

Superintendent's Corner

We have work to do

DR. JOSEPH M. SAWYER
SUPERINTENDENT

At the start of each calendar year, I provide my perspective regarding the strengths our schools possess and the challenges that we face in my "State of the District" report, from which this column is adapted. This year's overarching theme: While we have much to celebrate, *we have work to do* to achieve our collective aspirations for our students.

The work ahead will build on a sturdy foundation, as the current state of our schools is very strong. Our students continue to demonstrate very high levels of success in traditional measures of academics, including strong performance on state and national assessments, including our district again being named to the national AP Honor Roll for increasing access to rigorous coursework while maintaining very strong outcomes. Student creations and performances in the visual and performing arts continue to earn accolades, while academic competition teams and athletic teams continue to achieve impressive results. Further, we have educators, support staff, and administrators who continue to do extraordinary work every day, and our School Committee provides leadership that creates the conditions for students and educators to thrive. Our parent community provides outstanding support, as does the entire community-at-large, as evidenced by the overwhelmingly positive vote to build a new K-4 elementary school (for which we are extremely grateful!).

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“ Upon the subject of education ...
I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people can be engaged in. - Abraham Lincoln ”



Student participants in the "Shark Tank: Industrial Revolution Edition" competition at SHS are shown with their 2018 versions of inventions from the Industrial Revolution. Please see "Students engage in connected learning for a complex world" on page 6.

Developing next year's budget: more than dollars and cents

MR. JASON PALITSCH
SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAIR

The development of next year's budget for Shrewsbury Public Schools is well underway, a process that will continue into May, when Town Meeting Members will vote to authorize the total amount of town-appropriated dollars. A great deal of thought, preparation, discussion, and work will continue until then: ongoing discussions between the School Committee and the Superintendent, the Town Manager, the Board of Selectmen, and the Finance Committee; continuous review of the state budget process, which plays out simultaneously, to estimate likely state aid; and of course, public input. At roughly \$67 million in proposed expenditures, the school budget represents the largest component of the Town of Shrewsbury's spending.

But the budget is about much more than dollar figures: it is an annual conversation about where we are as a district – what our strengths and challenges of the moment are – and where we would like to go. Why? Because budgeting is the process of deciding where and how our resources will be allocated. Where we place those resources, in turn, is a question of values.

To that end, you may have heard that the School Committee and the Superintendent are taking a different approach to presenting and discussing budget options this year: by breaking down proposed increases – Strategic Investments – by Strategic Priority.

In February, following preliminary discussions with the School Committee, the Superintendent outlined his initial FY20 budget recommendation. First and foremost, the recommended budget seeks the resources necessary to maintain the education program as it exists today. Though it may seem counter-intuitive, additional financial resources are needed each year just to maintain the program as it exists, because built-in cost drivers increase the expense of providing education each year; these cost-drivers exist, for the most part, outside the control of the School Department. These include labor contracts and transportation costs, as well as special education expenses mandated by state and federal law. Just maintaining the status quo as it exists today will require a 4.59% increase in funds, for a total budget of \$67,080,933.

However, it is not the goal of the Superintendent or the School Committee merely to maintain the status quo. The world is changing at an increasingly fast rate, and what Shrewsbury students must know and be able to do inevitably changes with it. For our school district to remain strong,

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We should continue to celebrate the continued excellence of our schools, and utilize these strengths as we take the necessary steps to provide an even better education for our students, one that will adapt to the changing needs and demands that today’s world places upon our students and us. As with any successful organization, we have work to do in order to improve our ability to achieve our mission, and so we must focus our time and resources on our strategic priorities.

“The work ahead will build on a sturdy foundation, as the current state of our schools is very strong.”

Under our strategic priority of “Learning environments where everyone’s success matters,” we have work to do if we are to become a district where we can truly say that “all means all” when it comes to ensuring that all students are getting what they need to succeed. This means being intentional about applying best practices to educate diverse learners, and to ensure that our approach is inclusive where it comes to our students’ and families’ cultural backgrounds, so that all students and families feel welcome and unconditionally accepted as members of our school communities.

To achieve our strategic priority of “Enhanced well-being of all,” we have work to do to address the social, emotional, and behavioral health issues that have become more prevalent in recent times in our society – and in our community. This is especially true where it comes to the specific topics of depression and suicide, substance abuse and addiction (including new challenges

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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

In partnership with the community

DR. JANE O. LIZOTTE
PRINCIPAL,
SHERWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL

“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.” – Coretta Scott King

The mission of the Shrewsbury Public Schools includes, “*The Shrewsbury Public Schools, in partnership with the community, will provide students with the skills and knowledge for the 21st century, an appreciation of our democratic tradition, and the desire to continue to learn throughout life.*” On January 17, 2000, Coretta Scott King expressed a similar sentiment, as she spoke at a service summit convened in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s honor. Our school district’s mission focuses on our community because working together makes us stronger, happier, and better equipped to embrace life’s challenges.

Our school communities welcome parent volunteers, community partners, student teachers, and visitors into our buildings each day. These individuals contribute to the lives of students and staff, while energizing teaching and learning in the Shrewsbury Public Schools. At Sherwood Middle School (SMS), teams have welcomed business owners and others who have shared what they do, why they do it, and ways in which their skills, attitudes, and mindsets have influenced their work. The following are excerpts describing the people and experiences recently shared with students and staff at SMS.

Community Partners:
Dr. Jessica White, Dentist
Mrs. Litza Rivera, Instructional Technology Support Specialist, SMS
Ms. Norah Xenos, Learning Express, Westborough
Dr. Jessica Seaver, Assistant Program Director for the New England Center for Children
Dr. Armelle de Laforcade, Emergency and Critical Care Veterinarian (Students visited Dr. deLaforcade at Tufts School of Veterinary Medicine, Grafton, MA)

SMS Liaison: Ms. Meghan deLeon, Special Education Team Chair and Educator

As part of a literature study

unit developed by Ms. Carney, students on 6 Purple completed a culminating writing and visual arts activity. Students were asked to think about their future goals and dreams. In writing about how to achieve these goals, students were also asked to identify potential challenges. To celebrate their hard work, students were connected with community members who have overcome challenges and achieved their dreams.

Dr. Jessica White visited our classroom, via FaceTime, from her dental office in Hull, MA to speak to a student about her dream of becoming a dental assistant. During the virtual visit, Dr. White gave the students a tour of the facility, demonstrated the use of various dental tools, examined an X-Ray to locate a potential cavity and conducted a cleaning on a very kind and willing patient. Dr. White and her staff answered questions and offered great advice about a career in the dental field.

Mrs. Litza Rivera, Instructional Technology Support Specialist at Sherwood Middle School, joined our classroom to share with students stories about life in Puerto Rico. Students and staff were in awe of her adventures kayaking the bioluminescent bays. She spoke specifically to a student about his dream to visit Puerto Rico again someday to experience the unique geographic features and animal habitats.

Ms. Norah Xenos from Learning Express in Westborough visited the classroom to talk to a student about her dream of working at a toy store someday. Ms. Xenos had lots of information to share about designing the store to prepare for different seasons and holidays. She explained how they order merchandise and she described all the latest trends in toys! Ms. Xenos even surprised the students with a trinket from the shop to bring home.

Dr. Jessica Seaver, Assistant Program Director for the New England Center for Children, came into our classroom to speak to a student about his dream of visiting Burj Kahlifa, the tallest building in the world. Dr. Seaver impressed the students with her experiences living and working in Dubai! She shared actual photos taken by her colleagues in front of “the Burj” and answered the students’ questions about the construction

and completion of this amazing work of architecture.

Dr. Armelle de Laforcade, an Emergency and Critical Care Veterinarian, invited students to visit her at Tufts School of Veterinary Medicine, to see first hand the work that goes into caring for animals. Students and staff were provided with an in-depth tour of the animal hospital and were able to see animals receiving medical care. The student who dreams about becoming a veterinarian was able to ask questions about the qualifications to work in various departments of the animal hospital.

Community Partner: Mr. Abba Caspi, Grandparent of SMS Student
SMS Liaison: Ms. Cheryl Stoychoff, ELA/ Social Studies teacher, 6 Silver

In early February, 6 Silver students welcomed classmate Dahlia Welland’s grandfather, Mr. Abba Caspi, to the 6 Silver team. Mr. Caspi spoke about the written languages of ancient Mesopotamia and worked with students to decode laws created by Hammurabi, the Amorite king of the Babylonian Empire. Sixth grade students study the early civilizations of Mesopotamia, among other ancient civilizations. Mr. Caspi is very interested in, and knowledgeable about, the process by which different civilizations and generations learn from those who came before them and build on top of what they received. He graduated with high honors from Harvard University, where he majored in Near Eastern Languages and Literatures and studied, among other subjects, the Sumerian and Akkadian (Babylonian and Assyrian) languages.

Community Partner: Mr. Mohan Gundu, SMS Parent
SMS Liaison: Mr. Nate Forest, Physical Education and Health Teacher

Mr. Mohan Gundu, father of 6 Red student, Kruthi Gundu, recently shared his knowledge and expertise of Yoga practice to several physical education classes at SMS. The students learned about the history, benefits, and practice of yoga, while gaining experience with yoga basics, learning the importance of and ways to quiet the mind, with the goal of being present in the moment. Mr. Gundu’s fam-

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A new “league”

JOHN “JACK” DOYLE
STUDENT,
SHREWSBURY HIGH SCHOOL

The growth of Esports over the last few years has been astounding. From the humble beginnings in rented out basements to a mainstream phenomenon and million dollar industry, this new and unique sport has been turning heads all over the globe. By now, many of you have heard about Esports, but for those who haven’t, Esports translates to “electronic sports,” or in more literal terms, competitive video gaming. Through untraditional means to say the least, Esports landed its spot as a sanctioned high school sport last fall in multiple states across the country, with many more expected to join in future seasons. One of those states was Massachusetts, and that’s where the story began.

This past fall the school administration of Shrewsbury High School (SHS) sent out a poll regarding student interest in the proposed creation of an official Esports team. Immediately, the students responded, but the structure of the proposed team remained largely up in the air. Captain of the state champion *SHS Gatekeepers*, SHS senior Tommy Wang, reached out to Mr. McKinstry, IT Support Specialist, as well as Mr. Lizotte, Assistant Principal, at SHS. Through their efforts, the project was able to progress, as the groundwork for the team was put in place. Four teams were created from the roughly 30 odd students who had registered for the team, giving Shrewsbury the highest participation of any school in the Massachusetts Circuit.

The video game chosen for the inaugural season was “League of Legends.” Abbreviated “LoL,” this game emphasized teamwork and synergies between players. Successful LoL teams are more than just groups of friends playing together. They must be well coached, have strong in-game and out-of-game leaders, and communicate effectively with each other.



Students from all four Esports teams at Shrewsbury High School (SHS) are shown competing at the first game of their regular season on October 23, 2018 at the SHS computer lab.



Massachusetts School Administrators’ Association (MSAA) Fall 2018 Esports State Champions, the Shrewsbury High School “Gatekeepers,” are pictured at Showcase Live! Patriot Place after their win on January 28, 2019. Shown left to right are Coach Steve McKinstry; Students: Varisra Upatising, John “Jack” Doyle, Thomas Wang, Gerry Dang, and Jerry Du. Not shown: Student Tristan Duerk.

All four SHS teams performed well enough to make the playoffs, which were stressful for all of us. Both *SHS TMA* and *SHS DHU* lost in the first two rounds on the first day of playoffs, marking a swift end to their seasons. My team and *NPG* were determined to avoid a similar fate. All the playoff games, bar the finals, took place in the computer lab at our school. Our teams helped each other prepare with information on our opponents based on the games we had played against them in the regular season. Despite strong play, three of the SHS teams were eliminated, but the *SHS Gatekeepers* made it to the state finals to compete against *Newton South Orange*. The finals took place at Showcase Live in Foxboro, next to Gillette Stadium. When I got there, I was shocked. The stage was professionally laid out, there was food in suites in the back for the players, there were live casters, and functional practice rooms as well. When we all got there, we immediately set to work. There is a lot of pre-game preparation that goes into each match. Every player can be scouted and the game database also held stats and game records for all the regular season matches. We had a fairly solid game plan going into the first match, and came out victorious despite the extensive delays due to technical issue. However, in the second game, Newton came back with a vengeance, evening the score at one to one and setting the

stage for a single deciding match. Everything we had worked for was on the line. There was even a considerable trophy that we desperately wanted to get our hands on. Rather than being demoralized from our loss, we regathered ourselves and set out with a new game plan. We changed our strategy, but in doing so had to open ourselves to Newton’s more effective options. We had faith in each other to match our opposite number, even on their best champion, falling back on our teamwork and coordination to win the day. With all of us working in unison like a well-oiled machine, we dominated the last game, securing our spot as the state champions. The formalities followed, starting with interviews, pictures, handshakes, and ending with our team leaving together, with one more large wooden trophy for our school in tow.

Our success wasn’t a product of obsession or addiction to an often criticized activity. Success in this league is derived from teamwork and strategies. Coordination and communication are the cornerstones of competitive gaming, even at this level. Gaming is an incredible pastime. It’s entertaining, engaging, inclusive, and attainable. Gaming is a common string between millions of people over the world, and one that shouldn’t be ignored. Gaming brings us together, despite our differences of background, gender, wealth, and academic success. At its core, gaming is a means of uniting massively different populations, and Esports is the pinnacle of gaming. Esports united me with my fellow students, and helped me forge bonds that would never have been made otherwise. It was an experience I wouldn’t trade for anything.

Next Year’s Budget

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we must continue to innovate.

Our School Committee remains committed to the Strategic Priorities and five-year Goals adopted for the district in 2017, which have outlined where we would like our school district to be, and what we’d like our students to know and do, when 2022 arrives. These goals are broken into four categories: 1) *Space and resources to support effective learning*; 2) *Learning environments where everyone’s success matters*; 3) *Enhanced well-being of all*; and 4) *Connected learning for a complex world*.

Within each category are a set of specific, clear, actionable goals that the district aims to achieve by 2022. Many of them require investments of time or resources, both of which are in short supply. Realizing this vision for our district will require discipline, and being thoughtful and strategic about how we invest in our schools.

To that end, the Superintendent’s recommended FY20 budget breaks down proposed increases by Strategic Priority to illustrate how these investments will help the district make progress towards

“For our school district to remain strong, we must continue to innovate.”

these goals. Here are just a few examples from each Strategic Priority that could be implemented if resources beyond the status quo budget are available:

- **Space and resources to support effective learning:** a PreK-12 space and enrollment capacity study, an additional SHS Science teacher to meet enrollment, ending the sharing of staff between the high school and middle schools (where schedules do not align) to create efficiencies
- **Learning environments where everyone’s success matters:** additional special needs teaching staff, better assessment tools to determine how the district is serving our highest-needs students, and improving culturally proficient educational practices
- **Enhanced well-being of all:** an increased focus on Social-Emotional Learning, supporting the work of the School Start Time Committee, and adding Adjustment Counselors and/or other mental health professionals
- **Connected learning for a complex world:** procure new curriculum Materials (including resources needed to implement the new K-8 state-mandated Science curriculum), update classroom technology, and support additional project-based learning approaches.

To read the Superintendent’s full FY20

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Superintendent's Corner

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related to the legalization of marijuana and an epidemic of vaping, in addition to the opioid crisis), and the societal phenomena of smartphones and screen time changing the social dynamic. To address these issues, we will need to focus time, attention, and resources on developing a comprehensive approach to social and emotional learning for all, as well as expanded counseling and clinical supports for students with significant needs.

To move forward with our strategic priority of "Connected learning for a complex world," we have work to do if we are to become a district where we can truly say that all of our students are learning the skills they will need to be successful citizens. There are many innovative ways in which our students are learning the 21st century skills of communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking, and it becomes more clear each year why building these competencies is crucial for our students' future success. What we see in society and the media today also makes it apparent that our students must become savvy consumers of news and information who can also see the moral and ethical dimensions of issues, so that they become informed, empathetic citizens who serve the community and seek the common good.

The approval of building a new Beal School significantly advanced our strategic priority of "Space and resources to support effective learning," and we not only have work to do to successfully complete this critical project, but as our district continues to grow we also will need to address other physical space needs, ensure adequate staffing, and provide appropriate learning materials and technology, all in order to achieve what the community has made it clear that it expects of us.

We are fortunate in our district, as we have substantial resources, both capital and human, to do the important work of educating our students. These resources continue to be modest when viewed in the context of other school districts across the state, and the value that our community receives regarding the return on its investment is superb.

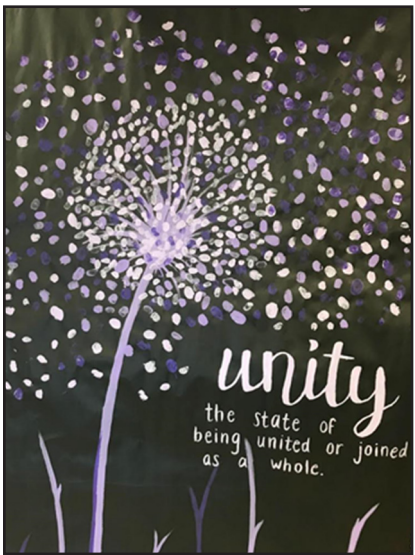
Our students and educators have and will continue to learn much and learn well, but we have work to do so that we may reach the ambitious goals that have been set for improving the lives of the children in our care. I am confident that, with the support of the community, we will continue to seek and find innovative ways to teach our students both the academic and life skills they will need to lead successful lives.

News from the Visual Arts department

PAMELA LEBLANC
DIRECTOR OF
VISUAL ARTS, K-12

Shrewsbury High School's National Art Honor Society (NAHS) has been active for over 30 years, and the mission to spread art throughout the Shrewsbury community remains strong. Each year the members of NAHS are involved in volunteer work and team activities. They are sought-after by locals to volunteer in the greater community and participate in various art contests while simultaneously bringing beautiful art to the halls of Shrewsbury High School (SHS). This year's National Art Honor Society consists of 23 students in grades 10 through 12, all of whom can proudly say they have contributed to the collective artistic mission.

Most recently, to celebrate Black History Month and to symbolize unity, the second installation/art project was created and shared during the February 12th assembly. The art project (*pictured below*) is a depiction of a dandelion blowing in the wind. Once again students and staff came together creating an image of a dandelion that is made up of the fingerprints of those who share the halls of SHS. As stated by student Divya Addepalli during the assembly, *the flower depicts a common goal and direction and though we are all individuals, we see each other through times of need and are united as a school community.*



"Unity," was the theme for this year's Black History celebration. however, it wasn't the only time that the SHS community came together to signify unity, it happens more than we know or see as it has many forms. This year the National Art Honor Society involved the SHS community in two school-wide art installation projects that were a visual to emphasize unity and togetherness. Special thanks go to to National



Art Honor Society officers Phoebe Gullion, Zachary St. Pierre, and Anjali Tanna for facilitating this project.

The NAHS also facilitated an all-inclusive installation project that incorporated the entire Shrewsbury High School community. This year, the NAHS wanted to find a meaningful way to address the issues of mental health and stress at SHS. After a process of research and experimentation, the group decided to create an origami butterfly installation piece (*pictured above*), inspired by artist Carlos Amorales and his interpretation of the symbology connected to swarms of butterflies.

Phoebe Gullion, NAHS Officer, notes: *From ideation to execution, the entire process took one month to bring to fruition. We met with the school's administration throughout the process to discuss logistics. We also maintained a cost effective and time efficient operation. The members of the NAHS handed out pieces of warm-colored construction paper to every student and staff member at SHS. They were then instructed to write a cause of their stress or a reason they feel trapped on the papers that were then collected and folded into thousands of origami butterflies by members of the NAHS. Over the course of a weekend, our members hung the butterflies in an elegant swarm in the first-floor main hallway of our school. In many cultures, butterflies symbolize freedom and for SHS, they also signified unity and a sense of release. Conveyed by the swarm, the SHS community was able to overcome the stress imposed on our community by ourselves and external pressures through the catharsis and beauty of art, and to find comfort in the feeling of never being alone when we are in times of need.*

This "swarm of hope" will be moving to the main entrance of the Shrewsbury Public Library

in April 2019 where it can be experienced by a larger community audience. Again, the officers of the NAHS were instrumental in the installation of this piece at Shrewsbury High School.

The Memory Project

It is with passion, dedication, and kindness that our students step forward to take part in the Memory Project each year. The Memory Project is a non-profit organization that asks art students to create portraits of impoverished orphans around the world: it's the highlight of the students' year! They utilize their incredible talents in a selfless act of goodwill that will forever bring joy to others less fortunate than themselves. This year's portraits will be completed at the beginning of April, and delivered to the children in May. Over the summer a video of the children receiving portraits will be shared with the department. The joy on the children's faces is palpable; it's what makes this partnership so special.

More information about the Memory Project can be found at: <https://www.memoryproject.org/about>

Other recognitions...

Congratulations to Junior Lanna Wang, whose artwork (*pictured below*) was selected to be the cover for the 2019 Literary Magazine for the Rotary Clubs of Shrewsbury and Worcester.



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Visual Arts

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Youth Art Month at the Worcester Art Museum

March celebrated Youth Art Month (YAM) at the Worcester Art Museum! YAM is a national celebration endorsed by the Council for Art Education, the National Art Education Association, and the Massachusetts Art Education Association. Shrewsbury Public Schools were represented with over 40 pieces of incredible work from our students, grades K-12. Works were exhibited in the Higgins Education Wing of the Worcester Art Museum along with other schools from Central MA throughout the month of March. Over 400 pieces were on display to be adjudicated. An opening reception recognizing the accomplishments of the student artists of Central Massachusetts was held on March 3rd. This annual celebration emphasizes the value of art education for all children and encourages support for quality art programs in public and private schools.

Congratulations to the following artists of the Shrewsbury Public Schools whose work was on display!

Grade K: Luke Liu, Elyse Oh, Ahaan Prakash,

Grade 1: Owen Greenberg, Jacob Moura, Varsha Nannuri

Grade 2: Mishka Chellappa, Tierney Murphy, Geethika Velagapudi

Grade 3: Andrew Boles, Gabriella Besada, Shreya Charvan, Norah Gaffey, Samantha Ha, Camille Loconsolo, Grace Yin

Grade 4: Olive Barber, Maria Campaniello

Grade 5: Adam Mazejka, Hayleen Finlayson, Karina Kubit

Grade 6: Julian Cho, Luana DeMoura, Noah Csank, Rachel Line-man, Chenhao Xu

Grade 7: Isabelle Zhao

Grade 8: Savina Villani, Ada Booras, John Grenier

Grade 9: Safiyah Ahmed, Jillian Evans, Kelly Quinn

Grade 10: Emily Liu, Amelia Mendoza, Megan Remington

Grade 11: Nicole Lacerda, Lauren Mendoza, Arimita Padam, Heather Spangenberg, Lanna Wang

Grade 12: Talib Haider, Anthony Mastromatteo, Julia Miller, Lindsey Richardson, Maria Walsh

Campaign for Shrewsbury Athletic Fields update

MICHELLE BISCOTTI &
KATHLEEN KEOHANE
COORDINATORS OF
VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES
& DEVELOPMENT

We are finally playing on our new field! (see photo at bottom of page)

On October 12th, 2018, *The Campaign for Shrewsbury Athletic Fields* invited all Shrewsbury families to an action-packed “Evening Preview” of our new David J. Adams Memorial Field at Central One Federal Credit Union Stadium. The turf field installation was completed in August 2018 but rain and weather delayed the completion of the new track that surrounds the field until early October.

The first games played on the new turf field were Varsity and then Junior Varsity field hockey against Wachusett Regional High School. Spectators also enjoyed the 2nd Annual Colonial Way, sponsored by Shrewsbury High School (SHS) Student Council & the SHS Athletic Boosters. Finally, the evening culminated with a Varsity Football game against Algonquin Regional High School with the Colonials getting the win, 40-13. We never could have played three games back-to-back on our old grass field and many athletes were excited to say they were one of the first to play on turf at Shrewsbury High School.

Field hockey fans enjoyed a bright sunny day, watching the first-ever field hockey game played on the SHS turf field.

Throngs of students, parents and staff gathered at Colonial Way, giving a definite celebratory feel to our “Evening Preview,” providing live music, delicious food and fun activities for people of all ages. During the Colonial Way celebration, turf field donors and the general public were invited to view renderings of the new brick plaza and donor recognition areas that will be constructed later this year.



Once the brick plaza and donor recognition areas are installed, we will celebrate the official opening of the David J. Adams Memorial Field on September 13, 2019. Fans will enjoy the incredible sound and video from our new, larger digital scoreboard and delight in the updates to our ticket booth, reflection garden, concession stand and press box. Everyone will be invited to stroll through the brick plaza and read the many moving tributes to past, present and future community members and alumni. More details about our celebration will be forthcoming.

Would you like to advertise on our new beautiful scoreboard? This fall, in addition to offering a permanent sponsorship panel on the scoreboard, we will be offering 15 and 30 second video slots for advertising for local businesses. Ads will play during halftime. For more information about video ads, please email development@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us

We are grateful to the Shrewsbury community for coming together so quickly to give our school district its first all-weather playing surface. In just over 18 months, we raised over \$1.8 million dollars to fund this project. We wholeheartedly thank everyone who made a donation to the *Campaign for Shrewsbury Athletic Fields* and who purchased a memorial brick. A special “thank you” to Central One Federal Credit Union; Susan, Daniel and Sarah Adams; Al’s Oil Service and the Flynn Family; Shrewsbury Youth Soccer; Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union; Jim and Paula Buonomo; Shrewsbury Athletic Boosters; Mel and Maria Chacharone; Mark and Lisa Govoni; Unibank; Avidia Bank; Columbia Tech and the Coghlin Families; Gene Defeudis; Lifetouch National School Studios; Richard and Alison Ricker; the Galli Family; and many, many other businesses, families, teams and individuals who all helped to make the new turf field and refinished track a reality for our community.

Next Year’s Budget

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budget proposal, visit the district’s website at schools.shrewsbury.ma.gov and choose “Budget Information” under the School Committee section.

The development of our proposed budget is a process by which we allocate resources needed to achieve the goals of our district, and ultimately, to best serve our students. As this process moves forward, I invite all community members to get involved by letting the School Committee know what you think. We are always eager to hear the thoughts of residents, parents, and students as we go through this process. Send us an email at schoolcommittee@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us, or write to us at 100 Maple Avenue. These are Shrewsbury’s schools and Shrewsbury’s resources, and decisions around the budget will impact the future of our entire community.

Partnership

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ily serves as volunteers in HSS USA, a non-profit social and cultural organization. Bringing these experiences to our students strengthens their understanding of the importance of life-long skills and habits, as they relate to physical, mental, and emotional health.

Community Partners: Members of the Rail Trail Flatbread Company
SMS Liaison: Mrs. Anne Egan, Mathematics and Science Teacher, 6 Gold

The Rail Trail Flatbread Company, located in Hudson, MA, has supported Sherwood Middle School by judging the Flatbread Competitions on 6 Gold for the past few years. Members of the Rail Trail leadership team work with sixth grade students, provide critical feedback, and select winning flatbread recipes, financial plans, and marketing initiatives. The winning flatbreads are designed to be offered on the menu and have been offered to patrons with great success! Teams of students work diligently to develop the skills needed to create and sell a flatbread to be enjoyed at the restaurant.

The owners of the Rail Trail Flatbread Company are very excited about the work in which they are engaged with 6 Gold students. Each flatbread team creates video marketing presentations in preparation for the visit by the company’s representatives. Students prepared for the presentations by reading an article from Forbes Magazine about Rail Trail’s Mission (see here: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/fotschcase/2017/10/31/good-profits-vs-bad-profits/-1cc3426558b8>) Students focused their comments on the Rail Trail’s Mission Statement, which was well received by the leaders of the company, as they responded by sharing the importance of that mission to every-

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Partnership

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thing they do. Another segment included information regarding the process of calculating a profit, resulting in critical thinking by the students. Flatbreads including the Stealthy Healthy Flatbread and the Supreme Spanish Flatbread were among this year’s favorites!

Community Partner: Former SMS Student, Mr. Anthony Jreije
SMS Liaison: Ms. Catherine Jreije,
ELA/SS long-term substitute, 6 Gold

Mr. Anthony Jreije works as a transportation planner at the South Eastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority and is studying for his Master’s degree at the University of Pennsylvania. His research and work involves increasing urban bus transport efficiency through network improvements. Mr. Jreije recently spoke to 200 sixth grade students about the connections between ancient civilizations and modern urban planning by discussing ways in which transportation routes originally came into existence and how they have evolved over time.

Community Partner: Ms. Colleen Cauley, Marketing Promotions Manager, BJ’s Wholesale Club
Information shared by Ms. Gloria DiGiacomo and Ms. Suzie Polechronis, Teachers, 6 Green

Ms. Colleen Cauley, marketing executive from BJ’s Wholesale Club, was one of four judges who served on a marketing panel to listen to students present their *Award Winning Pizza* marketing campaigns, as part of a project-based cross curricular learning experience for students on the 6 Green Team. Among other things, Ms. Cauley spoke to the students about establishing a price based on cost plus a 16% increase for profit. The panel of judges included Ms. Cauley, Ms. Melissa McCann, Mathematics Curriculum Coordinator, Ms. Suzie Polechronis and Ms. Gloria DiGiacomo, 6 Green team teachers. After careful review of the students’ detailed and creative products, Ms. Cauley returned to BJ’s with the brochures, so that the marketing department could evaluate the student work and provide suggestions to them. The students were very excited for the opportunity to present their work to an authentic audience and receive critical feedback!

Community Partners:

Corporal James Belton, Marine (Skype visit)
Ms. Katie Van Lingen, Registered Nurse (Skype visit)
Ms. Gerrie Mahoney, Sr. Associate Athletics Director, Harvard University
Mr. Andrew Mahoney, Sports Producer, Boston Globe
Ms. Sandi Panaretos, Associate Man-

CONTINUED, see page 7

Students engage in connected learning for a complex world

JENNIFER DiFRANCESCA
DIRECTOR OF
SOCIAL SCIENCES,
SHREWSBURY HIGH SCHOOL

This winter, students and teachers in the Shrewsbury High School (SHS) Social Sciences department engaged in several learning opportunities that related to the district’s strategic priority of “connected learning for a complex world,” which included using technology, thinking independently, engaging with authentic audiences, and solving problems.

Students in United States History I Honors and American Studies classes used technology to broaden their understanding and demonstrate their learning. Using their iPads, Mr. Hertel-Therrien’s students researched, created and recorded rap songs that highlighted the accomplishments from the Age of Reform. They competed in a cross-class competition in which they evaluated their peers’ ability to accurately and creatively present their topic. Mr. Burton’s students created a podcast called “US History by Students for Students.” The podcast featured students engaging in a question and answer session about course content with professors from The College of the Holy Cross. Students in Mr. Aloisi’s and Mr. Brown’s Ameri-

can Studies classes competed in the 4th annual Royal Rumble competition, using technology to research and design their presentations which were judged by educators from both SHS and Oak Middle School as well as administrators from the district’s Central Office.

In December, several World Civilizations classes engaged in activities with authentic audiences. Students in Ms. Rigberg’s and Ms. Gray’s classes created holiday cards that described Shrewsbury as well as their families’ traditions. The cards were mailed to students in the Ukraine, France, Hong Kong, Turkey, Taiwan and Romania. In early January, SHS students received cards that enabled them to gain an insight into cultures and traditions in other areas of the world. Meanwhile, students in Ms. Wright’s and Ms. DiFrancesca’s classes competed in *Shark Tank: Industrial Revolution Edition*. To prepare for the competition, students created 2018 versions of inventions from the Industrial Revolution. They presented their models to their peers, while parents and educators provided feedback.

In all nine elective classes that were offered this winter, students were provided a variety of opportunities to engage in connected learning for a complex world.

Students in Mr. Scheer’s Law & Order class participated in mock civil and criminal trials. After extensive preparation, students’ performances as witnesses, jury members, lawyers, and bailiffs were judged by administrators, counselors and teachers. As part of their exploration of American Government, students in Mr. Aloisi’s class exchanged ideas with Shrewsbury Town Manager Kevin Mizikar and Superintendent Sawyer on local issues and how decisions at the state and federal level can impact Shrewsbury. Students in Ms. Fitzgerald’s AP Human Geography classes needed to think independently and solve problems as they competed in their ROSTOW Cup fantasy development league competition. During the competition, students worked collaboratively to apply their understanding of course content including countries’ different levels of development. The winners had their name engraved on the “Golden Globe” currently housed in Room B302 at SHS.

Throughout the rest of the school year, students in SHS Social Science classes will continue to have opportunities to use technology, think independently, engage with authentic audiences, solve problems and participate in field studies. We hope you will ask them to share their experiences with you.



Students in Mr. Scheer’s Law & Order class took part in mock civil and criminal trials.

Developing high quality math tasks for the middle grades

MELISSA McCANN
MATH CURRICULUM
COORDINATOR, GRADES 5-8

Math teachers representing grades 5-8 have been dedicating their professional development time during the 2018-2019 school year to develop standards-aligned instructional tasks that promote problem solving and reasoning. This work is being completed in tandem with other public school districts across Massachusetts, and in collaboration with the

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the STEM Education Center at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI). A major goal of this work is to offer teachers the opportunity to engage in high-quality professional development.

During their work in task development meetings, teachers are advancing their professional skills and deepening their understanding of the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics.

In June, some teacher representatives will attend the “Massachusetts Science and Math Institute: Standards-aligned Instructional Tasks” at WPI to present samples of the work done this year. Ultimately, the math tasks will be posted on the WPI and DESE websites and linked to the DESE Standards Navigator. As a result, Massachusetts educators will be able to search for thought-provoking tasks that align to specific grade levels and math standards to implement with their own students.

Shrewsbury High School students present at MassCUE Conference

HEATHER LEGER
FRENCH LANGUAGE TEACHER,
SHREWSBURY HIGH SCHOOL

Massachusetts Computer Using Educators (MassCUE) is Massachusetts' affiliate of the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). This past October, MassCUE partnered with



The students in attendance were (L to R in photo) Max Evers, Ruoyan (Vivien) Pan, Aleksia Bruzho, and Brooke Podlipec, along with their French teacher, Madame Heather Leger.

the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS) to host New England's premiere technology-in-education conference at Gillette Stadium in Fox-boro, Massachusetts.

MassCUE had two student showcases. CUEKids and Global Ed Trekkers shared amazing projects they have done in their classrooms. Students from over 30 different school systems across the state highlighted projects that focus on connection with global education, and explained their high-quality projects that incorporated learning and technology.

We are excited to let you know students from Shrewsbury High School presented at the Mass-CUE conference on October 18, 2018. They shared how they have

been using FaceTime for Authentic Connections with students in France. Through personal connections with native French speakers as well as English teachers in France, Madame Leger has been able to host FaceTime and/or Skype sessions with native French speakers including a Healthcare Management worker and mother, a teacher/native speaker from Sénégal, and two classes from French schools in Southwestern France. More in depth connections were made with a private school in Orange, France, where students exchanged videos, email, and interacted using FaceTime in small groups. Students were very excited to interact in this authentic way, thus proving to themselves that they could successfully apply what they had been learning in class.

Meg Belsito, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, shared that on November 30, 2018, **Dr. Russell Johnston, Senior Associate Commissioner of Education, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)** spent time in our schools. Dr. Johnston learned about what services, supports and programs are offered through student services. He was able to visit Parker Road Preschool, Paton Elementary School, Sherwood Middle School and Shrewsbury High School. Dr. Johnston was energized by our Educational Learning Center classrooms, Essential courses, Co-Teaching classrooms and Shrewsbury High School Transitions programming. In a follow up email, Dr. Johnston stated, "We were very inspired by what we saw, especially your cohesive continuum of services from preschool through high school. You gave us many ideas that will help inform our future policy decisions." Dr. Johnston is shown interacting with student Khloe Lothrop at Paton School.



Statement of Non-discrimination

Shrewsbury Public Schools is required by the Massachusetts Department of Education to publish an annual statement of non-discrimination. This notice serves to meet that requirement. The Massachusetts Equal Educational Opportunity statute, General Laws Chapter 76, § 5, ensures that all students have the right to equal educational opportunities in the public schools. The Shrewsbury Public School District is committed to ensuring equal educational opportunities for all students, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation or disability. The Shrewsbury Public Schools are in compliance with state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination and harassment. The following laws apply: Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, § 5, which states, "No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in the admission to a public school or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and course of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation." Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 is a Federal statute which states, in part, "No person in the United States shall on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program receiving federal assistance." This requirement not to discriminate in educational programs and activities also extends to employment. Ms. Barbara Malone, is the Title IX Coordinator, Director of Human Resources at (508) 841-8400. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, provides that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in be denied the benefits of or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Title VI provided for equal access and prohibits discrimination in the assignment of students to classes. It also prohibits discrimination in ability grouping or tracking students. The Shrewsbury School Committee's Policies #316 and #645 deal directly with the issues of harassment. Copies of these policies are available in the Principal's Office at each school or through the Superintendent's Office, located at 100 Maple Avenue, Shrewsbury, MA 01545. Further information may be obtained by contacting Ms. Barbara Malone, Director of Human Resources @ 508 841-8400. The following grievance procedure, which was approved by the Shrewsbury School Committee, is to be used for all issues relating to harassment or discrimination involving student and/or staff: 1. The Shrewsbury Public Schools does not and will not knowingly discriminate against any student or employee on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. All reports of harassment or discrimination will be taken seriously and investigated in a timely fashion. Reports will be held in the utmost confidence. Any student who believes he/she has been the subject of harassment or discrimination should immediately report the incident, either verbally or in writing to an administrator, adjustment counselor, guidance counselor, or teacher. The principal must be notified in all cases of harassment or discrimination. If any employee believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment, the employee has the right to file a complaint with Shrewsbury Public Schools. This may be done in writing or verbally. It is the goal of Shrewsbury Public Schools to promote a workplace that is free of sexual and other forms of harassment, and even if an employee believes that they may have a concern, he or she is encouraged to report it. If you would like to file a complaint you may do so by contacting the Director of Human Resources: Barbara Malone, Shrewsbury Public Schools, 100 Maple Avenue, Shrewsbury, MA 01545; bmalone@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us; Ph 508-841-8443. Complaints may also be filed with any School Principal, any Assistant Principal, or any Assistant Superintendent for Shrewsbury Schools, or with the Superintendent of Schools. These individuals are also available to discuss any concerns you may have and to provide

information to you about this policy and our complaint process. Harassment Investigation When a complaint of harassment (sexual or other forms) is received, an administrator will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. The investigation will include an interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. The person alleged to have committed harassment will also be interviewed. The investigation will include review of the alleged harasser's employment file and applicable policies. When the investigation is complete, the investigator will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the school district will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct, and where it is appropriate the school district will also impose disciplinary action, as described above. Complaints about the Superintendent of Schools should be made to the Chairperson of the School Committee. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal statute which states, in part, "No otherwise qualified individual, shall solely on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." This requirement not to discriminate in educational programs and activities also extends to employment. Each school has a designated Section 504 Coordinator. Initial inquiries relating to Section 504 should be directed to the building-based Section 504 Coordinator who can be contacted through the principal's office. Further information may be requested by contacting Ms. Margaret Belsito, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, the district's Section 504 Coordinator at (508) 841-8400. The following grievance procedure should be used to report discrimination under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Acts of 1973: To fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the Shrewsbury Public Schools recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding personnel and students. No discrimination against a person with a disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs or activities of the Shrewsbury Public Schools. The school district has a specific requirement under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which includes the responsibility to identify, evaluate and if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to free and appropriate educational services. Questions about eligibility or services should be first directed to the building-based coordinator. If a parent or guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school, he/she has a right to a hearing, first with the district's Section 504 Coordinator, and secondly with an impartial hearing officer. The district's Section 504 Coordinator can be reached at 100 Maple Avenue, Shrewsbury, MA 01545 or by phone at (508) 841-8400. The Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, the district's Section 504 Coordinator, who will provide a written report of the district's findings, will hear all grievances in a timely manner. If a parent or guardian is unsatisfied with the results of the review, they may contact one of the agencies listed below. For grievances not resolved at the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services level, a review by an impartial hearing officer may be scheduled. Individuals with grievances are not required to use the Shrewsbury Public Schools' grievance procedure. Written complaints may be filed with the following agencies: Massachusetts Department of Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148, (781) 338-3000; United States Department of Education Region 1 - Office of Civil Rights, 8th Floor, 5 Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02203 (800) 368-1019; Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, John F. Kennedy Federal Building, 475 Government Center, Boston, MA 02203 (800) 669-4000; Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, One Ashburton Place, Room 601, Boston, MA 02108 (617) 994-6000.

Partnership

CONTINUED from page 6

ager of Corporate Communications, American Girl Doll Company
Dr. Greg Wolfus, Clinical Assistant Professor at Tufts School of Veterinary Medicine and Director of the Tufts at Tech veterinary clinic at Worcester Technical High School

SMS Liaison: Ms. Judith Gill, Special Education Teacher, 6 Purple

As part of including *growth mindset* (the belief that our most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work, creating a love of learning and the resilience that is essential for meaningful accomplishment) into my daily practices, I asked my students to describe their dream jobs and goals for the future. In order to foster this connection to life outside the classroom, we invited guest speakers to talk about their professions and how they use growth mindset in their lives. The guest speakers shared words of wisdom via Skype, conference calls and classroom visits. Students actively engaged and interacted with each guest and asked questions to deepen their understanding of the content shared, while listening carefully to the personal and professional journey of each of the presenters. Throughout these experiences, students were able to link common themes learned to the growth mindset lessons, including the importance of persevering to accomplish a task to the best of your ability, setting goals, assessing progress, and doing what makes you happy.

Community Partner: Mr. Ernest Kutingala, Principal and Founder of the Maasai Joy Children's Centre, Tanzania

SMS Liaison: Mrs. Lisa Easson, Paraprofessional

During the fall, **Mr. Ernest Kutingala**, Principal and Founder of the Maasai Joy Children's Centre in Tanzania, spoke with students at our monthly Community Meetings to share his story. Mr. Kutingala fulfilled his dream of providing a pre-primary and primary school to educate Maasai children in his village. We learned that many of the children at the school are economically disadvantaged, and several are orphans. Mrs. Easson, SMS instructional aide, first met Ernest while she and her husband visited their son, Mike, who traveled to Africa to teach at Maasai Joy. When they learned that Ernest was visiting the United States, they invited him to stay at their home and spend a day at Sherwood Middle School. The school community was thrilled to learn from Ernest! During his visit he shared that he learned a great deal about education in Shrewsbury by visiting our school, and that his new learning would help the students of Maasai Joy receive the best education he can give them. He shared, "I want to provide the best education possible..... as education is the KEY to success."

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