



Superintendent's Update

May 11, 2016

Dear Shrewsbury Families & Community Members,

After it felt like we were living in Seattle last week, it is great to have some beautiful spring weather. Inside our schools, many of our students have been spending a great deal of time on standardized tests, including the PARCC, MCAS, and AP exams across different grade levels. It is difficult to maintain a sense of balance during this time of year with these kinds of academic demands in the classroom, co-curricular activities through the schools, and outside activities in the community. Despite the busy-ness of this time of year, I encourage parents to try to maintain good routines for meals and sleep for your children as much as possible. While I know firsthand that this can be a difficult challenge, nutrition and rest do make a big difference for our kids' overall health and wellness.

Please continue reading for information about:

1. National School Nurse Day - Today!
2. Student successes
 - a. Science fair
 - b. Spring musical
3. Shrewsbury rated highly in Stanford University study
4. Draft policy on fundraising
5. Town Meeting vote on budget

1) National School Nurse Day

Today is National School Nurse Day, and we are fortunate to have an outstanding team of school nurses. There is no question that they play a critical role in the success of our schools, now more than ever. When you have a chance, take a look at [this tribute to the importance of school nurses](#) that our Director of Nursing, Noelle Freeman, recently passed along.

Not only are our school nurses highly skilled and dedicated, they are also terrific people who contribute greatly to making our school cultures better for everyone. Please join me in expressing gratitude for their many important contributions that promote the health and wellness of the students and staff of SPS!

2) Student successes

- a. **Science fair awards:** Congratulations to the many Oak Middle School and Shrewsbury High School students who have won honors at the recent regional and state science and

engineering fairs, including a grand prize and multiple first place rankings. To see the names of the students and their impressive projects, click [here](#).

- b. **SHS spring musical honors:** Kudos to the cast, crew, and everyone involved with the production of *Urinetown: The Musical*, which has been nominated for 23 High School Musical Theatre awards (i.e., the TAMYs), including “Best Overall Production.” To see the list of SHS nominees click [here](#).

3) Shrewsbury rated highly in Stanford University study:

Recently, the New York Times published [an interactive feature on a Stanford study](#) of the correlation between parents’ socioeconomic status and student achievement. Click the link above to see the article and enter “Shrewsbury, Mass.” into the search box to see where our district compares nationally on academic performance measured as “grades ahead of average” for students in grades 3-8 vs. parent income, level of education, etc. It is encouraging to see these very strong results for our district, but also sobering to see the continued close correlation between poverty and school achievement. I am reminded of how fortunate we are to have a strong overall standard of living and high quality education in Shrewsbury, but also that we must be mindful of the challenges many of our own families and residents face and that we must be focused on helping all of our students receive an excellent education, regardless of their socioeconomic background.

4) Draft policy on fundraising:

The School Committee reviewed a draft policy on fundraising at their last meeting, and they are expected to vote on the policy at their May 25 meeting. The draft can be found [here](#), and if you have feedback regarding the proposed policy you can send it to the School Committee at schoolcommittee@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us.

5) Town Meeting to vote on budget:

The Annual Town Meeting begins on Monday, May 16 at 7:00pm at Oak Middle School. Town Meeting representatives will be voting on a variety of articles, including the Town budget, which includes the School Department budget. To view the budget information sent to Town Meeting members for their consideration, click [here](#).

Thank you for your continued support of our community’s public 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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