School safety is a clear priority in Holyoke School District Re-1J and has come to the discussion forefront following the recent school tragedy in Connecticut.

At the Dec. 18 School Board meeting, board members reviewed the Crisis Response Plan standard response protocols. The original plan was put in place in January 2011 and revisions are being printed in preparation for presentation to staff on Friday, Jan. 4.

Supt. Bret Miles noted the crisis response plan work was influenced by the I Love You Guys Foundation in response to the Platte Canyon tragedy in 2006.

Protocols have been adopted in many school districts throughout the state and outline specific steps for evacuations, shelter, lockout and lockdown.

Additional steps address bomb threat, child abuse, injury/illness, missing person, sexual assault and suicide.

In addition to the Crisis Response Plan revisions, Miles reminded the board of security upgrades completed this past summer using mill levy override money.

A new security camera system was installed at the elementary school, and cameras were added to the high school security system. A new computerized door lock system was added to both schools, and the district had the intercom system and phone system tied together to improve emergency announcements.

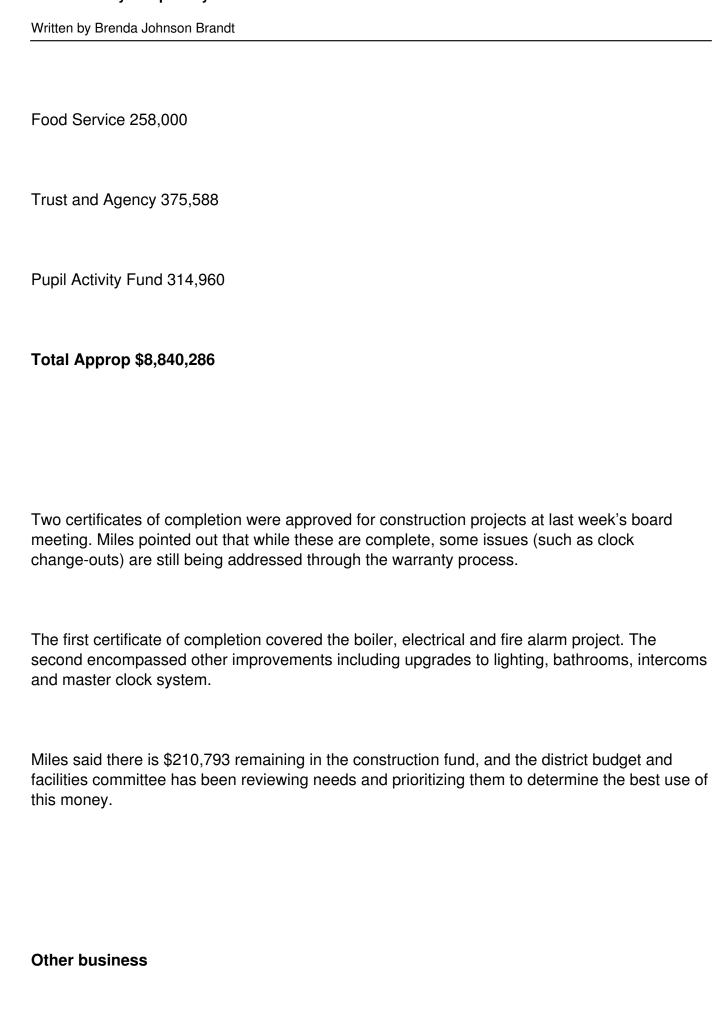
The Connecticut tragedy has led to local discussion about the idea of keeping school doors locked and requiring all visitors to buzz into the buildings with the new security system.

Miles said he and the principals are reviewing procedures and will have a plan in place prior to

## School safety is a priority



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