

## **D.A.R.E. program working well at Holyoke Elementary**

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

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A relationship with students that started last year when Holyoke police officer Larry Drake read to local elementary students has evolved into a successful Drug Abuse Resistance Education program.

Drake reported on the development of the program at the Feb. 4 meeting of the Re-1J Board of Education.

From basic reading of light lessons in grades K-2 last year to a McGruff program on peer pressure and anti-bullying in K-4 this year, Drake is getting acquainted with young students on a weekly basis.

Elementary counselor Sharon Jones and Drake work together to make the lessons mean something to elementary students.

Drake completed a two-week course last spring to obtain certification to teach the D.A.R.E. lessons, and every Friday he does a program with fifth- and sixth-graders.

Elementary Principal Kyle Stumpf said it's really neat to see the kids interact with Drake.

Using the D.A.R.E. Decision Making Model, Drake outlines the four steps as follows: Define the problem, Assess the choices, Respond and Evaluate.

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