Superintendent’s Update - April 17, 2015

Dear Shrewsbury Families,

The warmer weather has finally arrived, and as memories of our harsh winter recede our schools’ springtime activities are finally in full swing.  Thanks to all who came out to take part in the annual **Road Scholars 5K Race & 1 Mile Fun Run**, which had a record-setting number of participants with over 420 runners and walkers!  **Thanks to you, we raised over $10,000 for the** [**Colonial Fund**](http://shrewsburyps.wix.com/colonialfund), resources that will be used to fund innovative projects and initiatives that will keep our schools on the cutting edge of best educational practices.  For sponsor information, race photos, and results, see the [race website](http://shrewsburyroadscholars.org).  Thank you to our Gold Sponsor, Dunkin’ Donuts; our Silver Sponsors, Avidia Bank, The Law Offices of Joseph J. Cariglia, P.C., Daryl Henry Arborist & Landscape Contractor; and Price Chopper; our Bronze Sponsors, National Facilities Services, Inc., Collins & Demac Real Estate, and Greendale Physical Therapy; our Banner Sponsor, the Lakeway Business District; and to our In-Kind Sponsors, Raw Revolution, Polar Beverages, Marathon Sports, Dean Park Grill & Pizza, Wegmans, and the Massachusetts Emergency Care Training Academy.  Many thanks to Coordinators of Development & Volunteer Activities, Michelle Biscotti and Kathleen Keohane, and to all of the race volunteers for their help in making this event a great success.

I’m happy to share some recent exceptional student accomplishments with you:

* **The SHS Robotics team earned the prestigious Chairman’s Award at the New England Regional at WPI last week, and a result they have qualified for the national competition** being held in St. Louis next week.  Congratulations and good luck to our own FRC Team 467, whose motto is “we not me.”  For more information on our outstanding robotics program, see <http://www.shrewsburyrobotics.org/>.
* **The SHS Speech & Debate team finished third in the state championships** last week, an outstanding performance capping off an excellent year of competition.  Congratulations to the team and coaches, as well as to Surabhi Godbole and Ben Harris for placing in the top ten double-entry students in the state.
* **The SHS Quiz team finished 7th in the state championship** last week, with David Du individually ranking 7th out of over 100 competitors.
* **SHS Visual Arts students won nine awards** in the James McGovern Art Competition, including five first place awards: Celine Chandra, Digital Art; Jasmine Duerk, Mixed Media; Liam Monahan, Printmaking; Abigail Eckstrom, Drawing; and Taylor Brown, Collage.

Please also note the following informational items:

**District Goals 2015-2017**: The School Committee recently voted to approve the [District Goals](http://schools.shrewsbury-ma.gov/egov/docs/14292749127890.pdf)  for the next two years.  These goals will help focus the work of our schools as we strive to meet our [five year strategic priorities](http://schools.shrewsbury-ma.gov/egov/docs/13244153986410.pdf) to *engage and challenge all students*, *enhance learning through technology*, *promote health and wellbeing*, and *increase value to the community*.  We are excited about the work ahead as we seek to make a very successful school district even stronger.

**New Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations**: The School Committee voted to approve my recommendation to appoint **Mr. Patrick C. Collins** as the Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations, effective July 1.  Those of you who have been in Shrewsbury for some time may remember that Mr. Collins previously was the Director of Business Services for our school district from 1996-2007, and after serving in district-level leadership roles at Assabet Regional Vocational School District and Lincoln-Sudbury Regional School District he will return to Shrewsbury to serve in the critical role of chief financial and operations officer for the district.  Mr. Collins is a graduate of Shrewsbury High School and the University of Notre Dame, holds an MBA from UMass-Boston, and he served as an officer in the United States Marine Corps during the Gulf War.  He is a longtime Shrewsbury resident and SPS parent who has been very involved in the community, especially in his role as the founder and race director for the annual Veterans Memorial 5K Race to support Veterans Inc.  I am highly confident that Mr. Collins’s leadership will make a significant, positive difference for our students, staff, and the entire town in the years ahead, and I look forward to welcoming him back to SPS in July.

Next week our hardworking students and educators get the opportunity to recharge a bit before the big push to the end of the school year.  Whether you are traveling far, heading into Boston for the Marathon, or staying local, I hope you have a terrific April Vacation!

Thanks for your continued support of our schools.

Respectfully,

Joe Sawyer

Superintendent of Schools