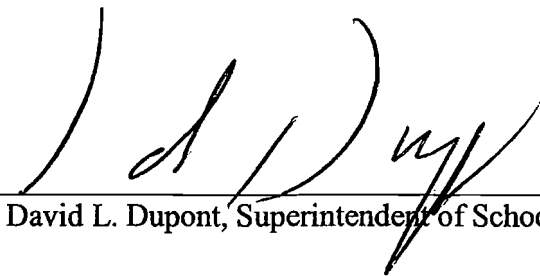


Mr. David L. Dupont, Superintendent of Schools

Holyoke Public Schools
MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. David L. Dupont, Superintendent of Schools
FROM: David A. Lawrence, Director of Human Resources
DATE: December 5, 2011
RE: Extended Time Programs

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>PROGRAM</u>
Arrin Brewer Barnes	Teacher	Saturday School – Kelly
Maureen Callahan	Teacher	Saturday School – Kelly
Roseanne Caracciolo	Teacher	Saturday School – Kelly
Kathleen Engelson	Teacher	Saturday School – Kelly
Leslie Rocha	Teacher	Saturday School – Kelly
Maureen Callahan	Tutor	Before & Afterschool Tutoring – Kelly
Kathleen Engelson	Tutor	Before & Afterschool Tutoring – Kelly
Kristin Gladu	Tutor	Before & Afterschool Tutoring – Kelly
Erin Hanley	Tutor	Before & Afterschool Tutoring – Kelly
Lynn Jubinville	Tutor	Before & Afterschool Tutoring – Kelly
Leslie Rocha	Tutor	Before & Afterschool Tutoring – Kelly
Lauren Sherwood	Tutor	Before & Afterschool Tutoring – Kelly
Patricia Valois	Tutor	Before & Afterschool Tutoring – Kelly
Wendy Sullivan	Tutor	Before & Afterschool Tutoring – Kelly

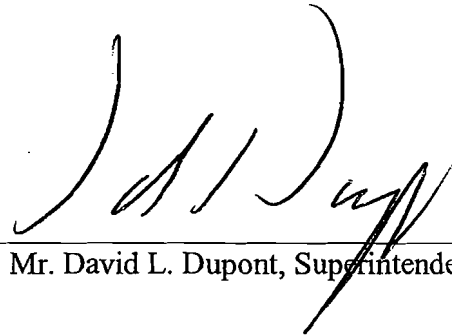
I approve and accept: 
Mr. David L. Dupont, Superintendent of Schools

Holyoke Public Schools
MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. David L. Dupont, Superintendent of Schools
FROM: David A. Lawrence, Director of Human Resources
DATE: December 5, 2011
RE: Retirements

<u>Name</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Date of Retirement</u>	<u>Years of Service</u>
<i>Teachers</i>				
Linda Forget	HHS	Math Teacher	December 22, 2011	11
Mary Santiago	Sullivan	Elementary Teacher	December 31, 2011	26
Ralph Webb	Dean	Culinary Arts Instructor	December 31, 2011	22
William Martin	HHS	Math Teacher	December 28, 2011	5

I approve and accept:



Mr. David L. Dupont, Superintendent of Schools

