# Shrewsbury School Committee
# Priorities & Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Development

## Overview

This document provides the community with information about the School Committee's priorities for the Fiscal Year 2020 School Department Budget.  It also is designed to provide guidance to the Superintendent of Schools and the School Department administration regarding the development of its initial Fiscal Year 2020 School Department Budget proposal.

## Priorities

The initial FY20 School Department Budget proposal shall include resources to address each of the following priorities for Fiscal Year 2020:

- To sustain the improvements in class size realized through the Fiscal Year 2015 budget by keeping as many sections as possible within School Committee guidelines for class size.  These guidelines are:  Preschool: 15; Kindergarten: 17-19; Grades 1 & 2: 20-22; Grades 3-8: 22-24; Grades 9-12: 18-20.
- To continue investing in instructional materials, curriculum personnel, and staff professional development in order to ensure that the district's educational program meets local expectations for academic rigor, as well as state mandates.
- To make sufficient investments in technology in order to realize the educational and operational benefits available through digital resources and to provide sufficient capacity for the state's new testing system, while creating opportunities to benefit from short and long term cost efficiencies.
- To make investments in district-based programming and resources in order to provide high quality, cost effective opportunities to educate students with all forms of specialized needs within their own community's schools rather than specialized placements outside of the district.
- To evaluate and assess the level of administrative support and adjust accordingly to: 1) adequately serve our growing student population, 2) meet the ever-increasing compliance and reporting requirements of the federal and state governments, and 3) ensure successful achievement of the 2018-2020 District Goals.

## Assumptions

It is assumed that the initial FY20 School Department Budget proposal will:

1. Provide adequate resources to meet all legal mandates required of the school district.
2. Reflect the terms of collective bargaining agreements and other contractual obligations.
3. Provide sufficient resources to maintain a) the existing educational program and b) staffing levels necessary to meet mandates and priorities.
4. Utilize the best available information to project changes in costs (such as tuitions) and revenues (such as state funding through the Chapter 70 and Circuit Breaker programs, grants, etc.).
5. Estimate the level funding of all federal and state grants and factor known increases or reductions from FY19.
6. Review fee levels for all programs and adjust, as necessary, to reflect market price conditions and specific cost structure of each program.  With respect to the Full-Day Kindergarten Program, the administration should prepare a financial plan that eliminates the tuition fee over the next three years in anticipation of providing universal, full-day kindergarten starting in the Fall 2021 in connection with the completion of the Beal Project.
7. Examine ways to reduce or shift costs in order to achieve district priorities without requiring additional funding allocations wherever possible.
8. Given space constraints the administration should assume no new School Choice seats will be voted by the School Committee for approval.

9. Consistent with prior practice, the initial budget proposal will take into consideration the town's tax levy constraints.
10.    Budget document preparation will align with the best practices inherent in the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO) Meritorious Budget Awards Program.


# Guidance

The School Committee recommends that the administration's initial FY20 Budget proposal should reflect the School Committee's fiscal and strategic priorities so that there are sufficient allocations for the following (categorized by strategic priority in no particular order):

## Strategic Priority: Space and Resources to Support Effective Learning

### *Address stressed enrollment capacity by increasing physical space and making programmatic adaptations:*

- Assess Preschool through Grade 12 facility needs, including completion of a space and enrollment capacity study to facilitate planning
- Partner with the community to build a new Beal School to address Kindergarten through Grade Four space needs and to provide access to a full-day program with no tuition to all kindergarten students
- Relieve overcrowded conditions wherever necessary by providing additional space and/or revising use of existing space, especially at Shrewsbury High School

### *Secure the necessary resources for a high quality educational program:*

- Address growing enrollment with adequate staffing to maintain appropriate class sizes according to School Committee guidelines
- Ensure that students have access to personnel, technology, and instructional materials to achieve expected levels of learning
- Provide effective professional learning opportunities for staff to build teaching and leadership capacity
- Further educate the community regarding the costs and benefits of a high performance school system


## Strategic Priority: Learning Environments Where Everyone's Success Matters

- Create a common understanding of the benefits of inclusive schools and develop a shared, systematic approach to ensure that everyone has equitable access and opportunity for successful learning

- Ensure that all staff actively participate in professional development focused on inclusive and culturally proficient practices that improve learning and school cultures

- Analyze data related to academic performance and other indicators of success to identify existing gaps among populations; determine and implement action steps for improvement; and demonstrate success at closing these gaps

## Strategic Priority: Enhanced Well-Being for All

- Create a common understanding of the benefits of the skills, habits, and mindsets of social and emotional learning and develop a shared, systematic approach to explicitly teach, integrate, and assess these competencies

- Ensure that all staff actively participate in professional development focused on the skills, habits, and mindsets of social and emotional learning that improve students' learning, resilience, and focus

- Investigate, recommend, and plan for potential changes to school start times to better align with adolescent health needs for adequate sleep

- Improve support systems and resources to enhance the well-being of students and staff

## Strategic Priority: Connected Learning for a Complex World

- Integrate project-based learning experiences that require students at all grade levels to create complex, high-quality work for an authentic audience, with an emphasis on critical thinking, communication, creativity, and collaboration

- Review and adapt curriculum and instructional approaches to help students gain the knowledge and skills necessary to become ethical, empathetic, and informed citizens who make thoughtful decisions and contribute positively to their community

- Provide opportunities that help students develop independence after graduation, including exposure to career choices and development of skills in financial literacy

- Review and adapt feedback and homework systems in order to implement effective, research-based practices that enhance learning and build stronger partnerships with students and families

- Build community partnerships with businesses, institutions, and individuals in order to increase access to experiential learning and career awareness and to enhance learning in the STEAM fields (science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics)