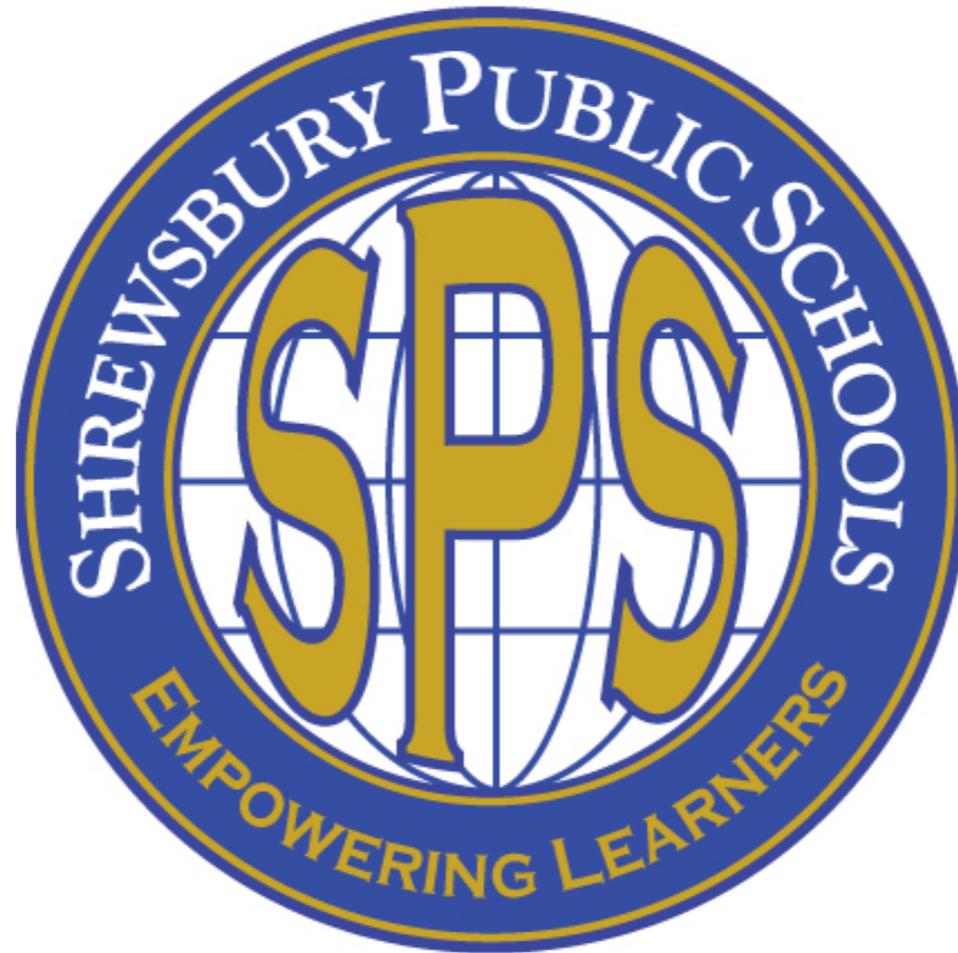


Shrewsbury Public Schools



State of the District - Part I
September 11, 2013

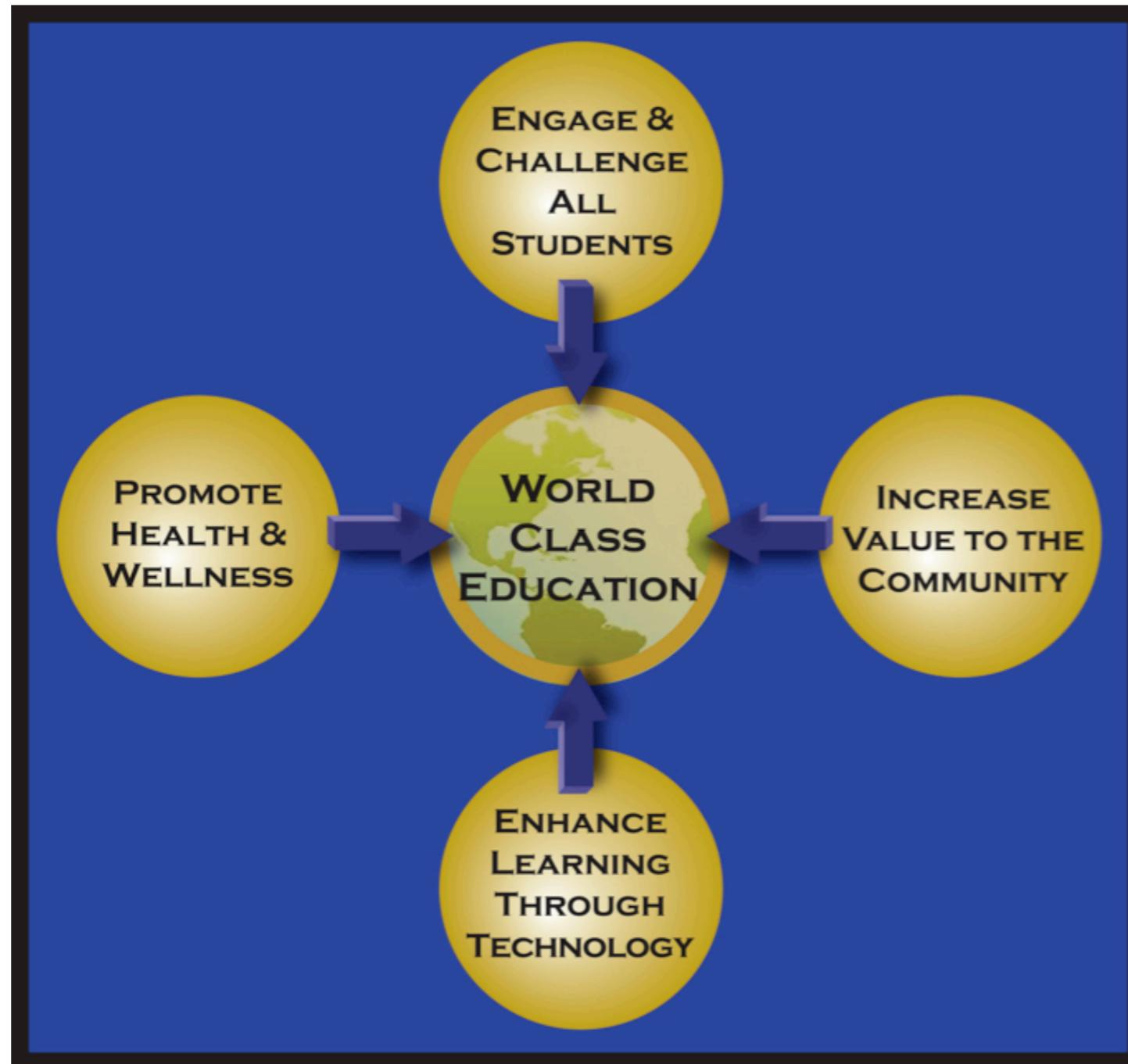
Mission

- The Shrewsbury Public Schools, in partnership with the community, will provide students with the skills and knowledge for the 21st century, an appreciation of our democratic tradition, and the desire to continue to learn throughout life.

Core Values

- Respect & responsibility
- Collaboration & communication
- Commitment to high standards & expectations
- Equity

Strategic Priorities 2012-2016



State of the District

- We have insufficient resources to meet student needs
- We are innovating and collaborating to try and cope with increased demands
- We are concerned that the quality of the education provided to Shrewsbury students is deteriorating

Class sizes are too high in too many places

- Class size above guidelines in 70% of core classes in grades K-8 as of first day of school (some grade 2 & 3 classes with 30 students)
- Class size well above guidelines in 100% of core classes in grades 5-8 as of first day of school (several 30-32)
- Majority of high school class sizes above guidelines (including sections above 30)

Effects of high class sizes

- Compromised quantity and quality of attention, instruction, and feedback; ultimately lower student achievement
- Compromised physical, social & emotional classroom environments
- Increased teacher workload leaves less time for involvement in educational initiatives



Out-of-date curriculum, instructional materials & technology

- Not up-to-date with state-mandated curriculum changes, due to insufficient funding, personnel, and time to make this shift (especially in mathematics)
- Our students have already started being tested on updated state curriculum, and we are out of alignment
- Underinvestment in textbooks and technology has created obstacles to learning

Insufficient support for mental & behavioral health needs

- Increased frequency and intensity of student mental and behavioral health concerns
- Impact on individual students, classroom environments, and personnel availability for other needs

Unrelenting state mandates

- Time and resource-intensive launch of the state mandated supervision and evaluation system for educators
- Mandated graduate level courses for English language learning training
- Pilot testing for potential MCAS replacement (PARCC assessment)

Need to respond to heightened safety & security concerns

- Post-Sandy Hook Era
- Increased physical security
- Ongoing examination and refinement of training for emergency response
- Partnership with Police, Fire, Public Buildings, & Parks & Recreation Departments

Volatility in cost of doing business

- Need to provide programming to students with special education needs who move to our community
- Pressure from parents to provide services to offset effects of high class sizes and resource limitations
- Substitute teacher shortages due to low pay
- Transportation for technical high school students - may require additional bus route

Low morale

- General feeling of being overwhelmed; concern for effect on climate & culture
- Retention concerns
- Recruitment concerns

Ongoing impact of “pay to play” and “fundraising fatigue”

- Financial pressure on families to pay fees and tuitions limits opportunities for some students
- Difficulties in raising supplemental funds, and use of supplemental funds for fundamental needs rather than enrichment
- Administrator energy and time spent on seeking resources rather than on leadership

Innovating to cope with demands

- Utilizing technology for instructional resources and assessment (interactive white boards, iPad 1:1 program, web-based resources)
- Leveraging technology for program and operational efficiencies (academic record keeping, staff recruitment, etc.)
- Use of social media for improved communication with families & community

Collaborating to cope with demands

- Utilizing teacher leaders to help implement new educator evaluation program
- Seeking to expand partnership with Shrewsbury Youth & Family Services to assist with mental and behavioral health
- Safety & Security Committee

Many strengths

- Outstanding students
- Committed and skilled staff
- Supportive parent community
- Cooperative relationships with other
Town departments
- Generally excellent facilities

Overall challenge for 2013-2014

- Limit further damage to the quality of education in Shrewsbury, while implementing multiple new mandates, despite significant resource limitations.

State of the District

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Questions & Comments

