

**STUDENTS**, from page 1

"We want to have one line in every school so people are able to call out and reach Puerto Rican schools for the necessary student information," Zrike said.

In addition to the incoming students, the Holyoke schools have hired three Puerto Rican teachers and a substitute teacher who have also fled the island, where some 660,000 customers still do not have electricity. Zrike reported that the state Department of Education has granted waivers allowing teachers from Puerto Rico to teach in Massachusetts schools for 1.5 years before they must receive state certification.

Ward 3 School Committee member Dennis Birks asked Zrike at the meeting whether students coming from Puerto Rico could take the state MCAS assessment tests, which are required by law, in Spanish, but Zrike said there is no Spanish-language version of that test.

"Given the nature of the language barrier, I would like to see these students have an opportunity to pass this test," Birks said. "It would be good to get a sense of where they are academically." Zrike said the district also uses the STAR assessment test, which is available in Spanish, to evaluate students' academic proficiency in different subjects.

Zrike said most of the incoming Puerto Rican students are "Spanish-dominant," and while some can speak a bit of English, most do not.

"They are being taught by and large in English," Zrike said. He noted that all city schools have staff members who are bilingual in Spanish and English, however, and they can help students as needed. In addition, Holyoke High School has a program called Newcomer Academy where new English learners receive extended instruction in English language development, but also take core academic subjects in Spanish.



**E.N. White School has welcomed, from left, seventh graders Damangely and Kennel, and eighth grader Dereck, who moved to Holyoke from Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria devastated the island.**

"We want to help students from Puerto Rico to transition as quickly as possible and, not surprisingly, with the right kinds of support, students are able to develop second language acquisition much quicker," Zrike said. "Every school is staffed with a lot of native Spanish speakers and we are always hiring new people."

Zrike said it has been challenging to accommodate such a large influx of students at one time, but said "as a school system, we have had to pivot and shift." He expects the migration from Puerto Rico to continue, but eventually, some may want to return to their homeland.

"We are looking at this as an opportunity to enrich our community," he said. "It makes us more resilient as a school system, but it also helps the students who are already in our schools with a great learning opportunity, both

to add new staff members from Puerto Rico and some really motivated parents who are already becoming active in our community."

Zrike said the clothing drives and other efforts to help the new arrivals from Puerto Rico have been inspiring. People from Puerto Rico have been displaced from their homes by a natural disaster and are deemed homeless as a result, giving them access to various forms of public assistance and social services. Zrike said some of the new arrivals from Puerto Rico are staying with relatives in Holyoke, some are in shelters and other forms of temporary housing, and some have been placed in permanent housing.

"We see this situation as a challenge, but it is nothing compared to what these families have gone through," he said.

**SEEDS**, from page 8

your favorites. It is important to fold over used seed packets and seal them with tape after use, and if you are just getting to it now, it's better late than never. Put them in a location that is cool and dry. Since temperatures around 37 to 41 degrees are ideal, many people assume that storage in the refrigerator is preferred. It is, as long as the seeds are first placed in an airtight container along with a desiccant to absorb moisture. Desiccants such as silica gel are available in the floral section of craft shops, or you can reuse the pouches of silica that come in vitamin bottles or shoe boxes.

If you'd rather not take up space in your fridge, storing the container of seeds in a cabinet in a dry part of the house will also work. Whatever you do, don't put them in a hot attic or damp basement! It is also not a good idea to purchase seeds from stores that have their seed displays in greenhouses. Temperature and moisture extremes can affect viability even if the seeds are brand new! Some seed companies sell their seed in foil-lined packets. These are very good at keeping them fresh for the longest amount of time - especially if they are unopened.

Have fun as you peruse the colorful seed catalogs on the cold nights up ahead. Now you will know exactly what you need to buy!

*Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food, as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to [dfarmer@turley.com](mailto:dfarmer@turley.com) with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.*

**COUNCIL**, from page 1

chairman, Councilor Linda Vacon, along with David Bartley and Rebecca Lisi.

McGee was well-known for his service with the Finance Committee as its chairman. He has named Councilor Joseph McGiverin, a veteran councilor, to chair the committee now. McGee remains on the committee as a member, along with James Leahy, Peter Tallman and Michael Sullivan.

"I believe these committee assignments strike the proper balance of experienced leadership and diverse options

in the City Council for the challenges we face this year," said McGee.

McGee has Bartley chairing the Development and Government Relations Committee, which also takes on a large amount of business each year.

There are four other committees of the council that have been reduced in size to just three members, following the loss of two council members.

The Public Service Committee will be chaired by Leahy, and include Lisi and McGiverin. The Charter and Rules Committee will be chaired by Roman,

and include Vacon and McGee.

Councilor Daniel Bresnahan will continue to chair the Public Safety Committee, and will be joined by Councilors Jossie Valentin and Gladys Lebron-Martinez.

There is also a joint committee of the council and School Committee. That group is chaired by Lebron-Martinez. She will be joined by Anderson-Burgos and Bresnahan.

As expected, Sullivan has taken over Jourdain's spot on the Community Preservation Committee. The council, in creating the ordinance that estab-

lished the CPC, agreed to have one council member on the committee to serve as a liaison to the full council. The full council must approve all CPC spending requests after it has gone through the CPC's approval vote.

McGee said there a number of different issues facing the Holyoke City Council in the coming year, with a number of decisions looming in just the next couple of months. However, he was not specific in addressing his stance on any of the issues. He said he is looking forward to the Jan. 16 meeting to start full council agendas.

**PUBLIC NOTICES**

**City of Holyoke  
Purchasing Department  
536 Dwight Street #15  
Holyoke, MA 01040-5078  
(413)-322-5650  
REQUEST FOR  
PROPOSALS #2017-005  
SALE OF  
188 CHESTNUT STREET**

Sealed proposals for the sale and development of 188 Chestnut Street, Holyoke, MA will be received by the Chief Procurement Officer, Room 15, Holyoke City Hall, Holyoke, MA 01040 up to **January 29, 2018 at 2 PM**; in which time they will be publicly opened and read.

Proposals will be available to be available electronically on January 2, 2018 at 10:00 AM by contacting [belangerl@holyoke.org](mailto:belangerl@holyoke.org) and/or [sheri-danb@holyoke.org](mailto:sheri-danb@holyoke.org).

The City of Holyoke reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals.

**Lori Belanger**  
Chief Procurement Officer  
Room 15- City Hall  
536 Dwight Street  
Holyoke, MA 01040-5078  
(413) 322-5650  
[belangerl@holyoke.org](mailto:belangerl@holyoke.org)  
1/05, 1/12/18

**Commonwealth of  
Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Hampden Probate and  
Family Court  
50 State Street  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413)748-7758  
Docket No. HD17C0261CA**

**In the matter of:  
DAVID WILLIAM SCRUGGS  
Of: Holyoke, MA  
NOTICE OF PETITION  
FOR CHANGE OF NAME**

To all persons interested in petition described:

A petition has been presented by **DAVID W SCRUGGS** requesting that: **DAVID WILLIAM SCRUGGS** be allowed to change his/her/ their name as follows: **LAUREN GRACE SCRUGGS**

If you desire to object thereto, you or your attorney must file a written appearance in said court at: **Springfield** on or before ten o'clock in the morning (10:00 a.m.) on: **01/24/2018**

WITNESS, Hon. **Barbara M Hyland**, First Justice of this Court.

Date: December 27, 2017  
**Suzanne T. Seguin**  
Register of Probate  
1/05/18



**Send Us Your Photos!**  
**[thesun@turley.com](mailto:thesun@turley.com)**

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