SHREWSBURY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DRAFT REPORT

Shrewsbury Central Office Organizational Study

Shrewsbury Public Schools
Shrewsbury, Massachusetts

March 2019

Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management

McCORMACK GRADUATE SCHOOL OF POLICY AND GLOBAL STUDIES

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Executive Summary

The Shrewsbury Public Schools (District) is a Pre-K-12 school district with nine schools and a student enrollment of 6,214 (DESE: 2017-2018). The nine schools include a pre-school, five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. The District has faced increased student enrollment for several years and the local and state educational initiatives continue to create pressure on the district's capacity, in particular on the central office staff. The District will also be opening a new elementary school within the next two years, which will add to the district's organizational challenge.

Within this context, the Shrewsbury Public Schools contracted with the Edward M. Collins Center at UMass Boston to conduct three major analyses and to develop set of recommendations for review and possible adoption in the FY20 district budget process.

1. A study of the organizational structure, staffing, and practices of central administration operations;
2. A study of the organizational structure, staffing, and practices of the instructional and academic program leadership and the special education administration;
3. A survey of central office and leadership positions in similar size school districts, particularly those who have faced and addressed increased student enrollment and facility and staffing challenges; and
4. Recommendations for an enhanced central office organizational structure that will properly support the district's mission.

The Collins Center project team conducted 40 interviews, 1-1 interviews or in small focus groups, with Shrewsbury Public Schools central office and district leadership staff. Our goals were two-fold: (1) to understand the functions and relationships of their departments and to solicit their insights into areas of strengths, limitations, and omissions as well as suggestions for program improvements, and (2) to ascertain their perception of the level of support provided by Central Administration. Representatives were identified for the following functions, at a minimum: curriculum, instruction and assessment, grants and special project administration, student services, business operations, budget development and monitoring, human resources, payroll,

transportation, information technology services, intergovernmental relations, student registration, and school security. The project team also reviewed the central office organizations of mutually agreed upon similar size Massachusetts school districts, in particular those with similar resource challenges. We used an on-line survey to 11 similar size Massachusetts school districts, supplemented by follow-up telephone interviews where necessary. The goal of this research was to highlight best practices and alternative means to administrative functions, where appropriate.

Our findings and recommendations, which are detailed in our full report, include 12 major categories of findings, a total of 35 separate findings within those categories, and a total of 44 recommendations within those categories. We have specifics findings in 11 areas:

- Superintendent's Office – Overall Central Office Collaboration
- Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Assistant Superintendent for Student Services
- Human Resources
- Technology, Data Analysis and Reporting
- District Registrar
- Central Office Space Needs
- Payroll
- A/P, A/R, Grants and Purchasing
- Transportation
- New Middle-Management Position in the Business Office
- New Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-Being

It should be noted that all the district staff who were interviewed could not have been more open or constructive in their assessment of their own position and that of the Central Office as a whole. They all recognize the need for continual improvement and have made excellent recommendations as to what would be needed to become a high performing Central Office.

Project Background

The Shrewsbury Public Schools (District) is a Pre-K-12 school district with nine schools and a student enrollment of 6,214 (DESE: 2017-2018). The nine schools include a pre-school, five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. The District will also be opening a new elementary school within the next two years. The District's administrative team includes the Superintendent of Schools, three Assistant Superintendents (Curriculum and Instruction, Finance and Operations, and Special Education and Pupil Services), a Director of Human Resources, and nine school principals.

The District has faced increased student enrollment for several years and the local and state educational initiatives continue to create pressure on the district's capacity, in particular on the central office staff. As noted above,

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opening a new elementary school will add to the organizational challenges. The District has asked the Collins Center for Public Management (Center) to conduct an organizational study of the District's Central office, and by extension the District's full administrative team.

Within this context, the Shrewsbury Public Schools contracted with the Edward M. Collins Center at UMass Boston to conduct three major analyses and to develop set of recommendations for review and possible adoption in the FY20 district budget process.

5. a study of the organizational structure, staffing, and practices of central administration operations;
6. a study of the organizational structure, staffing, and practices of the instructional and academic program leadership and the special education administration;
7. a survey of central office and leadership positions in similar size school districts, particularly those who have faced and addressed increased student enrollment and facility and staffing challenges; and
8. Recommendations for an enhanced central office organizational structure that will properly support the district's mission.

Project Methodology

As outlined in our original proposal, the Collins Center project team studied the organizational structure and practices of the District's central administration with the goal of developing recommendations for maintaining a high standard of support for District schools and programs. Findings and recommendations will be included in a final report to the School Committee.

We conducted 40 interviews, 1-1 interviews or in small focus groups, with Shrewsbury Public Schools central office and district leadership staff (see Appendix). Our goals were two-fold: (1) to understand the functions and relationships of their departments and to solicit their insights into areas of strengths, limitations, and omissions as well as suggestions for program improvements, and (2) to ascertain their perception of the level of support provided by Central Administration. Representatives were identified for the following functions, at a minimum: curriculum, instruction and assessment, grants and special project administration, student services, business operations, budget development and monitoring, human resources, payroll, building services, transportation, information technology services, food services, intergovernmental relations, student registration, and school security. The project team also reviewed the central office organizations of mutually agreed upon similar size Massachusetts school districts, in particular those with similar resource challenges. We used an on-line survey (See Appendix) to 11 similar size Massachusetts school districts, supplemented by follow-up telephone interviews where necessary. The goal of this research was to highlight best practices and alternative means to administrative functions, where appropriate.

The findings and recommendations that follow are the result of a thorough analysis of the feedback from the multiple district interviews and focus groups and the online survey.

Shrewsbury Central Office Organizational Study - Findings/Recommendations

1. Findings: Superintendent's Office – Overall Central Office Collaboration

The findings and recommendations herein are based upon interviews with Shrewsbury Central Office administrators, Central Office staff, principals, and School Committee members as well as survey data from 11 comparable school districts. A review of available district documents, MA DESE school district profile data, and consideration of research on best practices complemented the qualitative data from interviews.

Based on in-person interviews, it is apparent that Shrewsbury administrators and staff generally have a positive attitude, work hard, support the mission of the district, and are proud to work as part of the Shrewsbury team.

Central Office administration consists of the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, Director of Technology, and Director of Human Resources. The Superintendent is responsible for supervising more staff than typical. In addition to the Central Office administration positions listed above, the Superintendent has the following direct reports: District Registrar, and 2 part-time Coordinators of Development and Volunteers, School Principals (9), and an Administrative Assistant.

Superintendents of designated comparable districts have between 11 and 16 direct reports while the Shrewsbury superintendent has 19 direct reports. The current Massachusetts educator evaluation system requires significant time and attention in order to implement the system with fidelity. Districts across the Commonwealth struggle to meet the requirements while focusing on providing useful feedback to enhance students' educational experience and opportunity as well as to advance professional practice. Previous administrative staffing is typically insufficient to meet the demands of the evaluation process without sacrificing other important work. This is indeed the case in Shrewsbury.

Of the comparable districts with more than 5000 students (Andover, Lexington, Natick, Needham), superintendents have 16, 15, 16, and 13 direct reports respectively. We found no other comparable district where the Registrar reported directly to the superintendent with one exception where the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent served as the registrar. We found no other comparable district where part-time development/engagement staff report directly to the superintendent. The higher number of direct reports contributes to a lack of time for big picture, organizational thinking, communication, and operations.

The chart below indicates the number of direct reports for Superintendents in comparable districts:

District	# of Direct Reports - Superintendent	# of Schools
Andover	16	10
Belmont	12	6
Burlington	11	6
Chelmsford	15	8
Lexington	15	10
Melrose	14	8
Natick	16	8
Needham	13	8
Sharon	11	6
Walpole	15	8
Winchester	12	7
Shrewsbury	19	9

Central Office administrators and staff expressed concerns regarding workload and their ability to do things in the high-quality manner they desire. A consistent theme of concern regarding rollout of initiatives and clarity of responsibility also emerged along with the understanding that Central Office administrators have a heavy workload.

While considering the addition of another district administrator (**See Finding #11**) it is important to recognize that there is a lack of sufficient physical space at the Central Office. Physical space is an area of concern for many Central Office administrators and staff. A sense of disconnectedness exists for the Student Services department due to physical location separate from the Central Office. In addition, the lack of confidential space to meet with families and/or employees is a need to be addressed, in particular for school registration purposes as well as Human Resources operations.

1. Findings:

A. With 19 direct reports, the Shrewsbury superintendent has more direct reports than typical for comparable districts.

B. Administrators require and desire more time to collaborate and communicate initiatives and their implementation. The lack of this time and process has created a lack of clarity regarding responsibility for and implementation of key initiatives.

C. Space needs exist in order to create confidential work spaces for Human Resources and Registration. Additional space is required in order to locate all Central Office departments in proximity to one another.

Recommendations:

1.1 Reduce the number of direct reports to the Superintendent. Implement an additional Assistant Superintendent position as planned after a review of all Central Office administrative position job descriptions focusing on equity regarding evaluation and supervision responsibilities. There also may be a need in the future to add administrative support for the new Assistant Superintendent position.

1.2 Remove the following positions as direct reports to the Superintendent: Registrar, Coordinators of Development and Volunteers, and Director of Technology.

1.3 Review with Central Office administrative team the current collaboration and communication structure and consider options to address the need for additional communication and collaboration among central office administrators.

1.4 Continue to pursue space needs for Central Office team, including the ability to create additional confidential spaces and have the Student Services department at the same location.

2. Findings: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment oversees K-12 programming for general education. The Assistant Superintendent is supported by 7 K-12 Directors (Performing Arts, English Language Learners, Physical Education, Health, and Family Consumer Science, Foreign Languages, Visual Arts, Instructional Technology and Media Centers, and Title I). The department is also supported by site level curriculum Directors and Coordinators. At the High School level curriculum content Directors include English, Mathematics, Science and Engineering, and Social Sciences. At the Middle School Curriculum Coordinators for English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies support learning. Finally, at the elementary level there are 6 Instructional Coach/Curriculum Coordinator positions supporting the work of the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment department.

Assistant Superintendents for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment in comparable districts have evaluation responsibilities for between 6 and greater than 15 staff members. Only Belmont, Winchester and Shrewsbury have responsibility for more than 15 staff members with Shrewsbury at 22. Of the comparable districts with more than 5000 students (Andover, Lexington, Natick, Needham), assistant superintendents for teaching and learning have 11-15, 11-15, 6-10 and 6-10 staff evaluations, respectively. Within Shrewsbury, the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment has responsibility for supervision and evaluation of 22 staff members (8 as primary evaluator and 14 as secondary evaluator).

The chart below specifies the number of evaluations assigned to assistant superintendents for teaching and learning in comparable districts. The shaded districts have more than 5000 students.

District	# of Evaluations – Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	# of Schools
Andover	11-15	10
Belmont	>15	6
Burlington	6-10	6
Chelmsford	6-10	8
Lexington	11-15	10
Melrose	6-10	8
Natick	6-10	8
Needham	6-10	8
Sharon	6-10	6
Walpole	6-10	8
Winchester	>15	7
Shrewsbury	22	9

The Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment department administrative assistant is responsible for generating employment letters, and facilities booking for the district, in addition to directly supporting the work of the Assistant Superintendent. These are tasks typically fulfilled in departments other than Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. Time spent on these tasks could better be used to support the needs of the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment department. There is a need for support in the area of data collection and analysis. The technology department works very hard to meet the district needs. However, staffing is not sufficient to meet the diverse needs of the district and, in particular, the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment department. Reduction of manual task strategies and investment in professional development for staff to fully utilize available technology is a clear need and a desire among staff.

2. **Findings**:

A. The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment has evaluation responsibility for more staff than typical among designated comparable districts.

B. The Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment department uses non-technological strategies to keep data related to lane changes and professional development points for each educator. The process is unnecessarily time-consuming.

C. There is a need for access to data and data analysis in order to make curriculum, instruction, and professional development decisions.

D. Tasks typically completed by other departments are the responsibility of the only administrative assistant to the Assistant Superintendent.

Recommendations:

2.1   Move the supervision of the Director for Physical Education, Health, and Family Consumer Science to the new proposed Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-Being position.

2.2   Reduce the evaluation responsibilities of the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. With a focus on equity and effectiveness, consider the evaluation responsibilities of the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment as well as those of the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services when finalizing responsibilities for the new Assistant Superintendent position.

2.3   Analyze supervision caseloads of K-12 Directors and site administrators (not part of this study) and consider increasing evaluation responsibilities for site content directors, curriculum coordinators and instructional coaches.

2.4   Add an educational data analyst position to facilitate access to data collection and data analysis in order to make curriculum, instruction, and professional development decisions. Provide training for existing staff to augment this needed service.

2.5   Investigate utilization of technological systems for professional development and lane change advancement data collection and reporting. In order to implement new systems or fully utilize current systems, provide adequate professional development on usage of technological systems to ensure efficiency.

2.6   Generation of contracts and lane change process should be moved to the Human Resources Department.

2.7   Facilities Use scheduling should be moved to the Finance and Operations Office.

3. Findings: Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

The Student Services department is responsible for a wide range of student services including special education as well as general education supports and services. The Central Office Student services administrative team includes the Assistant Superintendent, Assistant Special Education Director, and Director of Specialized Services. In addition to Central Office administrators, the high school has a Special Education Director, there is a middle school Special Education Director, and a vacant elementary Special Education Director position. The Assistant Superintendent supervises and evaluates 16 staff members, the Assistant Director supervises and evaluates 32 staff members, and the Specialized Program Director supervises and evaluates 17 staff members. There are 4 administrative support staff positions in the Student Services office performing a variety of duties and working for varied portions of the calendar year. Similar to the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment department, there is a need to focus on implementing technological solutions for recurrent processes as well as collecting, analyzing, and reporting data. Similar school districts include administrative support positions such as "budget analyst" and "data coordinator" in addition to an administrative assistant to the Assistant Superintendent or Director for Student Services. The nature of work in the department has changed over the years and it is necessary to shift responsibilities of support staff as staff report working during lunch and/or at home as needed (but not required) to complete tasks.

Findings:

A. The Assistant Superintendent for Student Services has an evaluation and supervision workload that is at the upper end of comparable districts.

B. The Assistant Director for Special Education has an excessive evaluation and supervision workload.

C. Administrative support varies throughout the calendar year due to different work year calendars for specific positions (1 full year and 3 school year plus).

Recommendations:

C.1   With a focus on equity and effectiveness, consider the evaluation responsibilities of the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services planning for an additional Assistant Superintendent position. (See recommendation 2.2.)

C.2   Begin the process of shifting to electronic processing of IEP's and all related notices, planning time for appropriate professional development for staff.

C.3   Implement a Budget Analyst/Data Reporting position as one of the 4 current administrative support positions.

C.4   As mentioned in the A/P, A/R, Grants, and Purchasing section of this report, the District should explore processing purchase orders electronically.

4. Findings: Human Resources

The recent addition of a staff member in the Human Resources department has proven helpful in managing the responsibilities of the department. The department is in the process of fully utilizing the staffing to accomplish and equitably assign necessary tasks. This additional staffing has brought the department in better alignment with staffing in comparable districts. However, it should be noted that there is variation in the responsibilities of Human Resources departments within the comparable districts. Additionally, some districts have more or less support from Town Human Resource departments. And, finally, some Human Resources departments are under the supervision of the Assistant Superintendent/Director of Finance and Operations while others are directly supervised by the Superintendent. In some cases, Human Resources staff are responsible for certain payroll and benefit related tasks. Therefore, when considering adequate staffing and efficiency of operations, the analysis must be made after reviewing responsibilities of the department in the specific context of the school district. There is a need for confidential work and meeting space for all members of the Human Resources department. Currently two staff members have spaces that are not confidential, and the work of these staff members may be interrupted when they serve as receptionists for the Central Office.

Findings:

A. The Shrewsbury Human Resources Office appears to be appropriately staffed due to recent hires and considering the responsibilities of the department in Shrewsbury and the varying duties of Human Resources departments in different communities.

District	# Human Resource Staff, including Director/Asst. Supt.	Notes
Andover	7	6 staff shared with Town
Belmont	2	

Burlington	.5 Director	1.0 position Shared with Town
Chelmsford	3-4	
Lexington	>4	
Melrose	3-4	
Natick	2.5	.5 is Data Entry
Needham	>4	
Sharon	2	
Walpole	2	
Winchester	2	
Shrewsbury	3	

B. There is a need for confidential work space for all members of the Human Resources Department.

C. There is a need for continued cross-training and analysis of workload within the Human Resources Department.

Recommendations:

4.1 The Director should analyze workload and consider delegating additional duties to Human Resources staff members.

4.2 The Human Resources Department should assume responsibility for generating all contracts as well as collecting and managing Lane Change process and data.

4.3 Human Resources staff should not serve as a Central Office receptionist. Central Office would benefit from a full-time Welcome Center administrative assistant to welcome and assist all visitors to Central Office. This staff member should also be cross-trained to assist with Student Registration during busy times.

4.4 Work toward identifying confidential work space for all members of the Human Resources department.

5. Findings: Technology, Data Analysis and Reporting

The Shrewsbury Central Office includes a Director of Technology who oversees technology (operational and educational) for the school district. The Technology Office is supported by Data, Network and Audio/Visual specialists as well as IT Support Technicians. Central Office operations across several departments require additional support with data collection, analysis, and reporting. Comparable districts employ a wide variety of staff to address data analysis and reporting needs. Many districts employ data specialists while some employ data managers for various needs including, for example, educational data, budget analysis, student information data, and general database management. Comparable districts maintain these positions within multiple departments in

the district to address the specific needs of each.

Findings:

A. Central Office operations across several departments require additional support with data collection, analysis, and reporting.

B. The Shrewsbury Central Office Information Technology team work very hard to meet the diverse needs for data collection, analysis and reporting however, the workload is varied and is more than can be accomplished by current team members.

C. There is an opportunity and need (across departments) to shift some manual and basic spreadsheet strategies for data management to software solutions. While shifts have been made in some areas, it will be important to continue to work toward efficiency and workload balance.

Recommendations:

5.1. Move the Information Technology Department as direct report to the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations to coordinate services across district departments. The Director of Information Technology should be a dotted line report to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment to coordinate educational technology needs.

5.2. Central Office administrators should review the data needs within each department, analyze the tasks that are being accomplished efficiently, and identify areas for updating strategies. This may help free up time of current staff for enhanced data analysis.

5.3. Add staff with data analysis expertise in order to meet the needs of the district. Recommendations have been made (Recommendation 2.3 and 3.3) for additional staff in this area.

5.4. Access to data is extremely important as is the integrity of the data. Review how data is collected, stored, and analyzed within each department and make any necessary adjustments to enhance security of data and access to data. In particular, be aware of any instances where data is collected and kept by an individual. Be able to answer the question "what happens if an individual is out of the office and access and/or action is needed relative to any type of data?"

6. Findings: District Registrar

As the district prepares to hire a new Registrar due to the departure of an 18-year veteran in the position, there is an opportunity to address some of the

issues related to the workload of the position. The district has had increased enrollment over the years and the requirements for State reporting have also increased. Similar to other positions noted in this report, there are tasks being done manually that could be made more efficient solely through the use of technology. During busy times, it has been noted that delays may occur in having students enter school when registering during the school year. There is a need to increase support for this important district function. Registration is one of the first interactions a family has with the school district and it is extremely important for families to feel welcome. It is apparent that the administration and staff in Shrewsbury place a high priority on welcoming families and providing adequate support.

Findings:

A. The Registrar position will need to be filled for FY20 and this creates an opportunity to address department needs.

B. A shift to reliance on available technology is necessary for efficiency and effectiveness.

C. Further support is necessary to meet the demands of registration, year-round, and required State reporting.

Recommendations:

6.1   Hire a new full-time Registrar and provide robust professional development on technological systems in place in the district. (i.e:, PowerSchool).

6.2   Implement Recommendation 4.3 to provide cross-training and support during busy registration periods.

6.3   Consider establishing "registration hours" similar to some comparable districts to facilitate workflow and provide information to schools quickly. This will provide time within the work day to process paperwork and attend to State reporting requirements. For example, registration hours could include mornings on M-F and afternoons on Tu/Th. During non-registration hours, the Welcome Center Administrative Assistant recommended in 4.3 could provide support to families who may "walk in".

7.   Findings: Central Office Space Needs

As indicated earlier in this report, the district has important needs for space to allow for confidential tasks and meetings. In addition, communication, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Central Office administrative team is somewhat compromised due to the location of the Student Services office

outside of Town Hall while the remaining departments are housed together at Town Hall.

Findings:

A. Shrewsbury Central office administration is fragmented due to the Student Services department being housed outside of Town Hall.

B. There is a lack of confidentiality for some Human Resource functions due to the location of the Human Resource Assistants desks.

Recommendations:

7.1   Continue to pursue options to relocate the Student Services department to Town Hall and to provide confidential work spaces for Human Resources staff.

8. Findings: Payroll:

The staff who work on payroll consistently incur overtime (2-3 hours), more on payroll weeks (5-6 hours). When asked about ways to reduce overtime, staff identified placing payroll online would be an enormous time saver. They also would like to receive training on the upgraded MUNIS system as that may also result in time savings as well. They cited the stipend payment as being very time consuming and would recommend processing payments on a phased basis. These also require individual data entry for every stipend and they recommended batch processing instead. A number of other issues were raised during our interviews to reduce overtime or improve efficiency of the payroll staff:

1. The current payroll calendar leaves little time to research and resolve issues, often leading to the need for overtime;
2. The issue of mandating direct deposit was mentioned; however, that may require introducing the issue during collective bargaining for inclusion in any of the district's existing contracts;
3. The need for a Policies and Procedures Manual was identified with clear expectations for submitting information to payroll;
4. Better information regarding leaves of absence with timely and complete information shared with payroll.

One important note about the relationship between Human Resources and Payroll/Business Office staff. The support staff in these two critical areas have instituted an informal monthly meeting, which they have called COAST (Central Office Administrative Support Team), where issues and problems are discussed and solutions developed between and among these two areas. The

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agenda is developed by one of the members of this group and notes are kept. This working group has evolved "organically" and was not mandated or structured by anyone other than the participants, all of whom should be commended for their work to increase efficiency and communications within the Central Office.

Findings:

A. The payroll calendar/schedule leaves little time to resolve payroll issues and incurs significant overtime as a result.

B. Leaves of absence that require significant research for information often result in the need for overtime.

C. Payment of stipends requires individual data entry and significant time commitment to manage.

D. Staff lack time to engage in MUNIS upgrade training.

Recommendations:

8.1   Explore the possibility of changing the payroll calendar/schedule with Town Accountant and Town Treasurer who are responsible for municipal payroll to see if there may be mutual interest in such a change.

8.2   Develop a system to share information between Human Resources, Business Office and Town Treasurer's Office for benefits coordination. Automate and phase the stipend payment process.

8.3   Automate and phase the stipend payment process.

8.4   Dedicate specific times for staff availability by posting "office hours" so that staff can access training and professional development.

8.5   Develop a Payroll Policies and Procedures Manual that has clear instructions and expectations for the administration of payroll.

8.6   Cross train others in the administration of payroll to ensure that payroll staff can be covered when they are absent (currently done through the good graces of a staff member in Business Office who came from Payroll and is familiar with its operations).

8.7   Explore mechanisms to automate and become more efficient with bi-weekly payroll processing to include a further assessment of the MUNIS add-on payroll module, ExecuTime.

9. Findings: A/P, A/R, Grants and Purchasing:

There appears to be some confusion as to whom questions about finance should be addressed other than to the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations. There is a sense that the purchase order process is "archaic"

and that it takes too long for purchase orders to be processed. The process for reimbursements is also viewed as slow and discouraging to staff who submit for reimbursement. Business Office staff would like to be able to report out financial data/budget reports the way that the School Committee and Town Meeting would like to see the data. However, current response to requests for financial data require extensive manual input and preparation resulting in some duplication ("green sheets" and budget reports). Staff also expressed concern that timelines for submission of data to the Business Office or requests for additional data or information is often delayed creating processing problems across the office.

Findings:

A.   District lacks clarity with regard to roles and responsibilities of various staff in the Business Office.

B.   Many processes are still manual and time consuming.

C.   Compliance with timelines/data gathering is inconsistent.

Recommendations:

9.1   Clarify roles and responsibilities of staff in the Business Office and reorganize or restructure positions. Develop new organizational chart with areas of responsibility detailed.

9.2   Explore with Town Accountant the possibility of moving to an automated system with electronic purchase order workflow.

9.3   Set up User Roles for all Budget Managers and provide training on how to do budget inquiries, print reports, download past year data in Excel etc.

9.4   Establish and promote deadlines for submittal and receipt of information to ensure timely processing of payments by meeting necessary deadlines.

The current staffing in the Business Office is barely adequate to maintain the status quo for business operations as evidenced by the amount of overtime staff need to do their jobs. However, the Office also needs to move ahead on a number of fronts, especially the automation of systems and the training of end users to access financial data themselves and not have to await the Business Office accessing that data for them. In addition, there are several recommendations herein that will require working closely with the Town Accountant and the Town Treasurer in order to make any progress toward improving staff efficiency and service to the district. The Business Office

currently has a vacant position (District Courier) and should revisit the need to fill that position as it was a full time, year-round position that could be restructured to a half time position. This creates an opportunity to reallocate some funds that could be used to address areas of improvement that cannot be done by existing staff. This, in combination with some restructuring and possible reorganization, might give the Business Office the range of staffing needed to address many of the areas that need improvement.

10. Findings: Transportation:

There are a number of concerns about the current management of both regular day transportation as well as Special Education transportation with respect to who is responsible for addressing concerns and the absence of follow through that results from this lack of clarity as to responsibility. Schools find it difficult to get timely information from the Transportation Office. There is a lack of efficient and effective follow-through on transportation issues that impacts principals, team chairs and parents who must invest additional time seeking information or answers. In many instances, it is not clear where the responsibility for addressing an issue resides, whether at the vendor level or at the transportation staff level, and thus follow through on issues is erratic, at best. Transportation complaints normally occur via telephone or email, but there is no data logged about the type of service complaint, bus number, or even the source of the complaint nor is there any documentation of complaint resolutions.

Findings:

A.   Combining transportation with safety and security in one position results in uneven attention to one area or the other as both need dedicated, consistent time and attention.

B.   There is significant downtime during vacation periods and summer vacation when there are reduced transportation needs as well as reduced safety and security issues when students are not in school.

C.   District does not have clear lines of responsibility for managing transportation.

D.   The District does not record transportation issues, complaints, and their resolution in a system or database. Doing so would provide the ability to track and assess trends on the whole and with specific bus routes, print reports, and track outstanding issues.

Recommendations:

10.1   Re-evaluate the staffing structure that supports these functions with goal of improving communications and services.

10.2 Consider assigning/contracting for these responsibilities as school year only, i.e., when students are in school.

10.3 Better define district responsibilities for managing transportation and share that information with district staff and parents.

10.4 Research and implement a simple tracking system or leverage technology to track transportation issues/complaints/resolutions.

11. **Finding: Additional Capacity in the Business Office in the form of a new middle-management position.**

As evidenced by the above information in all three areas – payroll, accounting, and transportation - there are a number of findings and recommendations that will require considerable time and attention to resolutions that involve either other school departments, outside vendors or other departments within the Town. Because of the "horizontal" structure of the Business Office (all staff reporting directly to the Assistant Superintendent), all of this work to improve the efficiency and service in the Business Office will rest solely on the Assistant Superintendent. The lack of middle management in the Business Office also contributes to the perception that any and all issues or problems with any services of the Business Office must be directed to the Assistant Superintendent, which staff are hesitant to do on a regular basis.

We believe that it is this lack of "verticality", (i.e, a reasonable chain of command that allows problems or concerns to be addressed by "middle management" as opposed to either line staff or the Assistant Superintendent) may be the root cause for the apparent confusion about who is responsible for what, which staff feel when attempting to bring issues to the Business Office. The Business Office needs to have a position between staff and the Assistant Superintendent to drive the needed initiatives for improvement as well as to provide an interim level of authority to make decisions, direct or redirect issues to appropriate staff, and provide relief for the Assistant Superintendent so that he can engage in addressing the need to enhance the district's financial reporting and provide the financial and operational leadership for the schools in all district, town and state level matters.

Finding:

A. We have identified the need for the creation of a new middle-management position that can support the efforts of the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

Recommendation:

11.1 The district should implement a new middle-management position in the Business Office.

12. Finding: Additional Capacity at the District Leadership Level in the form of an Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Community Partnerships and Well-Being

The Superintendent of Schools has been clear in the need for additional assistance at the district leadership level in order to properly implement and support the district's 2018-2022 Strategic Priorities and Goals and the 2018-2020 District Goals, particularly as they relate to a new Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-Being. Our findings will indicate that we concur with this assessment of the need for an additional Assistant Superintendent to facilitate oversight of important district strategic goals and initiatives. This additional administrative position should be implemented with responsibilities and direct reports determined after a review of all Central Office administrator's responsibilities. This position should assume some of the current direct reports to the Superintendent.

The district's strategic priority of creating robust partnerships with the community to advance experiential learning and career awareness is aligned with the MA Department's strategic focus on "Providing high quality career pathways for our high school students". Further, a focus on Social-Emotional Learning in our schools has become an important initiative locally and nationally.

Locally, Shrewsbury has been an active participant in the Rennie Center's Excellence through Social Emotional Learning Network (https://www.renniecenter.org/exSELnet). At the state level, social-emotional learning is a core component of one of the MA Department of Education's five strategic priorities: "Support 2 social-emotional learning, health, and safety". Further information is available on the MA Department of Education website focused on Social and Emotional Learning http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/SEL/.

Nationally, the 2018 Aspen Institute's National Commission on Social, Emotional and Academic Development report, From a Nation At Risk to a Nation of Hope, cites six recommendations that seek to accelerate efforts in states and local communities by strengthening six broad categories that impact student outcomes. Recommendation #5 (V.), in particular, supports the proposed Colonial Connections MOU and the improved district focus and support for this work:

"V. Align resources and leverage partners in the community to address the whole child:

Build partnerships between schools, families, and community organizations to support healthy learning and development in and out of school. Blend and braid resources to achieve this goal."
(http://nationathope.org/)

We strongly support the creation of such a position for a number of reasons. We agree, based upon our interviews and analysis, that the district needs an additional Assistant Superintendent to assist with oversight of important district strategic goals, with a focus on community partnerships, social-emotional learning, resource development, and the general well-being of students and staff. This additional administrative position should be implemented with responsibilities and direct reports determined after a review of all Central Office administrative position job descriptions. Ideally, this position should assume some of the current direct reports to the Superintendent. While this position was proposed previously and was not funded in the current budget, it certainly appears that the Colonial Connections MOU will provide the impetus and significant funding for this new position, which, ultimately, is truly focused on student outcomes.

As regards making an investment in district-level administrative leadership, the Superintendent has noted that in the most recent state statistics on per pupil expenditures, Shrewsbury Public Schools ranks near the bottom of districts (7.4%) in the state for investing in administration. Likewise, there has not been a central office position added in the district since 2000, while the student population and staff have grown dramatically, along with a significant increase in administrative responsibilities for the current Central Office leadership team.

Finding:

A. We concur with this assessment of the need for an Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-Being to facilitate oversight of important district strategic goals and initiatives.

Recommendation:

12.1 The district should implement the new Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-Being leadership position.

Conclusion

It should be noted that all the district staff who were interviewed could not have been more open or constructive in their assessment of their own position and that of the Central Office as a whole. They all recognize the need for continual improvement and have made excellent recommendations as to what would be needed to become a high performing Central Office. They are committed to be the best that they can be and work hard to make sure the Central Office provides the best service that it can, oftentimes committing to working overtime to ensure they meet their timelines. They are well aware of

what needs improvements and, in many cases, the how to achieve that improvement, but they lack the resources, time and/or training to reach their goal. With a thoughtful and creative restructuring and reorganization, it may be possible to give the Central Office staff that which they presently lack and a realistic chance to dramatically improve their service to the district.

Appendix A

Individuals Interviewed for Shrewsbury Central Office Organizational Study

Name	Office
Diane Abbott	Registrar
Denise Bairos	Special Education Office
Meg Bartlett	Special Education Office
Todd Bazydlo	High School Principal
Wendy Bell	Walter J. Paton School
Meg Belsito	Assistant Superintendent for Student Services
Michelle Biscotti	Superintendent's Office
Erin Canzano	School Committee Member
Amy Clouter	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
Pat Collins	Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations
Kim Fitzpatrick	Business Office
Dotty Flynn	Business Office
Christine Fowler	Business Office
Katie Fox	Human Resources Office
Sandra Fryc	School Committee Member
Kathy Gaudette	Special Education Office
Christian Girardi	Beal Early Childhood Center Principal
Kristin Herrick	Special Education Office
Ann Jones	Oak Middle School Principal
Kathleen Keohan	Superintendent's Office
Michelle Liberty	Special Education Office
Jane Lizotte	Sherwood Middle School Principal
Barb Malone	Director of Human Resources
Donna Manzoli	Assistant Superintendent for CIA Office
Christine Mattero	Human Resources Office
Bryan Mabie	Spring Street School
Beth McCollum	Administrative Assistant – Superintendent's Office
Lisa McCubrey	Floral Street School Principal

B. Dale McGee	School Committee Member
Tiffany Ostrander	Calvin Coolidge School Principal
Jason Palitsch	School Committee Member
Robert Parry-Cruwys	Special Education Office
Sue Rapp	Business Office
Sherry Robbins	Registrar Office
Lisa Robinson	Parker Road Preschool Principal
Steve Rocco	Business Office
Daryl Rynning	Special Education Office
Joseph Sawyer	Superintendent of Schools
Anne Marie Tyler	Special Education Office
Jon Wensky	School Committee Member

Assistant Superintendent for Teaching, Learning, and Innovation

Natick Public Schools
Assistant Superintendent for
Teaching, Learning, and Innovation's
Office Organizational Chart

.5 Receptionist/Clerk shared with HR

District Directors:

Digital Learning

METCO

ASAP (before and after
school programming)

Physical Education

Fine and Performing Arts

Database Manager

Data Analyst

Assistant Director of Fine
and Performing Arts

Natick Public Schools

Business Office
Organizational Chart

Director of Finance

Assistant Director of Finance

| Transportation Coordinator and Facility Rental Coordinator | Budget and Planning Analyst | Payroll Clerk | Accounts Payable/Welcome Center | Director of Food Services |

Natick Public Schools
Superintendent's Office
Organizational Chart

Superintendent

Administrative Assistant

Assistant Superintendent for Teaching, Learning, and Innovation

Principals (9)

Director of Communications

Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

Director of Finance

Director of Human Resources

Director of Technology

Natick Public Schools
Assistant Superintendent for
Student Services

Organizational Chart

Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

Central Office

- Assistant to the Director
- Administrative Assistant-Data Coordinator
- Business Analyst
- Out of District Coordinator

Assistant Director of Student Services
(High School)

Assistant Director of Student Services
(Middle School)

Assistant Director of Student Services
((Elementary School)

Nurse Leader

Natick Public Schools
Director of Human Resources

Organizational Chart

Director of Human Resources

Human Resources Assistant

HR Clerk (.5)

Needham Public Schools
Assistant Superintendent for
Student Learning's Office
Organizational Chart

Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning

Administrative Assistant

District Directors:

K-12 Wellness

K-12 Media and Digital Learning

K-12 World Language

K-12 Fine and Performing Arts

K-5 Science Center

Coordinators:

K-8 Literacy

K-5 Mathematics

6-8 ELA

6-8 Mathematics

6-8 Science

6-8 Social Studies

9-12 ELA

9-12 Mathematics

9-12 Science

9-12 Social Studies

Needham Public Schools
Business Office
Organizational Chart

Assistant Superintendent Finance and Operations

Assistant Director of Finance Operations

| School Business and Operations Coordinator | Lead Accountant | Director of Nutritional Services |

Accounting Specialists (3)

Needham Public Schools
Superintendent's Office
Organizational Chart

Superintendent

Administrative Assistant

Assistant
Superintendent for
Student Learning

Principals (8)

Assistant
Superintendent for
Student Support
Services

Assistant
Superintendent for
Finance and
Operations

Assistant
Superintendent f
Human Resources

Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

Needham Public Schools
Assistant Superintendent for
Human Resources

Administrative Assistant to the
Assistant Superintendent

Organizational Chart

**Assistant Director for
Human Resources**

HR Specialist

Payroll Supervisor

Administrative Assistant

Payroll Coordinator

Needham Public Schools
Assistant Superintendent for
Student Services

Organizational Chart

Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

Administrative Assistant

**Executive Director
Special Education**

Directors:

- Special Education 9-PG
- Preschool
- School Health Services
- Guidance K-12
- METCO

Coordinators:

- ELL
- Out of District

Registrar

Shrewsbury Public Schools
Business Office
Organizational Chart

Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations

| Transportation, Safety and Security Coordinator | Accounts Payable/ Receivable | Payroll (2) | Financial and Grants Coordinator | Director of Food Services | District Courier |

Shrewsbury Public Schools
Assistant Superintendent for
Curriculum, Instruction, and
Assessment's Office Organizational
Chart

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Administrative Assistant

District Directors:

English Language Education (ESL)

Foreign Language

Instructional Technology and Media Services

Performing Arts

Physical Education, Health and Family and Consumer Sciences

Visual Arts

Title I Reading

High School Directors:

English

Mathematics

Science and Engineering

Social Sciences

Middle Level Curriculum Coordinators:

English Language Arts

Mathematics

Science

Social Studies

Elementary Instructional Coach/Curriculum Coordinators (6):

Parker and Beal (shared PK, Early Childhood)

Coolidge

Spring

Floral (2)

Paton

Shrewsbury Public Schools
Superintendent's Office
Organizational Chart

Superintendent

Administrative Assistant

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and

Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance

Director of Human Resources

Director of Information Technology

Principals (9)

Director of Extended Learning

Registrar

Coordinator Development and Volunteer Activities (2 part-time)

PROPOSED

Shrewsbury Public Schools
Assistant Superintendent for
Curriculum, Instruction, and
Assessment's Office Organizational
Chart

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Administrative Assistant

Data Analyst

Director of Technology

District Directors:

English Language Education (ESL)

Foreign Language

Instructional Technology and Media Services

Performing Arts
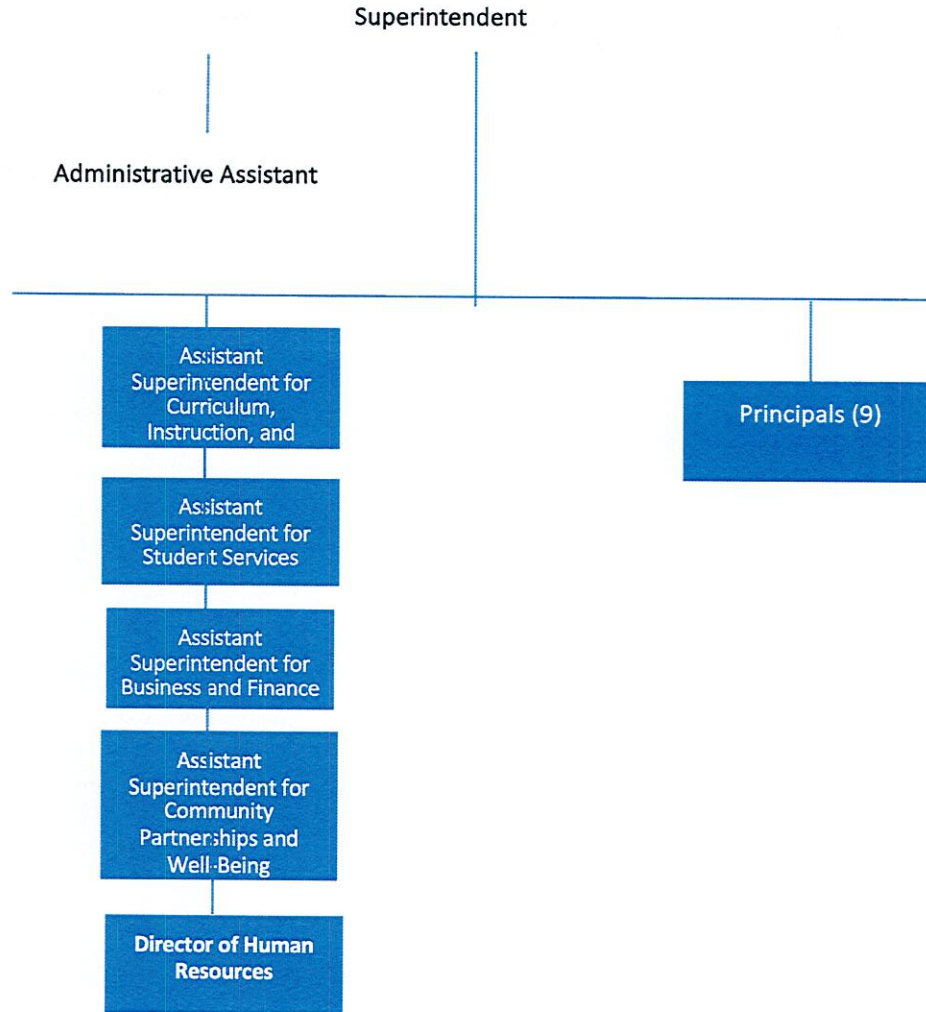
Visual Arts

Title I Reading

High School Directors:

English

Mathematics

Science and Engineering

Social Sciences

Middle Level Curriculum Coordinators:

English Language Arts

Mathematics

Science

Social Studies

Elementary Instructional Coach/Curriculum Coordinators (6):

Parker and Beal (shared PK, Early Childhood)

Coolidge

Spring

Floral (2)

Paton

Shrewsbury Public Schools
Superintendent's Office
Organizational Chart

Superintendent

Administrative Assistant

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and

Principals (9)

Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance

Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-Being

Director of Human Resources

Director of Human Resources

Shrewsbury Public Schools
Director of Human Resources

Organizational Chart

| Human Resources Administrative Assistant | Human Resources Administrative Assistant |

Shrewsbury Public Schools
Assistant Superintendent for
Student Services

Organizational Chart

Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

Assistant Director Student Services/Special Education

Department Secretaries:

- Budget
- Medicaid/504
- Records
- Records

Directors:

- Special Programs
- High School
- Middle School
- Nursing
- Elementary (Vacant)

Clinical Coordinators (2)

PROPOSED
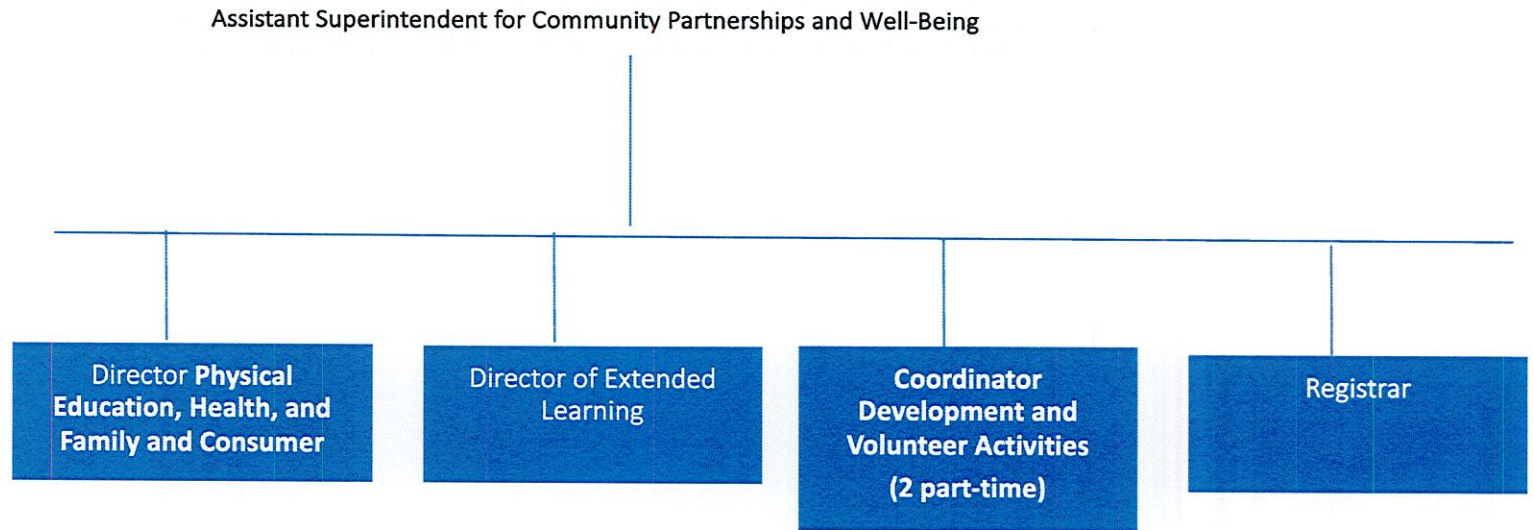
Shrewsbury Public Schools
Assistant Superintendent for
Student Services

Organizational Chart

Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

Assistant Director Student Services/Special Education

Department Secretaries:

- Budget Analyst
- Medicaid/504
- Data Analyst
- Records

Directors:

- Special Programs
- High School
- Middle School
- Nursing
- Elementary

Clinical Coordinators (2)

Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-Being

| Director **Physical Education, Health, and Family and Consumer** | Director of Extended Learning | **Coordinator Development and Volunteer Activities (2 part-time)** | Registrar |

PROPOSED

Shrewsbury Public Schools
Assistant Superintendent for
Community Partnerships and Well-
Being Organizational Chart