School Committee Meeting

November 20, 2013
7:00 pm

Town Hall
Selectmen's Meeting Room

SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
AGENDA
November 20, 2013 6:30pm
Town Hall—Selectmen's Meeting Room

Items	Suggested time allotments
I. Public Participation	6:30 – 6:35
II. Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports	
III. Superintendent's Report	
IV. Time Scheduled Appointments A. Technology Update: Report	6:35 – 7:15
V. Curriculum	
VI. Policy	
VII. Budget A. Fiscal Year 2015 Budget: Public Hearing B. Grants: Annual Report	7:15 – 8:15 8:15 – 8:30
VIII. Old Business	
IX. New Business	
X. Approval of Minutes	8:30 – 8:35
XI. Executive Session	8:35 – 9:00
XII. Information Enclosures	
XIII. Adjournment	9:00

Next meeting: December 4, 2013

ITEM NO: I.   **Public Participation**   MEETING DATE: **11/20/13**

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:
Will the School Committee hear thoughts and ideas from the public regarding the operations and the programs of the school system?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
Copies of the policy and procedure for Public Participation are available to the public at each School Committee meeting.

ITEM NO: **II.**   **Chairperson's Report/Members' Reports**

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:
Will the School Committee hear a report from Ms. Sandra Fryc, Chairperson of the School Committee, and other members of the School Committee who may wish to comment on school affairs?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
This agenda item provides an opportunity for the Chairperson and members of the Shrewsbury School Committee to comment on school affairs that are of interest to the community.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:
Ms. Sandra Fryc, Chairperson
Mr. John Samia, Vice Chairperson
Mr. Jason Palitsch, Secretary
Ms. Erin Canzano, Committee Member
Dr. B. Dale Magee, Committee Member

ITEM NO: **III.**   **Superintendent's Report**

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:
Will the School Committee hear a report from Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
This agenda item allows the Superintendent of the Shrewsbury Public Schools to comment informally on the programs and activities of the school system.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:
Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

ACTION RECOMMENDED FOR ITEMS I, II, & III:
That the School Committee accept the report and take such action as it deems in the best interest of the school system.

ITEM NO: **IV. Time Scheduled Appointment**   MEETING DATE: **11/20/13**
         A.   Technology Update: Report

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee hear a report that provides an update regarding the district's technology program?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Each year administration provides an update on technology.
2. The administration will present an overview of the current state of technology and future plans. This report also contains information on programs, projects and initiatives for teaching and learning, and administration and operations as well as infrastructure, staffing, budget and funding.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee accept the report and take whatever steps it deems necessary in the interests of the Shrewsbury Public Schools.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Mr. Jonathan Green, Director of Technology and Media Services
Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Various faculty and students
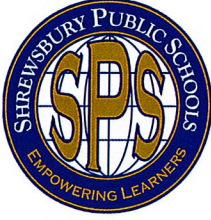
Shrewsbury Public Schools

Jonathan Green, Director of Technology and Media Services

Introduction:
Technology represents significant potential for amplifying the great teaching our faculty does and empowering our learners by significantly reducing barriers to learning and communicating. This creates opportunity and motivation for more exploration and in-depth understanding. Shrewsbury has a vision for achieving this potential through technology that is thoughtfully and strategically interwoven throughout the curriculum and a plan for implementing it through ongoing investments in infrastructure, classroom equipment, student devices, faculty devices, professional development, and tech support. This report examines the state of Technology programs, projects, and initiatives in the Shrewsbury Public Schools for Teaching and Learning, Administration and Operations, and Infrastructure in terms of status, performance, and what they'll need to continue to grow and be successful.

Executive Summary:
- The last ten or more years in Shrewsbury have been marked by substantial underinvestment in technology resulting in opportunity, labor, and deferred capital costs.
- We have a vision and a plan and we're making progress
- Our funding is irregular and insecure
- To implement the plan we will need adequate resources for projects that "fill the holes" left by the long-term under-investment in technology as well as for projects that move us forward.

Table of Contents
- Teaching and Learning Programs, Projects, and Initiatives
- Administrative and Operational Programs, Projects, and Initiatives
- Infrastructure Programs, Projects, and Initiatives
- Staffing
- Budget and Funding

I. Teaching and Learning programs, projects, and initiatives:
The **Personal Learning Device (aka the 1:1 program)** is the largest and highest profile technology initiative in the district, now in its second year, it involves more than 1470 students in grades 5-7. Additionally more than 120 students and 5 teachers in grade 8 are participating in a pilot, and the remaining teachers in grades 8-12 have access to iPads and may participate in PD and other exploratory experiences.

Reflecting on our experiences and incorporating feedback from last year we made incremental changes to the program and its operations, with the biggest changes being the design and implementation of digital citizenship learning experiences for students, the introduction of a more explicit gradual release of responsibility model for device features, and the redesign of the orientation and distribution process.

It became clear to us through feedback from students, parents, and teachers that a non-trivial number of students was being overly distracted by non-educational uses of their personal learning devices and that more work needed to be done to help them learn ways of managing the distractions. We started by identifying the areas of concern where we could have the most impact and got consensus on when students should gain access to those features and how those features would be kept from them until that time. That necessitated that we enlist and empower parents to help manage device restrictions for those features that our mobile device management (MDM) system could not adequately address. To facilitate this we provided a place in the PowerSchool Parent Portal for parents to securely share the restriction code with the program staff so adjustments could be made at school when needed. For incoming 5th graders we added steps to the distribution process where parents set the restrictions and enter the code into the Parent Portal. We sent instructions to the parents of students entering their second year in the program who were taking their iPads home showing them how to set the restrictions and and enter the code in PowerSchool. For students using their iPad only at school, program staff set the restrictions. While we are a long way from full compliance with second-year students, we at least have consistent and public expectations.

Recognizing that digital citizenship education was needed to help prepare the students for the release of these features, a team of teachers, media specialists, and administrators met over the summer and adopted a revised version of the Common Sense Media curriculum for grades 5-12 to be integrated throughout the school year in multiple settings. Sherwood students are now getting concrete, age-appropriate digital citizenship lessons in all classrooms as well as curriculum connections, and community meetings. Reports from Sherwood are uniformly positive and indicate a significant decrease in time spent dealing with device related discipline issues.

Driving our development of effective classroom practices for 1:1 learning environments has been sustained and differentiated professional development that includes peer collaboration, small study groups, a year-long, graduate-level, introductory course, and intensive 4-day workshops at the beginner and advanced levels. These professional learning experiences model the vision for our students in that they are project-based and encourage collaboration, reflection, and application. This year we are working with the newly formed innovation teams to identify and satisfy gaps and needs.

Adequate technical support becomes ever more important as teacher-student workflows, assessments, projects, and curriculum are enhanced and mediated by technology as has been the case with this program. While the tech support team at the middle school level is spending much less time trying to eke acceptable performance out of outdated equipment, the very large number of devices involved in the 1:1 program has created demand for technical support that outstrips our current staffing levels. The result is that issues take longer to resolve than we would all like, and projects take longer to execute due to lack of available staff.

Primary funding for the devices and apps used in the Personal Learning Device program comes directly from the parents in the form of technology fees; $165/year to take home a district-owned device, $40/year to bring in a family-owned device, or $0/year to use a district-owned device at school. The program was designed to deliver value to the community by delivering a lower total cost of ownership for the device than could be realized by families individually. The collected fees pay for devices, apps, cases, and repairs and our projections indicate that once the program is fully established and all grades 5 through 12 are participating on a 4 year cycle, the fees will cover 95% of the ongoing device costs. We are encouraged by the participation trends that show across the board movement from School-Only and Family-Owned to Take-Home. Based on our interactions with students and the comments some parents left during the registration process, we attribute this to an increased recognition of the value of the program both educationally and financially.

	Take Home	Family owned	School only
5	80%	14.5%	5.5%
6	70% -> 73.5%	21%->19.5%	8%->7%
7	67%->72.5%	21%->19%	12%->7.5%

The next stage of the plan is to get the high school fully 1 to 1 in FY 2016 which will require a one-time investment on the order of $490,000. This will push the total non-personnel need for 2016 to $1,439,000, an increase of $286,500 over the need for 2015 which is $571,500 over the current budget. A large part of the need for FY 2015 is for projects that have been started and need to be completed such as completing installation of interactive digital classrooms at the elementary schools, starting their installation at the Oak middle school and the high school, replacing aging equipment that is past its life, and upgrading network infrastructure. After FY 2017 the existing projects taper off and are completed by 2020. (See Table 1)

Thanks to the ongoing generosity of the PTOs and Garden Party, we've completed the installation of another 15 **interactive digital classrooms** in the elementary schools. While this represents almost 83% of elementary classrooms overall, the numbers are not uniform across the schools. We need to focus resources on the Floral St. School to upgrade more classrooms there, and we plan to use Kindergarten-specific funds to outfit all Kindergarten classrooms at Beal and Coolidge. Beal is especially challenging to retrofit due to its age and construction.

Certainly in the elementary schools where interactive projector use is targeted to the students the value is clear, but what about the upper grades where instructional models are different? In the upper grades there is a great demand for classroom projectors and we continue to use Garden Party funds to purchase projector carts at Oak Middle School and Shrewsbury High School to replace and augment the lower resolution projectors on carts that teachers are currently sharing. Our experience at the elementary schools and the new Sherwood shows that when a classroom is outfitted with a permanently mounted projector, speakers, and document camera, it is much easier for teachers to realize benefits for teaching and learning. Therefore we would realize better value by installing a permanently mounted projector in each classroom as is the practice when building new and renovating rather than buying more projector carts. The cost of installing a permanently mounted projector in a classroom can be reduced by installing a wall mounted ultra-short throw projector on the wall above the dry-erase board rather than mounting a projector on a pole attached to the ceiling. This simplifies installation by removing the ceiling mount, reducing the length of cabling required, and in most cases eliminating the need to have an electrician install additional power outlets in the ceiling. Given that each classroom needs to be outfitted in this way, what are the costs and benefits of installing an interactive projector instead of a traditional one? Along with the interactive projectors teachers get presentation software that is similar to PowerPoint and Keynote, but is much more powerful. It has the ability to easily embed interactive and multi-media components, allows the teacher to record, reuse, and share what happens on the board, and is connected to a dynamic library of curriculum resources that teachers can draw from. These benefits come at the very modest cost increase of $650/classroom--$3,500/classroom for interactive projectors v. $2,850/classroom for non-interactive projectors.

So that we may have continuity from grade to grade and equity between schools, we are seeking to commence a four year phased installation of interactive digital classrooms at Oak in 2015 and at the high school in 2016 so that by 2019 all classrooms PK-12 will be interactive and all grades 5-12 will be 1:1. We project that the Oak installations will require ~$45,000/year and the high school $88,000/year over the four year life of the project.

Our longest running programs are the **faculty laptop and student device refresh programs**. We continue to refresh faculty laptops on a five year cycle, refurbishing and redeploying those that we can for student use in classrooms and carts. While we plan to refresh computers in the middle and high school computer labs on a five year cycle, the budget doesn't always allow this, resulting in labs at Oak and the high school to be severely out of date. Although the flood at the high school damaged laptops and desktops waiting to be refurbished and delayed their deployment, we were able to use the insurance reimbursement to accelerate refreshing teacher laptops, redeploying the old ones for student use, and purchase Chromebooks to pilot in the elementary schools. With funds freed up in 2014's level-funded budget, we were able to refresh the A202 lab and half of the media center lab at the high school. At Oak the 333 and 339 labs are still in desperate need of replacement still having renovation era eMacs. Along with the hardware refresh for the oldest computers, we are in the final stages of the mid-cycle memory and OS upgrades to teacher laptops so that teachers can take advantage of the latest OS features and improvements.

This summer we refreshed **the high school language lab**, removing PCs and other hardware that were original to the building and replacing them and the Sony Soloist software with the latest iMacs and Digital Language Lab (DiLL) software. We also installed ceiling mounted projectors, screens, and classroom audio so as to take full advantage of the technology. Included in the installation was one day of technical training and one day of teacher training so that we would be able to troubleshoot it and be on our way to using the lab to its potential. While there has been a learning curve for the tech staff and teachers, we have received very positive feedback from them about the new lab.

In addition to our primary programs and projects we have pilots going on. In elementary classrooms we are experimenting with $280 **Chromebooks** as a replacement for the old, slow, unreliable eMacs and iBooks. The eMacs are large and heavy and both require an inordinate amount of tech support to keep them running at their barely acceptable levels. For those not familiar with them, Chromebooks are small netbooks that boot directly to Google's Chrome browser. They support Flash and Javascript, but not Java or Shockwave and they do not have native apps. We see their main uses with internet research, writing, and curriculum websites that require Flash.

We are preparing for the **PARCC field tests**, some of which will be be conducted online. The online Performance Based Assessments (PBA) will be conducted in March/April in Floral St. grade 3 and Sherwood grade 5, and the online End of Year Assessments (EOY) will be conducted in Floral St. grade 3. MacBooks, iPads, and Chromebooks are all approved devices and we are hoping to pilot all three to find out their strengths and weaknesses relative to PARCC and which ones students prefer and why.

Teachers in Sherwood, Oak, and the high school are piloting the new version of **Socrative**, a web service for real time formative assessments that students access via their iPads, laptops, or smartphones. It functions like the "clickers" of previous student response systems and allows teachers to view and analyze the results in the moment as well as save and share assessments.

At Oak, the 7 Green team is piloting **Schoology** with their students. Schoology is a social networking style learning management system that helps teachers, students, and parents organize, share, and communicate. The pilot is in response to feedback from middle school parents about how the large number of different online classroom management tools teachers were using with their students made the parent's task of keeping up with all of their students' classes more complex and difficult. Schoology doesn't necessarily replace all of the tools but rather it provides a single place to organize and reference them.

Finally, to illustrate that Shrewsbury is contributing to the educational technology conversation, a 5th grade teacher presented at **MassCUE** on using Voicethread for student digital portfolios, and leaders of the Personal Learning Device program presented lessons learned at the **EdTechTeacher iPad summit** in Atlanta in April and again in Boston in November.

II. Administrative and operational programs, projects, and initiatives:
In addition to our teaching and learning initiatives and projects, we have also been engaged in a number of administrative and operational initiative and projects. The most visible of these is the

deployment of computerized **point-of-sale cash registers in the middle school cafeterias**. The goal of introducing these systems is to make it easier for students to participate, increase the efficiency of the back-office operations, and to improve accuracy and confidentiality of free and reduced lunch reimbursements. The primary difference is that students now identify themselves by entering their student ID on the register PIN pad. Students can elect to pay with cash or through a debit system with balances tracked in the Powerschool Parent Portal. There was quite a lot of back-end IT work required to connect and integrate the systems and to ensure that they could operate at the required throughput. Current plans include expanding the program to the high school in early December.

We continue to use technology to **streamline and improve operational processes** around curriculum, fee collection, school-home communications, the new educator evaluation system, scheduling, and workflows. We accomplish this by working with stakeholders to identify opportunities to redefine tasks and workflows through task automation, integration of new tools with PowerSchool and other databases, data analysis, and moving data entry to the source and then implementing them strategically. Examples not mentioned elsewhere include online registrations through the PowerSchool parent portal and other online tools, Guidance scheduling, Human Resources workflows, educator evaluation software, and social media.

Finally, we're well underway laying the groundwork to **migrate district staff email from Exchange to Google Apps for Education** to improve service and avoid the costs associated with managing and replacing the server as well as the upcoming costs of upgrading our Exchange server software to the latest version.

III. Infrastructure programs, projects, and initiatives

The learning and operations initiatives depend on appropriate infrastructure, and we've been busy addressing those needs as well. On the **networking** side we were able to take advantage of aggressive vendor pricing this summer to replace the end-of-life edge switches at Oak and the high school with new ones that are able to directly power the new wireless access points. These increase available network bandwidth and save money on the procurement and installation of the access points. There is still need for $60,000 and $20,000 network upgrades at SHS and Oak respectively to upgrade the WAN connections to SELCO to 10G so as to match the performance at the new Sherwood.

For **wireless** we added significant capacity at Oak Middle School in order for it to be 1:1 ready and able to handle the challenges of the personal learning device program. The High School is not yet 1:1 ready, needing a ~$50,000 investment in wireless access points in FY 2015 in order to be ready for 2016 when the personal learning device program starts there. We also rearchitected the wireless at the elementary schools to match the secure and guest networks at the middle and high schools using the surplus access points from the old Sherwood, Oak, and the high school. Unfortunately they are not as capable as the new ones, lacking features that facilitate roaming and automatically authenticating with the web filter. They are also not as reliable as the new ones and the result is a less convenient and dependable wireless experience at the elementary schools compared with the middle and high schools. We will be seeking ~$90,000 in FY 2015 to replace the wireless access points in the elementary schools to match those in use at the middle and high schools.

Last year, in an effort to improve service and reduce costs, we undertook two printing related initiatives; centralized print service, and managed print service. The goals of the **centralized print service** initiative are to reduce barriers to finding the nearest, lowest cost printer and quickly and easily printing to it. The solution we built allows users to browse from a comprehensive list of printers and print-enabled photocopiers, select the one they want to use, and print to it without having to worry about printer models or print drivers. We ran into some performance challenges as we scaled up and expanded the service to a broader range of devices. This resulted in some periods early in this school year when printing was unavailable or unreliable, but we have resolved most of the issues and are fine-tuning the system for maximum benefit. The regularity with which MacOS X evolves complicates our implementation and support as we need to accommodate devices that range from eMacs and iBooks running 10.4, to MacBook Pros running 10.9. Replacing the older devices with modern ones would greatly simplify support and reduce the expense.

A **managed print service** program is one where the customer pays a per-page fee to the vendor in return for all printer supplies and repair parts and labor. The goals of this initiative are to reduce spending on printer repairs and supplies as well as to reduce the amount of time that tech support specialists spend dealing with printers, toner, and inventory. This service was adopted in conjunction with the Municipal and SELCO IT departments and while it is taking time for us to retool our processes and procedures, the data indicates that we are well positioned to realize $10,000-$15,000 in savings this year. The usage data also shows that print volume for August and September were at the high end of the projected range for average monthly usage which is good because they traditionally see higher volume than other months due to start of the school year although it is possible that the print server issues have contributed to a lower volume for those months.

For several years we've been looking for an affordable way to **upgrade the web filter** that serves the district. We were increasingly needing to provide students at all grade levels access to resources appropriate for them even when they were not appropriate for other levels. It was also becoming increasingly unreliable and causing network outages when it failed, it was fairly easily circumvented, and it couldn't provide the identity-based of policy enforcement that we needed. Working with the SELCO and Municipal IT departments along with the TownISP network consultants, we realized that if we made some strategic changes to the network design, we would end up with a simpler network that was more reliable and flexible and would adhere to the principles of common network services that we had agreed upon. Over the course of school year we tested and implemented these changes and performed comprehensive market and product research to identify the product(s) that best met our needs, environment, and budget. We also worked with SELCO to develop a funding model that would offer the most benefits to all and came up with a plan where SELCO would offer it to the district as an annual service to be included in the annual invoice along with Internet and WAN services. These efforts came to fruition in June and July when we transitioned to a demo unit of our preferred solution and then to SELCO's service. While we continue to tweak the filtering rules to meet curriculum and administrative needs, the new service has been very successful in addressing the shortcomings of the previous filter. It is reliably meeting the needs of students, teachers, staff, and

administrators and is a testament to the power and benefits to the community of the partnership between the SELCO, Municipal, and School IT departments.

Of course the big infrastructure story from last year is the opening of the new **Sherwood Middle School**. From WiFi to interactive classrooms to network capacity, Sherwood set the standard for school and classroom infrastructure throughout the district. The tech team spent a tremendous amount of time working on Sherwood and the successful and smooth transition to the new building was no accident. We applied what we were learning in trials elsewhere in the district to the Sherwood project, tested designs and fine-tuned them for maximum performance, verified implementations to make sure that what we got was what we were expecting, confirmed compatibility as we worked with the latest models and revisions, and always working with teachers and administrators to make sure that what was delivered met their needs.

IV. Staffing

At the **elementary** level interactive projectors are the rule rather than the exception and iPads are becoming more common, but when it comes to desktop and laptop computers for students we continue to spend most of our support time and effort trying to eke acceptable performance and interoperability out of outdated equipment. Being able to keep these devices up to date would help increase the value of the technology to our students and teachers and would increase the value of our tech support efforts.

Tech Support Service Requests for Elementary Schools
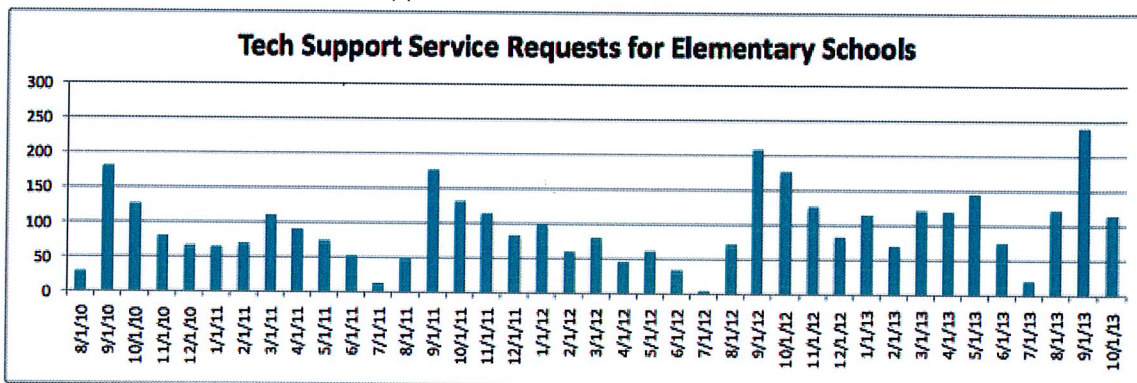
In the **middle** schools the quantity, quality, and reliability of the available technology has increased dramatically, leading to a predictable increase in demand for technical support. While the individual devices need less attention, the overall increase in volume has been substantial and requires additional tech support personnel in order to provide the service levels and response times that the students and teachers need.

Tech Support Service Requests for Sherwood Middle School

Tech Support Service Requests for Oak Middle School
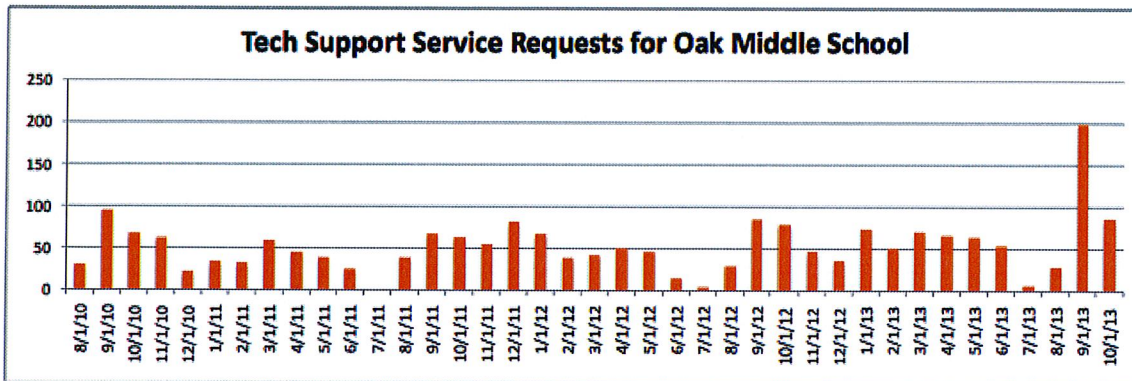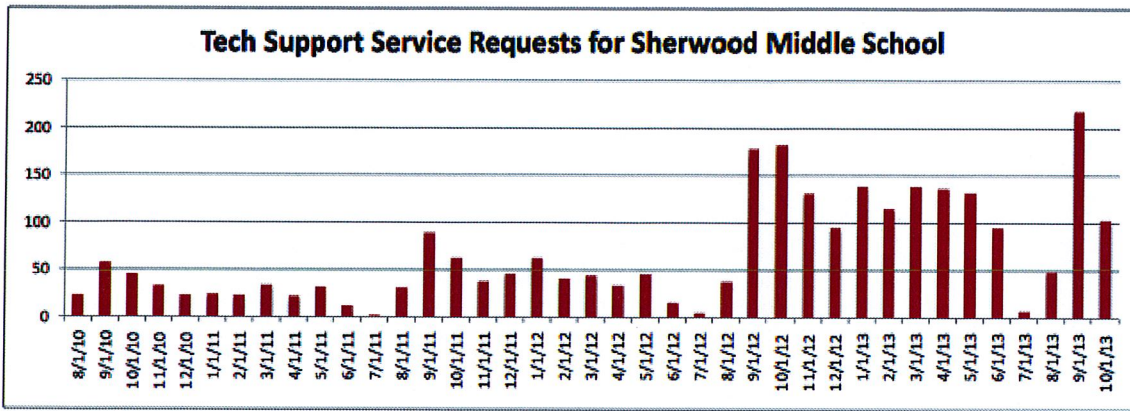
The **high school** is between the elementary and the middle schools in that it has a fair amount of outdated technology that consumes inordinate amounts of support time, but it is transitioning to more up to date technology with the goal of being part of the Personal Learning Device program in 2016. The high school would benefit from additional tech support capacity as it makes this transition and becomes fully 1:1.

Tech Support Service Requests for Shrewsbury High School
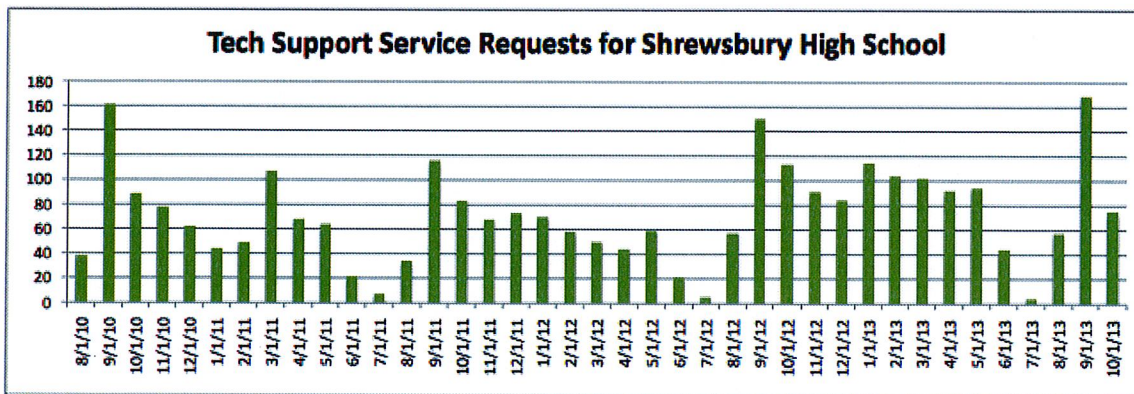
The technology department also designs, operates, maintains, and trains teachers and administrators on the use of our **Audio-Visual** (AV) equipment throughout the district, including the Educational Television (ETS) studio, interactive projectors, digital media and CATV distribution, PA systems, projector carts, and more. We also support inside and outside groups using our facilities that need these services.

Because the tech support personnel are so heavily loaded, tier 2 and tier 3 tech support staff end up helping more often and engaging in necessary but less strategic activities. Adding at least one FTE of technical support at the middle school would help to rebalance the workloads and improve service there and adding another FTE of AV/technical support to assist throughout the district would improve service and increase capacity for tier 2 and tier 3 tech personnel to engage in more strategic activities.

Total Tech Support Service Requests for All Schools
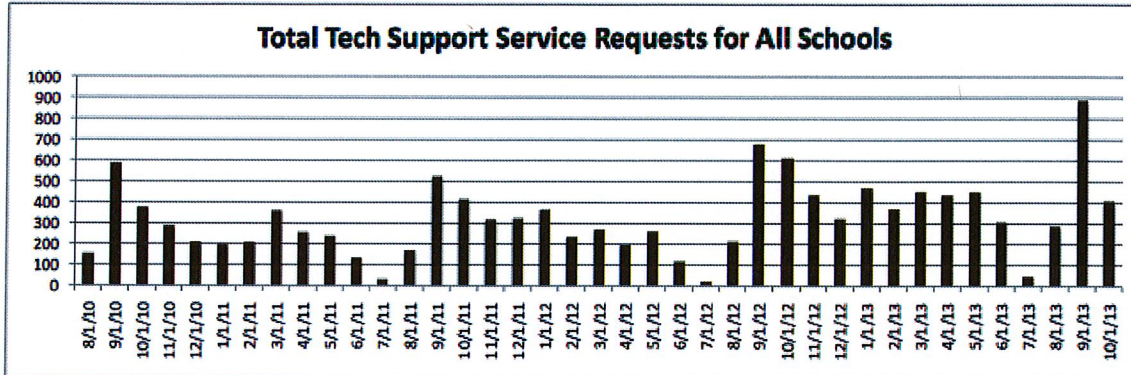
V. Budget:

Shrewsbury has historically relied on building projects as the main provider of classroom technology, resulting in substantial underinvestment. According to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Shrewsbury has consistently spent far less per pupil than the state average on instructional materials, equipment, and technology.

Per pupil spending on Instructional Materials, Equipment and Technology
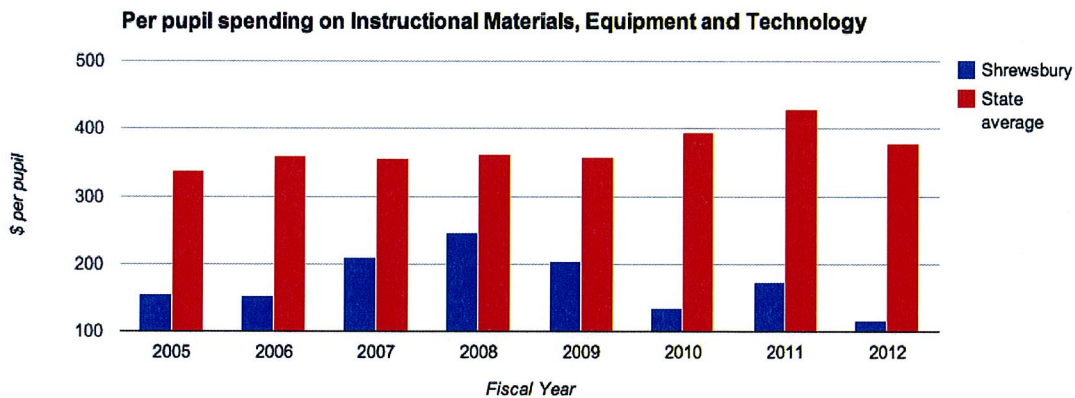
While spending more doesn't guarantee better results, not spending is pretty well guaranteed to impede progress. Like every other aspect of the Shrewsbury schools, we've got great potential in our teachers, staff, administrators, and students, and we need the tools to do the work and have success.

ITEM NO: **V. Curriculum**   MEETING DATE: **11/20/13**

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

ITEM NO: **VI. Policy**   MEETING DATE: **11/20/13**

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE

ITEM NO: **VII. Budget**   MEETING DATE: **11/20/13**
         A. Fiscal Year 2015 Budget: Public Hearing

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the Committee hold a public hearing regarding the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. This is the first public hearing regarding the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget to be held by the School Committee.
2. This is an opportunity for the community to hear public feedback and to provide guidance to the administration as it sees fit.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee hear the presentation and take whatever steps it deems necessary in the interests of the Shrewsbury Public Schools.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Liam Hurley, Director of Business Services

ITEM NO: **VII. Budget**   MEETING DATE: **11/20/13**
            B. Grants: Annual Report

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee hear a report on grants the district is receiving for Fiscal Year 2014?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1.   Each year the Assistant Superintendent and Director of Business Services provide an update on grant funding.
2.   Ms. Banios and Mr. Hurley will provide an overview of the funding the district is receiving this year through these grants and how this funding is used.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee accept the report and take whatever steps it deems necessary in the interest of the Shrewsbury Public Schools.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Liam Hurley, Director of Business Services

Shrewsbury Public Schools

Mary Beth Banios
Assistant Superintendent

Report to the School Committee: FY14 Grants Update

Entitlement Grants

Federal and state entitlement grants are an important source of funding for our school operations. Entitlement grants are established and allocated at the state and federal level. Entitlement grants are noncompetitive and are awarded automatically on the basis of defined formulas that differ by grant. This report will show the amount of funding we are receiving for Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14), i.e., the 2013-2014 school year, and it will also provide comparisons to past years.

While relatively small in comparison to the appropriated budget, state and federal grants provide valuable resources for a wide variety of student supports and staff development. In FY14, almost all of the federal and state entitlement grants saw a reduction, with the exception of the Full Day Kindergarten grant which was level funded. Overall, we saw a net decrease of $77,249 or 4.03% across all grants. Fortunately, due to the federal government sequestration, we had projected a 5% reduction in our grant allocation in the FY14 budget. However, any further reductions in grant funds will have a negative impact on our appropriated budget in the future.

The chart below illustrates the FY14 entitlement grant monies allocated to Shrewsbury in relation to the entire Shrewsbury Public School budget.
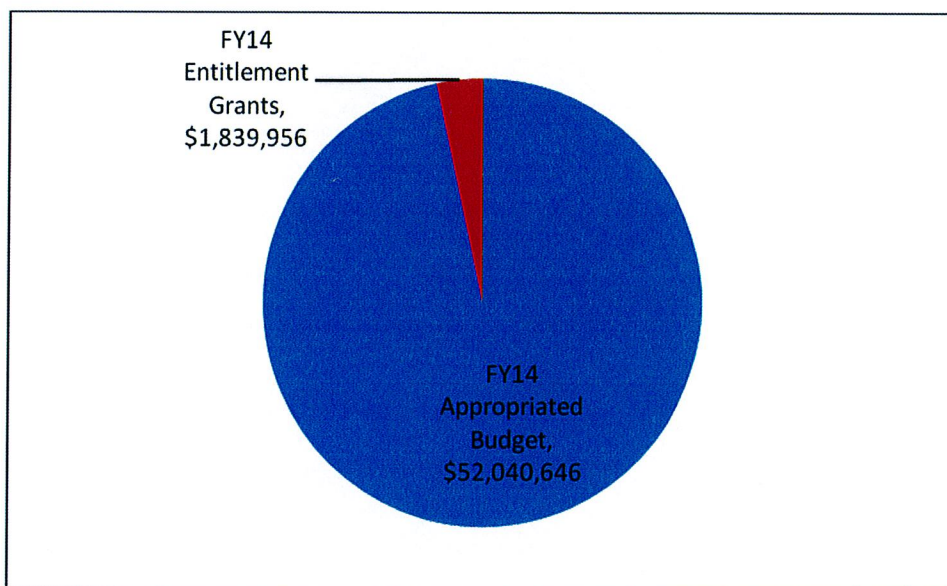
The table below shows the grants we are currently receiving, a brief description of what each is used for, and the amount we have been allocated for the current fiscal year.
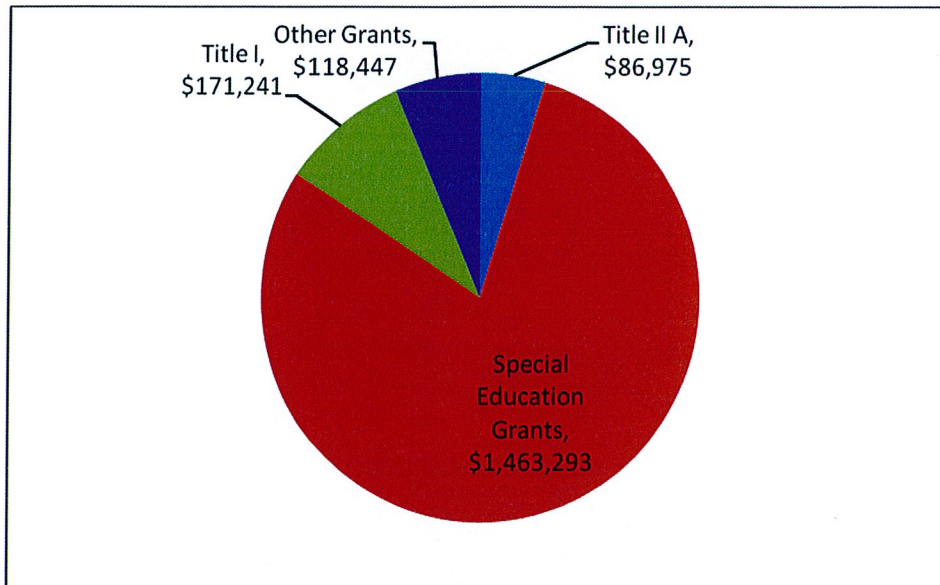
Federal and State Entitlement Grants

Grant	Description	FY14 Amount
(Title IIA) Teacher Quality Grant	Federal funding for professional development. Title IIA monies offset a large portion of the salary of an elementary instructional coach. The funding of this position from this grant vs. the district's appropriated budget was necessary to avoid further reductions in personnel and to maintain critical coaching support at the elementary level.	$86,975 *(FY13 $91,194)*
(Title III) English Language Acquisition	The federal allocated Title III grant enables Shrewsbury to offer targeted summer instruction for English Language Learners. It also provides various supports for the instruction of these students during the course of the year.	$22,909 *(FY13 27,084)*
Special Education Entitlement Grant	Federal funding to assist with the costs of educating students with disabilities. Shrewsbury uses its funding to pay the salaries of FTE special education teachers; a portion of the salaries of special education coordinators; and the salaries of special education aides; and some textbooks, instructional materials and technology for students with disabilities.	$1,405,287 *(FY13 $1,448,018)*
Early Childhood Special Education Grant	Funding through the Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC) to provide support for preschool special education programming. Shrewsbury uses these funds for a portion of the preschool director's salary and a portion of the preschool psychologist salary.	$32,167 *(FY13 $34,031)*
Quality Full-Day Kindergarten	Funding through the DESE to support the improvement of full-day kindergarten programs. Shrewsbury uses its funding to provide classroom aides for full-day K classrooms, mandated accreditation work, and materials for full-day K classrooms.	$82,138 *(FY13 $82,138)*

(Title I) Supplemental Education for Disadvantaged Children	Federal funding to provide academic support to children in schools that qualify for assistance due to their socioeconomic status as measured by the rate of participation in the subsidized lunch program. In Shrewsbury, Floral and Coolidge are receiving funding from this grant this year.	$171,241 (FY13 $175,479)
Academic Support Services	Funding from DESE to support MCAS preparation and remediation for high school students at risk of failing MCAS test. Shrewsbury uses this funding for after school and summer programming to provide additional learning for students who qualify. This grant continues to be reduced by an average $1,400 each year.	$13,400 (FY13 $14,900)
Special Education Program Improvement Grant	Federal funding to provide professional development in order to increase the effectiveness of the district's special education program. These funds will be spent on Orton-Gillingham training, Autism Spectrum Disorder training, Psychiatric consultations, Co-teaching training, and mentoring.	$25,839 (FY13 $44,361)
Total Grant Funding for FY14		$1,839,956

The table below illustrates the allocation of State and Federal Entitlement Grant Funds to the Shrewsbury Public Schools over the past five years.

Grant	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	1 Year Difference	5 Year Difference
Teacher Quality Grant (Title IIA)	$105,922	$102,928	$88,653	$91,194	$86,975	($4,219)	($18,947)
English Language Acquisition (Title III)	$34,923	$31,844	$25,812	$27,084	$22,909	($4,175)	($12,014)
Special Education Entitlement Grant	$1,408,095	$1,408,614	$1,440,178	$1,448,018	$1,405,287	($42,731)	($2,808)
Early Childhood-Special Education	$34,094	$34,096	$34,152	$34,031	$32,167	($1,864)	($1,927)
Full Day Kindergarten Grant	$45,920	$75,400	$73,158	$82,138	$82,138	$0	$36,218
Special Education Program Improvement Grant	$0	$0	$69,348	$44,361	$25,839	($18,522)	$25,839
Supplemental Education for Disadvantaged Children (Title I)	$197,102	$169,732	$157,559	$175,479	$171,241	($4,238)	($25,861)
Academic Support Services	$20,300	$18,300	$16,500	$14,900	$13,400	($1,500)	($6,900)
Totals	$1,846,356	$1,840,914	$1,905,360	$1,917,205	$1,839,956	($77,249) -4.03%	($6,400) -0.35%

The chart below illustrates the amounts allocated for entitlement grants in FY 14 by grant area.

State and Federal Entitlement Grant Summary

The above data show that, overall, federal and state grant funding for Shrewsbury has decreased over a one-year period (-4.03%). However, the State and Federal entitlement grant funding has decreased by approximately (-0.35%) over a five-year period, while our student population has grown by approximately 1%. The continuing erosion of federal and state grant funding is likely to put pressure on our local budget to make up the difference.

US Department of Education Carol White PEP Grant

Thanks to the efforts of Patricia Degon, our Health, Physical Education, and Family Sciences Director, the Town of Shrewsbury has been awarded a PEP grant to fund *The Get Fit Adventure* project. The total amount of this grant is **$1,148,879**; the funds will be distributed over a three year period. This year the District will receive **$235,570.** FY14 is the last year of this grant and the appropriated budget will need to cover the continuation of this program including 2.0 FTE in the Physical Education department as well as other program costs.

ITEM NO: **VIII. Old Business**   MEETING DATE: **11/20/13**

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

ITEM NO: **IX.   New Business**   MEETING DATE: **11/20/13**

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

ITEM NO: **X.**   **Approval of Minutes**   MEETING DATE: **11/20/13**

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting on November 6, 2013?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The minutes have been reviewed by Mr. Palitsch and will be provided under separate cover.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee vote to approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting on November 6, 2013.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:
Ms. Sandra Fryc, Chairperson
Mr. Jason Palitsch, Secretary

ITEM NO: **XI. Executive Session**   MEETING DATE: **11/20/13**

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing negotiations where discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

That the School Committee discuss the information presented and take such action as it deems to be in best interests of Shrewsbury Public Schools.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee enter into executive session.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Ms. Barbara A. Malone, Director of Human Resources
Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

ITEM NO: **XII. Information Enclosures**   MEETING DATE: **11/20/13**
ITEM NO: **XIII. Adjournment**

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION: