

# Shrewsbury Public Schools

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## Special Education Budget Report FY 2015

### 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 **816** (October 1, 2013 enrollment report) students with disabilities both in the district and out of district. This represents **13.5%** of the district.

State Reporting based on October 1 enrollment			
	2011/2012 October 1	2012/2013 October 1	2013/2014 October 1
# of special education students	890	907	816
District % of students in special education	15.0	15.0	13.5
State % of students in special education	17.0	17.0	N/A

Based on current data there are **916 (15%)** students receiving special education services. This number includes students after October 1, 2013 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, and students who receive walk-in services.

This number also includes **60 students** who are currently referred for an evaluation or are in process of 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.

Referrals for Special Education Services					
2011-2012		2012-2013		* 2013-2014 current data	
#	Eligible	#	Eligible	#	Eligible
82	76	131	121	<b>100</b>	<b>40</b>

\*Referrals include any student referred by the school or parent to be evaluated in an area of suspected disability.

The referral numbers may also include students who are currently receiving special education services, but a new area of disability is being evaluated. This number represents the data up to 1/14/14. Of the 100 referrals thus far, 40 were eligible for special education services, a number of students will be found with no special needs, and the remaining are still in the evaluation process.

### **Process for a Referral for Special Education Evaluation**

#### **Referral:**

- Either a parent or staff member makes a referral.
- Consent to evaluate is sent to the parents.
- Parents have 30 days to respond to the consent.
- If they consent, the evaluation team has thirty days to complete the assigned evaluations.
- A meeting to review and consider the evaluation must be scheduled within 45 days of the consent date.

#### **Types of Evaluations:**

- Achievement – typically conducted by the Psychologist or special education teacher
- Psychological with personality testing
- Academic – Typically completed by a special education teacher
- Speech and Language
- Occupational therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Specialized evaluations (i.e. Orientation and Mobility, Vision, Augmentative Communication, etc.)

#### **Process to evaluate:**

- Typically one evaluation can average 10 to 12 hours to complete. This includes several sessions to administer the test(s), analyzing the data, and writing a comprehensive report.
- Because staff that are providing services or teaching complete these evaluations, they need to schedule time in their schedule to administer the tests and write the reports.
- The evaluator must attend the TEAM meeting to summarize the report and discuss recommendations as a result of the evaluation.
- A student can have anywhere from one to six evaluations being completed at the same time.

#### **Costs:**

- Time to complete evaluation and write report 10-12 hours
- Attendance at Team Meeting typically 2 hours
- Total time ranges from 12 to 14 hours = approximately \$784.00 (based on a per diem rate of \$56.00) per evaluator x # of evaluations
- As of 1/14/14 there have been 100 referrals for evaluation and this has cost approximately \$78,400 in staff time

Other than the costs related to the professional and support staff, the most costly aspects of the special education budget includes 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 had decreased significantly between 2010 and 2013. The legislation indicates a 75% reimbursement, subject to appropriation, for expenditures that exceed the foundation (see table below for foundation amounts per year). Fortunately, the reimbursement rate for 2013 was 70% and 75% for 2014. It is unclear as to what the state will reimburse the district in fiscal year 2015.

	Students Claimed	Claim Amount*	Foundation	Net Claim	Reimbursement
FY 2011	89	\$6,238,081	\$3,361,332	\$2,876,749	<b>40%</b> \$1,150,694
FY 2012	84	\$6,344,325	\$3,137,310	\$3,207,015	<b>65%</b> \$2,084,560
FY 2013	91	\$6,643,476	\$3,288,402	\$3,355,074	<b>74%</b> \$2,502,777
FY** 2014	91	\$7,267,058	\$3,666,336	\$3,600,722	<b>75%</b> <b>\$2,700,546</b>

\* Claim based on prior fiscal year census and qualifying costs. \*\*Current estimated reimbursement for FY13 costs.

**Out of District Placements:**

While the vast majority of students with special needs, 86% 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 and access to mental health supports and services. 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 2014-2015 school year have been projected to range from a high of \$393,000 which is for a residential program, to a low of \$31,200.00 for a Collaborative day placement. The state of Massachusetts Operational Service Division sets the tuition rates for these programs and, at times, will approve rate increases. Typically this increase can be between 3% and 4%. However, in addition to an increase in tuitions granted by the state, schools are able to apply for extraordinary relief or restructuring and request a tuition increase. One school was granted restructuring which increased the tuition by \$14,300.00 annually. Shrewsbury has three students attending this school with a total of \$43,000.00 increase to the budget. However, even with this increase, the school will be closing as of June 20, 2014 and three placements will need to be secured for these students. This will potentially have an impact on the budget, as these three students require unique services that had been provided at this school.

Currently, it is projected that there will be 80 students in out of district placements in the 2014-2015 school year. This includes 18 students who will participate in the Assabet Valley Collaborative Evolution program, 6 students who are currently attending the Assabet Valley Collaborative Alternative program, and 3 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 his/her 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.

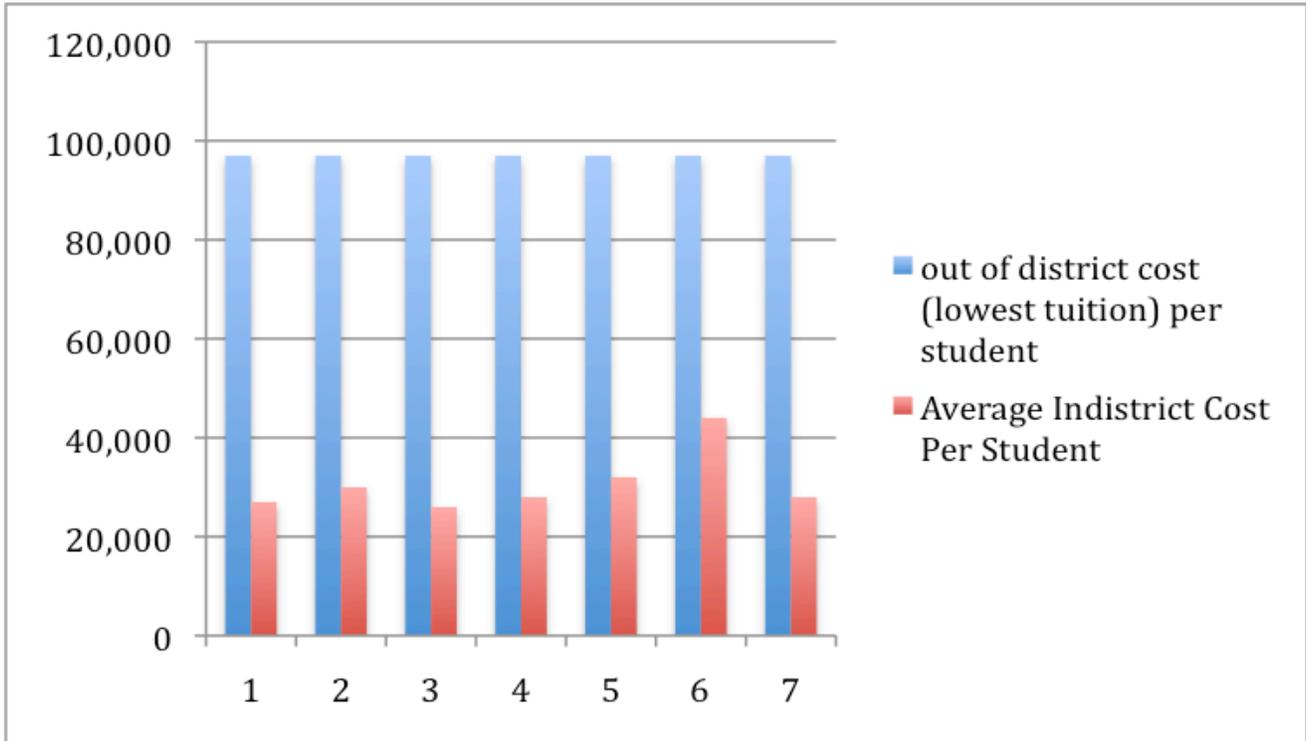
<b>Students Served Out Of District</b>				
<b>Out of District Placement</b>	<b># of Students 10-11</b>	<b># of Students 11-12</b>	<b># of Students 12-13</b>	<b># of Students 13-14</b>
<b>* Elementary</b>	14	5	2	7
<b>Middle School</b>	18	20	22	17
<b>Collaborative Middle School</b>	3	4	4	2
<b>High School</b>	27	25	27	24
<b>Collaborative High School</b>	6	3	4	4
<b>Post Graduate High School</b>	8	5	1	8
<b>Transition Program</b>	4	8	19	18
<b>Total</b>	80	70	79	80

\* 3 students were placed for significant mental health issues and 1 for complex medical issues and 1 for challenging behaviors at the elementary level.

<b>Net Appropriation</b>			
	<b>FY14 Budget</b>	<b>FY15 Budget</b>	<b>Change in FY15</b>
Out-of-district Tuition	\$7,231,896	\$6,771,485	(\$460,411) Decreased tuition
Offset: Circuit Breaker Reimbursement	(\$2,370,689)	(\$2,700,546)	(\$329,857) More reimbursement
Offset: Assabet Valley Collaborative Tuition Discount	(\$40,000)	(\$45,000)	(\$5,000) Increased offset
<b>Net Appropriation</b>	\$4,821,207	\$4,025,939	<b>(\$795,268)</b> <b>Net decrease for projected tuition in FY15</b>

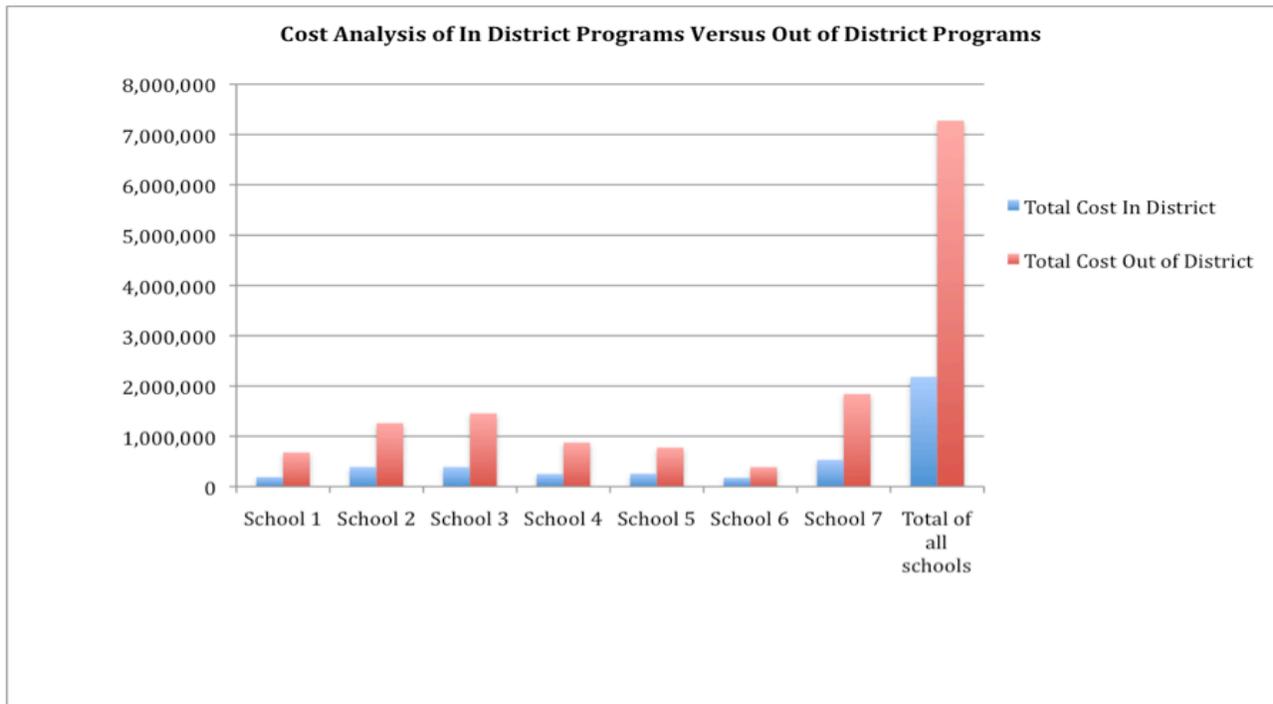
**Cost Analysis comparing students in an ELC (Elementary Learning Center) Program versus out of district**

**Graph 1:** For each school that supports an ELC program, an average tuition was calculated by taking the higher end salary for a special education teacher (\$70,000) and the total number of ABA Technicians working in the program (average salary 27,000) and dividing it by the total number of students in that program. The Lowest out of district tuition (\$92,000) was used as the base for this analysis. This is the lowest tuition currently for programs that can support students with severe special needs including students on the Autism Spectrum who require significant support.



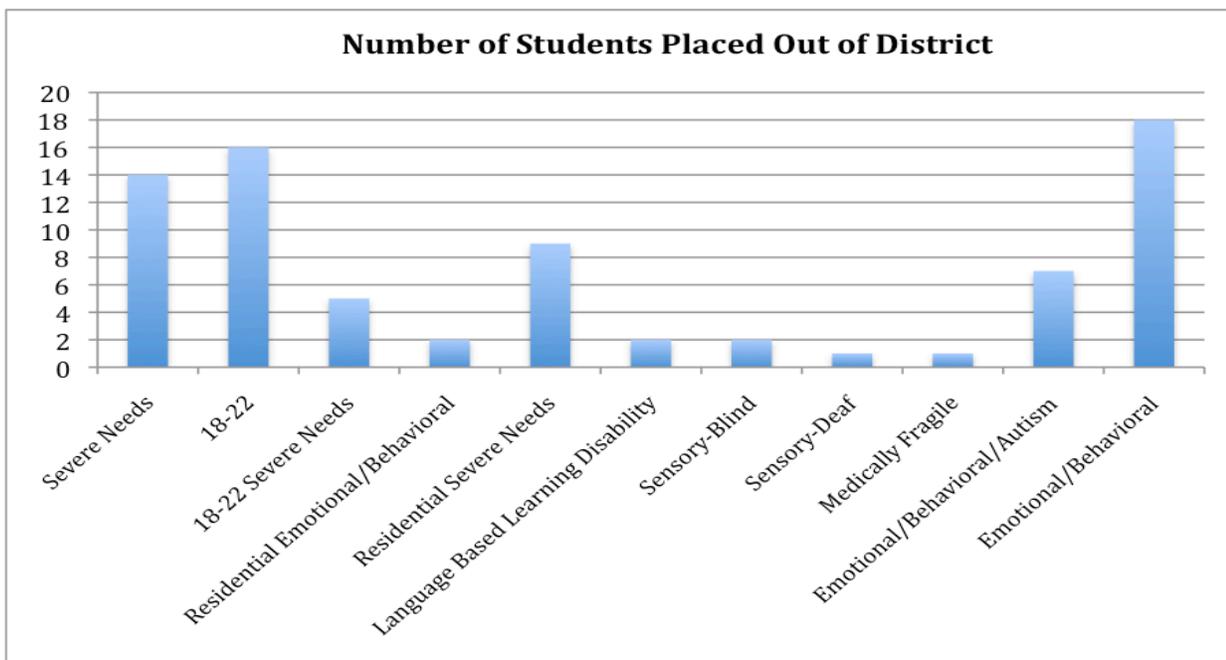
\* X-axis represents the 7 schools that support ELC programs, not including Parker Road Preschool

**Graph 2:** Based on the tuition that was calculated for in district programs and the lowest out of district tuition, this graph represents the total cost for the in district program (based on the total number of students in the program) and the total cost for an out of district programs (based on the total number of student that would be sent out) for each school.

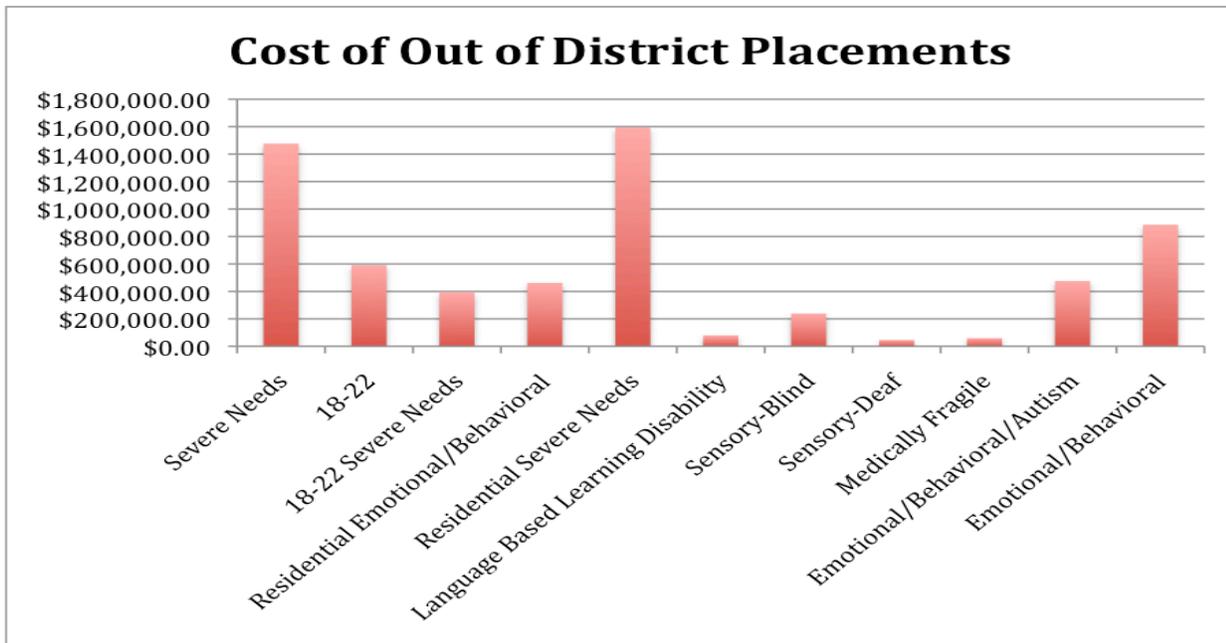


\* X-axis represents schools that support ELC programs with the exception of Parker Road Preschool  
 \*\* X-axis #8 represents the total cost for all students should they be placed in an out of district program  
 \*\*\* This cost does not take into consideration transporting students to out of district placements

**Graph 3:** This graph represents the number of students currently placed in an out of district program as of November 1, 2013. Predominantly students who are placed in an out of district program fall into three categories: Severe special needs (including residential programs), 18-22 programming, and Emotional/Behavioral/Autism Spectrum



**Graph 4:** This graph represents the total cost for students in each of these categories. This cost does not include the cost to transport students to the out of district placement.



**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 cost for FY15 will increase by 2%.

	FY14 Budget	FY15 Budget	Difference
<b>Out-of-district Transportation</b>	<b>\$1,062,126</b>	<b>\$0*</b>	<b>\$1,062,126</b>

\*In FY15 we have shifted the Special Education Transportation Costs to the Federal Special Education Grant, so it no longer is funded by the appropriated budget. Shifting salary costs back from the grant to the appropriated budget will save approximately \$100,000 of grant allocations to the Mass. Teachers’ Retirement System.

**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 or in the spring when enough data have been collected to make this determination.

There is a full day program and a half-day program that operates for a four week and six week session.

The program must be fully staffed with teachers, related service providers, ABA technicians and aides and transportation must be provided for students in order to ensure we are meeting each students Individual Education Program.

	FY14 Budget	FY15 Budget	Difference
<b>Extended Year Services</b>	<b>\$374,117</b>	<b>\$379,677</b>	<b>\$5,560</b>

**Contracted Services:**

There are a variety of mandated special education services for which we must hire outside contractors and who have specialized licenses. Many of these involve low incidence disabilities. We currently contract specialists in the following areas: Physical Therapy, Music Therapy, Psychiatry, Orientation and Mobility, Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Vision Specialists, Teacher of the Deaf, Wilson Reading Specialists, home based services, Teacher of Deaf Blind, and Audiological services. Based on shifts in these various services, it is anticipated that there will not need to be an increase in the budget.

	FY14 Budget	FY15 Budget	Difference
<b>Contracted Services</b>	<b>\$446,954</b>	<b>\$ 446,954</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**Additional Expenses Related to Special Education:**

	<u>FY 14</u>	<u>FY15</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Legal fees	\$40,000	\$45,000	\$5000
Translator/Interpreter	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$0
Home/hospital tutoring	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$10,000
Testing supplies	\$20,000	\$30,000	\$10,000
Instructional materials	\$0	\$0	\$0 use federal grant
Evaluations	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$2,000

**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 physician’s statement requesting home/hospital tutoring, the school department must provide tutorial services for the child.

**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. We have several tests that will have new editions that we will need to replace. We typically schedule a two-year replacement plan.

**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 15. Equipment that is outdated and no longer operational will be requested through the technology budget.

## **Programs continued and implemented in 2013-2014 that mitigated costs to the district:**

**Elementary Learning Centers (ELC):** 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. Beal opened an ELC program for the 2013/14 school year as there were too many students to be supported in the Kindergartens at Spring Street school. Spring Street, Floral Street, Sherwood, Oak and the high school all support ELC/Lifeskills programs. 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 challenges and this continues to rise. In order to minimize out of district evaluations and placement, a child and adolescent psychiatrist was hired to consult across the district 10 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. Additionally, the psychiatrist and the clinical coordinator have been able to offer a course to families (Family Strategies) twice yearly through a grant.

**Partnership with UMass Adolescent Psychiatry Fellows:**

Shrewsbury is in its’ third year partnership with UMass Fellows from the adolescent psychiatry unit. There are typically two to three Fellows that conduct weekly rounds at the different schools across the district. They provide consultation and feedback based on observations they have made. The districts’ consulting psychiatrist supervises the Fellows and they work closely with her and the clinical coordinator.

**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 that 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.

**Comparison of SPS to Area Districts Based on FY 12:**

It is critical to understand the percentage of the total budget related to net school spending, as it would appear that Shrewsbury is spending a higher percentage than 67% of districts within the Collaborative and 72% of similar districts identified by the state. The percentage of special education spending is proportional to the size of the overall budget. This is because the in-district budget is much smaller than other districts (bottom 6% for in-district spending in the state). This creates the perception that the special education spending is higher, when it is actually higher in proportion to the overall budget. The source of the following two charts was the DESE website: <http://finance1.doe.mass.edu/statistics/>

Town	Collaborative Spending	Private School Spending	Total SPED Expenses	Net School Spending	% Of Total Budget 2011	% of Total Budget 2012
Marlboro	1,005,607	5,371,449	17,638,243	62,139,914	26.7	<b>28.4</b>
Southborough	262,899	1,955,710	5,321,387	20,174,904	26.7	26.4
Hudson	921,588	1,792,312	9,169,988	35,184,770	23.3	<b>26.1</b>
Berlin-Boylston	201,623	714,137	1,499,967	6,230,147	25.0	24.6
<b>Shrewsbury</b>	<b>612,185</b>	<b>5,273,326</b>	<b>14,686,635</b>	<b>59,630,392</b>	<b>24.6</b>	<b>24.6</b>
Westborough	478,754	3,124,609	10,969,010	46,532,445	20.7	<b>23.6</b>
Maynard	207,186	735,189	3,558,402	16,071,606	17.0	<b>22.1</b>
Northborough	321,327	1,190,941	4,824,534	22,692,465	21.1	<b>21.3</b>
Berlin	37,204	0	632,702	3,247,489	22.5	19.5
Nashoba	582,426	919,527	5,977,746	38,514,943	14.0	<b>15.5</b>
Boylston	36,488	6,152	643,650	4,468,978	18.0	14.4
<b>Statewide</b>	253,636,103	458,730,536	2,203,586,017	10,717,777,301	19.8	20.6

It is important to note that 66% of the districts had an increase of the percentage of their total budget for special education (statistics in bold above). The state also increased the percentage of the special education expenditures. Shrewsbury maintained the same percentage of its total expenditure in relationship to the total budget.

**Comparison of SPS to Similar Towns Based on FY 12:**

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

<b>Town</b>	<b>% of Total Budget 2011</b>	<b>% of Total Budget 2012</b>
Braintree	27.4	26.7
Franklin	24.9	<b>25.8</b>
<b>Shrewsbury</b>	<b>24.6</b>	<b>24.6</b>
Chelmsford	21.3	<b>23.3</b>
Peabody	21.8	<b>22.5</b>
Mansfield	21.3	22.1
Bridgewater/Raynham	19.8	<b>21.4</b>
Billerica	20.6	<b>21.4</b>
Cambridge	20.0	<b>20.2</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	19.8	<b>20.6</b>
Waltham	17.1	<b>18.2</b>
Barnstable	15.6	<b>18.1</b>

It is important to note that 75% of similar districts to Shrewsbury had an increase of the percentage of their total budget for special education (statistics in bold).

**Requests for 2015 fiscal year:** The special education department has operated on a very lean department structure. There have been minimal increases to the personnel or administrative structure in many years. In order to effectively address the multitude of demands (i.e., increase in mental health challenges, increase in the intensity of services required to meet FAPE, reporting, modification to curriculum, etc.) and state mandates (i.e., supervision and evaluation, reporting, MCAS Alternative Assessments, anticipation of PARCC Assessment, etc), it is critical that the department have the personnel to operate a district this size as well as provide the required services for students to access and be successful in their educational programs.

The following represents what is required to move the special education department and programs forward and build capacity to realize long-term savings by creating more opportunities for in-district programming.

**Special Education: In-District Program Development and Support**

The department has remained static related to the ability to oversee the level of services, manage the intensity of services, and the ability to build capacity to ensure all mandates are addressed. In order to sufficiently manage the level and quality of services, the following positions are required to continue operating, meet the legal mandates, and increase the capacity for staff to effectively teach and provide services to our students with disabilities.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Function</b>
Director of Special Education In-District Programming	<p>Supervise intensive Special Needs Programs including support staff (i.e., ELC and Intensive ELC programs for students with autism/intensive needs)</p> <p>Research best practices, curriculum development and professional development activities</p> <p>Research and develop programs to support students within the district to decrease out of district as well as transition students back to the district</p> <p>Manage and oversee general operations (i.e., transportation, Medicaid, summer programs, etc.)</p>
Elementary Special Education Coordinator	<p>Supervise and evaluate special education teachers at the elementary level</p> <p>Provide curriculum and instruction support and oversight</p> <p>Provide professional development</p> <p>Supervise and coordinate summer programming</p> <p>Support teams with complex cases</p>
Middle Level Special Education Coordinator	<p>Supervise and evaluate special education teachers at both middle schools</p> <p>Provide curriculum and instruction support and oversight</p> <p>Provide professional development</p> <p>Supervise and coordinate summer programming</p> <p>Support teams with complex cases</p>
High School Assistant Coordinator/Transition Specialist	<p>Assist with supervision and evaluation</p> <p>Facilitate IEP meetings</p> <p>Provide instructional support to regular and special education teachers</p> <p>Coordinate all activities associates with transitioning from the high school</p>

**Special Education and Support Personnel to Address Class Size and Caseloads**

Due to the increase in needs, class sizes, and extraordinary supports needed for our students the following teaching and related service providers will be needed in order to meet our legal obligation of providing a free and appropriate public education to students receiving special education services.

<b>School</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Function</b>
Parker Road Preschool	.5 Team Chair	Currently the Principal services as the Team Chair for a majority of students entering Parker Road Preschool. This position would allow the Principal to perform the critical functions of the building leader role.
Spring	.5 Special Education Teacher	There is no more capacity to service students at Spring Street
Paton	1.0 Special Education Teacher  1.0 ELC Coordinator	To support the increase number of students at and entering Paton  Currently there are too many students in the Floral Street and Spring Street ELC programs. A new ELC is required to meet the needs of these students.
Floral Street	5 additional hours of a COTA	Current staffing cannot meet the IEP services outlined in IEP's
Coolidge	.5 Special Education Teacher	To meet increased student needs
Sherwood	2.0 Special Education Teachers  2.0 Aides	To support the increased number of students and needs and to support additional teams to address class size  Support the students on team in conjunction with the special education teachers
Oak	2.0 Special Education Teachers  1.0 Special Education Math Teacher  2.0 Aides	To support the increased number of students and needs and to support additional teams to address class size  To support students who are not currently meeting the curriculum standards and who have not passed MCAS.  Support the students on team in conjunction with the special education teachers.

<b>School</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Function</b>
High School	1.0 Special Education Teacher	This position will provide academic support and instruction to struggling students to avoid additional special education services, support students who have missed a substantial amount of school due to medical and mental illness.
	1.0 Aide	This position will support students in the academic support program
District	1.0 SLP	Support increased caseloads and evaluations
District	1.0 Technology Assistant	Support schools regarding updating technology, maintaining technology, downloading educational software and applications, general problem solving
District	5.0 Paraprofessionals	Support increased needs, students who move-in, and transition students who require additional support.

**Special Education Resources to Address Mental and Behavioral Health**

There has been a significant increase in the type and level of support needed for students faced with behavioral and mental health challenges. When students are not mentally or behaviorally healthy, they are not ready for learning nor can they access their educational program. Students are faced with varying degrees of trauma and mental illnesses that require interventions. Additionally, the faculty requires support, consultation and training to support these students.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Function</b>
1.0 Clinical Coordinator	There is currently one coordinator for nine schools. This position would allow for a more effective distribution of supports and services across the district.
1.0 Team Chair	Both Paton and Coolidge are the only two schools that have a School Psychologist that also serves as the Team Chair. In order to address the mental health issues, full time psychologists are required in the schools. A full time Team Chair for both Paton and Coolidge would allow the psychologists to be full time.
0.4 School Psychologist	Spring Street and Beal currently have 0.8 school psychologists. This has been problematic for both schools on the day the psychologists are not available to address behavioral and mental health issues. This would put both psychologists at 1.0.
2.0 Adjustment Counselor	These positions would support Sherwood and Oak Middle Schools.
90 contact hours Licensed Social Worker	Contracted from the Assabet Valley Collaborative to support the schools across the district to address specific family issues affecting students and their ability to successfully access their educational program.

## Special Education Services Operations

<b>Area of Need</b>	<b>Associated costs and Reason</b>
Out of District	There are no additional costs associated with out of district placements as there is a decrease of \$465,410 in the actual tuitions budgeted due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students graduating</li><li>• Students moving out of the district</li><li>• Shifts in placements for students</li></ul>
Tutoring	\$10,000 in Pupil Personnel due to new legal mandates  \$10,000 in Special Education due to new legal mandates
Contracted Services	No additional contracted dollars required

### Conclusion:

Shrewsbury Public Schools has made a strong commitment to the education of children with disabilities. An exceptional staff that is highly qualified and has extensive expertise and cares deeply about students provides the special education services. Most of these children are being educated in programs within the district 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.

With increases in class size, demands to evaluate students to determine special education need, the intensity of services to support students, mental health challenges, and federal and state demands; there is very little capacity to continue providing services to students while meeting the competing demands and mandates. The special education department has maintained quality services to students with special needs, but at the expense of not being able to thoughtfully support staff, program development, and the overall methodology of quality service delivery.

The requests made in this budget are a result of years of pent up demand to provide services with reasonable caseloads, programmatic oversight, adequate supervision and evaluation, and capacity for in-district program development. Additionally, this level of investment is required to ensure that we are effective in our service delivery while maintaining the highest degree of fiscal responsibility.