

J^{Apple} Shrewsbury School Journal

Serving a community of continuous learners

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Superintendent's Corner

Lack of resources = lower quality

DR. JOSEPH M. SAWYER
SUPERINTENDENT

In my recent, two-part "state of the district" report to the School Committee, I shared several messages of concern. Based on performance data and empirical evidence, it is clear to me that our schools have insufficient resources to meet student needs. While we are doing our best to innovate and collaborate to cope with increasing demands from the state, we are concerned that the quality of education provided to Shrewsbury students is deteriorating. These concerns were amplified by the fact that our district's state rating and five of our schools' individual ratings were downgraded from Level 1 to Level 2 due to widening achievement gaps, while experiencing a significant overall drop in student academic growth scores.

The causes for concern are many:

- **Class sizes continue to be too high in too many places**, reaching an average of 28-30 students in many Grade 2 and Grade 3 sections, all of our middle school sections, and many high school sections. This has a negative effect on the quantity and quality of teacher attention, instruction, and feedback, which ultimately leads to lower student achievement. Teachers cannot be as proactive to catch student learning issues before they become problems, and more families are requesting time-consuming special education testing because they are nervous that their child will slip through the cracks. Too-high class

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New Hires and Mathematics Improvements

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Expert Student Support Services, Celebrating Diversity and Communication through Social Media



Pictured above (left-right) English language learner students Nicholy Cabral, Siayo Wu, David Li, Ayan Vaishnav, and Hajra Ali hold an enlarged star with their completed "I am special" sentence. See "Diversity" story on page 5.

"Difference is of the essence of humanity. Difference is an accident of birth and it should therefore never be the source of hatred or conflict. The answer to difference is to respect it. Therein lies a most fundamental principle of peace: respect for diversity."

~ John Hume ~

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Pictured above is a photo of a display celebrating Floral Street School's diverse student population in the main lobby bulletin board. Students decorated a cut-out star and wrote reasons why s/he is special. These various colored stars were then hung on the board to create this unique display. Please see story titled, "Celebrating Diversity" and additional photos on page 5.

School Committee concerns

SANDRA FRYC
SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

At the opening of school on August 26th, I spoke to the district's staff about my recent experience sending my daughter Nicole off to college. Sending a child to college is an exciting time, but also one that creates many different emotions and worries for parents. My son Christian is a college senior and I remember the same feelings of concern when he left for school. I worried if they had made the right choice of college to attend? Would they be safe on campus? Would they be homesick?

However, the one thing I did not worry about was whether or not my children were prepared for the academic challenge of college. Since they entered the Shrewsbury Public Schools in kindergarten, they continually built upon the knowledge and skill set they need to be successful in college. The Shrewsbury Public Schools gave both of my children the tools necessary to enter into the next phase of learning. My family feels extremely fortunate that our

children attended public school in a district that provided them with an excellent academic foundation. Students graduate from Shrewsbury Public Schools empowered to face challenges, explore new areas of interest and grow intellectually in order to be successful in whatever path they choose in life.

I am concerned that the district's ability to provide today's students with the same academic experience prior generations received is being

"Our top priority remains class size. We believe that smaller class sizes provide teachers with more opportunity to interact with students on a one on one basis."

severely challenged by ongoing and increasing budget constraints. The school district continues to encounter difficulty in providing the students of our town with the level of education they deserve and the public expects. Continued high class sizes, lack of curriculum materials

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Superintendent's Corner

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sizes also compromise the physical, social, and emotional environments of those classrooms. Additionally, the increased teacher workload just to complete their core duties leaves little time for involvement in other initiatives. As a result, teachers are not able to provide the same level of enrichment for students and cannot contribute extra time to the improvement of our curriculum and instructional program.

- Due to a lack of ability to invest in curriculum and instructional materials and technology in recent years, combined with recent cuts of curriculum leadership positions, **we are out of alignment with the new state math curriculum** and other mandates and have out-of-date materials and computers in too many classrooms.

- **We do not have enough counseling or mental health support** to meet the increased frequency and intensity of student mental and behavioral health concerns. While these directly affect a small but growing percentage of students, the impact of these problems is felt by all.

- The state mandates we must meet for the new educator evaluation system, the new state testing system, and new staff training requirements are unrelenting, and **we do not have sufficient personnel or professional development resources** to keep up.

- In the post-Sandy Hook era, **we must address heightened concerns for safety and security and emergency response.**

All of these issues are resulting in negative outcomes. Staff morale is low due to the overwhelming nature of demands combined with larger classes and caseloads with less support. Families are experiencing fundraising fatigue and resentment that the burden of funding basic educational needs is being passed on to them through significant fees for transportation, athletics, and co-curricular activities. It is very concerning that our students' performance on state assessments has weakened and our state rating downgraded.

Typically, we pride ourselves

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Shrewsbury School Journal

The non-profit Shrewsbury School Journal is published three times a year and reaches every household in the diverse and growing town of Shrewsbury. It is published by the central office of the Shrewsbury Public Schools with the help and expertise of many individuals. The mission of the Shrewsbury School Journal is to provide an accurate source of information about our school system and the town in which we live. We hope to foster a community of continuous learners.

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer
Superintendent

Mary Beth Banios
Assistant Superintendent

Kimberlee Cantin
Project Coordinator/Designer

New principals bring new energy

DR. JOSEPH M. SAWYER
SUPERINTENDENT

This year, new principals have been appointed to lead the Beal Early Childhood Center and the Walter J. Paton School. Last year, in her last year prior to retirement, veteran Paton principal Jayne Wilkin served

“After this exhaustive and meticulous process, I had the pleasure of appointing two very strong candidates to these important leadership positions.”

as principal of both schools as a stopgap cost saving measure. The school district was very grateful that Ms. Wilkin took on this additional workload, which prevented further teacher cuts due to our limited budget.

Last March, the district conducted searches for the next principal of each school. This process, led by Director of Human Resources Barbara Malone, included meetings with faculty and parent surveys to determine each school's needs; resume and phone screening; semi-finalist interviews conducted by a panel of staff, parents, and administrators; day-long finalist visits to the school (which included a forum with the faculty); search team visits to the finalists' schools; an evening

public forum; and reference checking. After this exhaustive and meticulous process, I had the pleasure of appointing two very strong candidates to these important leadership positions.

At Beal, I appointed Mr. Christian Girardi as principal. At the time, Mr. Girardi was in his fourth year as the assistant principal of the Abby Kelley Foster Public Charter School in Worcester. Prior to that, he was the Music Department head and a music teacher at the same school. Mr. Girardi is a graduate of St. John's High School, holds a bachelor of arts from Wesleyan University, and earned a master's degree in leadership and educational administration from Worcester State College. He lives in Shrewsbury with his wife and two young children. We had



Pictured above is Mr. Christian Girardi, Principal, Beal Early Childhood Center



Pictured above is Mrs. Wendy Bell, Principal, Walter J. Paton School.

strong finalists for the position, and I selected Mr. Girardi based on his character, his intelligence, his leadership experience, his educational expertise, and his motivation. Based on what staff and parents have expressed, Mr. Girardi is off to a great start. When asked about his transition, he stated, “I have truly enjoyed my transition to Beal and have found the staff, students, and families wonderful to work with. I anticipated a professional, child-centric environment and my expectations have been surpassed.”

At Paton, I appointed Mrs. Wendy Bell as principal. Mrs. Bell was an outstanding teacher for many years at Paton, and the overwhelmingly positive feedback from parents, staff, and students made it clear that the Paton community believed

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Improving mathematics education

DR. ANN JONES
PRINCIPAL, OAK MIDDLE SCHOOL

Improving Mathematics Education: It All Adds Up to High Standards

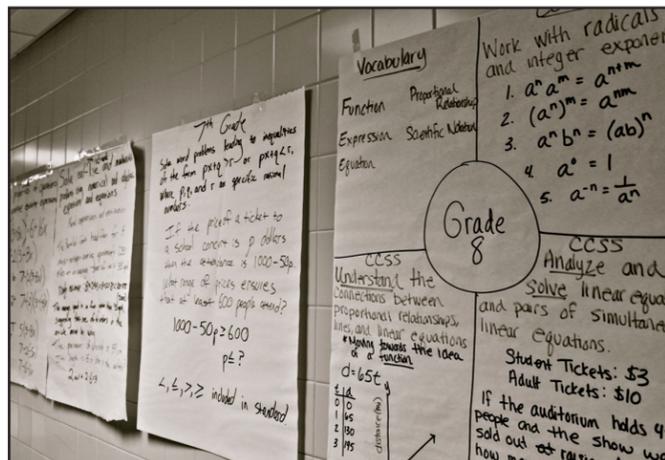
This past July, while many were enjoying the beautiful summertime weather, twenty-four kindergarten through grade eight teachers joined together in the Oak Middle School Media Center at our district Mathematics Institute to plan for implementation of the new Massachusetts Mathematics Curriculum Frameworks. Districts across the Commonwealth are working to align their respective programs to these new state frameworks. Shrewsbury teachers, under the guidance of Paula Sennet and Dona Apple, consultants from the Regional Science Center at University of Massachusetts Medical School, immersed themselves in a full week of exploration of the framework revisions and application to our district mathematics program.

The new math curriculum differs from the previous framework in a

number of ways. First and foremost, the new framework addresses a common criticism of the original framework, which had been considered by some to be “a mile wide and an inch deep,” that is, too many topics and not enough in depth learning. This new framework allows for focused study on specific standards while incorporating a more logical progression of content from one grade level to the next. Secondly, the new framework is arranged in grade-specific format, rather than a grade-span format of the former framework. This means that teachers at any given grade level, can be assured of the specific and ap-

propriate content being taught at the previous grade, thus enabling teachers to expand on a specific and focused content knowledge base. Lastly, the new framework clearly defines “Standards of Mathematical Practice,” those practices, processes and proficiencies, that all teachers of math should seek to develop in their students. These eight standards of practice define ways in which students ought to engage in mathematical practice in order to develop mathematical expertise.

Teachers participating in the institute had the rare opportunity to explore, in depth, the progression of mathematical standards within several of the domains. For example, one domain that spans kindergarten through grade 8 is “Operations and Algebraic Thinking.” If you have never conceived of your kindergartener doing algebra, don't be alarmed. In kindergarten, the ability to understand that addition means putting together, and subtraction means taking apart or taking from, which is a requisite skill for algebraic thinking. This core knowledge base is then extended in grade 1 whereby students learn about the relationship that



K-8 teachers demonstrated their understanding of the Massachusetts Framework's progression of mathematical knowledge by creating these visual representations of the key content at each grade level.

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Welcome to our new hires

BARBARA A. MALONE
DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

As the 2013/2014 school year unfolds we have completed the recruitment and selection process for the new teachers and administrators who have joined the Shrewsbury Public Schools. This year we were pleased to advertise through an online educator recruitment service, which enabled us to deepen our pool of eligible candidates for each position while realizing substantial savings in advertising costs.

Our 37 new educators were appointed following a rigorous selection process including interviews with principals, department directors, teachers, parents, and Central Office administrators. In addition to interviews, these new educators also provided a demonstration lesson in the classroom, where students provided the district feedback on their thoughts and observations. While some positions are filled before the close of school in June, many positions were filled during the summer. Thank you to all of the staff, parents, and students who assisted us with these summer interviews and demonstration lessons.

As in the past our new staff will primarily replace teachers and administrators who have retired, resigned, not had their contract renewed, or who are on a school year leave of absence. We have appointed Mr. Christian Girardi as the Principal of the Beal Early Childhood Center and Ms. Wendy Bell as the Principal of the Walter J. Paton Elementary School. 26 of our 37 newly hired educators (70%) hold a Master's Degree or Higher and 26 of these educators (70%) were completely new candidates to Shrewsbury Public Schools and were sourced through the online educator recruitment service.

All of our new staff attended a two-day orientation program on

August 20 and 23 and each one was assigned a mentor to prepare and support them in their new role in Shrewsbury Public Schools. They will also be attending a course during their first year that will further prepare and support them as they transition to their new roles in Shrewsbury. Besides the staff listed below, other positions have also been filled, including substitute teachers, crossing guards, door monitors, and paraprofessional aides and technicians.

New Teacher/Administrator Hires Shrewsbury High School

Matthew Heaney, Physics, Engineering, B.S. Mathematical Physics, Brown University; M.S. Geology, Geophysics, Temple University

Erin Hickey, Health, B.S., Nutrition, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Sara Honig, Director of Foreign Languages, B.A., Latin, Barnard College; M.A., Teaching, Latin and Classical Humanities, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; M.Ed., Policy, Planning and Administration, Boston University (shared with Oak and Sherwood)

Jessica Rigberg, Social Sciences, B.A., American Studies, Siena College; M.Ed., High School History, Lesley University

Timothy Scheer, Social Sciences, B.S., Education, B.A., History, University of Connecticut; M.A., Education & Curriculum Instruction, University of Connecticut

Alexandra Wilson, Environmental Science, Biology, B.A., Biology, Wheaton College

Oak Middle School

Matthew Amdur, English Language Arts, B.A., English, Middle School Education, Worcester State University

Colleen Connolly, Visual Arts, B.F.A., Education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Master of Visual Arts, Anna Maria College

Kate Dowd, Mathematics, B.A., Mathematics, Saint Anselm College

Kristopher McCabe, English Language Arts, B.A., Lasell College,

English with Secondary Education Concentration; M.S. Ed., Advanced Content in Pedagogy, Simmons College

Sarah Powers, Special Education, B.A., Business Administration, Worcester State University; M.Ed., Moderate Special Education, American International College

Serenity Sullivan-Jacques, Spanish, B.S., Business Administration/Accounting, Worcester State University, M.Ed., Secondary Education/Spanish, Worcester State University

Sherwood Middle School

Emily Broderick, Mathematics/Science, B.A., Elementary Education, Spanish, Stonehill College

Margaret Dagon, Music (Strings), B.Music., Music Education, Ithaca College

Caitlin Daley, Special Education Team Chair, B.A., Moderate Special Education, Westfield State University; M.Ed., Moderate Special Education, American International College

Karen Goudreau, English Language Arts/Social Studies, B.A., History, Simmons College; M.A., Teaching, Simmons College

Megan Graham, Mathematics/Science, B.A., Communication, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; M. Ed., Elementary Education, Salem State University

Aaron Gritter, School Psychologist, B.S., Biology, Calvin College; Doctor of Psychology, School Psychology, University of Southern Maine

Karen Gutekanst, Assistant Principal, B.A., French, College of the Holy Cross; M.S., Education, Western Connecticut State University; Massachusetts Administrator Certification, Commonwealth Leadership Academy

Laurie Krueger, Special Education, B.A., Special Education, University of Central Oklahoma;

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New principals

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that she was ready to assume this important leadership role. Mrs. Bell, who lives in Grafton with her husband and three young children, holds a dual undergraduate degree in general science and elementary education from Eastern Nazarene College and a master's degree in elementary education from Fitchburg State College, and she completed the Commonwealth Leadership Academy principal licensure program. Mrs. Bell's impeccable character, very strong communication skills, exceptional work ethic, expert understanding of best educational practices, and deep understanding of the Paton community make her the right person to lead Paton into the future. From my perspective, Mrs. Bell has transitioned well into her new role. When asked about her experience so far, she commented, "Becoming the leader of the school that I know and love deeply, and working together with a faculty that shares my desire to make a difference in every child's life has been a dream come true. I don't think anybody has a better job than I do."

Mrs. Bell and Mr. Girardi have taken the helm at two successful schools, and I am confident that each has what it takes to provide the leadership necessary to energize students, staff, and parents to continue both schools' traditions of excellence. Our school district is fortunate to have two very skilled and committed new leaders serving our community.

Superintendent's Corner

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on striving to continuously improve the education our students receive. Unfortunately, due to the many challenges illustrated above, too often we are performing triage in order to limit further damage to the quality of education in Shrewsbury. While we are doing our best to cope with increased demands despite significant resource limitations, I am greatly concerned about both the short-term harm and the risk of long-term damage to the quality of education our town's students receive – an education they need to be successful in a world where having well-educated citizens is more important than ever for the financial and social stability of families and communities.

I will continue to communicate my concerns, and our team is beginning the work of creating a budget plan for next year that will address them according to the priorities and guidance the School Committee has provided. I urge you to stay informed and to engage in conversations with your family, friends, and neighbors about the problems our schools are experiencing. I also will continue to communicate the successes our students and educators achieve, as they deserve to be recognized. I simply ask that when you read and hear the good news stories, remember that these achievements can't continue if we don't provide adequate resources, and that right now the ongoing excellence of our schools is in jeopardy.

5-2-0-1 Every Day

SHIRLEY LEMAY
HEALTH AND ADAPTIVE
PHYS. ED. TEACHER

Coolidge School's recent "Get Fit Family Adventure" took place on Wednesday, October 2nd from 4:30 - 6:00. The event's focus was very important, as it was an initiative communicated to kids and adults everywhere. It's not just a Shrewsbury program - kids have seen posters at gymnastics places, doctors offices, gyms, dance studios, and other public places.

This program is called "5-2-1-0 Every Day!" The purpose is to promote healthy behaviors for kids and adults each and every day. This is what it stands for:

- 5- servings of fruits and vegetables every day
- 2- hours or less of screen time per day

- 1- hour or more of active time (exercise)
- 0-sugary drinks

In the cafeteria at Coolidge School, we had Station "5" set up. There, students and parents watched a short video about the importance of eating a variety of colors of fruits and vegetables. While watching, they had the opportunity to try a homemade frozen fruit pop, giving them a full serving of fruit. The pops were really yummy and so healthy!

In the Media Center, "Minute to Win It" games were set up for

Station "2". Ordinary household items were used for really fun activities that showed students that there are a lot of fun alternatives to screen time. These activities students could easily set up at home to play instead of watching TV or playing on the computer.

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Pictured above on the left is Ms. Liz Hebert serving flavored water to 4th grader, Katelynn DeLeon. Standing behind her is her mom, Emily DeLeon

New hires

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M.A. Reading, Worcester State University

Laura Macchi, English Language Arts/Social Studies, B.A., English, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth; Bachelor of Education, Elementary, Framingham State College

Kelley Maguire, Health, Physical Education, B.S., Health Studies, Bridgewater State University (shared with Floral)

Paige Quinn, Special Education, B.A., Communications, Lynchburg College, M.S., Education (Moderate Special Needs), Assumption College

Alicia Tinsley, English Language Arts/Social Studies, B.A., English, Elementary Education, Merrimack College

Calvin Coolidge School

Rebecca Cloyes, Second Grade, B.S. in Education, Mathematics, Westfield State University

Amy Loconsolo, Visual Arts, B.A., English, Studio Art, Providence College; M.Ed., Art Education, Leslie University (shared with Beal)

Linda McQuade, First Grade, B.S., Marketing, Southeastern Massachusetts University; M.Ed., Curriculum and Instruction, University of Massachusetts Lowell

Danielle Rinker, Second Grade, B.A., French, History (Asian Studies Concentration), Clark University; M.A., Teaching, Clark University

Walter J. Paton School

Wendy Bell, Principal, B.A., Elementary Education, Eastern Nazarene College; M. Ed., Elementary Education, Fitchburg State University; Massachusetts Administrator Certification, Commonwealth Leadership Academy

Spring Street School

Carolyn Daniels, Special Education Team Chair, B.A., Psychology, Framingham State University; M.S., Education, Simmons College; Graduate Certificate, Behavioral Interventions in Autism, University of Massachusetts, Lowell; Advanced Graduate Studies, Educational Leadership and Management, Fitchburg State University (shared with Beal)

Beal Early Childhood Center

Melissa Barrett, Kindergarten, B.S., Human Services Management, Lesley University; M.Ed., Early Childhood Education, Lesley University

Emily Chaves, Kindergarten, B.A., Early Childhood, Sociology, Worcester State University

Christian Girardi, Principal, B.A., Music, Wesleyan University; M.A., Leadership and Educational Administration, Worcester State University

Julie Griffin, ELC Coordinator (Special Education), B.F.A., Communication Design and Psychology, Washington University (St. Louis); M.S., Behavioral Science, Simmons College

Lisa McKiernan, Kindergarten, B.A., Sociology, Fitchburg State University; M.Ed., Education, Anna Maria College

Lynn Pinto, Kindergarten, B.A., Communication, Fairfield University; M.A., Teaching, Monmouth University

Parker Road Preschool

Amanda Park, School Psychologist/Early Intervention Coordinator, B.A., Psychology, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale; M.Ed., School Psychology, University of Massachusetts Boston; Educational Specialist, School Psychology, University of Massachusetts Boston

Support from combined expertise

DR. KIMBERLEE KUSIAK

CHILD AND ADOLESCENT
PSYCHIATRIST

ELLIOTT NERLAND

SPS CLINICAL COORDINATOR

The Shrewsbury Public School District is dedicated to supporting the emotional needs and mental health of Shrewsbury students and families. Teachers, administrators and counselors can reach out to Elliott Nerland M.S.Ed. BCBA and Kim Kusiak MD with questions about how best to help students having emotional, behavioral or social difficulties that are affecting how they perform in school. Mr. Nerland, the district's Clinical Coordinator, specializes in the field of Applied Behavior Analysis. Dr. Kusiak is a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist who consults to the

“The goal of this partnership is to improve the school experience for students and families.”

district. They combine their areas of expertise to consult with teams at each school to help students who are struggling. The goal of this partnership is to improve the school experience for students and families.

Mr. Nerland has been the Clinical Coordinator for Shrewsbury Public Schools since 2008. As the Clinical Coordinator Mr. Nerland provides behavioral consultation to teams of teachers, support staff, administrators, students and their families. Mr. Nerland consults with school teams who work with students in both regular education programs and special education programs across the district. Consultation involves investigating what is happening in the student's world that may be contributing to problematic behaviors. Then the team is given a plan that outlines how they can support the student's strengths and help the student learn new behaviors to be more successful.

Dr. Kusiak brings knowledge about psychiatric issues, medications and community mental health services. She guides school personnel on how to effectively interact with students who may be having emotional struggles, medication side effects or social stress. Dr. Kusiak also helps school personnel communicate with mental health providers in the community so that schools, outside therapists and physicians can work together successfully.

Weekly, Dr. Kusiak and Mr. Nerland travel to each school in the district that requests a

consult. These “Clinical Rounds” include meeting with any teachers, counselors, administrators, nurses or support staff who are involved with the student and have concerns. The purpose of this consultation is to identify ways to support children both within the school setting, in their homes and community. Often parents or guardians will be invited to attend to be part of this process.

In order to support parents be

“Weekly, Dr. Kusiak and Mr. Nerland travel to each school in the district that requests a consult.”

active partners with the schools in helping their children succeed, Dr. Kusiak and Mr. Nerland put together a course called Parenting Strategies. Parenting Strategies consists of eight classes offered each semester at no cost to Shrewsbury parents. It runs every other Tuesday night at the High School. Parents are given tips and strategies to be even more effective in helping their children succeed in school and life. The course also helps parents figure out how to decrease tension and increase communication difficulties if they exist in the home.

This year Dr. Kusiak has been

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Planning and effort set new record

THE GARDEN PARTY
HOST COMMITTEE

For the fifth year in a row the Garden Party was graced with beautiful weather when nearly 400 community leaders, neighbors and friends gathered for the 5th Annual Celebration in the Garden Party at the home of Jason and Heather Logrippo. The Fallon House served as the perfect backdrop to celebrate Shrewsbury Public Schools by raising funds to augment school budgets, which have been impacted due to several years of budget shortfalls. At the first School Committee meeting of the 2013-14 school year, members of the Garden Party Host Committee presented the district with a \$50,000 check, the highest amount to date.

Many festive touches such as gorgeous table centerpieces provided by Danielson Flowers, a glass of Preseco upon arrival, fine wine, beer and the “Gardini Martini” provided by Shrewsbury Counseling, a wine and beer bar sponsored by Expose Yourself PR, Tom Fahs & Melissa Pride-Fahs, and Consolidated Beverages, tasty treats and desserts from CocoBeni Confections and Christopher & Maria Munro and music from the local band Tension, sponsored by Beaton Kane Construction set the mood for the night.

This signature event would not have been possible without the many local businesses, individuals and families who participated in the Garden Party. They are (but not limited to) the presenting sponsor, the 15-40 Connection; J. Briggs at the Diamond Level; Hairlines and Dunkin Donuts at the Celebration Level; Danielson Flowers, Webster Five, and Wheelabrator/Waste Management at the Fallon House Level; The Law Offices of Joseph J. Cariglia, Jim and Paula Buonomo, Ready Med, Gene DeFeudis Family Foundation, Madulka's Ice Cream (Open Mic Night), and

Lamoureux Pagano Associates Architects (Jack & Jeanette Howard), at the Garden Level; Aurora Exterior Painting Inc. Southgate at Shrewsbury, Heald & Chiampa Funeral Directors, Provo Financial Services, Inc., Central One Federal Credit Union, Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union, Price Chopper, Maribeth McCauley Lynch of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage, All-Access Physical Therapy, 2 Ovens, Scizzors, and Stadium, at the Vintage Level.

The auction hosted nearly 100 items – ranging from Boston

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Photo Credit - John O'Brien

Pictured above under the massive tent on the grounds of Fallon House are many of the nearly 400 attendees at the “Party in the Garden” this past June. They are gathered for the live auction portion of the event where the donated auction items available for bid helped to push the total fundraising to a new high total of \$50,000 for Shrewsbury Public Schools.

Celebrating diversity

KATHLEEN LANGE-MADDEN
DIRECTOR, ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION (ELE)

Celebrating diversity is a phrase that seems almost overused. However, at Floral Street School, students' languages and cultures were a cause for celebration for the month of May 2013. The Floral English as a Second Language team (ESL), Ms. Laura Bowman, Mrs. Verity Gentile, and Ms. Heather Wojcik, decided during the first trimester, they wanted to engage the entire school community in activities to celebrate the school's diversity.

In order to instill the message, "We are the same, but we are different. We are special," every child received a copy of the Shrewsbury Education Foundation grant funded book *To Be A Kid* by Maya Ajmera and John Ivanko. The ESL team suggested ways in which classroom teachers could utilize the book with their students. The ESL team also reached out to Floral Street parents to help translate the message "I am with my friends. You are all my good friends." into the twenty-six languages represented at Floral Street. Thanks to willing parent volunteer Emiko Yamada, who traced the various translations onto posters, the multi-language message was prominently displayed on posters in the main school hallway. Floral families and teachers loaned items from various continents, which

were placed in the first floor display cabinets. All students decorated a cut-out star with reasons why s/he is special. The stars were then used to decorate the lobby bulletin board, the school hallways, the translated language posters, and the display cabinets.

Ms. Bowman, Mrs. Gentile, and Mrs. Wojcik worked with classroom teacher Mrs. Helene Bisceglia and music teacher Ms. Tracy DeBlois to plan a grade 1 & 2 and a grade 3 & 4 All School Meeting (ASM). The student led ASM included a welcome, the Pledge of Allegiance, a patriotic song, *There Are Many Flags in Many Lands*, and the *Happy Birthday Song* before focusing on one of the special activities for the monthly celebration, the culture questions. Each morning, for ten days, a culture question was posted

President's father immigrate? The answers were revealed in the ASM in a multiple choice game show style. In other words, the speaker would instruct students to "put your hands on your head if you think the answer is A."

Mrs. Bisceglia's third grade class led another component of the ASM. To illustrate how we are the same, students presented their connections with the common text *To Be a Kid*. Pairs of students presented posters capturing their similarities despite their outward physical differences. Each poster was then turned over and mounted on the wall to create a black rectangle or night sky.

Floral Street English Language Learners (ELLs) helped illustrate *how we are different*. The ELLs decorated an enlarged cut-out star and completed the star sentence starter, "I am special because _____." The ESL team showed photographs of the ELL students with their stars. As each picture was shown, second grade ELLs handed Ms. Wojcik a glowing star to put on the black rectangle, or night sky, that had been previously constructed using Mrs. Bisceglia students' posters. The ASM concluded with the message, "We are the same but we are different. We are special, just like the night sky!"

The student and teacher audience enthusiastically demonstrated their enjoyment during the interactive May All School Meeting. Principal Lisa McCubrey shared that many, many students and teachers offered positive comments. Thanks to the ESL team and the ASM team for successfully creating, facilitating, and engaging the Floral Street community in a celebration of diversity.



Pictured above are three of the twenty-six multi-language posters, "I am with my friends. You are all my good friends," that were posted in Floral Street School hallways.

on the easel, just inside the main doors, to greet students. Some of the culture questions included: How many languages are spoken at Floral? Which country does sushi come from? If you met people from Pakistan, what language might they speak? From what country did the

5-2-1-0 every day

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Everyone had a blast playing the games! In the gym for Station "1", students and parents were given one M&M to eat. They put on a pedometer and had to walk off the calories for that one M&M. It turned out that they had to walk 880 steps to burn off the four calories they just ate. Food cards with calorie contents were provided with calculators for participants to see how many steps they would have to take after eating excess snacks. Everyone was surprised with how long they had to walk to burn just four calories!

We also had Station "0" set up in the cafeteria. Samples of water flavored with lemons, limes, oranges, grapefruit, cucumbers and strawberries were offered to students and parents. A "Rethink Your Drink" display board was a great visual of how much sugar is in popular drinks that students may be drinking every day. Parents and students were able to take handouts home about sugary drinks and 10 ways to drink more water.

The event was a real success. We had over 150 students, siblings, and parents attend. It was a fun way to learn about "5-2-1-0 Every Day!"

Mathematics

CONTINUED from page 2

exists between the operations of addition and subtraction. Algebra is further expanded in grade 2 as students work with groups of objects to form the foundations for multiplication. The teachers in the institute spent many hours identifying core concepts for each of these domains and connecting these threads from grade K through grade 8. This is done, in order to understand the progression of knowledge, as it builds from one grade to the next.

Armed with this background knowledge of the new framework, teachers set to work to document their grade level standards, pacing, and materials in a web-based curriculum management tool Atlas Rubicon. This tool allows teachers to share curriculum guides, assessments and instructional materials in a common space on the web. It is a valuable collaboration tool that takes advantage of our teachers' extensive technological skills, as well as enables collaboration in an online space between colleagues who might not otherwise be able to physically

Standards of Mathematical Practice

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
- Model with mathematics
- Use appropriate tools strategically
- Attend to precision
- Look for and make use of structure
- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

(From Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics, March 2011)

meet together. Given the differences in our teachers' daily schedules, this tool is indispensable in managing curriculum across the district, and ensuring the consistent progression of mathematics content across buildings and between grades.

Over the course of this school year, Shrewsbury's teachers will continue to work with our expert consultants, our new online tool, and each other to implement the new mathematics frameworks. This will ensure that changes to our mathematics program meet with the high expectations the community has come to depend on from Shrewsbury Public Schools.

Food Services information

BETH NICHOLS
DIRECTOR OF FOOD SERVICES

Breakfast Program

A Breakfast Program is offered daily at the High School, Oak and Sherwood Middle Schools and Coolidge Elementary School before the school day begins. Breakfast is not served at the other Elementary Schools. A variety of cereals, fruits, morning breads, juice and milk are offered daily. All meals meet the USDA requirements for good nutrition. The cost of breakfast is \$1.50. Families with financial need may qualify for a reduced price breakfast at \$.30 or a free breakfast.

Lunch Program

A Lunch Program is offered daily at all schools. A minimum of four entrees are offered daily. In addition a variety of sandwiches, milks, 100% juices, fruits, vegetables and a salad bar are offered

daily. All meals meet the USDA nutritional guidelines. The cost of lunch is \$3.00 at the Elementary Schools, \$3.25 at the Middle Schools and \$3.50 at the High School. Lunch Tickets left over from the 2012-2013 school year can be used at the appropriate schools.

Kindergarten Snack Program

A kindergarten snack program is available to Full Day Students.

Both a snack and a beverage are delivered to your child's classroom daily. The cost of the snack and beverage is \$125.00 for the year.

High School Meals to Go

An after hour meal program is available daily for students. Students must order their meal by 8AM of the day the meal is requested. Bag Meals include a sandwich, beverage, snack and fruit. Bagged Meals cost \$4.00. Order forms are available at the school store, the cafeteria and in the serving area.

Free and Reduced Breakfast/Lunch Applications

Free and Reduced price meals are available to students if there is financial need. Applications are available on line at:

www.shrewsbury-ma.gov/schools under the Food Service Department pages Applications must be submitted each school year by October 1st to continue eligibility. Applications will be accepted for new applicants at any time as the need arise for families. If you need an application at any time during the year call the Food Service Office at 508-841-8819 and one will be mailed to you or visit our web pages at: www.shrewsbury-ma.gov/schools Eligibility is governed by guidelines set by the Federal Government. A written notification will be sent to all families stating what program they qualify for.

CONTINUED, see page 7

Concerns

CONTINUED from page 1

and support staff, and outdated technology are further compromising the district's ability to provide what has always been thought of as an excellent education program.

Currently, there are insufficient resources to meet the needs of students and the School Committee remains very concerned about the district's ability to meet increasing demands. Further erosion of the district's educational services is not acceptable. We believe the district must begin the process of restoring educators and programming that were cut over the past few years. As we begin the

"We intend to focus our efforts on recovery."

Fiscal Year 2015 budget process, the School Committee determined it was appropriate to develop fiscal priorities and guidelines for the school administration to develop the initial budget proposal.

At our school committee meeting on October 9, 2013 we approved the Fiscal Priorities & Guidelines for FY2015 Budget Development. This document outlines for the community the School Committee's priorities for the upcoming budget year. Our top priority remains class size. We believe that smaller class sizes provide teachers with more opportunity to interact with students on a one on one basis. The current class sizes throughout the district are not acceptable and not conducive to learning. Our second priority is to provide sufficient resources to update curriculum aligned with state expectations, including instructional materials and staff professional development. Our third priority is to implement our adopted Strategic Priorities and Goals to the greatest extent possible.

Further reductions in staff and programs will increase stress on a school district that is experiencing fraying around the edges. As a community we must work to prevent further damage to our education system. The School Committee believes strongly that the students who are currently in the district should be provided with the same learning opportunities that past generations enjoyed. We intend to focus our efforts on recovery. Our children are the future of this community and we must do all we can to provide them with a quality education.

Support

CONTINUED, see page 7

working with the High School Guidance Department to teach incoming Senior Class members skills to handle the higher stress level as they work on college applications and move towards graduation.

Feedback from the schools and parents has suggested that the services provided by Mr. Nerland and Dr. Kusiak have been very helpful in making the schools and parents more effective in supporting students to reach their goals, as the district strives to implement its strategic priorities to improve students' health and wellness.

We hope you "like" us

KIMBERLEE CANTIN
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT FOR
COMMUNICATIONS AND OPERATIONS

In the 19th century, apart from letter writing, social interaction was done in person by visiting another's home. For a certain portion of society this was always facilitated with a calling card and very specific etiquette determined the protocol for such interactions. A gentleman needed to be especially cognizant of his image. The type of card a gentleman presented conveyed a great deal about the image he wished to communicate along with an indication of his social position. One had to be aware of the type of paper and the style of engraving used, and even the hour one left the calling card to ensure a proper impression was made.

Then along came Alexander Graham Bell with his "talking machine" and face-to-face socialization and communication took a huge turn. Now, with the presence of personal devices, social interaction has once again taken on a completely new dimension.

For a large portion of our society, the practice of interacting through social media is now as common as a calling card was in the late 1800's. One could equate what a person chooses to share through

social media, their "digital footprint", to the Victorian Age calling card in what it says about that person and the image they want to portray. A great deal of information can be revealed in what is shared on "timelines", "status posts" and "tweets".

Many of you may already be aware that Shrewsbury Public Schools, Dr. Sawyer and school principals can now be found on Facebook and Twitter. On an increasing level teachers and administrators are becoming networked by using this technology to effectively participate in professional sharing and learning networks. It is agreed that the ease and speed at which information can be disseminated is another advantage of using this technology. There is no denying that the use of communication on varying levels through social media is here to stay.

Our goal in using social media is to establish a professional, controlled presence that allows us to capitalize on this platform, especially the immediacy of this type of communication. We consider our presence on Facebook and Twitter to be an opportunity to supplement our robust website as well as spotlight news and information about what's happening in the district that wouldn't be posted on our website. We feel strongly that this endeavor will improve family engagement, increase positive involvement and

strengthen our community partnership. At the printing of this Journal edition, nearly 600 people have "liked" our new district Facebook page, and over 100 are "following" us on Twitter.

It is our hope that a majority of families will come to rely on our district Facebook page and "tweets" as another resource to find real time information on current events, school happenings, and other pertinent news that crops up on a day-to-day basis. We encourage you to "like", "follow" and spread the word to others to help us build awareness regarding the district's and each school's utilization of social media for communication.

The addresses are as follows:

DISTRICT

<https://twitter.com/ShrewsburyPS>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Shrewsbury-Public-Schools/151602471699144>

SUPERINTENDENT

https://twitter.com/SPS_Supt

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Dr-Joseph-M-Sawyer/185507388294562>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Dr-Joseph-M-Sawyer/185507388294562>

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Find us on:
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Cultural collaboration

KATHLEEN LANGE-MADDEN
DIRECTOR, ENGLISH LANGUAGE
EDUCATION (ELE)

Having the opportunity to experience three weeks of winter in the middle of summer was invaluable. Traveling below the equator to the South American country of Argentina was the reason for the reversed seasons. My trip, from July 21 to August 10, completed a Fulbright fellowship program, which was funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The program began in October 2012 with a three-day Washington DC orientation between USA school administrators and school administrators from Argentina, Brazil, Portugal, and Thailand. After the short orientation, I traveled home to Massachusetts with my Argentine counterpart, Mrs. Maria Azucena Ramallo. Maria Azucena spent three weeks living in my home and learning about the culture and educational system of the United States. This summer she hosted me in her home and was my guide to the country, culture, and school system of Argentina.

After a ten-hour flight from Houston, Texas to Buenos Aires, Argentina, I was greeted with a strong gust of chilly wind as I left the airport. Memories of the almost one hundred degree temperatures in Massachusetts quickly vanished as I searched my suitcase for my fleece and down coat. I spent only a day in the capital city with six other North American administrators. We attended a presentation about the Argentinean education system and toured the expansive city by bus before departing the next day to my counterpart's home province and city of the same name, Cordoba.

Cordoba is the second largest city in Argentina and the one the Jesuits chose during colonial times for their South American home base. The Jesuits arrived at the end of the 16th century. They planted the first vineyards and established the first college on the continent. The city is filled with a considerable population of undergraduates, while

the central province of Cordoba is filled with vast agricultural flatlands. My host, Maria Azucena, lives about two hours by car or bus from Cordoba city, in Villa del Totoral.

By the time I arrived in Maria's home, I had adapted to the weather and the daily meal schedule: breakfast after waking, midday meal, similar to our dinner, between 2:00-3:00pm, tea & snack between 6:00-6:30pm, and a simple evening meal of empanadas or pizza between 10:00-11:00pm. I learned that this meal schedule is the basis for family time, as shops and businesses, including cafes and restaurants, close from about 2:00-4:00 or 5:00pm. Students attend school in the morning or in the afternoon, so families are together for the midday meal.

The Argentine school year begins in March and finishes in December. Primary or elementary schools educate students in kindergarten through grade six. Individual schools differ in their morning and afternoon start times. One primary school held classes for morning students from 7:45am to 1:15pm, and the afternoon students attended classes from 1:30pm to 6:00pm. Secondary schools educate students in grades seven through twelve. Students at one school I visited attended classes from 7:30am to 3:30pm, and afternoon students attended from 3:30 to 9:00pm.

In a country that experiences earthquakes, schools are made from concrete and brick. There is no central heating, but some school offices do have a fireplace or small, portable heaters. Faculty and students dress in layers. Female students and teachers in primary schools wear pinafores or aprons, usually white ones, over their clothes. Male students and teachers wear coats that resemble the ones worn by doctors or scientists. Secondary school students wear uniforms. Teachers are paid by the hour, so teachers may work at several different schools. Teachers who work in several schools are called "taxi teachers." Secondary principals often teach a class or two in their own school or in a different school. Despite our differences, the Argentine teachers and administrators embrace the work they do with commitment and dedication, just as we do in Shrewsbury.

Unfortunately, this program, as well as several other teacher and administrator exchange programs, has been discontinued due to sequestration. However, using Skype and e-mail, I will continue to communicate and collaborate with administrators, teachers, and students I met in Villa del Totoral. I hope to work in partnership with my Shrewsbury colleagues to find ways we can use technology to promote student collaboration between our two countries.



Kathy Lange-Madden, first row second from right, poses with grade six students and their English teacher at Escuela Normal Superior primary school in Villa del Totoral, Cordoba, Argentina. This Argentine school was one of several that Ms. Lange-Madden visited during her Fulbright fellowship program funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

Call for nominations

Help the Shrewsbury Education Foundation (SEF) celebrate the people who are the heart of our school district's success!

What are the awards all about? The great successes of Shrewsbury's students - in personal development, academic achievement, athletics and the arts - are the result of hard work by innovative, dedicated individuals and teams at all levels.

The John P. Collins Awards For Excellence will honor the exemplary efforts of those whose work brings to life the mission of the Shrewsbury Public Schools: to 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. The awards are named for former Superintendent of the Shrewsbury Public Schools John P. Collins, PhD, who served in town from 1978 to 1994 and continues to exemplify the highest standards of professionalism and a dedication to lifelong learning in our community.

Who can be nominated?

Anyone who now works in the Shrewsbury Public Schools can be nominated.

Please note: This includes any staff member who you or your child has worked with either currently or in the past.

Who can nominate someone? Students, teachers and staff, parents, administrators AND community members can nominate someone. Everyone who is nominated will receive a copy of the nomination letter.

How can I nominate someone? Visit www.shrewsbury-edfoundation.org to access the J.P. Collins Awards for Excellence nomination form. Write about your nominee according to the directions and send the completed form by email to SEF at jpcollinsawards@gmail.com - questions can also be sent to this address. Nomination forms are available in the main office of each school and at School Department central office on 100 Maple Ave.

How will honorees be selected? A small committee of SEF volunteers, Shrewsbury Public Schools staff and community members will review nominations and select the honorees. They will consider how each nominee personifies the Shrewsbury Public School's mission and core values, how the nominee has positively impacted students, the curriculum, fellow staff members, team-building, or the school or district-wide community.

When will awards be presented? Awards will be presented, along with those to our grant recipients, during the SEF Awards Dinner on Saturday, January 25, 2014, which will be held at Cyprian Keyes Golf Club.



All nominations must be received by SEF on or before Wednesday, November 20, 2013



Partnering with our community

For several years, businesses in our community have volunteered in many ways to partner with Shrewsbury Public Schools. Our Coordinator of Volunteer Activities, Ms. Beth McCollum, whose position is generously funded by two local businesses, **Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union** and **Avalon Shrewsbury/Avalonbay Communities**, recently organized the event pictured at right. The owners of **Via Italian Table** volunteered their time to demonstrate how to prepare several traditional Italian dishes (stuffed clams, crostini, anti pasti, and gelato) for SHS students in the **Mediterranean Cuisine Class** during their unit on Italy.



Pictured above are Caitlyn Carolan (left) and Madeleine Ahlquist (right) from Via Italian Table preparing a number of Italian dishes.

Planning and effort

CONTINUED, from page 4

sports tickets, to spa packages, to exclusive travel experiences from the beach to the mountains, to an evening of fine jewelry designing. The live auction brought life to the tent of nearly 400 people. They were bidding on a Night on the Town for 8 donated by Niche Hospitality, a Peppers catered BBQ, 2 tickets and backstage passes to see PINK live, a Jewelry Party hosted by Heart and Stone Jewelry, tickets to the American Idol finale, Red Sox - Yankee's tickets, a trip to Aruba, the Ultimate SHARC experience, and the "Get it Done" Garden Party Committee. Andover residents, Gretchen and Tom Papineau graciously gifted

their auction item of the Ultimate SHARC Experience to Shrewsbury Youth & Family Services in order to find a family they can surprise with this gift. Shrewsbury Health and Racquet Club won the Garden Party Committee to assist with the planning of a future event at the club pool and a Diamond Extraordinaire drawing featuring the gorgeous diamond pendant from J. Briggs & Co. that was custom designed and hand crafted by local designer and Shrewsbury resident Jennifer Briggs.

Mark your calendars for next year's event on Saturday June 14th. Go to

www.ShrewsburyGardenParty.com for more information.

THANK YOU!

The district would like to thank the Host Committee Members, Whitney Andrews, Maribeth McCauley Lynch, Brenda Buckley, Sarah Cole Camerer, Beth Casavant, Mary Casey, Christa Duprey, Maureen Harrington, Hannah Kane, Kathleen Keohane, Heather Logrippo, Debra Page Mooney, Maria Munro, Kimberly Nobrega, Melanie Petrucci, Melissa Pride-Fahs and Caroline Schultz. Your hard work is greatly appreciated.

Food Services

CONTINUED from page 4

Menus

The menu is posted on the Shrewsbury Home Page website at www.shrewsbury-ma.gov/schools under Food Service Department. The Food Service is committed to serving what is on the printed menu.

Prepaid Breakfast Plan

The Prepaid Breakfast Plan is available for the 2013-2014 school year. Breakfast will be served at Coolidge Elementary School, the Middle Schools and High School. Breakfast is not offered at the other Elementary Schools. Full Price Breakfast costs \$1.50 and Reduced Price Breakfast costs \$.30. Books of 20 Full Price Breakfast tickets cost \$30.00. Books of 20 Reduced Price Breakfast tickets cost \$6.00 Breakfast tickets are pink and can be used at the Middle or High Schools.

To purchase tickets send a self addressed stamped envelope along with your check for the number of books requested to: Shrewsbury School Food Service, 64 Holden Street, Shrewsbury, MA. 01545. Tickets will be mailed back to you. Tickets are non-refundable.

High School and Middle School Tickets may also be purchased by High School and Middle School Students at the cafeteria registers during lunch and breakfast.

Prepaid Lunch Plan

The Prepaid Lunch Plan is available for the 2013-2014 school year. Meals at the Elementary Schools cost \$3.00. Books of 20 - lunch tickets can be purchased for \$60.00. Tickets for the Elementary Schools are orange. Meals at the Middle Schools cost \$3.25. Books of 20 - \$3.25 lunch tickets can be purchased for \$65.00. Tickets for the Middle Schools are yellow. Meals at the High School cost \$3.50. Books of 20- \$3.50 lunch tickets can be purchased for \$70.00. Tickets for the High School are green.

To purchase tickets send a self addressed stamped envelope along with your check for the number of books requested to: Shrewsbury School Food Service, 64 Holden Street, Shrewsbury, MA. 01545. Tickets will be mailed back to you. Tickets are non-refundable.

High School Tickets may also be purchased by High School Students at the High School cafeteria registers during lunch and breakfast. Middle School Tickets may also be purchased by Middle School Students at the Middle School cafeteria registers during lunch and breakfast.

Reduced priced tickets are only available through the mail they are not sold at the registers.

Food Service Department Contacts

Please contact the Food Service Department with any questions, suggestions, or ideas. The Food Service Department is located at Shrewsbury High School, 64 Holden Street, Shrewsbury, MA 01545. The telephone number for the Food Service Director, Beth Nichols is 508-841-8819. Each school site has a manager also available to speak with you.

The numbers are as follows.

Beal	841-8874
Coolidge	841-8889
Floral St	841-8723
Paton	841-8635
Spring St	841-8708
Sherwood	841-8681
Oak	841-1217
High School	841-8848

Please visit our web page on the Shrewsbury Home Page website at: shrewsbury-ma.gov/schools for forms, menus and Food Service information.

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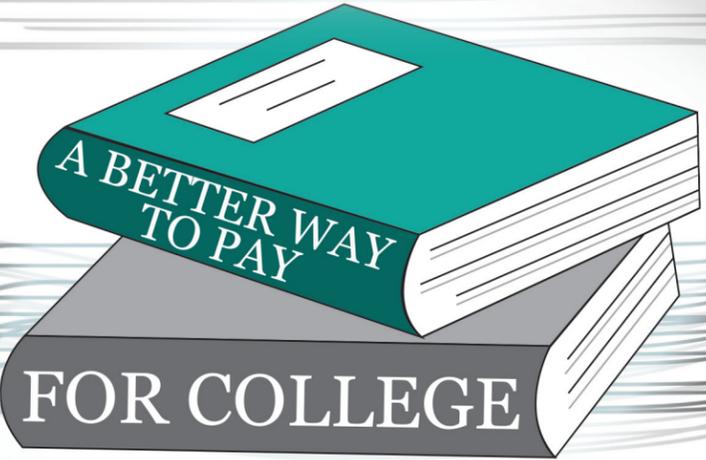
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at
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ext. 8

Looking to volunteer?

Contact Beth McCollum,
Coordinator of Volunteer Activities
at 508-841-8400 or
emccollum@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us
Please see the article on page 7.

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