

Superintendent's Corner

Playing to win

DR. JOSEPH M. SAWYER
SUPERINTENDENT

The Red Sox are World Series champs, again! It was very satisfying to witness the defeat of the Yankees, Astros, and Dodgers by a Sox team that maintained their poise and played with confidence, especially after each single loss to those opponents (especially the 18-inning marathon against LA!). In this age of sophisticated statistics, Red Sox manager, Alex Cora, and his coaches used various analytics to make decisions that put players and the team in a better position to succeed. However, it was clear that some choices regarding whom to put in the batting line-up and when to bring in certain pitchers were also made based on the manager's intuition regarding what he felt was psychologically needed at the time, in order to create a climate that signaled that the Sox were *playing to win*.

Every sports fan knows that there is a distinctive difference between "playing to win" and "playing not to lose," especially when the pressure is high. When watching a game, you can sense the level of confidence displayed by teams and athletes as the game ebbs and flows. Success is usually achieved by those who play with conviction as they strive for victory, and it eludes those who play tentatively in an effort not to make mistakes. Successful coaches motivate their players by empowering them in ways that signal trust in their abilities, while coaches whose teams fail often create an atmosphere where players are mainly worried about messing up. After all, it's hard to hit a home run if you are afraid of striking out!

These concepts also apply to how we educate our students. If they receive signals from educators and parents – either intentionally or unintentionally – that the most important thing is *not* to make mis-

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“ What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must the community want for all of its children. Any other ideal for our schools is narrow and unlovely; acted upon it destroys our democracy. - John Dewey ”



Proposed new Beal School rendering from Schematic Design Phase - September 2018

Giving thanks

MR. JASON PALITSCH
SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAIR

On behalf of my colleagues on the School Committee, thank you to the residents of Shrewsbury for voting overwhelmingly to support the construction of a new Beal School. This K-4 elementary school is more than the replacement of an aging structure; it will have a town-wide benefit in reducing stress on space capacity at all of our elementary schools. The project is a sound long-term investment for the community, taking advantage of \$34 million in state funding, and building a facility that will serve students and meet space needs for many years to come.

Of course, while appropriate learning spaces and tools are necessary for education, what really matters is what happens inside our school buildings. As the discussion of any building project can dwell on specifics like construction costs and timetables, building design and aesthetics, location and traffic flow, I thought it important to highlight the project's place in the district's long-term

goals for student success.

As options for Beal School were explored, the Committee kept at the forefront concerns such as population growth, the changing nature of education, and needs not currently addressed by available space. It is not about having a "nice" or "new" building, but about having the space and tools necessary to meet the educational needs of some of our youngest students, not just today but for future generations.

Included within one of our district's Strategic Priorities, "Space and resources to support effective learning," is the specific goal that Shrewsbury Public Schools will offer tuition-free, Full-Day Kindergarten to all families and students who want it by 2022. Today, this is not feasible due to limited space; however, the construction of the new Beal as a K-4 elementary school will eliminate that barrier. A decade ago, Shrewsbury's approach to providing Full-Day Kindergarten, where access is determined first by lottery, and then parents are charged a fee, was the norm. But today, 94.7% of students in Massachusetts have access to Full-Day Kindergarten, the vast majority of that being free of charge.

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Superintendent’s Corner

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takes, anxiety and fear of looking bad or falling short is the result, and that is not conducive to learning. On the other hand, when educators and parents emphasize learning as growth and view mistakes as a natural part of improvement, students are more likely to feel empowered and motivated to achieve goals – and they’re more likely to be resilient when the inevitable mistakes happen.

Every sports fan knows that there is a distinctive difference between “playing to win” and “playing not to lose,” especially when the pressure is high.

Similarly, if educators receive signals, either intentionally or unintentionally, that what matters most for our students’ success is making the fewest mistakes on standardized tests and other traditional measures of learning, this can lead to overemphasizing a narrow range of skills and knowledge. Focusing too much on what is convenient to measure creates the danger of having “our kids study what’s easy to test, not what’s important to learn,” as education advocate and venture capitalist Ted Dintersmith suggests. We don’t want to create an atmosphere where teachers are intent on minimizing student errors, which is the schoolhouse equivalent of “playing not to lose,” as it stifles innovation. Instead, we want our educators to engage our students in ways that ignite their curiosity and motivate them to apply skills and knowledge in order to develop the essential capacities of critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration.

We have successful schools, and it would be easy to play it safe,

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Shrewsbury School
Journal

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

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer
Superintendent

Elizabeth McCollum
Project Coordinator

Cristina Luther
Designer

Welcome to our new staff members

BARBARA A. MALONE
DIRECTOR OF
HUMAN RESOURCES

Shrewsbury Public Schools has successfully completed the hiring process to fill key positions within the District. These positions were hired to replace educators who had retired or resigned, or positions open due to changing organizational needs, and a very small number of non-renewals, in order to provide the best possible educational experience to students utilizing the resources available. A significant number of our positions were filled via transfer requests from our professional staff. One area of challenge for hiring this year was hiring licensed English as a Second Language (ESL) educators who meet our high standards for excellence to serve English Language Learners (ELLs), which is a challenge experienced by our colleagues in other area school districts as well.

We have appointed 36 staff to professional positions, nine staff to transfer or promotional opportunities, including two Information Technology (IT) promotions, 27 staff to paraprofessional positions and three staff to other positions, such as school secretaries/administrative assistants or IT. We had two nursing staff exchange schools this year. We also continue to fill long-term substitute positions available due to maternity and paternity leaves or staff illnesses. The greatest area of challenge for long-term substitute teacher positions is in hiring licensed special educators.

Professional Staff

Included among the 36 professional staff hired is the new Director for Physical Education, Health, and Family Consumer Science, Jeff Lane. These 36 staff included a total of two hires for the entire district, including Mr. Lane, six hires for the high school, 15 hires for the middle level, 12 hires for the elementary level, and one hire for the pre-school level.

The teacher selection process in Shrewsbury is rigorous, and through the hard work of our District Leadership Team, as well as educators, parents and students who volunteered to be part of selection meetings or demonstration lessons, we have adhered to our high standards.

The process includes interviews with principals, department directors, curriculum coordinators/instructional coaches, teachers, parents and central office administrators. At the high school level, students also serve on the interview teams.

All teaching positions require a demonstration lesson in the classroom, which is a key ingredient in the selection and hiring process. All professional-level candidates recommended for hire are also required to interview with the Director of Human Resources and the Superintendent of Schools as the final step in the selection process, where the district’s strategic priorities, Portrait of a Shrewsbury Graduate, and mission and core values are discussed individually with each finalist. This year the final interview also included viewing the student-produced “Leading the Nation” video. A thorough reference check is conducted on each new hire, including the “CORI” (Massachusetts background check) and the “SAFIS” (national fingerprint-based FBI background check).

We continue to use www.schoolspring.com as our primary sourcing tool, which netted 2313 applicants to our professional positions, including those ultimately filled by our own transfers or promotions. This means that 1.6% of those who applied to our professional positions ultimately received a position with us this year. Last year, for FY 18 that percentage was 1%; in FY 17 it was 1.46%; in FY16 it was 3.8%; in FY15 it was just under 2%.

Principals, Directors, and selection committees reviewed these application packets. Some applicants were selected for phone interviews, and then an even smaller number were invited for face-to-face interviews with search committees and teaching demonstration lessons. References were contacted, which resulted in the finalist recommendations.

Our new professional educators completed two days of orientation on August 23 and August 24, led by Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Amy Clouter. Each educator has a mentor assigned for the upcoming school year and will also receive mentorship in their second and third years of employment, in addition to support from the evaluator.

Paraprofessional Staff

As of September 4, 2018 we had hired 28 paraprofessional positions. These positions netted 399 applicants. This means we hired 7% of those who applied to our paraprofessional positions, compared to 8% in FY18, 6.2% in FY17, 4.3% in FY16, and 3.3% in FY15. These applicants also underwent a rigorous selection process, which included applicant packet screening, phone and face-to-face interviews, reference checks, and the CORI and SAFIS background checks.

New Hiring - Administrative Support and Information Technology (IT)

As of September 4, 2018 we had hired two replacement secretarial positions and one Tier I IT position. These three positions netted 395 applicants, a hire rate of less than 1%.

New District Leader

• Jeffrey Lane, *Director of Physical Education, Health, and Family Consumer Science*
Master of Education, Springfield College
Bachelor of Physical Education, Bridgewater State College

Transferring Educators

• Kristin Kilgore, First Grade Teacher at Walter J. Paton, transferred to a 0.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Kindergarten Teacher at the Beal Early Childhood Center

• David Lien’s role was expanded to include teaching Music as well as Drama at Oak Middle School

• Heidi Marchand, Preschool Teacher at Parker Road Preschool, transferred to Kindergarten Teacher at the Walter J. Paton School

• Beth McNerny, ELE Teacher at Spring Street School, transferred to a Kindergarten Teacher at Spring Street School

• Ryan Middlesworth, Sixth Grade Math/Science Teacher at Sherwood Middle School, transferred to Seventh Grade Math Teacher at Oak Middle School

• Lindsey Borraccino-Morrissey transferred from a Third Grade Teacher at Floral Street School to a Fourth Grade Teacher at Walter J. Paton School

• Jeremy Mularella moved from an Eighth Grade Science Teacher

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The people who influence us

JOHN BROCKI
SCIENCE TEACHER
SHREWSBURY HIGH SCHOOL

The following are remarks given by Mr. John Brocki, Science Teacher, at the Shrewsbury High School Class of 2018 Commemoration on May 29, 2018, edited for publication.

Good Evening!
I would first like to thank you all for the honor of speaking before you tonight. The symbolism of choosing an environmental science teacher to speak to the “green” class is not lost on me.

I have to share that I was floored when Jacob first asked me to speak tonight. My initial shock was supplanted by a sense of honor and subsequently by a suspicion...you see I had Jacob in my classroom for the past three years. In each of those classes, I required Jacob to present in front of his peers. Did Jacob just one-up me? Well played, sir, well played.

As I contemplated what I would say here tonight, I reflected on *why* you asked me. I sincerely doubt it was the effectiveness of my instruction in stoichiometry, or making you smack the table whenever I said ATP, or the depth of our discussion of soils. Apparently not my sense of humor, either. My guess is it wasn’t the content, but rather those other things, those life lessons, that I taught you. So here we are, time for one last “Brock-talk.”

Tonight’s topic: People. Because as we commemorate your successes at this point in your life, it is important that you think back to the people that influenced you.

In that light, I would like to take a moment to share with you three people who influenced my journey, for it is those people who have helped shape the educator I am today.

The first, SGM Peter Gould, was my sergeant major during ROTC at Florida Tech. I need you to picture this man: a grizzled special forces operator who had seen his fair share of combat; hair a bit longer than typical military; 80’s era mustache; slight smirk; missing the tip of a finger. That guy. He was a former sniper and special forces

ski instructor with 10th SF (Special Forces) out of Fort Carson, Colorado. SGM Gould, who was used to training elite soldiers had been tasked with training about 80 ROTC cadets. Some operators might lament such a change in their career, yet he embraced it. He wanted to make sure that the future Lieutenants he was training were not “lost in the sauce.” Patient yet demanding, he instilled in us confidence in basic military skills. I’ll be honest, he wasn’t the best teacher - he was never trained in pedagogy, he had *some* college credits, but not a degree, and I doubt if he knew what lesson planning was - but he made up for it in enthusiasm and unrelenting standards. Firm in his tone, yet supportive in his actions, SGM Gould embodied the professional soldier. His methodology has stuck with me: be passionate, set high standards, help people achieve them. Perhaps my favorite memory of SGM Gould, and the thing that captures his expectations for us the best, was that at the end of every lesson he would say to us, “Go forth, and do great things.” The man inspired us all to do our best.

The second person I’d like to discuss with you was my AP U.S. History teacher, Mrs. Kira Hurst. I *hated* Mrs. Hurst. She made me do so much work. I actually had to read the chapters. The homework was relentless, and she was seemingly unimpressed no matter how much effort I put into those review packets. The *nerve* she had! Giving me a “C”! Realize that up until Mrs. Hurst’s class, I had never *really* had to try at school. And while I begrudged her through that first quarter, things started to click second quarter. Imagine, having developed good work habits, and focusing on my studies before video games, I was able to make a change. Struggling to get As and Bs from that point forward...I started, ever so slowly, to *like* her. Oh, she was a task-master, but she knew her stuff. She would *not* stand for anything less than my best. By the end of my junior year, Mrs. Hurst was my *favorite* teacher. I even asked to be her TA during my senior year. Mrs. Hurst was the one teacher who taught me more than any other. The one who got me to work harder than any other teacher had ever done before. Any of you that have been in my room should recognize this pattern. I based my philosophy of education off

Mrs. Hurst’s class. Set high standards, be passionate, help students realize what they can achieve if they truly try.

The last person I’d like to talk about, is you. You are the whole reason we are here today. I look into this crowd and see the agents of change that will help to resolve the issues we have in our society and to propel this country to new heights. In this crowd are environmental engineers who are going to develop remediation methods and carbon capture technology that we can’t currently fathom. Policy makers that will help rewrite and revise our laws to ensure that all Americans are guaranteed the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Law enforcement officers who stand up to injustice and show compassion for their communities. Business owners who “get” that the bottom line is not the sole measure of success. Doctors that will pioneer new treatment protocols. Future SGM Goulds who will train their cadets to be the very best leaders that they can be. The beauty in life is you get to define your own success. Let me share with you a little secret: teaching is not the most fiscally lucrative career option. Notice that I said “fiscally lucrative” because I think, and I bet the other educators in the room tonight will agree, that our profession is rich in other ways. Your success is our success. So find a calling, find a passion. Be compassionate. Find joy.

Let us not be naive, though. Life will present you with hurdles. Some of them taller than you think you are capable of getting over. Some of them are going to knock you down and might even scar you. Don’t give up, work your hardest to get over that hurdle, and wear the scars to remember those times that life didn’t go your way. I have my own scars that influence who I’ve become. I want to discuss one of those failures, because understanding failure and learning from it allows you to adapt, allows you to find success. I did not go into college thinking I was going to be an educator. My intended path was to be a career army officer. My presence here should indicate how well that worked out. Two trips to Ranger school, both ending in broken bones helped to alter my trajectory. My failure at Ranger school scars me. It is the one failure that pecks at me

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Graduates

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While in the past the Full-Day program may have been viewed as an “extra,” the School Committee believes it is important to move towards providing Full-Day Kindergarten as part of the expected public education experience our community provides to all of its students. The clear expectation of kindergarten curriculum and programming in Massachusetts is that it will be delivered in a Full-Day program. This goal reflects the strong and consistent feedback from the community that our district regularly receives on this topic.

It is not about having a “nice” or “new” building, but about having the space and tools necessary to meet the educational needs of some of our youngest students, not just today but for future generations.

Last year, in the process of developing our 5-year Strategic Priorities, as well as our “Portrait of a Graduate” initiative, the School Committee and our District leadership engaged the entire community in a discussion designed to crystalize where we want to go as a district. The heart of these conversations was always what is in the best educational interest of our students as we navigate the coming years. Through the community’s support for the construction of a new Beal school, a major step is being taken towards addressing our space needs. But the real matter at hand is the programming that will be offered within those classrooms. Thanks to your support, Shrewsbury Public Schools will have the capacity to offer Full-Day Kindergarten to all families who would like it when the new building opens. We will be able to have dedicated spaces for art and music across our elementary schools. The community has given us the space; we, in turn, are going to use those spaces to give Shrewsbury students the best learning experiences possible.



Superintendent's Corner

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keep doing what we've been doing, and try not to make mistakes. I think our children deserve better than that. Our bold vision for every Shrewsbury graduate requires us to empower our educators, students, and families to play to win – where winning means, to paraphrase Thoreau, that our students will have the confidence to pursue their dreams, the motivation to work toward the life they imagine, and, in doing so, achieve the success known by those who strive to become their best selves.

Influence

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and influences my actions. So I refuse to give up. I know that had I “pushed through” or worked harder on my parachuting skills I may not have had those injuries. Why do I share this failure with you? To share with you that the path that you *think* you’re on may not be the path you ultimately take. But that does not preclude you from finding success. Had I not had those injuries, I might still be in the army. I would never have realized how rewarding teaching is, and would not have found my true calling. So just because something doesn’t work out the way you wanted, doesn’t mean you give up; merely take that thing and learn from it. *For it is only when we fail to learn, when we fail to keep trying, that we truly “lose.”*

School year begins with service

PAULINA HRUSKOCI,
OLIVIA MEUSE,
KEVIN NGUYEN, AND
ERICA SCHECHTER
SHREWSBURY HIGH SCHOOL
SERVICE LEARNING
COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Warm temperatures, new classes, back-to-school shopping and a chance to be charitable welcomed Shrewsbury High School (SHS) students as they returned to school this past fall. Students at SHS believed there was no better way to start off the year than by uniting in service and the idea of a back-to-school supply

drive was born.

Several years ago two student groups traveled to the Belmont Street Community School in Worcester where they hosted a holiday craft event for the second grade students. That joyful, fun-filled day not only produced beautiful crafts, it also resulted in a mutually rewarding and bonding relationship between our high school students and their second grade students, which is now a yearly tradition. As a result of this experience, two stu-

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Shrewsbury High School students - left to right: Robby St. Fleur, Liv Meuse, Sean Roman, and Alessandro Houghton - are shown boxing school supplies they collected for students at Belmont Street Community School.



The school district has a tradition of recognizing high performing staff at the onset of each new school year. The Superintendent's Awards are presented in recognition of extraordinary service to the Shrewsbury Public Schools, and were conferred to recipients at Opening Day for Staff on August 27, 2018. Pictured left to right are Jennifer DiFrancesca, Director of Social Sciences, Shrewsbury High School (Jayne M. Wilkin Award); Chris Girardi, Principal, Beal Early Childhood Center (Thomas M. Kennedy Award); Robert Cox, Superintendent of Public Buildings, Town of Shrewsbury; Norma Chico, Physics Teacher, Shrewsbury High School; Greg Marceau, Video Technician/Telecommunications Specialist, Shrewsbury High School; Kelly Sutton, ABA Technician, Spring Street School; Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools; Kristen Minio, Adjustment Counselor, Oak Middle School; Michael Lapomardo, Music Teacher, Shrewsbury High School; Bryant Clark, Music Teacher, Sherwood and Oak Middle Schools. Not pictured: Karin Freeman, Secretary, Beal Early Childhood Center.

Service

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dents from SHS, Tom O'Neill and Eliana Jreije felt inspired to develop a twice-weekly after-school tutoring program at the school which offered extra educational support as well as mentoring. This student-led project demonstrated the powerful effect of service learning, as well as the significance of being role models.

This year our students decided to take our relationship one step further and collect back-to-school supplies for the student body. Collection bins were set up at all of our district schools and Staples agreed to let our students set up a table outside of the Shrewsbury store for two consecutive weekends where they collected additional supplies from the community. Staples also donated teacher bags filled with supplies for the teachers at the Belmont Street school. As the Service Learning Advisory Board worked with the student body they were overwhelmed by the generous contributions from students and community members. Teamwork made the dream work and the collective effort of groups such as the National Honor Society, the high school Parent Forum, football and crew team members, student government officers and many other individuals made this effort a resounding success.



Truck load of back-to-school supplies collected by students at Shrewsbury High School.

The back-to-school supply drive resulted in the collection of hundreds of pencils, erasers, markers, notebooks and binders; dozens of pencil cases, backpacks, rulers, calculators, tissue boxes, hand sanitizers, erasers...the list goes on and on. Our district's student body, parents, and faculty, and our local community members donated close to forty boxes (a literal truck-load) of school supplies to the Belmont Street Community School students. We are very grateful to our community members for their kindness and generosity. Jennifer Keating, Principal of Belmont Street Elementary School expressed how thankful the teachers and students were for all of the supplies. Here is a portion of her correspondence:

"Every second grader who needed a backpack received one along with their own school supplies!!! The donated supplies allowed teachers to create writing and homework folders for students who needed them most! A first grader who received a backpack with supplies commented 'Wow, now I will have supplies at home to practice my work and even color it to make it pretty for my teacher.' This was a child I never expected this comment from! Just goes to show how a simple act of kindness touches the lives of many!"

Jill Carter @MrsCarterSHS · Oct 24
Exploring the incredible @NASA Climate website in #honorsbio #shrewsburylearns

Wendy Bell @PatonSchool · Sep 25
I asked a first grader in art "What are you learning about?" His answer... "Elements of shape". 🤔 Wasn't expecting THAT level of sophisticated language from a 6 year old. @ShrewsburyArt #ShrewsburyLearns #180daysofhappiness

Karen Gutekanst @AP_G6_Sherwood · Sep 24
In Ms. Lawson's sixth grade science class today, students discussed what it means to make a claim, support the claim with evidence, and explain their reasoning when writing in science class. This is referred to as C-E-R writing! #ShrewsburyLearns

Anna LaValley @MrsLaValley · Oct 25
Active learning happening in #8redoms math class today! #Shrewsburylearns

Welcome

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at Oak Middle School to a STEM Design Lab Teacher at Oak Middle School (STEM = Science/Technology/Engineering/Math)

Information Technology Promotions

- Joe Sharry was promoted from a Tier I IT Support Specialist to a Tier II IT Support Specialist
- Mark Vaillancourt expanded his duties from an IT Operations Manager to a Network Manager for the district

New Educators

District
Brittany Zelesky, District Physical Therapist
Doctor of Physical Therapy, Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions
Bachelor of Kinesiology, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Shrewsbury High School
Sarai Dancy, Mathematics
Bachelor of Mathematics and Secondary Education, Emmanuel College

Samantha DiReda, Mathematics
Master of Education and Mathematics, Worcester State University
Bachelor of Education and Mathematics, Nichols College

Jay Fickes, Physics
Bachelor of Astronomy and English, Wellesley College

Alesia Raczelowski, Physical Education
Bachelor of Kinesiology and Health Professions, Liberty University

Kasey Teixeira, English
Master of English Language Arts Education, Boston University
Bachelor of English, Worcester State University

Susan Tokay, Special Education
Master of Education in Moderate Disabilities, Fitchburg State University
Master of Computer Science, Boston University
Master of Business Administration, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Bachelor of Political Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Oak Middle School
Kaitlin Davies, Eighth Grade Science
Bachelor of Biology, Worcester State University

Jing Fang, Seventh Grade Mathematics
Master of Chemistry, University of British Columbia
Bachelor of Chemistry, Nanjing University

Courtney Gilpin, Eighth Grade Science
Master of Education in Adolescent and Young Adult Life Science, Wright State University

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Security and safety update

STEPHEN ROCCO
SAFETY & SECURITY
COORDINATOR

During the past fiscal year, a continued and ongoing comprehensive top-down review and analysis was conducted of the School Department’s safety and security procedures with a goal of enhancing and strengthening the district’s overall security posture.

Our goal each and every year is to continue improving and refining our security procedures to meet the challenges of ever-evolving threats. The actions taken in the initial minutes of an emergency are critical to saving lives. Details are as follows.

Standard Response Protocols (SRP): SRPs have been fully integrated and deployed throughout the school district at each and every school site location with continuous and varied training involving emergency-response base scenarios. The training and associated drills have continued to evolve in complexity and scope (i.e. unannounced drills to both staff and students; Lock Down drills while students are outside the building or classrooms; blocked pathways in order to alter routes and stimulate critical thinking during a fire drill; and incorporating severe weather scenarios in addition to continuous ongoing active shooter and fire drills). Site surveys to identify “safe zones” and subsequent shelter drills were conducted at Parker Road, Floral, Paton, Sherwood, and Oak schools, with the assistance of school administrators.

Emergency Radio Communications: Emergency handheld radio and base stations with their own dedicated frequency have been installed and in use at each school site location. These radios are monitored by police dispatch at all times. This allows the schools direct contact with the Police Department in case of an emergency. It also allows for redundancy for emergency contact by schools in case the telephones are disabled. Training for utilization has been provided to school staff and routine testing is conducted to ensure operability.

Two-way radios: Standardized two-way radios have been deployed to all school site locations throughout the district. Staff have been fully trained on their use and are proficient in utilizing them.

These very high frequency (VHF) model radio options allow police department personnel the option to “dial” in to the school’s respective radio frequency and effectively communicate directly with staff members during an emergency situation. Standardization of radio and communication equipment is an essential element of an effective communication plan.

Emergency Management Tabletop Exercises (TTXs): Tabletop Exercises (TTXs) generally involve key personnel discussing simulated scenarios in an informal setting. This type of exercise can be used to assess plans, policies, and procedures, or to assess the protocols and systems needed to guide the prevention of, response to, and recovery from, a defined incident. Participants are encouraged to discuss issues in depth and to develop decisions through slow-paced problem solving, rather than the rapid, spontaneous decision making that occurs under actual or simulated emergency conditions. The effectiveness of a TTX is derived from the energetic involvement of participants and their assessment of recommended revisions to current policies, procedures, and plans.

During the past year, the School Department in conjunction with the Shrewsbury Police Department (SPD) conducted twelve (12) separate TTXs. Of the twelve TTXs, the first two involved large-scale emergency management scenarios centered around discussing and developing Parent-Student Reunification protocols with senior staff and representatives of each school’s Crisis Management Team. The third large scale TTX was an Active Shooter scenario at the high school focused on implementing developed Parent-Student Reunification protocols and procedures.

Subsequently, a total of nine (9) additional Parent-Student TTXs were conducted with SPD at each school site with staff and Crisis Management Team members. Protocols and procedures were established to address nuisances specific to a certain school site.

Evacuation sites were reviewed and updated, which gives the school department greater access and control.

Building Assessment Team (BAT) Security Survey: A major goal of the BAT is to provide enhanced protection for students and staff by pinpointing high-risk

areas in school buildings where potential problems or emergency situations might occur. The BAT survey is conducted on a yearly basis, and the BAT is comprised of members from the School Department, Shrewsbury Police Department, Shrewsbury Fire Department, and Town Buildings Department. This may also be known as Target Hardening. Target Hardening refers to strengthening the security of a building, and in this case the various schools, so that it is difficult for an individual(s) to attack. The goal is to increase the time and effort (creating a “time barrier”) needed to compromise a school facility to the point where a perpetrator will move on to a softer target. The BAT accomplishes this through a “Physical Security Survey” and walk through of each school site location. The survey is an annual, comprehensive, detailed, technical on-site inspection and analysis of the current security and physical protection conditions. As a result, numerous improvements were implemented including the following:

-Installed new and improved public-address systems located at Paton, Parker Road, and Coolidge schools.

-Identified and conducted drilling sessions for students and staff relocating into “Safe Zones” for severe weather/tornado sheltering within the following schools sites: Floral, Parker Road, Coolidge, Paton, Spring, and Sherwood.

-Provided Magnet Door Locks to numerous school locations in order to expedite the securing of classrooms during an emergency situation.

-Identified and anticipate the installation of a new and improved public address system for Spring Street School. The existing system is old and failing.

Training: The School Department, in conjunction with the Shrewsbury Police Department, conducted Active Shooter Training and classroom instruction at the Sherwood and Oak Middle Schools during winter and spring school breaks in December 2017 and April 2018. Because there is no way of knowing which police department employees might be the first to arrive at the scene of an active shooter event, the thought process behind the training was to train all officers in the skills that would be needed to perform criti-

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Welcome

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Bachelor of Biological Sciences, Wright State University

Gabriel Hopkins, English as a Second Language
Post Baccalaureate Program, Initial Licensure in English as a Second Language, Worcester State University
Bachelor of French and Arabic, University College London
Undergraduate Certificate of Arabic, University of Damascus
Higher Language Institute

Kristi Menard, Special Education
Master of Special Education, Simmons College
Bachelor of Special Education, Westfield State University

Maureen Pellizzari, School Nurse
Bachelor of Nursing, George Mason University
Bachelor of International Studies, Allegheny College

Heather Ponte, Special Education
Bachelor of Early Childhood Education and Psychology, Worcester State University

Sherwood Middle School
Hilary Clegg, Media Specialist
Post-Masters School Library Teacher Certificate
Master of Secondary Education, Tufts University
Bachelor of English, University of Texas, Austin

Daniel Cushing, Sixth Grade Mathematics/Science
Bachelor of Community Health, Florida Gulf Coast University

Bethany Jones, Special Education
Master of Special Education, Assumption College
Bachelor of History, University of New Hampshire

Christina Manos, English as a Second Language
Master of Spanish, Middlebury College
Bachelor of English and Spanish, Williams College

Blandine Posiadala, French Teacher Certification Program, Miami-Dade Community College
Master of Foreign Trade, Ecole Supérieure du Commerce Extérieur
Bachelor of Foreign Trade, Ecole Supérieure du Commerce Extérieur

Amy Rensko, Advanced Mathematics Coach

Doctor of Jurisprudence, Boston College
Master of Education, Simmons College
Bachelor of Economics, Smith College

Hannah Rooney, Sixth Grade Mathematics/Science
Master of Curriculum, Leadership, and Inclusion, Lasell College
Bachelor of Elementary Education, Boston University

Melissa Williams, Fifth Grade, English Language Arts/Social Studies
Master of Elementary Education, Worcester State University

Beal Early Childhood Center
Jillian Falvo, Music (with Coolidge)
Master of Elementary Education, Anna Maria College (anticipated completion December 2018)
Bachelor of Music, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Kristen LaVeck, Music
Master of Music Education, Boston Conservatory
Bachelor of Music Education, Houghton College

Kristin Pupecki, Special Education
Master of Special Education, Fitchburg State University
Bachelor of Elementary Education and Psychology, Worcester State University

Coolidge School
Jillian Falvo, Music (with Beal)
Master of Elementary Education, Anna Maria College (anticipated completion December 2018)
Bachelor of Music, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Emily Gauthier, Second Grade
Bachelor of Elementary Education and Psychology, University of Rhode Island

Floral Street School
Melissa Allen, Third Grade
Bachelor of Elementary Education and Psychology, University of Rhode Island

Sarah Crump, Music (with Paton)
Bachelor Of Music Education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Rachael Grolman, Elementary Learning Center Coordinator
Master of Education, Simmons College
Bachelor of Communication Disorders, Worcester State University

Julie Hamilton, School Nurse
Bachelor of Nursing, University

of Massachusetts, Amherst

Paton School
Sarah Crump, Music (with Floral)
Bachelor Of Music Education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Emily Walker, Fourth Grade
Bachelor of Elementary Education and Psychology, Worcester State University

Meghan White, First Grade
Master of Reading Education, Worcester State University
Bachelor of English, Assumption College

Spring Street School
Bethany Knight, Music
Bachelor of Music Education, Gordon College

Christine Zambenardi, Fourth Grade
Bachelor of Elementary Education and Psychology, Stonehill College

Parker Road Preschool at Wesleyan Terrace
Anne Heinen, Preschool
Master of Curriculum and Instruction, Lesley University
Bachelor of Early Childhood Education, Lesley University

New Secretarial and Information Technology Staff
Carol Lourie, Administrative Assistant/School Secretary, Shrewsbury High School
Alexandria Lucchese, Administrative Assistant/School Secretary, Coolidge Elementary School
Christopher Hardee, Tier I IT Support Specialist

New Paraprofessional Staff
Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Technicians
Danielle Allain, Melissa Breault, Celeste Fontaine, Tia Kasparian, Brittany Lund, Christine Marshall, Nichole Muller, Patrick O’Callahan, Erin Pelletier, Lisa Perna, Diana Pineau

Child Specific Aides
Caryn Gordon, Brittainy Jackson, Tatyana Mikhelashvili, Christopher Noble, Karen Olivier, Mahalakshmi Venirapragada

Special Education Aides
Janet Allen, Olga Fourcade, Kerri Kelly, Jigna Yajnik

Instructional Aides
Jesmin Aleem, Emily Joubert, Martha Kinback, Elizabeth Lombardi, Meghan Parisi, Jill Shah

Media Aides
Karen Geddes

Safety

CONTINUED from page 6

cal tasks. These skills and tasks include immediate assessment of an active shooter scene, room entry techniques, building clearing, building formularization and victim rescue. Active shooter incidents are fundamentally different from hostage situations and other critical incidents because of the extreme pressure on police to respond as quickly as possible to stop the killing and wounding of victims. Active shooter training is built around the reality that even a one-minute delay in responding may result in multiple additional fatalities.

Additional training and drills pertaining to other emergency scenarios were conducted to include lockdown, shelter, evacuation, and fire.

The Future of Security and Safety in the School Department: Again, with our eyes focused forward, the School Department through the year will continue to build upon, improve and refine our security and safety procedures to meet the challenges of ever-evolving threats. Standardization and institutionalizing our emergency response protocols, communications and equipment, along with training, will remain the cornerstones of this program. The School Department will maintain our vigilance and evolve our procedures to counter the ever-increasing bomb threats, which continue to plague numerous school districts. Enhancement and leveraging technology surrounding the existing school video surveillance systems and capabilities is critical for several reasons. School security cameras help maintain safety around our campus, they also discourage misbehavior, and act as a deterrent. Conspicuously placed school surveillance cameras have been shown to reduce threats of violence and vandalism drastically. Additionally, school security cameras at entrance doors can assist administrative staff in the monitoring of visitors and ensure they are properly signed in, while still allowing students and staff to move freely around the campus.

Last and most importantly, we continue to work with school administrators in support of a robust high school Student Support Team (SST), which consists of school administrators, guidance counselors, psychologists, and students to help proactively prevent violence and or inappropriate behavior in the schools. The efforts of the SST, which meets on a weekly basis, can go a long way toward mitigating the threat of such occurrences. Although not an exact science for predicting school-setting violence or adverse behavior, students and staff can take certain actions to reduce these incidents. First, it is critical to understand that these types of behavior do not just happen at random or “out of the blue.” Rather, perpetrators usually display some behaviors of concern. Thus, awareness of these indicators and the subsequent implementation of an action plan to de-escalate potentially violent situations and/or unwanted behavioral issues form essential components of school violence prevention programs.

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