

SHREWSBURY SCHOOL Journal



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Serving a community that empowers learners

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Superintendent's Corner

High expectations for respectful school cultures

DR. JOSEPH M. SAWYER
 Superintendent of Schools

As winter comes to an end and we are beginning to see signs that spring is on the way, it is exciting to see our students blooming in many different ways. As we finish the second semester and head into the last third of the school year, there are many accomplishments of which our community can be proud. These include: in performing arts, another superb high school musical along with music ensembles and individuals earning regional and state honors; incredible student artwork created and displayed locally and online; several team and individual honors in academic competitions; various successes in the athletic arena; and, at the core of our educational mission, a variety of measures that show promising overall growth in our students' academic progress.

I'm pleased that the vast majority of our students are doing well and developing their academic skills and character as we would hope. However, as I've reported to the community previously, at the same time we continue to experience significant challenges where too many students are struggling with complex mental health issues, and too many others are displaying behaviors that are disrespectful or inappropriate both in and outside of school. This is not unique to Shrewsbury, as communities across the state and nation are seeing similar struggles among our youth. While we are fortunate that this phenomenon is more limited in scope here in Shrewsbury than in many other locales, these behaviors – which we see across all of our grade spans and among all types of student demo-

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“ The goal of education is the advancement of knowledge and the dissemination of truth. ”
 – John F. Kennedy

Happy Lunar New Year!



The Lion Dance Troupe at Shrewsbury High School (SHS) performed at all lunches on February 9, 2024, to ring in the Lunar New Year, the year of the Dragon! The Lion Dance Troupe was formed this year under the direction of Mandarin Chinese Teacher Guimei Jia and Assistant Principal Nga Huynh. It currently includes students from the Asian Culture Club and Mandarin Chinese classes at SHS, and it is hoped that all interested students will have an opportunity to join in the future. Outside coach Leon Ly, from The Imperial Lion Dance Team, teaches and trains the students. Lion Team Troupe student members Ayla Tran, Emily Phan, Vivian Le, Rachael Laikangbam, George Liu, Aadrishma Dahal, John Lam, and Kory Phan are pictured left to right, above. Submitted by Nga Huynh.

Crafting a budget to meet evolving needs

SANDRA FRYC
 School Committee Chair

When the calendar turns to a new year, the School Committee focuses on developing the School Department's budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The priorities in the district's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan guide our work and it involves three significant commitments: 1) educational excellence, 2) the enhanced well-being of all, and 3) optimization of resources. The development, management, and careful implementation of the school budget are vital for our district to maximize the town's investment in teaching and learning.

The development of the Fiscal Year 2025 budget involves consideration of the current needs of the district in several areas:

- maintaining class sizes within the School Committee Guidelines
- advancement of the literacy initiative in grades PreK-6
- providing support for students with complex educational, social, emotional, and behavioral needs
- considering initiatives that promote staff well-being
- allocating resources to deliver mandated educational services for the English Language Learner population that is growing in size and complexity

- further developing in-district career and technical education programs, including creating partnerships and experiential learning opportunities, for high school students
- considering investments that will enhance the district's commitment to its core value of equity
- considering potential investments in school safety and security enhancements based on the audit conducted in 2023
- reviewing and determining what costs that are currently supported through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER-3) grant remain relevant and might be shifted to the appropriated budget or other available funding source

The town's favorable support of the May 2021 Proposition 2 ½ budget override provides improved, predictable, and stable financial support for school and municipal budget needs. The Override Agreement between the School Committee and the Select Board limits the School Department budget to a minimum annual increase of 4.25% and a maximum of 4.75%, however the amount available to the school district for FY25 is dependent on the available revenue projected by the Town Manager. Even with stable financial support, the Committee must continue to carefully as-

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Superintendent's Corner

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graphic groups – are affecting the climate of our schools in negative ways. We must respond skillfully as a school system to counteract these effects and maintain the positive, respectful cultures that have been the hallmarks of our schools for decades.

There are many strategic efforts underway to address students' mental health and well-being and to support their social and emotional development. I also want you to know that our schools are working hard to ensure that our high expectations for students' behavior are clear, and that students are held accountable when they do not meet those expectations.

I recently spoke with our educators and leaders, and I shared with them that in my 33 years in education (27 here in Shrewsbury), it is clear to me that their work has never been more challenging or complex. We must continue to use the expertise of our clinical staff to skillfully work with students whose behaviors are related to mental health challenges, and at the same time ensure that our teachers, paraeducators, and administrators are supported in addressing student behaviors that disrupt the classroom and school environment. I expect that parents will work collaboratively with their school when their child requires redirection or consequences for poor behavior – and the vast majority of them do, which I appreciate. In cases where parents are not supportive of holding their child accountable, I expect our educators and school leaders will take a respectfully firm stance, as the success of all of our students depends on maintaining a safe, supportive, and purposeful climate for learning.

We have rightfully taken pride in our strong school cultures in Shrewsbury. Despite the challenges of today's society, I am optimistic that our school communities will succeed in helping our students meet the high expectations we hold for them. By guiding our students, empowering our staff, and partnering with our families, I am confident that our schools will continue to provide learning environments where our students can thrive.



Just Believe

MARGARET BELSITO
Assistant Superintendent
for Student Services

The following are remarks given by Ms. Margaret Belsito, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, on November 3, 2023 at the Grand Opening of the "Maple & Main" retail business and learning space presented by the RISE (Reaching Independence through Supported Employment) Program, edited for publication.

Good morning, and together with our students, we welcome you to the official opening of *Maple & Main*. It has been a journey to get to this point and as you can tell we are beyond excited to welcome you all here today. As I make my remarks, please remember these two words: *Just Believe*.

To begin, we'd like to explain to you our "why". In Student Services, we provide services for students ages 18-22 who have either deferred their high school diploma or who have exited high school with a Certificate of Attainment; these services will foster academics, employment, independent living, and community access.

In the Winter of 2020, our Student Services directors started to discuss what we could do for our adult students who would have historically been transitioned to programs outside of the district and community. After an initial conversation with Assistant Director of Special Education Meghan Bartlett, we started to bring this topic into more meetings and floated our thoughts, vision, and hopes for this work, and reached out to Mr. Patrick Collins, then the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations. From there, spreadsheets were made and building drawings were drafted on paper, always putting what students need first – above all else.

I don't need to remind everyone, but in 2020 the world paused, including this work. Out of a dark place, we began to see light again. One of those silver linings was the American Rescue Plan grant from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) which has served as the seed money for the Reaching Independence through Supported Employment (RISE) program and *Maple & Main*. We'd like to thank Russell Johnston, DESE Deputy Commissioner and State Director of Special Education, who is here today, for his guidance throughout



The 2023-2024 RISE Program picture of students and staff above is framed by students' signatures.

those trying years.

With Dr. Sawyer's support, on November 17, 2021, we received approval from the School Committee to design and create RISE and the district's first retail business, *Maple & Main*. Knowing we were going to expand quickly with upcoming graduating classes, we instantly began looking for space and knew we wanted the students to have their own learning and working space outside of the high school building, where they could be seen as a part of the community and have access to public transportation and community-based learning opportunities. After a few months of waiting, a response came through to lease 557 Main Street from Chacharone Properties. Mel Chacharone and his family have been instrumental throughout this entire process, from the building renovations to offering business insights, advice, and support. We know this program and business will be a part of our district's legacy and we believe it will be a legacy for the Chacharone family as well.

Along with the Chacharones, we are forever grateful for all the people that have stepped up to help make this a reality by believing we can do great things when we work together. We recognize the many hours, days, nights, weekends, meetings and participation on committees that you have given to RISE and *Maple & Main*.

Lamoureux Pagano Associates Architect Corina Javier literally took our pencil drawings and volunteered her time to put them into a thoughtful design we could give to the Chacharones and their contractors so a building that once was many different pharmacies dating back to the 1970s could transform into a learning, vocational and work environment that will have an impact for years to come.

Katrina Lallier, Visual design-

er and SPS parent, sat for many hours listening to our vision. From there she was able to conceptualize what we were planning and was able to design our logos, for both RISE and *Maple & Main*, (who knew there were so many fonts, colors, sizes?!) and she continues to assist us with concept development and branding. We thank her for designing the Grand Opening programs and for her continued support with our capital campaign information kit. We appreciate her patience and willingness to draft, create and revise the logos until our team felt things were just right in representing academics, employment, independent living, and community access.

Director of Nursing Noelle Freeman's office is next to mine. In speaking about the progress with the program and space, and noticing potential landscape drawings on my office table, she said: "Did you know my husband (Steve) was in the landscaping business years ago? Would you like me to ask his opinion?" Steve and Noelle quickly joined this journey without hesitation and spent many, many hours (with their adult children, too) designing, ordering, laying, and installing the patio area and benches, and planting various shrubs and flowers supported by generous donations including one large sum from WIN Innovations.

To our design team, advisory committee and newly formed capital campaign committee, thank you for coming together over the past couple of years to give your input, feedback, advice and support on everything from paint colors to inventory selection, marketing, and the naming of our store (fun fact: *Maple & Main* was suggested by none other than our retired Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Mr. Patrick Collins).

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Anatmage Table: the future of science education

KATHLEEN KEOHANE
Director of Alumni Relationships and Community Partnerships

Imagine a Shrewsbury High School (SHS) biology classroom equipped with the most technologically advanced, 3D anatomy visualization tool for exploration. Picture our science students immersed in an interactive journey, where the exploration and virtual dissection of real human bodies - tissue, muscle, veins, and organs - are literally at their fingertips. With your help, this incredible tool, an **Anatmage Table**, will become a reality at Shrewsbury High School. To watch an enlightening video showcasing the transformative potential of the Anatmage Table and how it has the potential to propel our Science Department into a new era of learning and engagement, please visit this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LRTJ0N4QSy4>

Here is an Anatmage Table in use:



Several local high schools have already embraced this invaluable teaching tool, including Hopkinton High School, which acquired an Alpha version in February 2023. According to their Anatomy and Physiology teachers, they "love using the Anatmage table!" "[They use it] absolutely every day, in nearly every class ... It can easily be rolled from classroom to classroom, ...[and they] use it for everything from histol-

ogy of tissues to comparing normal and pathological organs." The teachers find it "quite user friendly and fun to explore." SHS Biology Teacher Dr. Rana Dabbagh, Science & Engineering Teacher Jill Carter, and Director of Science & Engineering David Hruskoci visited Hopkinton High School and were thoroughly impressed with the Anatmage table in action. Dr. Dabbagh expressed his enthusiasm by stating: "This table would allow our students to perceive the human body in a way that no other experience would. Even for me, someone who dissected a cadaver in grad school, I didn't have access to the detail, depth of content, study, and practice that this table provides." Ms. Carter echoed the sentiment, adding "The opportunity to observe the human body systems in 3D and in functional motion with such great detail—wow—it's something that we are never able to mimic with books, videos, and diagrams. This is as real as it gets!" Please see this Hopkinton Independent article for further insights into the impact of the Anatmage Table at Hopkinton High School: <https://hopkintonindependent.com/anatmage-table-enhances-anatomy-physiology-studies-at-hhs/>

The Anatmage table proves especially beneficial for visual learners, offering the chance to explore real CT and MRI scans, as well as human organs, providing a learning experience beyond the capabilities of words on a page. For students aspiring to pursue careers in medicine, the virtual exploration of the intricacies of the human body offers a realistic preview of what they may face in their future professions. This im-

mersive experience enhances their comprehension and readiness for the challenges of the medical field.

While this state-of-the-art tool will benefit every high school student enrolled in Biology (a graduation requirement), Human Anatomy, and Principles of Biomedical Science courses, it is particularly relevant for those participating in our upcoming Biomedical and Life Sciences Innovation Career Pathway program. However, it comes at a great cost: \$80,000. **The Shrewsbury Public Schools Colonial fund will match every dollar that is donated towards the purchase of the Anatmage Table. As of February 29, 2024, we have raised \$11,300 – can you help us reach \$40,000?**

To make a donation, scan this QR code:



or visit <https://schools.shrewsburyma.gov/future/donate-now-clone>, where you will have the option to make a sustainable monthly donation or a one-time gift online. Additional information is also available to make an honorary gift or a matching gift.

Checks can be made payable to **Shrewsbury Public Schools** and mailed to:

Shrewsbury Public Schools
 Colonial Fund
 100 Maple Avenue,
 Shrewsbury, MA 01545

on products and candle scents; learned screen printing; and helped with ordering, counting every piece of candy, pricing, and the layout of *Maple & Main*. This is your program and your business and we believe in each and every one of you.

Finally, thank you to our founding members and their families, Jazmine, Ryan, and Zaid. Thank you to their families for believing in this vision and supporting our creation of RISE and now *Maple & Main*. These were our first RISE students and

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Crafting a budget

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sess the district's needs and exercise prudent use of all available funding in an environment of increased inflation that makes the cost of doing business more expensive.

During the Fiscal Year 2025, our district will continue to need to manage post-pandemic learning gaps; increased student mental health and behavioral needs; evolving student population needs and requirements for English Language Learners and students with disabilities; access to career and technical education opportunities; technology needs due to the risk of cybersecurity threats and the increased reliance on IT systems for operations and education; update curriculum materials and textbooks; closely monitor emergency homeless shelter funding for educational services for students who are currently living in our community; and negotiate a successor contract with our Paraprofessional union.

After several budget workshops with the Committee and the district leadership that focused on key areas of identified needs and the district's Strategic Priorities for FY25, recommendations for investments in personnel and operation needs were presented to the Committee during Dr. Sawyer's initial FY25 budget recommendation on February 7, 2024. Identified personnel needs include additional staff to: provide mandated services, as well as new staff to meet the growing demands to support students with significant behavioral health concerns; address the growing increase in the need to manage services for English Language Learners, including state-mandated screenings, assessments, and program supports; keep class sizes within School Committee guidelines; advance the district's Commitment to the enhanced well-being of all; coordinate the increased need for internships, job shadowing, and capstone projects, including the Career Innovation Pathways program; and deal with the increased demand on the IT Department for implementation of programs for educational and operational purposes, as well as cybersecurity and network maintenance. Suggested strategic investments for operation needs include materials to implement the district's new literacy program fully; the purchase of textbook and curriculum materials for Shrewsbury High School (SHS) World Civilizations, US History I, and US History II courses, which were last updated in 2009; and moving the Late Bus Service from ESSER-3 grant funds to the appropriated budget to provide equitable access to after-school academic help and co-curricular activities.

Shrewsbury Public Schools has always been a forward-thinking district, and it applies to the area of school funding. Grant funds play a particularly significant role in the overall financing of public education in our district, as they provide funding for specific needs and relieve pressure on the School Department's appropri-

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Just Believe

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To our families and friends - Brendon, Jack, Patrick, Andrea, Dave, and especially my husband George - who put furniture together, installed slatwalls, attached moldings, built benches, hung signs, touched up paint, helped with landscaping and encouraged our team to keep believing in the vision: without all your support our vision would not have been possible.

Christine Pellerin (Program Coordinator) and Jennifer Tabor (Retail Manager), the work you have accomplished

to date and the leadership you have shown is exemplary; your motivation, energy and drive to make sure both RISE and *Maple & Main* are successful is inspiring for us all.

We would also like to recognize our many community partners and internship sites. You all have welcomed our students. As you enter *Maple & Main* please take a moment to look at the wall and to see those that have silently supported our students.

Our students who transitioned from the high school to this building joined the conversations and decided

Schools help keep the community warm

DR. JANE LIZOTTE
Assistant Superintendent
for Community Partnerships
& Well-Being

Students and staff at Sherwood Middle School (Grades 5-6), Oak Middle School (Grades 7-8), and Shrewsbury High School (SHS) are working hard to help keep the community warm. Housed at Sherwood Middle School (SMS) and staffed by SHS student volunteers, *Andy's Closet* provides clothing to middle school students in need, and is an offshoot of *Andy's Attic*, which operates out of South High Community School in Worcester. The family of SHS Class of 2012 student Andy Reese, who was killed in a tragic car accident in 2010, developed *Andy's Attic* several years ago in his honor. If you would like to make a donation or have a question, please contact Ms. Karen Gutekanst,

SMS Assistant Principal, at kgutekanst@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us. If you are in need of assistance, please contact SMS for a request form.

SHS students who have volunteered their time at *Andy's Closet* include Nisarga Jarali, Nishaa Babu, Nivedita Jarali, Katherine Mui, Courtney Chen, Kalin Igallo, Anya Sahani, Joann Mui, and Iyana Dutta. Additional SHS student volunteers are pictured at right working hard alongside Sherwood Middle School (SMS) Assistant Principal Karen Gutekanst at *Andy's Closet* on February 1, 2024.

At Oak Middle School (OMS), *The Locker* is a donation-based program that supports OMS families and the larger community by providing clothing and personal-care items. Families are invited to share specific needs by completing



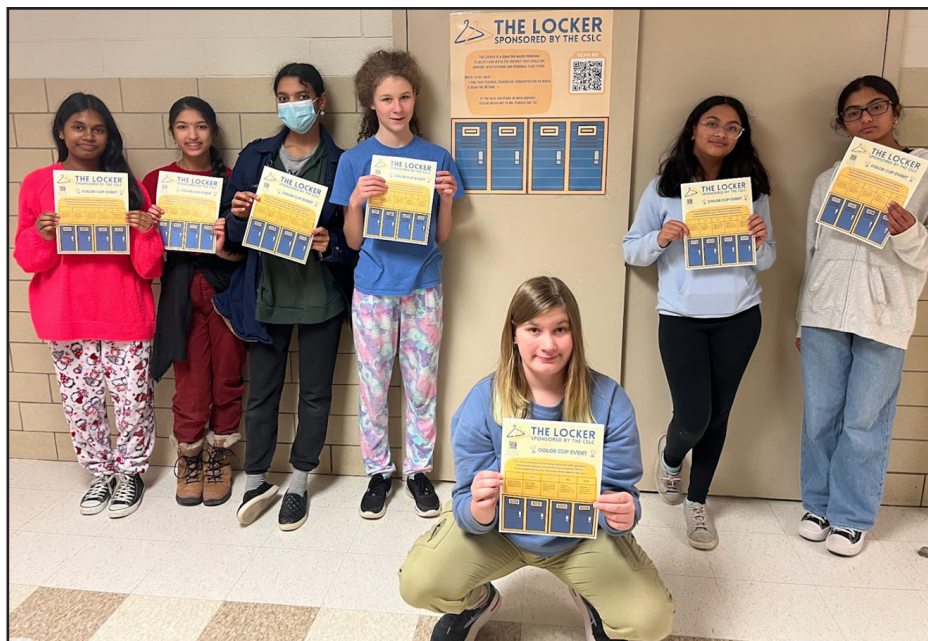
Sherwood Middle School Assistant Principal Karen Gutekanst (far left) is pictured at *Andy's Closet* with Shrewsbury High School student volunteers (left to right) Hamza Adam, Andrew Stumm, Joshua Ford, Denzel Okyere Appiah, Zoe Tompsett, Kaavya Moondhra, and Anushka Thomas.

and submitting a confidential form containing information on sizing, fashion styles, and color preferences. The orders are filled and left at the Nurse's Office for pick up. Parents, caretakers, and students also have the option to visit the neatly organized closet to choose items they need. Anyone wanting more information about *The Locker* can reach out to the OMS Main Office at 45

Oak Street. The Community Service Club, facilitated by Special Education Team Chair Kristen Clifford and Music Teacher Jon Zucchi, organizes *The Locker*, which is overseen by Special Education Teacher Sarah Powers. Ms. Powers submitted the photo below of students displaying an informational flier for *The Locker*:



Shrewsbury High School student volunteers (left to right) Anushka Thomas, Zoe Tompsett, and Kaavya Moondhra, are shown sorting clothing at *Andy's Closet*.



Above, OMS students Hasini Palaniappan, Sana Bharath, Thaniska Suresh Kumar Praveena, Kalae Heisen, Naysa Ajeesh, and Norah Linto are pictured left to right, back; Sarah Rotman-Moore is front and center.



Sherwood Coffee Cruiser

"Sherwood Coffee Cruiser" has begun at Sherwood Middle School! This new business provides an opportunity for students from the Intensive Learning Center (ILC) to gain important vocational and social skills they can use for their future success by making coffee, tea, and hot chocolate for various staff members. Students and teachers are loving this new endeavor!

Pictured with the Sherwood Coffee Cruiser to the left, left to right, are Paraprofessional Tania Suma, Jacob Moura (Grade 6 student), Alice Silva Almeida (Grade 5 student), Intensive Special Education Teacher Keren Albiston, Principal Jon Kelly, and Landon Glynn (Grade 5 student). Submitted by Keren Albiston.

Grade 6 student Jacob Moura is shown to the right practicing vocational skills with Sherwood Middle School Principal Jon Kelly. Submitted by Keren Albiston.



Mindfulness Practice at Major Howard W. Beal School

SHELLEY HOEY
Assistant Principal, Major Howard W. Beal School
DR. JANE LIZOTTE
Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships & Well-Being

Mindfulness is such a common practice at Major Howard W. Beal School that Grade 4 student voice leaders have a crew called the Mindfulness Crew. These students work with their leader, Teacher Allison Campbell, and Mindfulness Director Mr. Jordan Grinstein to learn and lead a variety of mindfulness activities throughout the school. Students visit different Kindergarten - Grade 4 classrooms during morning meetings to incorporate mindfulness activities to start the day.

In early February, Mr. Grinstein met with Beal Grade 3 Teacher Kim Berthiaume and her students to engage in mindfulness strategies that help students and adults

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Grade 4 student voice leaders and Dr. Lizotte are pictured above leading Teacher Allyson Hoffman's Grade 1 class through a mindful moment to start their day. Mr. Grinstein (right, center) is pictured below practicing strategies to regulate emotions with Ms. Berthiaume's class.



Culture Night at Sherwood Middle School

On February 9, 2024, Sherwood Middle School (SMS) recognized and celebrated the diversity of its student body with its first Culture Night. The evening featured food, informational displays and student performances representing a variety of cultures. Photos submitted by Sherwood Middle School.



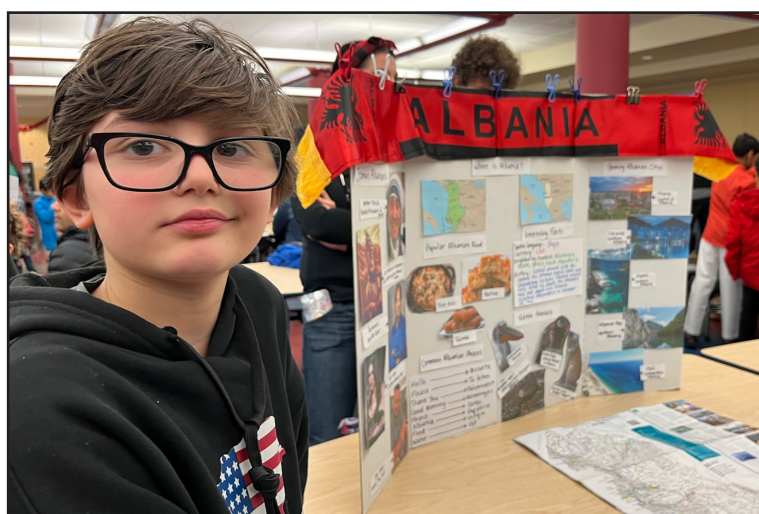
SMS students Sookti Hunnur, Lipika Mopidevi, and Joshitha Pyla are pictured left to right, above, in front of a display on Indian Traditional Clothing.



SMS student Suha Salam is pictured above in front of a display about Bangladesh.



SMS student Analia Ortega is pictured above in front of an informational display about Puerto Rico.



SMS student Brendan Topi is shown above next to a display on Albania.

Crafting a budget

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ated budget. Due to the hard work of employees in the Shrewsbury Public Schools, who took the time to seek out and apply for grants, the following grants were awarded to our school district during the current school year:

High Quality Instructional Material Purchase Grant for \$250,000 to purchase core instructional materials for deeper learning in English Language Arts, mathematics, and science. The funding will be used to purchase material for the implementation of the English Language Education literacy curriculum in grades K-6.

One8 Foundation Grant for SHS Engineering Program for \$40,000 to be distributed over three years to offset the costs associated with the Project Lead The Way engineering program. Uses include equipment, technology, and educator training.

Special Education Program Grant for \$38,702 to implement the Individualized Education Program Improvement Project to assist with transitioning to utilization of the newly revised forms and procedures.

Social & Emotional Learning and Mental Health State Grant for \$22,855 to support social-emotional and behavioral health needs of students, families, and educators.

Chronic Absenteeism Grant for \$10,000 to address chronic absenteeism by implementing tracking and monitoring systems and strengthening the family-school partnership.

Project Lead The Way Engineering Grant for \$10,000 to assist with the expansion of student access to Project Lead The Way engineering in partnership with Lockheed Martin.

MyCAP Development and Implementation Grant for \$5,500 to support the "My Career and Academic Plan," a program the district is involved with to ensure all students graduate from high school and are college and career ready. The funds will support staff professional development and are part of the Innovation Career Pathways work at Shrewsbury High School.

Instructional Leadership Institute Participant Stipend Grant for \$3,000 to support staff who attended the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Instructional Leadership Institute.

In addition, since the beginning of this school year, our district has received \$ 60,000 in donations from generous community members and local businesses to support various programs and initiatives.

The School Department FY25 budget will be official once it is voted on by Town Meeting Members at the annual Town Meeting in May. Until that occurs, the Committee will continue to assess all district needs and avail-

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Just Believe

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were able to lay the path for years of RISE students to come.

Last school year, we started RISE with three students, one Coordinator, and one Job Coach. Now, we are standing strong: we have our Program Coordinator, Christine Pellerin; Retail Manager, Jen Tabor; Special Education Teachers Erin Hruskoci and Kristi Menard; six Job Coaches; and 16 students.

RISE is a place where all students are accepted for who they are and where they plan on going. We focus on the student and family vision and take these precious years to create learning opportunities that will allow our students to be as independent as possible so that when they exit the program at the age of 22 they are prepared with the necessary tools and skills to be active community members. This is a *Portrait of a Graduate*.

I can earnestly say that RISE is a place of happiness and now *Maple & Main* will spread more joy in our beautiful town. All students will have opportunities to work at *Maple & Main*. They will continue to have opportunities for community-based paid employment and internships throughout central Massachusetts, but all students will know they are a part of RISE and *Maple & Main* first.

What started as a mild conversation will now have a lasting impact on these students and families, and hopefully for everyone in the town of Shrewsbury. So whether you are stopping in our store, or walking or driving by, please look at this building and let it represent our center of town and remember to *Just Believe*. Believe amazing things happen when we come together for our community.

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
Graphic Designer

Career Exploration in our schools

KATHLEEN KEOHANE
Director of Alumni Relationships and Community Partnerships

Shrewsbury Public Schools (SPS) continued to organize a range of events and programs throughout fall and winter empowering students to make informed decisions about their professional paths as part of SPS' 2023-2027 Strategic Plan that includes the following goal:

Advance Career and Technical Education: Strengthen all students' postsecondary preparedness by expanding access to career and technical education, evaluating course offerings, and exploring pathway opportunities.

- Expand opportunities for career exploration, job shadowing, and internships.
- Create multiple career and technical pathways for high school students, including coursework sequences followed by authentic field training experiences.

These events aimed to introduce students to different industries, trades, and post-secondary options. The district's efforts have yielded remarkable results which are evident in the growing number of relationships we have established with local businesses and organizations:

Blackstone Valley Hub. In October, November, January, and February, cohorts of eight students and two teachers from Shrewsbury High School (SHS) visited Blackstone Valley Hub. Blackstone Valley Hub for Workforce Development (BV Hub) in Whitinsville, MA, is providing a training program for SHS students during the 2023-24 school year to introduce them to manufacturing and allied topics using an experiential approach. A total of 32 students will have participated in programming at BV Hub by the end of this school year. The students participate in small groups of eight students and visit BV Hub for two or three sessions from 8:30am -1:30pm. The trainings are focused on manufacturing and primarily cover:

- Machine tools
- Welding
- 3D printing
- Lathes
- Mills
- Augmented arc welding
- Robotics
- Laser engraving

Career Fair. On February 6,

2024, SHS held its third annual Career Fair, highlighting 40 businesses and seven alumni who shared their careers with over 500 sophomores, juniors and seniors. Many businesses were selected and invited intentionally, as their expertise and support align closely with the evolving and future career pathways at Shrewsbury High School.

Thank you to the following businesses who shared their morning with our students, many of whom offered internships and job-shadowing opportunities as well: Amazon Fulfillment Technology & Robotics; Baystate Health; Blackstone Valley Hub; Charles River Laboratories; Flaherty Physical Therapy; Grafton Job Corps Outreach & Admissions; Guild of St. Agnes; Hanover Theater and Conservatory; Ideal Video Strategies, LLC; Kathy McSweeney, Realtor; Lutco, Inc.; MA Dept Fire Service; Shrewsbury Fire Department; *Maple & Main*; Marvell Technology; Massachusetts Air National Guard; Massachusetts Association of Insurance Agents; Massachusetts Attorney General's Office; MassBay Community College; MassHire Central Career Centers; Munq; New England PGA; Patrice Vocal Studio; Jean Pierre Schatzmann Peron, Professor – Scientist; Rockland Trust; RN Diane O'Connor; Shrewsbury Electric Co; Shrewsbury Building Inspector Office; Shrewsbury Department of Public Works; Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union; The Hanover Theatre and Conservatory; The Learning Experience; The Peterson School; Umass Memorial Medical Center (Respiratory Care); Wayne J Griffin Electric, Inc; Worcester Division of Public Health; Worcester Probate and Family Court; Worcester Red Sox; and Yatco Energy.

Guest Speaker Scott Nickerson. On December 18, 2023, Senior Vice President at Moderna Mr. Scott Nickerson spoke to Biology and BioMed students at SHS. Mr. Nickerson, a Shrewsbury parent and resident, discussed his educational background and diverse career journey, providing a glimpse into the path that led him to where he is today. During the session, Mr. Nickerson recounted his personal journey, starting at a public high school in Virginia where he was an average student, and progressing through three different colleges before he settled on his chemistry degree from the University of Arizona. His key message to the students was that future success can't always be based on performance in high

school, and he encouraged the students to remain open minded, explore diverse paths, and embrace various opportunities that may unfold along their own journeys.

CSI Tour. In February 2024, SHS Students toured Component Sources International's (CSI) manufacturing facilities in Westborough to learn more about the metal components made there. CSI manufactures parts for F-35 aircraft, Boeing 787 planes, submarines, trains, and SpaceX rockets. The facility runs just one shift, and employees are treated like family. Steve Doody, the CEO, personally welcomed the students and guided them on a comprehensive two-hour tour of the company he established. During the tour, Mr. Doody shared his own challenges with attending and staying in college, despite having a strong mechanical aptitude. He offered valuable advice to the students and outlined the qualities he values in his employees, emphasizing ambition over laziness, continuous self-improvement, commitment to the company beyond monetary motives, and the importance of being a "team player".

Lunch and Learn. Since October 2023, SHS has implemented a unique "Lunch and Learn" program, offering students the chance to engage with guest speakers during their Friday lunch period. This innovative initiative aims to expose high school students to a diverse range of career possibilities and foster exploration of future career paths. The program is carefully designed to create a relaxed and interactive setting, allowing students to comfortably engage with professionals from various fields. Through these sessions, students can gain valuable insights, ask questions, and establish connections with experts in different industries. As of February 28, 2024, 14 speakers representing 14 different careers have engaged with over 150 students. Topics have ranged from a career in Music to Neuroscience, from Conservation to Accounting, and more! Before the end of the school year, nine more guest speakers are scheduled to present topics including Real Estate, Physical Therapy, Theatre, Investment Banking, Drug Development and Research, Solar, and Electrical. For more information about all of the Career Exploration programs and to see accompanying photos online, please visit <https://schools.shrewsburyma.gov/future/career-pathways>

Crafting a budget

CONTINUED, from page 5

able funding carefully, and budget changes could occur in what is or is not able to be funded for FY25. Areas in the FY25 budget proposal that will be closely monitored are the projected costs for out-of-district transportation as a new contract is under negotiation; student enrollment and student needs - especially English Learners, students with disabilities, and kindergarten enrollment numbers; loss of ESSER III grant funding; collective bargaining with our Paraprofessional union; grant or alternative funding opportunities; the evolving student population needs; and continued assessment of potential efficiencies in current practices.

The proposed FY25 budget funding conforms with the district's priorities, identified needs, and the override agreement between the School Committee and the Select Board. The initial budget recommendation maintains current personnel and programming, however it only includes some identified areas of need or proposed new initiatives that would benefit the district's ability to provide educational opportunities for all students. It is imperative that the Committee make well-thought-out and data-

driven strategic investments in the FY25 budget that will benefit educational services for all students and provide excellent return on investment for Shrewsbury taxpayers.

The School Committee strives to work through the annual budget process transparently. Upcoming meetings and discussions will significantly focus on the FY25 budget development. We welcome the public's input in this important work and hope anyone with questions, concerns, or suggestions for the FY25 budget process will contact us at schoolcommittee@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us

Mindfulness

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regulate emotions. "Mr. Jordan" shared that mindfulness helps individuals to focus and pay attention. The students and staff learned that paying attention to thoughts and feelings allows them to better identify (name) what different emotions feel like in their bodies and minds while recognizing what situations create the different emotions. The interactive session allowed students and staff to practice ways to accept and manage these feelings through a variety of strategies.



Mr. Grinstein and Special Education Teacher Kathleen Blair practice wellness through sound healing (above) with second grade students at Major Howard W. Beal School.



Fourth grade Student Voice leaders at Major Howard W. Beal School guide Teacher Mary Ann Hogan's second grade class through a mindful moment (above).

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 against students or staff on the basis of race, color, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, creed, ancestry, national origin, disability, veteran's status (including Vietnam-era veterans), or background. 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 or homelessness." 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, Executive Director of Human Resources at (508) 841-8443. 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, which have been combined into a single policy entitled "Anti-Harassment & Title IX Policy", deals directly with the issues of harassment. Copies of this policy are available on the School Committee's policy website, 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, Executive Director of Human Resources @ 508 841-8443 or bmalone@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us. 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 students 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 or homelessness. All reports of harassment or discrimination will be taken seriously and investigated in a timely fashion. Reports will be held in confidence to the extent provided by law. There are differing procedures required by law for Title IX v. other forms of discrimination. Any student who believes he/she/they has/have 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 the complaint constitutes suspected sexual harassment the Title IX Coordinator must also be notified by the original staff member notified of the complaint or their Principal. If any employee believes that he/she/they has/have been subjected to harassment, the employee has the right to file a complaint with Shrewsbury Public Schools by contacting the Title IX Coordinator. It is the goal of Shrewsbury Public Schools to promote a workplace that is free of sexual and other forms of harassment. If you would like to file a complaint directly you may do so by contacting the Executive Director of Hu-

man Resources, Title IX Coordinator: 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 prompt manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstance or allowed by law. Please review the full Title IX policy at <https://campussuite-storage.s3.amazonaws.com/prod/11162/b2004386-1ca3-11e6-b537-22000bd8490f/2225766/0a1bbd7a-6c71-11eb-9f34-0a90ee9eb86d/file/316-645%20-%20Anti-Harassment%20&%20Title%20IX%20Policy.pdf>. 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, via a request to Ms. Barbara Malone, Executive Director of Human Resources, (508) 841-8443. Each school has a designated Section 504 Coordinator. Initial student or parent 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/they has/have 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.

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