



Superintendent's Update

March 8, 2016

Dear Shrewsbury Families,

Educators feel tremendous pride when a former student “makes it big.” In my lifetime I hope to see many Shrewsbury alumni achieve great things (A Nobel prize? An Oscar? World Series MVP?...*Jeopardy!* champion???). **As a trivia buff and a fan of *Jeopardy!*, I am excited to tune in TONIGHT (7:30pm, WBZ Channel 4) to watch one of our former students compete on *Jeopardy!*** Annie Moriondo, who attended Floral Street, Sherwood, Oak, and who was the valedictorian of the Class of 2010 at SHS and a 2014 graduate of Williams College (where she double majored in chemistry and Chinese), is [one of tonight's contestants](#). Go Annie!

Please read on for important information about our school district on the following:

1. Please join me on March 16 to view a compelling film
2. Student successes
3. Fiscal Year 2017 Budget
4. Colonial Fund major gift

1) *Most Likely to Succeed*: Please join me on March 16 to view this compelling film:

A hallmark of any successful organization is envisioning how to adapt in the future and planning strategically how to best do so, while maintaining its core values. For decades, our school district has been known as one that stays at the forefront of best practices in education in order to best prepare our students for future success. Innovation is key for any organization in a globally connected and hyper-fast world, and Shrewsbury educators are looking ahead to determine what promising practices might be in our students' best interests. **I invite you to a free screening of *Most Likely to Succeed*, a film that challenges our thinking about how the current model of education may need to adapt to truly prepare students for their lives ahead, which will span much of the rest of this century.** The film will be shown in the SHS auditorium at 6:30pm on Wednesday, March 16, followed by a panel discussion including representatives from business, higher education, and SPS. I strongly encourage parents, community members, educators, and high school students to attend. See the film trailer [here](#), and for more information see the Colonial Fund website [here](#).

2) Student Successes:

Our students continue to deliver incredible performances in academic competition, the performing and visual arts, and athletics. Here are just a few recent highlights:

- The SHS Speech & Debate team has won several tournaments this season, including recent wins at the Milton Academy event and being crowned champion of its own annual Mardi Gras tournament, one of the largest in the state. Our middle school team also finished 12th in the Mardi Gras tournament, outperforming many high school teams. Many members have already qualified for national tournaments; all the best to the team in the upcoming state championships!
- Good luck to the 15 SHS students who advanced from the school competition to the regional science and engineering fair at WPI this coming Saturday.
- Last weekend, SHS students put on the annual spring musical, and it was superb. This year's show, *Urinetown: The Musical*, was a success in all aspects, including the set, costumes, lighting, sound, choreography, pit orchestra, vocals, and acting. The quality of the production far outpaced what one would expect from a high school production. Bravo!
- The SHS drama competition play, *Getting Out*, was selected to move on to the semi-finals, which take place on March 19, with several actors and the set design winning awards in the preliminary round. Break a leg in the next round!
- Dozens of students across the district have been recognized with awards or recognition in the visual arts through annual contests sponsored by the Boston Globe, Anna Maria College, and the Worcester Art Museum's Youth Art Month. Shrewsbury students have created some extraordinary pieces of artwork! A list of awards and recognitions can be found [here](#).
- SHS athletic teams had a successful winter season, with many outstanding team and individual performances. Some teams are still competing in postseason tournaments: Good luck to the league champion SHS Gymnastics team, who finished third in the state tournament and competes in New England regional this Saturday; the league champion SHS Cheerleading team, who qualified to compete in the state tournament this Sunday; and to the conference champion SHS Boys Hockey team, who begins playoffs tonight. The SHS Girls Hockey team also won their conference championship. Go Colonials!

3) Fiscal Year 2017 Budget:

This past Saturday morning, the School Committee and district administration presented information on the FY17 Budget to the Finance Committee, and answered questions from the Finance Committee members and members of the public. The gap between the estimated cost of bringing our existing program forward intact into next year and the available revenue projected by the Town Manager is currently \$3.3 million, which is a substantial difference. While it is our hope that a better revenue picture emerges to help close that gap, it will not be possible to close the entire amount without making net cost reductions in the School Department budget. While we await updated information on revenue in April, during the coming weeks the district administration will be working on determining a cost reduction plan, which will most likely be presented to the School Committee on April 6. Information on the entire budget, including specific reports on special education, curriculum, and technology, can be found [here](#).

4) Major gift to the Colonial Fund:

I am pleased to announce that the school district has received an extremely generous direct donation of \$50,000 to the Colonial Fund from a town resident who wishes to remain anonymous. The donation was made in honor of Motumal Navani and Rekha Navani. Given that there will not be

a Celebration in the Garden fundraiser this year, this donation will be key to help us continue to fund high-impact, innovative initiatives that would not otherwise be possible through the regular budget. We are greatly appreciative for this financial support. To learn more about the Colonial Fund go [here](#), and to make a gift to support innovation in the Shrewsbury Public Schools click [here](#).

Thank you for your continued support of our schools. If I can be of assistance to you, please contact me at 508-841-8400 or at jsawyer@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us.

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