

Shrewsbury Public Schools

Office of Special Education
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Annual Special Education Budget Report: January 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 **829** (October 1, 2014 enrollment report) students with disabilities both in the district and out of the district.

State Reporting based on October 1 enrollment				
	2011/2012 October 1	2012/2013 October 1	2013/2014 October 1	2014/2015 October 1
# of special education students	862	884	814	829
District % of students in special education*	14.3	14.5	13.4	13.6
State % of students in special education	17.0	17.0	17.0	17.1

* This percentage is given by the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education based on the enrollment data provided for October 1, 2014.

Based on current data, there are **891** students who are considered to be receiving special education services. This number includes students after October 1, 2014 who have moved in to the district or moved out of the district, eligible students who have since turned three years old, and those who have been evaluated and found eligible. This number also includes 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 until such time; some number will not qualify.

Referrals for Special Education Services							
2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014		2014-2015	
#	Eligible	#	Eligible	#	Eligible	#	Eligible
82	76 (93%)	131	121 (92%)	211	120 (57%)	161	---

*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. It is important to note that the actual number of students found eligible last year was almost exactly the same as the previous year, but the number of referrals increased by 61%. We believe this is due to the class size and resource crisis we experienced, where students were more likely to demonstrate difficulties without the time and attention they would have received under typical circumstances, and where families were more likely to seek special education as a remedy. We believe that the high number of referrals to date this current year is still a byproduct of the district's inability to bring adequate instructional resources to bear until this year, resulting in a number students not meeting expected academic benchmarks and who are now being referred to determine eligibility for special education services. We believe that this trend will reverse itself over time now that the class size problem has been resolved, with the understanding that the impact of multiple years of resource limitations cannot be resolved immediately.

Measures of Special Education Performance: Massachusetts State Performance Plan (MA SPP):

Developed in accordance with 20 U.S.C. 1416(b)(1), the MA SPP responds directly to the 20 indicators identified by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), and includes baseline data, targets, and improvement activities for each indicator.

Indicator 1 - Graduation Rate

The state target and district and state rates for Indicator 1 are the most current data available. Data reported in the State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report reflect a one year data lag in reporting.

For the **2012-13** school year, the state target for the Graduation Rate for Students with IEPs is 80%.

Reported	Cohort 2013 Graduates	# of Students in 2013 Cohort	District Rate	State Rate	State Target
Special Education	55	73	75.3%	67.8%	80%
General Education	346	359	96.4%	89.3%	
All Students	401	432	92.8%	85.0%	

Indicator 2 - Dropout Rate

The state target and district and state rates for Indicator 2 are the most current data available. Data reported in the State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report reflect a one year data lag in reporting.

For the **2012-13** school year, the state target for the Dropout Rate for Students with IEPs is 4.3%.

Reported	Dropouts	Students Enrolled in Grades 9-12	District Rate	State Rate	State Target
Special Education	3	212	1.4%	2.9%	4.3%
General Education	10	1446	0.7 %	2.0%	
All Students	13	1658	92.8%	2.2%	

Indicator 3 - Participation and Performance of Students with IEPs on Statewide Assessments (MCAS)

2013 MCAS Results for Students With Disabilities by Grade and Subject

Composite Performance Index (CPI): A 100-point index that combines the scores of students who take standard MCAS tests (the Proficiency Index) with the scores of those who take the MCAS-Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt) (the MCAS-Alt Index) and is a measure of the extent to which students are progressing toward proficiency in ELA and mathematics, respectively.

Grade Level and Subject	Shrewsbury CPI	State CPI
Grade 3 Reading	77.7	63.4
Grade 3 Mathematics	80.4	64.4
Grade 4 English Language Arts	73.2	55.5
Grade 4 Mathematics	70.2	61.0
Grade 5 English Language Arts	75.3	62.3
Grade 5 Mathematics	69.2	57.3
Grade 5 Science and Tech/Eng	67.9	60.4
Grade 6 English Language Arts	80.9	63.1
Grade 6 Mathematics	75.0	54.9
Grade 7 English Language Arts	83.5	68.3
Grade 7 Math	58.3	48.0
Grade 8 English Language Arts	79.3	69.9
Grade 8 Mathematics	62.9	48.8
Grade 8 Science and Tech/Eng	59.3	50.1
Grade 10 English Language Arts	96.3	88.4
Grade 10 Mathematics	87.7	70.0
Grade 10 Science and Tech/Eng	80.3	70.3

* Current data available on the DESE website

Indicator 4 - Suspension/Expulsion for Students with IEPs

The federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires a one year data lag in reporting on Indicator 4. For example, the information used to calculate Indicator 4 in the report submitted to OSEP in the February 2014 state report is data collected by districts during the 2009-2010, 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years. Therefore, the Indicator 4 summary here reflects this lag in data reporting.

In all years, the state target for Suspension/Expulsion is 0%.

Reported	Special Education			
	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
# of Students	995	906	888	862
# of Students Suspended for Greater than 10 Days	4	1	1	0
District Rate	0.4%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
State Rate	1.2%	1.3%	1.2%	1.1%
State Target	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Indicator 5 - Educational Environments for Students Aged 6 - 21 with IEPs

For **2012-13**, the state target for the % of Students with IEPs served in Full Inclusion is 59.7%, the target for % of Students with IEPs served in Substantially Separate placements is 14.5%, and the target for % of Students with IEPs served in Separate Schools, Residential Facilities, or Homebound/Hospital placements is 5.5%.

	Enrollment	District Rate	State Rate	State Target
Enrolled Students with IEPs	799			
Full Inclusion (inside general education classroom 80% or more)	599	75.5%	59.2%	59.7%
Partial Inclusion (inside the general education classroom 40%-79% of the day)	88	11.0%	18.8%	--
Substantially Separate (inside the general education classroom less than 40% of the day)	57	7.1%	15.0%	14.5%
Separate Schools, Residential Facilities, or Homebound/Hospital placements (does not include parentally-placed private school students with disabilities)	55	6.9%	6.9%	5.5%

Indicator 6 - Educational Environments for Students Aged 3 - 5 with IEPs

In **2012-13**, the state target for the percent of students receiving a majority of their special education and related services in an inclusive early childhood program is 24%. The state target for the percentage of students attending a separate special education class, separate school, or residential facility is 13.9%. Included in the table below is additional information about students receiving special education services outside of the inclusive early childhood program that they attend and students that receive services either at home or at a service provider location.

	Enrollment	District Rate	State Rate	State Target
Students Age 3-5 with IEPs	87	9.7%		
Full Inclusion (Students in an inclusive early childhood program and receiving >50% of their special education and related services in that setting) (Indicator 6A)	32	36.8%	38.9%	24.0%
Partial Inclusion (Students in an inclusive early childhood program and receiving their special education and related services in that setting 0-50% of the time)	44	50.6%	37.2%	--
Substantially Separate (Students attending a separate special education class, separate school, or residential facility) (Indicator 6B)	4	4.6%	15.1%	13.9%
Students not attending an early childhood program and receiving special education and related services either in the home, at a service provider location, or some other location	7	8.0%	8.9%	--

State Financial Support for Special Education: Circuit Breaker

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. Although the legislature indicated that this year's state budget would fully fund Circuit Beaker at 75%, the initial payments for FY15 reimbursement have been just under 72%, and because of the current state budget deficit it is unclear whether this rate will continue or whether the full 75% will eventually be paid; this will probably not be known until the very end of the current fiscal year. The district budgeted for a 72% rate, as our budget was set prior to the state budget, which puts the current rate of reimbursement on target.

	Students Claimed	Claim Amount*	Foundation	Net Claim	Reimbursement
FY 2011	89	\$6,238,081	\$3,361,332	\$2,876,749	44% \$1,256,118
FY 2012	84	\$6,344,325	\$3,137,310	\$3,207,015	71% \$2,281,866
FY 2013	91	\$6,643,476	\$3,288,402	\$3,355,074	74% \$2,502,777
FY 2014	91	\$7,267,058	\$3,666,336	\$3,600,726	75% \$2,700,546
FY 2015	100	\$8,186,970	\$4,120,096	\$4,066,874	72% \$2,928,144

* The claim is based on prior fiscal year census and qualifying costs

Out of District Placements:

While the vast majority of students with special needs are educated within Shrewsbury schools, there are a small percentage of students who need specialized programs including very small classes and a low teacher to student ratio and access to mental health supports and services. These students are educated out of district in specialized public day programs, 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. These students may also have complex behavioral and/or medical needs that require consistent level of supervision to maintain appropriate health.

The cost of out of district programs varies greatly. Tuition for private placements for the 2014-2015 school year range from a high of \$393,000 for a residential program, to a low of \$24,000 for a specialized public day program. 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 a restructuring increase of tuition by \$16,286 annually. Shrewsbury has two students attending this school, so the increase resulted in a total of \$32,572 increase to the budget, well beyond what was budgeted. A collaborative that supports students who are medically compromised had a 28% increase to their annual budget resulting in an additional \$16,984. Collaboratives are capable of setting their own tuition fees that are approved by their Board of Directors that does not fall under the Massachusetts Operational Service Division.

Shrewsbury had additional unforeseen increases as well as decreases in out of district tuitions that affect the 2015 fiscal year budget. These changes are highlighted in the table below.

Fiscal Year 2015: Actuals vs. Projections to Date	Net Tuition Increase vs. Projections	Net Tuition Decrease vs. Projections	Net Difference
Total Non-Public (includes Summer)	\$1,294,633	(\$1,010,746)	\$283,887
Total Collaborative	\$194,549	(\$235,344)	(\$40,795)
Total Out of State	\$32,571	(\$8,648)	\$23,923
Total Public	\$45,597	(\$30,385)	\$15,212
Decrease AVC Tuition and Fee	\$0	(\$50,000)	
Net difference	\$1,567,350	(\$1,335,123)	\$232,227

*We anticipate that full funding of Circuit Breaker in FY14, which had been projected at 65%, as well as savings from other categories of the budget, will enable the district to absorb this difference.

Reasons for Increases beyond Projection	Reasons for Decreases beyond Projection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some out of district schools were granted tuition increases larger than anticipated. • Some changes in student programming to meet needs, requiring more services at greater expense. • Four students in out of district placements whose families moved in to town after budget was set and whose cost was required to be assumed immediately due to being in public programs or because the student moved from out of state: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$74,617 \$54,526 \$96,976 \$316,546 • Student who remained in placement longer than anticipated: \$50,397 • Two students whose programs changed from day to residential placements: \$261,861 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some out of district schools had tuition increases lower than anticipated. • Some changes in student programming to meet needs, requiring fewer or different services at less expense, including two students returning to the district. • Another district now pays 50% of the cost of tuition for a student in a residential placement due to one parent now living in that community: \$145,638 • Two students who were projected to move to outside placements remained in the district. • Five students in out of district placements moved out of the district. • One student graduated from an out of district placement earlier than expected. • The district has not utilized all of its available slots in the alternative school placement through our collaborative.

Fiscal Year 2016 Out of District Projections:

Currently, it is projected that there will be 69 students in out of district placements in the 2015-2016 school year. Due to increased use of Circuit Breaker reimbursement funds expected to be available, the net appropriation from the School Department budget is expected to decrease by \$149,281.

Out of District Placement	# of Students 10-11	# of Students 11-12	# of Students 12-13	# of Students 13-14	# of Students 14-15	Projected# of Students 15-16
Elementary	14	5	2	7	7	3
Middle School	18	20	22	17	17	10
Collaborative Middle School	3	4	4	2	1	1
High School	27	25	27	24	22	28
Collaborative High School/public	6	3	4	4	5*	4
Post Graduate High School/Collaborative	8	5	1	8	9	13
Transition Program	4	8	19	18	19	10
Total	80	70	79	80	80	69

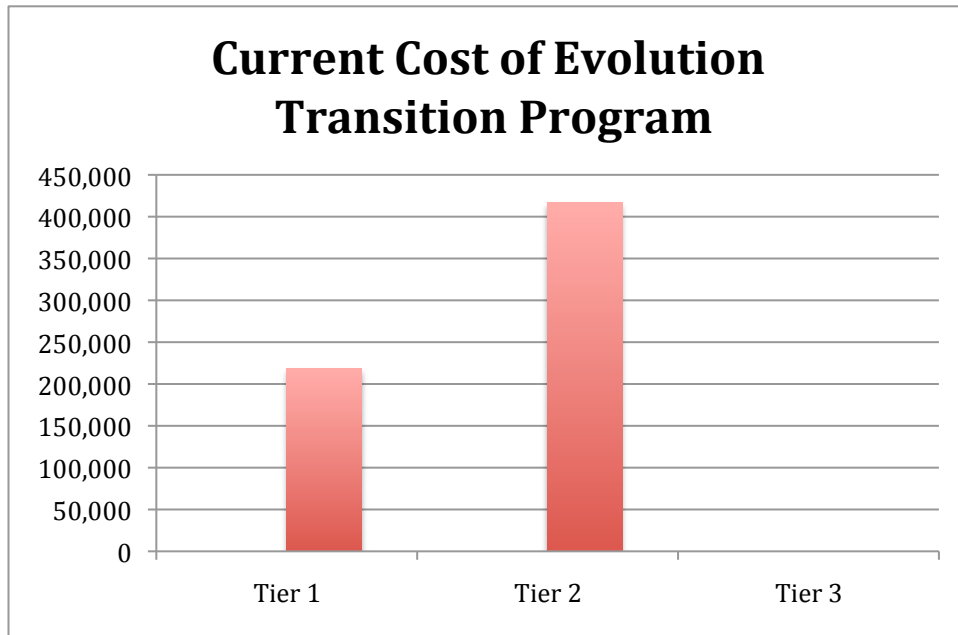
* Two students listed under Collaborative are attending a specialized public day program.

Projected Net Appropriation for Out of District Costs			
	FY15 Budgeted	FY16 Budgeted	Change in FY16
Projected Out-of-District Tuition	\$6,726,487	7,159,244	\$432,757
Offset: Circuit Breaker Reimbursement Funds	(\$3,065,836)	(\$3,647,874)	(\$582,038)
Net Appropriation for Out-of-District Tuition	\$3,660,651	\$3,511,370	(\$149,281) Net decrease for projected OOD tuition in FY16

Out of District Tuition Factors:

The Evolution (Transition) Program, part of the Assabet Valley Collaborative and located at Shrewsbury High School under a joint agreement between AVC and the district, specializes in students with special needs who are eligible for services to age 22. Within this program there are three tiers of specialized instruction contingent on student needs. All instruction has the main focus of functional academics, vocational and transitional support. Through a transitional intake process, students are assessed as to what level of instruction they require, and are assigned a specific Tier of instruction I, II, or III. Each tier has an increase of restrictive placement and an accelerated cost.

The chart below highlights the number of students Shrewsbury has within the Evolution Program, at what tier, and at what level of cost. Currently, Shrewsbury has 7 students in Tier I, 9 students in Tier II, and 0 students in Tier III.



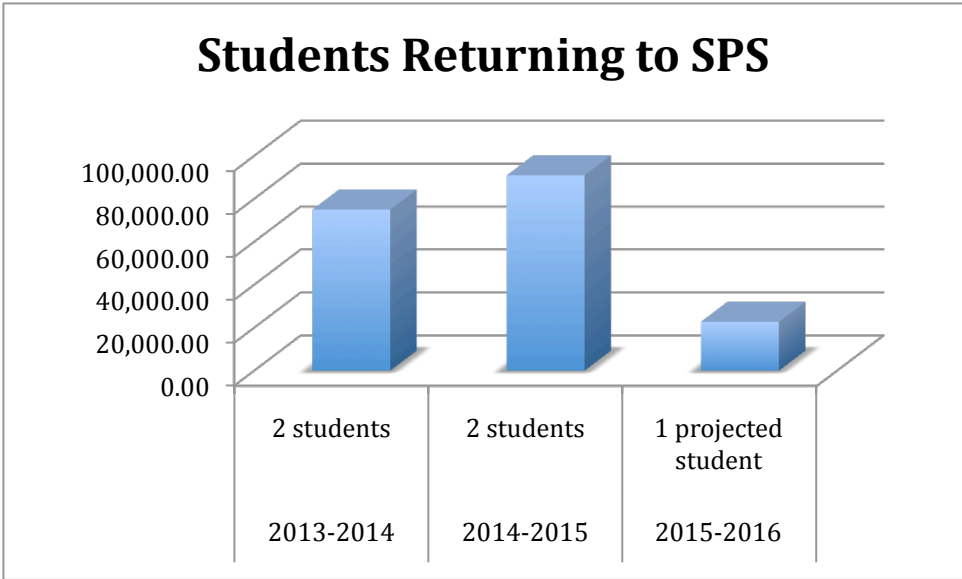
This does not include two students who attend a different Collaborative for their transitional services.

The projections for out of district placement does not account for 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. However, the budget does have provisions for potential placements at the AVC middle/high school alternative programs.

This also does not include students who are referred for a 45-day evaluation at the AVC 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.

Assabet Valley Collaborative Middle and High School is primarily designed for students in grades 6-12 with social and emotional disabilities. Primary services include special education instruction, clinical groups, individual clinical services, and communication supports. Over the course of this fiscal year, 2 students were able to exit this level of restrictive programming and transition back to the public school setting. It is projected for 2015-2016, for an additional student to transition back to the public school setting. These students have demonstrated sufficient skill acquisition and have met safety standards as outlined in transition plans by IEP Team.

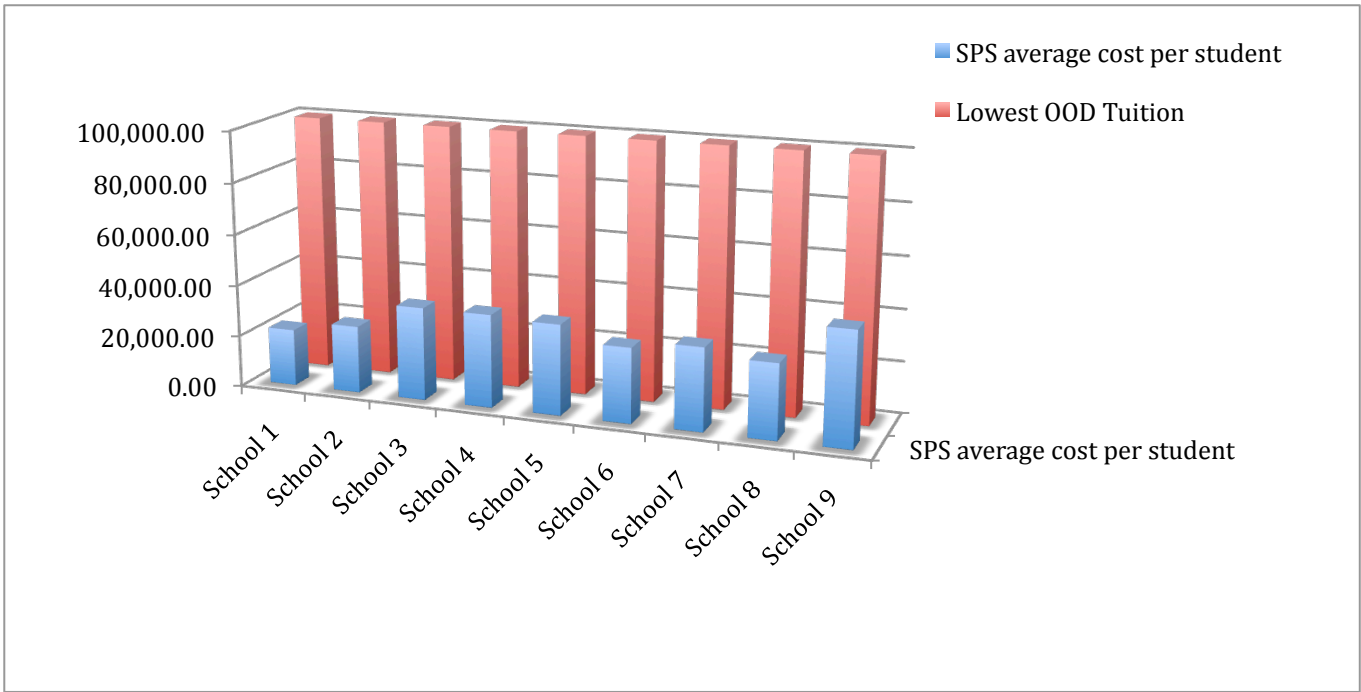
Two students were able to return to Shrewsbury High School this past year, which resulted in approximately \$100,000 difference in the budget.



Savings Realized Through In District Programming:

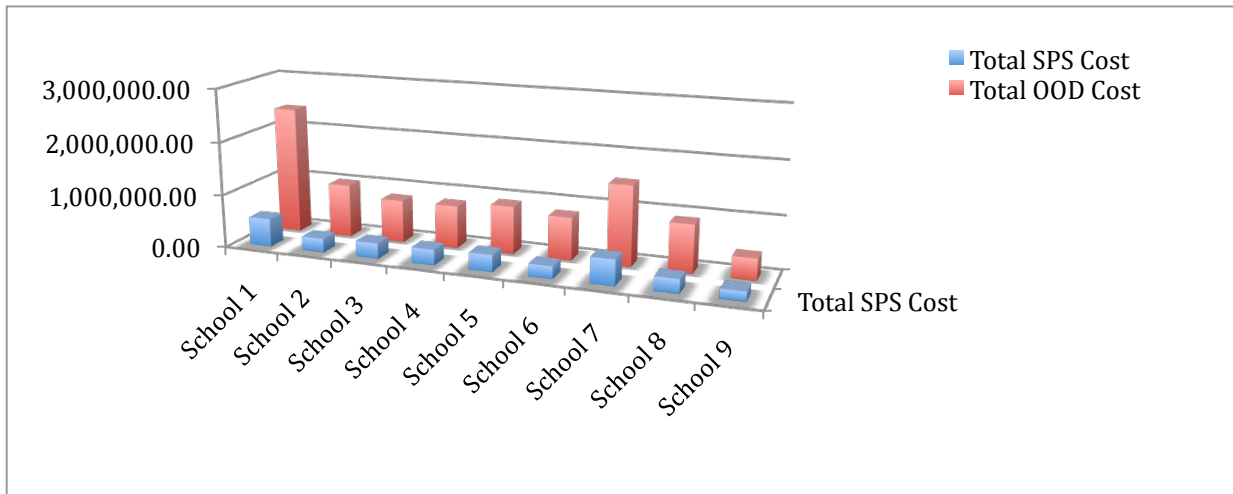
Cost Analysis comparing students in an ELC (Elementary Learning Center) Program versus out of district

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 (\$100,000) 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 9 schools that support ELC programs, 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 students that would be sent out) for each school.



* X-axis represents schools that support ELC programs including Parker Road Preschool

** This cost does not take into consideration transporting students to out of district placements

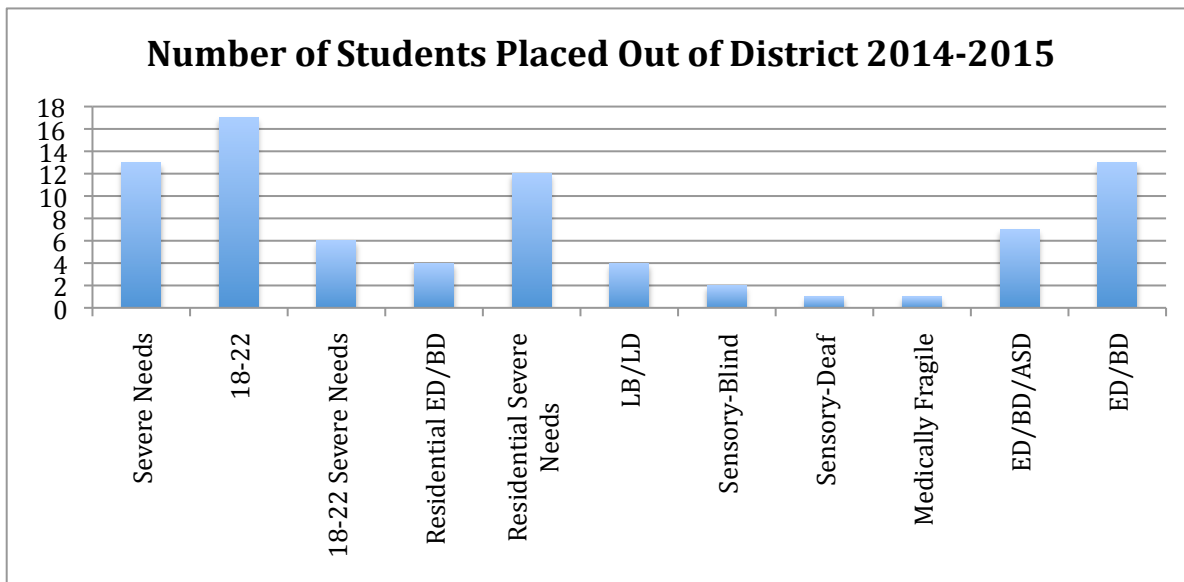
Estimated Cost Savings for ELC Programs Versus Out of District

A) Total Tuition Cost if Students Out of District (based on lowest tuition of \$100,000 each)	\$9,500,000
B) Net Tuition Cost After Applying Eligible Circuit Breaker Reimbursement for Tuitions	\$5,590,500
C) Total In District Cost (based on above estimate)	\$2,652,000
Annual Savings (B – C)	\$2,938,500

The table above illustrates that if all of the students served by ELC programs within the district were tuitioned out, this would cost the district over \$2.9 million in additional funds, not counting transportation to out of district schools, which would require hundreds of thousands more in funding beyond tuition.

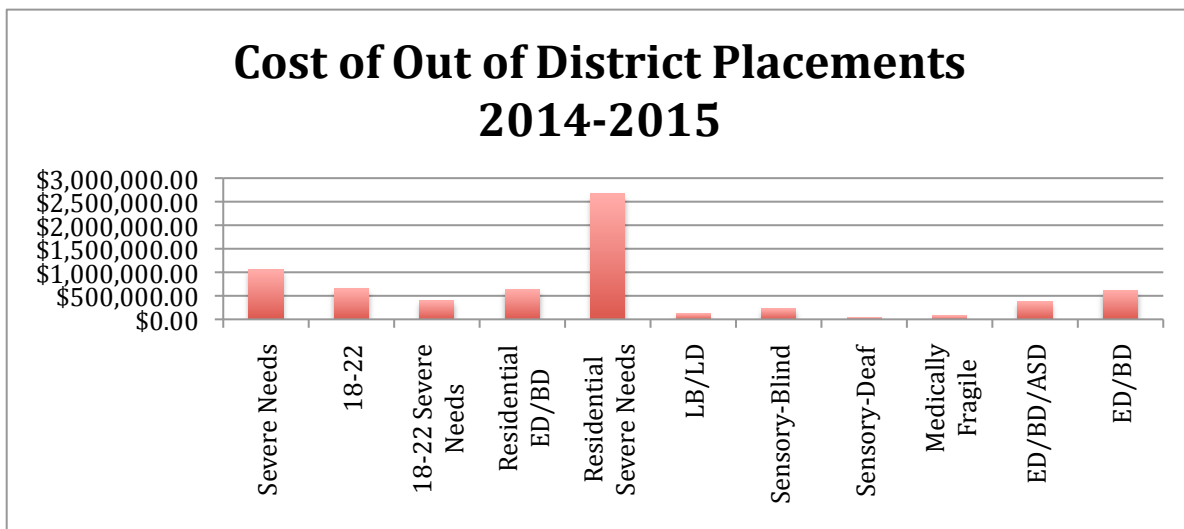
Profile of Students in Out of District Placements

The following graph represents the number of students currently placed in an out of district program as of December 1, 2014. Predominantly students who are placed in an out of district program fall into three categories: Severe special needs (including residential programs), age 18-22 transition programming, and Emotional/Behavioral/Autism Spectrum.



ED = Emotional Disability; BD = Behavior Disorder; LB/LD = Language Based Learning Disability; ASD = Autism Spectrum Disorder

The following 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.



ED = Emotional Disability; BD = Behavior Disorder; LB/LD = Language Based Learning Disability; ASD = Autism Spectrum Disorder

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. It is estimated that the cost for FY15 will increase by 2%. If the federal grant that funds this transportation does not increase, fewer other needs will be able to be met through that grant.

	FY15 Budget	FY16 Budget	Difference
Out-of-district Transportation	\$0*	\$0*	\$0
Amount Allocated to Grant	\$1,286,980	\$1,312,720 2% increase	\$25,740

*In FY15 we 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 saved approximately \$100,000 of grant allocations that would have otherwise been allocated to the Mass. Teachers' Retirement System.

Extended Year Services:

There are two standards for determining extended year services (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 operate for four-week and six-week sessions.

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 student's Individual Education Program. We are projecting essentially flat funding for this program in the coming summer.

	FY15 Budget	FY16 Budget	Difference
Extended Year Services	\$379,677	\$378,354	(\$1,323)

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 be a modest increase in the budget.

	FY15 Budget	FY16 Budget	Difference
Contracted Services (psychological, therapies, educational)	\$425,354	\$ 445,000	\$19,646

Additional Expenses Related to Special Education:

	<u>FY 15</u>	<u>FY16</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Legal fees	\$45,000	\$30,000	(\$15,000)
Translator/Interpreter	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$0
Home/hospital tutoring	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$0
Testing supplies	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$0
Instructional materials	\$0	\$0	\$0 use federal grant
Evaluations	\$4,000	\$6,000	\$2,000
Total	\$111,000	98,000	(\$13,000)

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 2014-2015 that mitigated costs to the district:

Educational Learning Centers (ELC): Parker Road Preschool and all five elementary school 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 coordinators are a full time master's level Behavior Analysts 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 over the past several years and this continues to rise. In order to minimize out of district evaluations and placement, a child and adolescent psychiatrist consults across the district for six hours weekly. The psychiatrist works with the clinical coordinators 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.

Family Success Partnership: The Family Success Partnership, through the Assabet Valley Collaborative, is a family centered social services program that expands the mutual capacity of schools, state agencies and programs, human service agencies, and community-based resources to provide a flexible, comprehensive and accessible system of services to children with mental health needs that are beyond the scope of the school, but do not meet traditional eligibility requirements for state agency support.

FSP utilizes a wraparound model to serve at-risk students and their families whose challenges prevent success and well being in school.

Shrewsbury currently contracts a full time social worker that will be able to support up to 30 families who require this level of support.

Partnership with UMass Adolescent Psychiatry Fellows: Shrewsbury is in its fourth year of a 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 in conjunction with clinical rounds weekly with the consulting psychiatrist and clinical coordinators. They provide consultation and feedback based on observations they have made.

P.A.C.E. (Promoting Academic Connections and Engagement): The P.A.C.E program is designed to support students at risk of either dropping out of high school or requiring a more restrictive educational program. The development of the program, which began this year, is in response to Shrewsbury Public Schools' five-year district priority of promoting the health and wellbeing of students. The development of this program creates a systematic response to students who struggle with academic, social/emotional, and/or mental health issues, but more importantly, it will assist students to graduate and become productive members of society. To date, none of the program's students, who are considered at risk, have dropped out or been shifted to a more costly out of district placement.

The program exists for the benefit of the students enrolled as well as the SHS community at large, the students' families, and the greater Shrewsbury community. Education is a shared responsibility of students, school, home and community. Investing in the education of our students benefits the community. All students want to learn and be life-long learners. The P.A.C.E. program is approaching education as a balance of the student's intellectual, social, physical, emotional and creative qualities.

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. Both clinical coordinators, one ELC Coordinator, 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/half day 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 student 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 13:

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 55% (compared to 67% in 2012) of districts within the Collaborative and 67% (compared to 72% in 2012) 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 9% 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 2012	% of Total Budget 2013
Marlboro	1,059,769	6,205,544	19,197,719	66,442,343	28.4	28.9
Southborough	271,891	1,784,111	5,546,885	21,040,239	26.4	26.4
Hudson	857,943	1,724,864	9,444,522	37,294,960	26.1	25.3
Berlin-Boylston	341,317	800,115	1,798,289	6,688,205	24.6	26.9
Shrewsbury	564,310	5,723,798	15,611,793	61,864,410	24.6	25.2
Westborough	260,809	2,844,428	10,484,400	46,211,980	23.6	22.4
Maynard	118,602	911,258	3,942,168	17,107,961	22.1	23.0
Northborough	175,709	1,110,400	5,097,535	23,279,449	21.3	21.9
Berlin	28,515	0	739,033	3,241,113	19.5	22.8
Nashoba	387,709	1,000,751	7,086,481	40,565,475	15.5	17.5
Boylston	10,342	1,692	613,186	4,130,547	14.4	14.8
Statewide	257,311,327	507,558,390	2,405,184,398	11,486,440,186	20.6	20.9

The local districts listed above 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's percentage increased by 0.6%.

Comparison of SPS to Similar Communities Based on FY 13:

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

Town	% of Total Budget 2012	% of Total Budget 2013
Braintree*	26.7	26.1
Franklin*	25.8	25.8
Shrewsbury	24.6	25.2
Chelmsford*	23.3	23.3
Peabody*	22.5	19.7
Mansfield*	22.1	22.5
Bridgewater/Raynham	21.4	20.9
Billerica*	21.4	21.7
Cambridge*	20.2	20.0
Waltham*	18.2	18.7
Barnstable*	18.1	19.0
Statewide	20.6	20.9
Arlington	--	23.3
Burlington	--	20.9
Dracut	--	17.5
Milton	--	21.9
Walpole	--	23.7

* These towns were not listed as comparable for 2013. The town below the statewide statistic were listed as comparable for 2013

Requests for 2016 fiscal year: The Special Education Department has operated on a very lean department structure. There have been minimal increases to the administrative structure in many years. Through the override in 2014, the Department was able to hire an additional clinical coordinator, an Elementary Special Education Coordinator, an ELC Coordinator for Paton, a half time team chair for Parker Road, part time special education teachers at Spring, Coolidge, and Paton, two special education teachers at both Oak and Sherwood to address class sizes and caseloads, and additional paraprofessional support. This allowed the continuation of providing mandated special education services as well as administrative support to meet all the operational requirements to oversee a large department.

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, 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 sustaining and creating more opportunities for in-district programming.

In order to sufficiently manage the level and quality of services in FY 2016, the following positions are requested to continue operating, meet the legal mandates, and increase the capacity for staff to

effectively teach and provide services to our students with disabilities. While some of these positions come under different categories in the budget, they all support students in ways that allow for the district to provide in-district programming for students with significant needs.

Potential program additions to address needs/mandates

Position	Notes
Director of Nursing (1.0 FTE)	Currently only department of significant size without a director. Supervision required for evaluation of nurses under new mandated DESE system. Key resource for health and wellness strategic priority. Currently insufficient capacity to respond to demands of Department of Public Health mandated reporting.
Part time nurse at Sherwood MS (0.4 FTE)	Shift existing temporary contracted nursing service to payroll and expand hours from 2 to 3 per day to address volume and complexity of student medical needs.
Part time nurse at Sherwood MS (0.4 FTE)	Shift existing temporary contracted nursing service to payroll and expand hours from 2 to 3 per day to address volume and complexity of student medical needs.
Intensive special education teacher at Sherwood MS (1.0 FTE)	Addition of intensive programming at Sherwood for cohort of students with intensive needs, some of whom otherwise would need to be educated out-of-district; paraprofessional support already exists for these students.
Additional special education paraprofessional positions (2.0 FTE)	Projections of students entering preschool from Early Intervention with significant needs indicate greater need for this type of support in order to educate the students within the district.
Part time adjustment counselor at Sherwood MS (0.4 FTE)	Additional support for large counseling caseload (mandated special education services).
Part time adjustment counselor at Oak MS (0.4 FTE)	Additional support for large counseling caseload (mandated special education services).
Additional aide hours at elementary level (60 hours across Beal, Coolidge, Floral Street, Paton & Spring Street; equivalent of 2.0 FTE in total - will not create benefit eligible positions)	Current allocation does not allow for aides to provide sufficient intervention work that may prevent needs for IEPs and/or more intensive IEP services in later grades. Maintaining students with significant special needs within the district requires additional general aide support to cover for teachers during co-planning meetings, consultations, IEP meetings, etc., so the need for aide classroom coverage has grown.
Increase secretarial support for special education office (0.7 FTE)	The current allocation is not sufficient to adequately complete Medicaid reimbursement processing along with other mandated legal recordkeeping, placing the district at risk of not claiming all eligible reimbursements and for compliance issues.

Adjustment Counselor Caseload Analysis				
	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
IEP/504/reg.ed	21	13	50	26
Groups	7 (27 students total)	13 (53 students total)	6 (46 students total)	3 (18 students total)
Total (Not including “drop in” services)	48	66	96	44
Other Duties	Attend IEP/504 Plan meetings Consults with staff Administrative meetings weekly General crisis response 8 th grade counselor also manages transition planning to high school Regular assigned duties Progress reports Medicaid reporting			
Other support provided by outside counselors	SYFS Intern: Currently sees 8 individual students per week? SYFS co-leads one group with 5-7 students with another SYFS intern. You, Inc. clinician: 3 students			

The American School Counseling Association recommends a ratio of 250:1 total student population to counselor. Our ratio is approximately 500:1.

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, while providing in-district programs wherever possible in order to provide mandated services within community schools in the most cost-effective manner possible.