

Shrewsbury Public Schools

Office of Special Education
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Special Education Budget Report FY 2014

Introduction:

Shrewsbury Public Schools has a comprehensive program for students with disabilities. The school system subscribes to the philosophy that all students can learn and that the purpose of special education is to minimize the impact of disability and maximize the opportunities for children with disabilities to have access to the general curriculum.

It is the responsibility of the school district to provide every student with disabilities with a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) within the least restrictive environment (LRE) from ages 3 to 22. This age range is important because it significantly increases the amount of time that the school district is responsible for educating a student with special needs that must be factored into the overall cost of special education.

The Shrewsbury Public Schools are responsible for educating **907** (October 1, 2012 enrollment report) students with disabilities both in the district and out of district. This represents **15.0%** of the district.

State Reporting based on October 1 enrollment				
	2009	2010	2011	2012
# of special education students	976	906	890	907
District % of students in special education	16.6	15.3	15.0	15.0
State % of students in special education	17.1	17.0	17.0	17.0

Based on current data there are **904** students receiving special education services. This number includes students after October 1, 2012 who have moved in to the district or moved out of the district, students turning 3-years old, those who have been evaluated and found eligible, students who have been terminated from special education services and students who receive walk-in services. In addition, there are **118 students** who are currently referred for an evaluation. These students are considered special education students until they are determined eligible or not eligible for special education services and are calculated in the total number of students served.

Initial Evaluation information - Comparison from 2010 to 2012									
School	# of Initial Evaluations			# Students Not Eligible for Services			# Students Eligible for Special Education		
	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012
Parker Road	49	27	41	14	6	16	35	10	25
Beal	23	13	21	6	2	12	17	11	9
Coolidge	15	22	18	7	6	4	8	16	15
Paton	24	26	18	12	17	7	12	9	11
Spring	14	14	21	7	5	11	7	9	10
Floral	18	22	17	2	8	7	16	14	10
Sherwood	18	22	30	8	10	14	10	14	16
Oak	16	10	17	5	8	10	11	2	7
High School	26	26	21	17	9	9	9	17	9
Total	203	182	204	78	71	90	125	102	112

Other than the costs related to the professional and support staff, the most costly aspects of the special education budget include out of district placement tuition, out of district transportation, extended year services and contracted services.

It is important to note, when discussing special education costs, that the federal legislation governing special education, IDEA or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, was originally mandated to fund 40% of the per pupil costs of educating all children with special needs. However, the federal funding contribution to local and state budgets for special education has consistently been approximately 18%, far below what is actually needed.

Equally as important, the state circuit breaker reimbursement formula has decreased significantly over the past three years. The legislation indicates a 75% reimbursement, subject to appropriation, for expenditures that exceed the foundation (see table below for foundation amounts per year).

	Foundation Amount	Students Claimed	Claim Amount*	Foundation	Net Claim	Reimbursement
FY 2011	\$37,767.77	89	\$6,238,081	\$3,361,332	\$2,876,749	40% \$1,150,694
FY 2012	\$38,916.00	84	\$6,344,325	\$3,137,310	\$3,207,015	65% \$2,084,560
FY 2013	\$40,512.00	91	\$7,016,633	\$3,521,898	\$3,494,735	70% \$2,446,317

* Claim based on prior fiscal year census and qualifying costs. **Current estimated reimbursement for FY12 costs.

Students Served in the District *				
School	# of Students 09-10	# of Students 10-11	# of Students 11-12 as of 12/11	# of Students 12-13 as of 1/15/13
Parker Road Pre-school	63	72	53	61
Beal Pre-K	59	58	50	26
Calvin Coolidge Elementary	38	38	40	45
Floral Street School	103	97	87	80
Paton Elementary	36	41	46	49
Spring Street School	55	54	46	50
Sherwood Middle School	146	139	135	140
Oak Middle School	163	149	134	140
Shrewsbury High School	243	211	249	214
Walk-in services *	-	-	-	20
Total	906	859	840	825

- Does not include referrals from Early Intervention that will result in services for the remainder of the year.
 - Does not include Out of District (see page 3)
- * Was not reported in previous years

Out of District Placements:

While the vast majority of students with special needs, 93% are educated within Shrewsbury schools, there are a small percentage of students who need specialized programs including very small classes and a high teacher to student ratio. These students are educated out of district in either collaborative or private special education programs.

Children attend out of district programs as day or residential students depending on the severity of their disabilities. In addition, they may also attend for a longer year that includes a summer school component. A residential placement provides the student with twenty-four hour learning opportunities, full assistance with all functional life skills and intensive specialized developmental services. The children who attend residential programs do not make effective progress in day schools and often their safety awareness is severely limited, putting them at great risk.

The cost of out of district programs varies greatly. Tuition for private placements for the 2012-2013 school year have been projected to range from a high of \$386,330.17 which is for a residential program, to a low of \$35,051.72 for a day placement. The state of Massachusetts sets the tuition rates for these programs and, at times, will approve rate increases. Typically this increase can be between 3% and 4%. Thus far, for the 2012-2013 school year the state has granted a tuition increase of approximately 2.75%. However, in addition to an increase in tuitions granted by the state, schools were able to apply for extraordinary relief or restructuring and request a tuition increase. The total amount of tuition increases due to restructuring for fiscal year 2014 is \$93,818.01.

Currently, it is projected that there will be 86 students in out of district placements in the 2013-2014 school year. This includes 19 students who will participate in the Assabet Valley Collaborative Evolution program, 7 students who are currently attending the Assabet Valley Collaborative Alternative program, and five new students who have been referred for an out of district placement due to their significant needs. This does not include potential placements at the Assabet Valley Collaborative Middle School and High School for students experiencing emotional difficulties as well as students whose team has discussed the potential for out of district placement due to the significance of their disability and intensity of their services. This also does not include students who are referred for a 45-day evaluation at the Collaborative or other approved program. The intent of the 45-day evaluation is to gather more information about a student's behavior and disability that has significantly impacted their ability to make effective progress. The goal is for these students to return to their middle or high school with strengthened support so they can succeed. However, there are times when a student's disability is such that they require a more intensive program and may be referred for an out of district placement either at the Collaborative or at a private school.

Students Served Out Of District				
Out of District Placement	# of Students 09-10	# of Students 10-11	# of Students 11-12	# of Students 12-13
Elementary	16	14	5	2
Middle School	16	18	20	22
Collaborative Middle School	1	3	4	4
High School	20	27	25	27
Collaborative High School	7	6	3	4
Post Graduate High School	10	8	5	1
Post Graduate Collaborative H.S.	1	0	0	0
Transition Program	5	4	8	19
Total	76	80	70	79

Tuition ranges currently in Fiscal Year 2013 and projected for Fiscal Year 2014			
Fiscal Year	Total # of Students	Day School tuition range	Residential Tuition Range
11-12	78 (63 day, 15 residential)	\$26,250 to \$95,772	\$127,482 to \$378,773
12-13	70 projected (56 day, 14 residential)	\$34,030 to \$98,337	\$127,519.88 to \$383,815.70
13-14	86 (75 day, 11 residential)	\$39,770.57 to 128,717.93	\$127,519 to \$386,739.77

Net Appropriation			
	FY13 Budget	FY14 Budget	Change in FY14
Out-of-district Tuition	\$6,633,602	\$6,903,810	\$ 270,208 increased tuition
Offset: Circuit Breaker Reimbursement	(\$2,405,261)	(\$2,271,577)	\$133,684 less reimbursement
Offset: Assabet Valley Collaborative Tuition Discount	(\$35,000)	(\$40,000)	\$5,000 increased offset
Net Appropriation	\$4,193,341	\$4,592,233	\$398,892 net increased tuition in FY14

Important considerations for increase in the Out of District Placements and costs:

1. Approval for restructuring of tuitions
2. Operational Service Division approval of a 3.0% tuition increase.
3. Students who moved in during the year and full tuitions are assumed for FY 13
4. 19 students attending the AVC Transition program – Evolution (planned)

Out of District Transportation:

In addition to tuition, transportation costs are a significant budget item related to out of district placements. Shrewsbury is part of a consortium of school districts working through the Assabet Valley Collaborative to manage transportation costs. Wherever possible, students from Shrewsbury are transported with students from surrounding towns who attend the same day programs. It is important to note, however, that few of these educational programs are located in central Massachusetts. Most are located in the metro-Boston area, which substantially increases transportation costs. The state does not provide any reimbursement for out of district transportation. The Collaborative successfully negotiated a new transportation contract which included a 2% increase

	FY13 Budget	FY14 Budget	Difference
Out-of-district Transportation	\$1,041,300	\$1,062,126	\$20,826

Extended Year Services:

There are two standards for determining extended year services or summer programming for students with disabilities. One is the severity of the child’s disability and the other is “substantial regression.” This means that if a student is likely to lose critical skills or fail to recover these skills within a reasonable amount of time compared to typical students, summer programs are required. The decision to provide extended year services is made by the TEAM at the student’s annual IEP review.

Students on the autism spectrum who qualify as well as other students with significant disabilities who qualify attend the full day summer program while students with other special education needs may attend the half-day program.

The program must be fully staffed with teachers, ABA technicians and aides and transportation must be provided for students.

	FY13 Budget	FY14 Budget	Difference
Extended Year Services	\$460,545	\$374,117	(\$86,428)

Contracted Services:

There are a variety of mandated special education services for which we must hire outside contractors. Many of these involve low incidence disabilities. Some examples of contracted services include aural rehabilitation, sign language interpretation, translation of documents into parents’ native language, blind-vision therapy, music therapy, mobility specialist, Wilson reading tutoring, and independent evaluations.

	FY13 Budget	FY14 Budget	Difference
Contracted Services	\$394,000	\$ 449,738*	\$55,738

* Includes adding psychiatric consultation and health service needs (partial hours may be picked up through a grant should it be available again next year), home based services, all contracted services.

FY 14 Requests

Changes to the Special Education Program for FY 14	Justification
Additional Required Special Education Paraprofessionals: 9.0 FTE	Required to provide mandated services to students with significant special needs (some move-ins during current year; some transitioning from preschool); inability to provide this service could require additional out-of-district placements
Additional Required Special Education Teacher at Beal Early Childhood Center: 1.0 FTE	Required to provide mandated services to students who will be moving from preschool to kindergarten; inability to provide this service could require additional out-of-district placements

Additional Required Assistive Technology Specialist: 1.0 FTE (possibility to add as contracted service)	Support for implementation of use of various assistive technology devices for students with significant special needs; currently only 1.0 FTE for entire district, cannot keep up with demand; inability to provide this service could require additional out-of-district placements
Additional Clinical Behavioral Specialist: 1.0 FTE (possibility to add as contracted service)	Incidences of extreme issues with behavioral health have outstripped current capacity of 1.0 FTE; inability to provide this service could require additional out-of-district placements
Additional Preschool-Grade 4 Psychologist Support: 0.8 FTE	Increases part time psychologists at Parker Road, Beal & Spring Street to full time
Additional Special Education Team Chair Position for Coolidge and Paton: 1.0 FTE	Removes team chair administrative duties from psychologists at Coolidge and Paton to allow full time psychologists at those schools
Additional Special Education Team Chair/Early Intervention Liaison for Preschool: 0.6 FTE	Currently cannot keep up with demand for transition planning for Early Intervention and transition from preschool to kindergarten
Additional Adjustment Counselor at Middle Schools: 1.0 FTE	Currently cannot keep up with demand for counseling services at middle level
Contractual Service Costs	Net increase to contracted services for psychiatric and health services
Additional duties for Out-of-District Coordinator	Current Out-of-District Coordinator is retiring and is on teacher school year pay scale; this will allow position to move to full year status to provide needed support to meet mandated deadlines, etc. during summer months
Add Elementary Special Education Coordinator: 1.0 FTE	Elementary is only level without administrative support for special education personnel and operations; new mandated evaluation program will require additional capacity to implement; will provide capacity to improve transition planning and efficiencies at elementary level

Programs continued and implemented in 2012-2013 that mitigated costs to the district:

Co-Taught Teaching Model

Co-Taught (grade 4): Cut

Early Learning Center – Intensive: Coolidge houses a program for eight students with intensive special needs that range from Kindergarten to grade 3. These students require intensive services and supports in order to be safe and access an educational program. These students would typically be placed in programs that range from \$95,000 to \$120,000.

Co-Taught (grade 5 and 6): Sherwood Middle School has an established co-taught program in fifth and sixth grade. Students who are at risk and present a similar profile to students with Language Based Learning Disabilities are identified for this program to prevent out of district placement. Students are placed on a two-person team with two regular education teachers, one special education teacher and a paraprofessional. Starting in fifth grade, the students will loop to sixth grade with their special education teacher and paraprofessional support.

Mobile On Site Vocational Education (M.O.V.E) 9-12: The high school students in Project M.O.V.E. have been recommended through the TEAM process and attend classes at the high school for part of the day and then attend the M.O.V.E. program for the remainder of the day. These students typically need direction in the areas of social/personal behavior, classroom achievement and/or appropriate attendance levels. M.O.V.E. is an alternative vocational training program and it is a site-based training in the food trade area. The primary goal is to help students gain vocational skills and develop appropriate work behaviors to better equip them for the world of work.

Clinical Programming

The clinical coordinator is a full time Master's level Behavior Analyst who works across the district. This role supports students in regular education and special education requiring clinical services and support. The clinical coordinator's primary responsibility in regular education is to assist the classroom teacher identify students who may be engaging in challenging behaviors that interfere with learning, conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment, develop Positive Behavior Support Plans, train staff to implement the plans, and follow-up when needed. The primary responsibility in special education is to develop procedural consistencies, develop accountability and reliability procedures, supervise home support programs, consult to district wide programs, and provide professional development.

Psychiatric Consultation

There has been a substantial increase in students with mental health issues and this continues to rise. In order to minimize out of district evaluations and placement, a psychiatrist was hired to consult across the district 4 hours weekly. The psychiatrist works with the clinical coordinator to provide clinical rounds at the schools across the district based on referrals from the schools. She has been instrumental in assisting parents obtain outside medical attention and services as well as provided valuable recommendations to support these students in their school program. We were able to purchase additional hours for the 2012 school year through a grant. It is hoped that more hours can be shifted to this grant in 2013 if it is available.

SOLVE Training: Strategies of Limiting Violent Episodes (S.O.L.V.E) is a 20-hour program teaching staff various methods to prevent aggression from occurring through verbal and environmental options to control aggression safely and through physical options within the context of treatment. The clinical coordinator, two ELC Coordinators, and two special education teachers are certified as trainers for the district. They provide minimally two courses each year as well as an annual recertification for staff who have been certified.

Summer Social Skills Program: The Social Skills Summer Program is a four-week program designed for children who have been receiving direct special education services in social/pragmatic skills over the course of the regular school year. The goal of the program is to maintain the skills that the child has learned throughout the school year and prevent substantial regression of those skills during the summer. The program provides the necessary environment to facilitate use and maintenance of skills, through both structured and unstructured activities that require such skills as cooperation, perspective taking, negotiation, and social problem solving. The program includes typical peers which is what makes it a great success and provides a rich program for students to learn and generalize skills with their typical peers.

Additional Expenses Related to Special Education:

Other important budgetary items for FY12 include:

	<u>FY 13</u>	<u>FY14</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Legal fees	\$45,000	\$40,000	\$- 5000.00
Translator/Interpreter	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$0
Home/hospital tutoring	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0
Testing supplies	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$0
Instructional materials	\$0	\$0	\$0 use 240 grant
Evaluations	\$4,000	\$2,000	\$-2000.00

Legal fees: The state and federal laws governing special education are extensive and even, at times, contradictory. In addition, sometimes, despite our best efforts, the school system must go to hearings through the Bureau of Special Education Appeals and this requires full legal representation.

Translator/Interpreter: State and federal laws require that students and parents receive written and verbal communication in their home language. This can be costly as documents pertaining to special education can be quite lengthy as well as special education meetings where the parent is in attendance.

Home/hospital tutoring: When a student is absent for more than 14 consecutive school days or cumulative days due to illness and has a physicians statement requesting home/hospital tutoring, the school department must provide tutorial services for the child. We have reallocated 50% of this to Pupil Personnel as many students who are not receiving special education services may require tutoring due to an illness or injury.

Testing supplies: These include all of the assessment tools that are used by the special education staff for initial and on-going evaluations of students with disabilities. Once a testing battery is obsolete, there is only a two-year window where it must be replaced.

Technology and instructional materials: In the current school year, all technology needs, including assistive technology and audiological equipment, were paid through a federal grant. We plan to fund special education technology through federal grant sources in FY 14.

Conclusion:

Shrewsbury Public Schools has made a strong commitment to the education of children with disabilities. An exceptional staff that is highly qualified in education and expertise and cares deeply about students provides the special education services. Most of these children are being educated in programs in town where they are able to be part of their school community. The request for additional funds for special education will allow us to continue to meet all of the state and federal mandates and provide a quality education for our students with special needs.

Comparison of SPS to Area Towns Based on FY 11:

The source of these two charts was the DOE website based on fiscal year 11:

<http://finance1.doe.mass.edu/statistics/>

Town	Collaborative Spending	Private School Spending	Total SPED Expenses	Net School Spending	% of Total Budget
Marlboro	993,717	4,316,504	15,918,215	59,515,953	26.7
Southborough	127,582	2,029,815	5,241,652	19,657,276	26.7
Berlin	19,708	0	733,376	3,265,619	22.5
Boylston	44,980	20,664	710,904	3,941,258	18.0
Berlin-Boylston	310,835	708,968	1,537,711	6,160,997	25.0
Maynard	53,008	772,296	2,686,520	15,815,262	17.0
Hudson	713,557	1,453,453	7,654,196	32,890,131	23.3
Westborough	548,887	1,893,591	9,330,035	44,971,168	20.7
Nashoba	409,638	909,000	5,296,949	37,736,631	14.0
Northborough	150,411	1,411,536	4,630,905	21,961,882	21.1
Statewide	245,487,886	436,108,098	2,124,584,089	10,709,520,289	19.8
Shrewsbury	611,897	4,831,856	13,869,846	56,326,097	24.6

Comparison of SPS to Similar Towns Based on FY 11:

These comparisons show similar districts on the basis of district structure, wealth and enrollment.

Town	Collaborative Spending	Private school Spending	Total SPED Expenses	Net School Spending	% of Total Budget
Barnstable	1,434,160	2,308,440	9,340,535	59,793,427	15.6
Billerica	2,580,483	2,303,600	13,664,056	66,325,501	20.6
Braintree	1,721,883	3,960,282	14,633,560	53,477,838	27.4
Cambridge	2,789,371	9,119,534	30,245,631	151,014,343	20.0
Chelmsford	2,728,884	3,749,089	11,582,313	54,333,679	21.3
Franklin	1,649,835	3,662,588	14,854,024	59,683,920	24.9
Mansfield	707,716	1,069,235	9,155,602	42,901,258	21.3
Peabody	2,349,417	3,241,020	14,096,656	64,598,898	21.8
Waltham	1,304,082	3,246,264	14,368,827	84,009,441	17.1
Bridgewater/Raynham	1,905,656	2,991,983	10,874,969	55,007,359	19.8
Statewide	245,487,886	436,108,098	2,124,584,089	10,709,520,289	19.8
Shrewsbury	611,897	4,831,856	13,869,846	56,326,097	24.6

Shrewsbury's Direct Special Education Expenditures as a Percentage of School Budget, FY02 to FY11

Enter a district's lea code in the shaded green box. Or Select from the Dropdown Box below

999 - state total

271 SHREWSBURY

Jun1 2012

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Direct Special Education Expenditures as a Percentage of School Budget, FY02 to FY11

Fiscal Year	-- In-District Instruction--		- Out-of-District Tuition -		Combined Special Ed Expenditures (A+B+C+D)	Total School Operating Budget	Special Education Percentage of Budget (E as % of F)	state average percentage
	Teaching	Other Instructional	Mass. Public Schools and Collaboratives	Mass Private and Out-of-State Schools				
2002	3,610,178	866,760	173,886	784,719	5,435,543	33,143,729	16.4	17.4
2003	3,359,492	1,127,412	231,026	897,974	5,615,904	36,101,586	15.6	17.7
2004	4,047,224	1,151,063	359,291	1,585,313	7,142,891	39,991,000	17.9	18.6
2005	4,653,632	1,210,379	248,700	2,035,770	8,148,481	44,057,313	18.5	18.9
2006	4,720,496	1,356,240	303,891	2,401,514	8,782,141	45,457,192	19.3	19.1
2007	5,208,100	976,842	348,552	2,836,586	9,370,080	47,100,297	19.9	19.4
2008	6,477,828	1,123,232	518,254	3,477,571	11,596,885	51,696,448	22.4	19.8
2009	7,342,907	1,318,275	619,963	4,194,338	13,475,483	52,583,507	25.6	20.1
2010	6,926,089	1,215,709	599,171	4,237,073	12,978,042	54,747,481	23.7	19.9
2011	6,955,970	1,470,123	611,897	4,831,856	13,869,846	56,326,097	24.6	19.8

Notes and Definitions

Source: End of Year Pupil and Financial Report, Schedule 4 - Special Education Expenditures
Special Education Expenditures

"Direct" special education expenditures include only those that can be related specifically to special education pupils.

"Other instructional" includes supervisory, textbooks and instructional equipment, guidance, and psychological services.

"Mass. Public Schools and Collaboratives" includes other public school districts, collaboratives, and charter schools.

Thru FY03, "Mass. Private and Out-of-State Schools" includes only the local share of residential programs (50 percent of the cost was paid directly to those schools by the Commonwealth). Beginning in FY04, the 50 percent reimbursement was replaced by the circuit-breaker program, which reimburses the districts directly. The tuition shown in this columns now represents 100 percent of the district cost.

Spending from state "circuit breaker" funds is included. Otherwise, spending from grants, revolving funds, or other non-appropriated revenue sources (totalling less than 4 percent of total special ed spending statewide) is excluded.

Total School Expenditures

Through FY03, "Total School Operating Budget" equals Chapter 70 actual "Net School Spending". Beginning in FY04, circuit-breaker revenues are added to the net school spending amount because the circuit-breaker program is included in the special education columns, but not in net school spending.

Operating budget includes municipal indirect spending for schools but excludes capital expenditures and transportation.

Other than circuitbreaker spending, operating budget does not include expenditures from grants, revolving funds, or other non-appropriated revenue sources.