

## State: Holyoke schools on track for July 1 exit from commonwealth oversight

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**HOLYOKE** — Holyoke Public Schools will return to local control on July 1, the state announced tonight.

The announcement comes after 10 years state oversight, called receivership, for chronic underperformance.

The state made a provisional determination in October that the schools would be ready to re-helm the district if the School Committee completed a plan for rebuilding and sustaining the schools.

“Holyoke has worked hard to regain local control of its schools, and this is a great moment for the city, students, educators and families,” said Gov. Maura Healey in a statement.

Education Secretary Patrick A. Tutwiler, who also serves as interim commissioner, said, “It is time for local officials to take the lead,”

It’s a proud day for Holyoke, said Holyoke Mayor Joshua A. Garcia, who also chairs the School Committee, in the statement.

The commonwealth noted a number of district achievements, including:

- an increase in the district’s four-year cohort graduation rate from 60.2% in 2014 to 77.1% in 2024, which includes a 32-point gain for English learners and a 31-point gain for students with disabilities over the same time period;
- a reduction of the out-of-school suspension rate from 20% in 2013-14 to 9.8% in 2023-24;
- an increase in the percentage of students in grades 11 and 12 completing advanced coursework from 39.5% in 2018 to 57% in 2024;
- and a gap-narrowing increase in the percentage of Hispanic/Latino students in grades 11 and 12 completing advanced coursework, from 32.2% in 2018 to 54.6% in 2024.

“The Holyoke School Committee and Local Control Subcommittee worked very hard to get to this day, but we know our work is just beginning,” said Yadilette Rivera Colon, vice chair of the School Committee, in the statement.

The district has about 4,800 students in preschool through grade 12 and had been in receivership since 2015.

Receiver Anthony Soto has led the district since 2021. Earlier this year, the School Committee named him superintendent for the 2025-26 school year, overseeing the transition.

The state will continue to support and monitor the district’s progress, which has to meet exit assurances that Tutwiler issued April 28, the state said. Exit assurances include professional development for teachers; the creation and use of an early literacy plan; two-way communication with families, including non-English speakers; policies related to teaching and learning time; and educator compensation and evaluation.