

# BRONCHO PRESS

Official Newsletter of Holly Area Schools

Fall 2018



PREMIER  
EDITION

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Superintendent Scott Roper takes time to work with a young Broncho during class.

Dear Holly Area Schools families,

Welcome to the first edition of the *Broncho Press*, the official newsletter of Holly Area Schools!

I truly hope you love our new newsletter, which will highlight the exciting events, achievements and success stories here at HAS. I hope the *Broncho Press* becomes your one-stop shop for all things Bronchos!

The *Broncho Press* is part of an ongoing effort to better communicate with Holly parents and the community. In this edition, you will read about several innovative and cutting-edge programs we are providing in the 2018-2019 school year that continue to make Holly an exceptional place to learn, grow and inspire.

As your new superintendent, I'd like to take a moment to explain my vision for Holly Area Schools in the new school year and beyond. The core of that vision is to use cutting-edge technology and innovative programs to give kids real-world experience that builds their skills for the jobs of the future.

Holly Area Schools has always been a leader in using technology and pioneering programs to prepare our kids for skills and jobs, and I plan to build on that success as superintendent. Our students and staff have access to the latest technology and receive valuable support from our full-time classroom technology integrator.

I am also dedicated to building a culture of kindness, compassion and respect among all Bronchos, which will help Holly Area Schools continue to foster a positive, nurturing learning environment to help all students achieve and succeed. This includes teaching skills outside the classroom, including leadership, taking responsibility, problem solving and teamwork.

I look forward to meeting all of our Broncho families in the months ahead as we continue an exciting 2018-2019 school year.

Sincerely,

Scott Roper, Superintendent

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[twitter.com/HollySchools](https://twitter.com/HollySchools)

Bronchos in the HEADLINES

“Holly Area Schools announces elementary STEM program”

– (Oakland Press, Sept. 7)

“High school diploma + college credit = dual enrollment”

– (Tri-County Times, Aug. 27)

“Superintendents welcome you back”

– (Tri-County Times, Aug. 27)

“Playing with purpose: Holly teachers train in new approach to recess”

– (ABC Channel 12, Aug. 8)



## Elementary STEM program teaches perseverance, problem-solving

**A**t all four Holly Area Schools elementary buildings, young Bronchos are learning lifelong skills in the new Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) program for Young 5s through fifth-grade students. The program is an investment in preparing the district's youngest students for bright futures and the jobs of tomorrow.

*“By providing the STEM program, we are preparing students for jobs that we don’t even know exist yet.”*

The district has hired two teachers with extensive STEM experience to lead the program and work with the district's full-time technology integrator to launch the program.

“Our overarching goal is perseverance,” said **Tracey Smith**, one of the new STEM teachers. “Children need to have the opportunity to experience a productive struggle and feel pride in their success after solving a problem.”

The STEM program goes beyond the traditional baking soda and vinegar science experiments of the past, Smith said. Students will learn basic coding, robotics, science,

problem-solving, critical thinking and more.

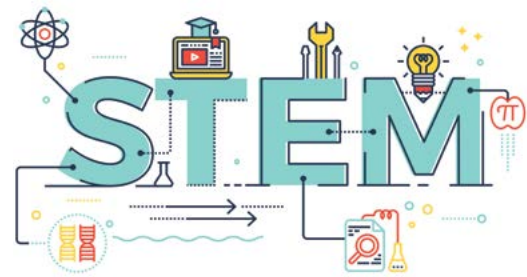
“What we like to do is take a science experiment they would do in the classroom and provide them the opportunity to solve the problem themselves,” Smith said. “It gives them the opportunity to flow through the engineering process.”

STEM Teacher **Nathan Mosseri**, also new to the district, said the program builds upon state standards and classroom experiences to enhance student learning – even for the youngest students.

“With the Young 5s and kindergarteners, we are using Play-Doh and straws to build shapes,” he said. “It is a kinesthetic opportunity to work through problems in order to learn. We also use stories with younger students. We have them design and create things to help solve the problems that come up in the story.”

While STEM education is popular at the middle school and high school levels, it is less common at the elementary level, Smith said.

“It is rare to find a standalone STEM classroom with a designated teacher,” Smith said. “By providing the STEM program, we are preparing students for jobs that we don’t even know exist yet.”



## Leader in Me builds skills and habits to ensure student success

In its sixth year at Holly Middle School, the Leader in Me program continues to teach students skills in leadership, accountability, teamwork, communication and more.

“We think this is a huge component of developing the whole child when they come to Holly Middle School,” said Principal **Eric Curl**. “We want them to leave middle school having grown academically, socially and as leaders.”

Leader in Me pulls content from “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People” by Franklin Covey in language that children can understand.

Holly Middle School was recently re-certified as a Lighthouse School. Lighthouse Certification is a highly regarded standard recognizing schools that have produced outstanding results in school and student outcomes. Holly Middle School was the first school to be certified in Michigan and the second to earn certification in the United States, Curl said.

“Being a Lighthouse middle school is unique,” Curl said. “The big component of being a Lighthouse school is that you are teaching habits and applying them to your day-to-day operations.”

Leader in Me has helped give students and teachers a framework and common language used when discussing goals, working in groups or participating in difficult conversations.

“Being a Leader in Me School has had a major impact on the way the students of Holly Middle School view the world and their part in it,” said **Susan Stefanko**, Leader in Me building coordinator and sixth-grade social studies teacher. “Leader in Me has allowed students to become young people who are more confident, empathetic and responsible.”



*Holly Middle School has earned the Lighthouse School of Academic Distinction for 2018. This is the second year in a row the middle school has earned this recognition. The Lighthouse School of Academic Distinction recognizes schools that have shown significant academic growth as measured by state academic standards.*



## School safety, 21st century learning focus of Holly Area Schools bond proposal

A proposal on the Nov. 6 ballot would, if approved by voters, allow Holly Area Schools to provide school safety improvements, energy and other building upgrades and enhanced classroom technology to help prepare all students for the jobs of the future.



Buildings and facilities were assessed to determine and prioritize needs throughout the district. If the proposal passes, the bond would fund safety and security upgrades throughout the district, including:

- > Secure school building entrances
- > New classroom door hardware
- > Additional video surveillance
- > Improved exterior lighting
- > Upgrades to fire alarm systems, and
- > Safer student drop-off sites

The bond would also support improvements necessary to extend the life of existing district buildings, including replacing or improving:

- > Failing heating and cooling systems
- > Inefficient lighting and electrical systems
- > Old roofs
- > All elementary school playgrounds, and
- > Parking lots and sidewalks

The bond would also fund improved classroom technology to help the district continue to provide innovative, 21st century learning opportunities to all students. Learn more about the proposal by visiting [hask12.org](http://hask12.org) and clicking on “2018 Bond.”



## Holly students marching to their own beat

From the marching and jazz bands to the symphony and concert ensembles, the talented musicians at Holly Area Schools have hit high notes over the past several years.

They have performed at the Alamo Bowl in San Antonio, Texas; the Outback Bowl in Tampa, Florida; and the National Memorial Parade in Washington, D.C. They won the 2016 Detroit Tigers National Anthem Contest, which provided the opportunity to perform the national anthem during opening weekend. The band also consistently ranks at the top in local and statewide competitions.

In 2020, the high school marching band will be one of only two high schools from the United States to perform in Dublin, Ireland, at the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Instrumental to their success is **Ben Baldwin**, the band director at Holly Area Schools. Baldwin uses music as a way to teach students essential life skills such as work ethic, persistence and discipline.

"When I am planning what I want the kids to get out of band, music is secondary," he said. "I think what they are really getting out of band are life skills like how to do something difficult and commit yourself to something to achieve success."

From dedicating themselves to practicing an instrument to being continuously challenged with new music, band provides students with a solid foundation of skills they'll

use throughout their lives.

"A lot of studies show that band kids tend to be in the top 10 percent in their class," he said. "And a lot of that has to do with the fact that we are training them to develop themselves intrinsically and that carries on to their academics. As a high-achieving band, we have high standards. I think those standards become a part of their life."

Baldwin said many students return after graduating and say band positively influenced their life's trajectory.

"It is not necessarily about the music," he said. "They come back to me and say the things they did in band class really inspired them to be successful in college and their careers."

Baldwin, who has been teaching for 17 years, is a former Marine.

"For me, the best training to become a teacher was serving in the military," he said. "A lot of the military's core values transferred right over, like structure, planning and leadership."

Baldwin has big dreams for his students beyond Dublin in 2020.

"My goal before I retire is to hit a few of the really big events," he said. "I'd love for Holly students to march in the Rose Bowl parade on New Year's Day. I want my students to perform at a presidential inauguration at some point. And I want to get the kids to Carnegie Hall."

*"I think what they are really getting out of band are life skills like how to do something difficult and commit yourself to something to achieve success."*



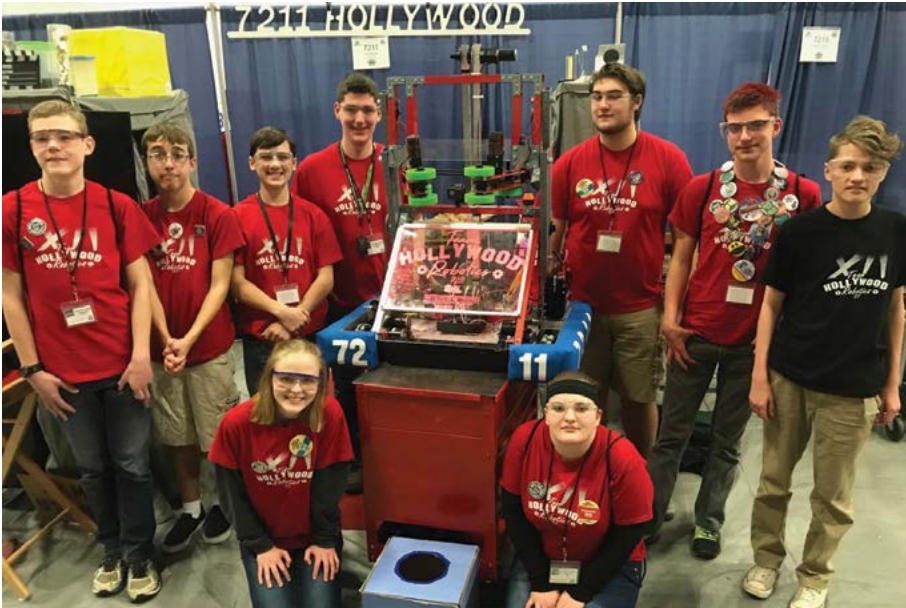
## Robotics team earns state-level recognition in rookie year



The Holly High School Robotics Team became a formidable force on the competition floor in its first year, eventually qualifying for the world championships.

In its rookie season, the 10-member Holly High School Robotics Team geared its way to success in the For the Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology Robotics Competition (FIRST). FIRST promotes Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math (STEAM).

In its first tournament, the team earned a Rookie All Star Award and competed as a finalist. At the second tournament, the team won the coveted Rookie Inspiration Award.



“We have had a pretty successful first season, which has set us up well for this next one,” said Head Coach **Jeremy Callahan**.

Callahan said the robotics team helps students build technical and interpersonal skills.

“In class you get lectures and theory,” he said. “In robotics, you gain the applied experience. You have your theories and ideas of what you want to do, and then you bring them to life by working side-by-side with mentors from industry.”

Because the team is supported by business partnerships, students also learn the nuts and bolts of the business world.

“The first thing students think is they’re there to wrench on a robot and be an engineer,” he said. “But we also have a business and marketing role. We are solely funded by companies, so we have to raise funds for the team to sustain itself.”

In the upcoming FIRST season, students will be given a challenge to build a robot. The challenge will involve competing with other robots in a 3-on-3 format, ranging from playing soccer or basketball to storming a castle or flying across the sky in an airship.

With a successful first season under the team’s belt, Callahan hopes they’ll have both the points and the funds to compete in the next world championship.



This fall, Patterson Elementary students harvested tomatoes, zucchini, flowers and other produce in their very own garden! Students planted the garden adjacent to the school’s playground as part of an ongoing, hands-on science learning opportunity. Throughout the summer, students continued to weed and water the garden.



**Patterson Elementary Garden**



Effective communication is essential to building and sustaining positive school-family relationships. To help parents effectively ask questions or communicate a concern, Holly Area Schools has outlined a “chain of command” sequence.

Many questions can be easily answered by the school staff directly involved in the class or program before moving to the next level in the sequence. Email addresses and phone numbers are provided to allow for quick and clear communication with parents and educators.

Visit [hask12.org](http://hask12.org) and under the DISTRICT Tab, please click on “Chain of Command” to determine who to contact for questions, concerns, and comments regarding:

- > Transportation
- > Instruction/curriculum
- > Special education services
- > Athletics
- > Student discipline
- > Facilities/grounds/buildings
- > Food/nutrition services



For a districtwide leadership directory, visit [www.hask12.org/district/chain-of-command](http://www.hask12.org/district/chain-of-command)



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