

Superintendent's Corner

A tradition of excellence & value

DR. JOSEPH M. SAWYER
SUPERINTENDENT

Our town has a long history of receiving an excellent return on the money it invests in local government. It is difficult to find a community anywhere in Massachusetts where citizens enjoy the level of high quality services that we do while also paying a tax bill that is very low by comparison. Investing in making a home in Shrewsbury is a tremendous value.

Shrewsbury students continue to shine in numerous ways, and they have been recognized at the regional, state, and even national level.

I am proud that our public schools play a large role in generating that value by making substantial contributions to the quality of life for all of Shrewsbury's citizens. I am pleased to report that our students' and educators' accomplishments are maintaining our school district's longstanding tradition of excellence. Shrewsbury students continue to shine in numerous ways,

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Curriculum coordinator roles & SPS Performing Arts

inside • pages 4, 5 & 6

Colonial Fund update; Road Scholars Race and Shrewsbury Education Foundation information, and the 2015-16 School Calendar



SAVE the DATE! Something NEW! See article on page 5.

“Imagination is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire, you will what you imagine, and at last, you create what you will.”

~ George Bernard Shaw ~

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Imagination and creation at its best!

In the photo montage above, top row on the left, is Nathan Colby, Director/Designer for the recent SHS musical “Cinderella” and on the right is the closing scene of the musical including the animated horses from Cinderella's coach that were student operated. On the bottom, left-right, are two photos from the competition play “Heartwired”. At left is the opening scene displaying the competitive play's set designer/creator Stan Pearson's use of the portable set design which is one of the requirements in the competition; the writer of this original play, Richard Peng, along with Jennifer Micarelli-Webb, Director, are pictured on the right. See related article on page 3.

The budget: promises kept

DR. B. DALE MAGEE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

If you are on the School Committee it is always about the budget. We have great teachers, committed parents and year after year we see the outstanding accomplishments that our students achieve. We have come to expect this and, maybe, even take it for granted. But the budget: it is always there, lurking and threatening to surprise us.

I have been on the School Committee long enough to see what the possibilities are and what tools we have to put out the fires that, it seems, inevitably arise each year at budget time. The school

budget is a reliable source of stress to everyone in town government. It is, by far, the biggest number, accounting for over half of our town's budget. Unlike utili-

Good schools attract young families that renew and enliven communities. Businesses thrive on the consumption that follows.

ties, not everyone uses it all of the time, many have passed their years of sending children to school and are not as enthusiastic about paying for someone else's children to get educated. Education, at

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Superintendent’s Corner
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and they have been recognized at the regional, state, and even national level for achievements in academics, the visual arts, music, drama, speech and debate, robotics, mathematics, science and engineering, and athletics. The variety of ways in which our students are excelling is truly remarkable.

The excellence of the education our students receive was recently noted by Newsweek magazine in its ranking of American high schools. Using a methodology that included a variety of academic measures, **Newsweek ranked Shrewsbury High School 146th out of 14,454 high schools - the top 1% - in the U.S.** I am particularly pleased that this ranking also included a special distinction for the achievement of low-income students, as one of the most important elements of the mission of public education is to provide opportunity to all the children in a community, regardless of their economic situation.

While the Newsweek ranking is one measure that represents excellence, another recent national study demonstrated that this excellence is achieved in an extremely efficient manner. The Center for American Progress conducted a study of over 7,000 K-12 school districts to determine “return on educational investment,” and it ranked the Shrewsbury Public Schools among only 1.8% in the entire U.S. who received the highest ratings overall and when controlling for economic and demographic factors. This is the second time this study was conducted, and Shrewsbury had similarly strong results in both.

We should all be rightfully proud of the results our schools

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Shrewsbury School
Journal

The non-profit Shrewsbury School Journal is published three times a year and reaches every household in the diverse and growing town of Shrewsbury. It is published by the central office of the Shrewsbury Public Schools with the help and expertise of many individuals. The mission of the Shrewsbury School Journal is to provide an accurate source of information about our school system and the town in which we live. We hope to foster a community of continuous learners.

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer
Superintendent

Mary Beth Banios
Assistant Superintendent

Kimberlee Cantin
Project Coordinator/Designer

Coach, coordinate & connect

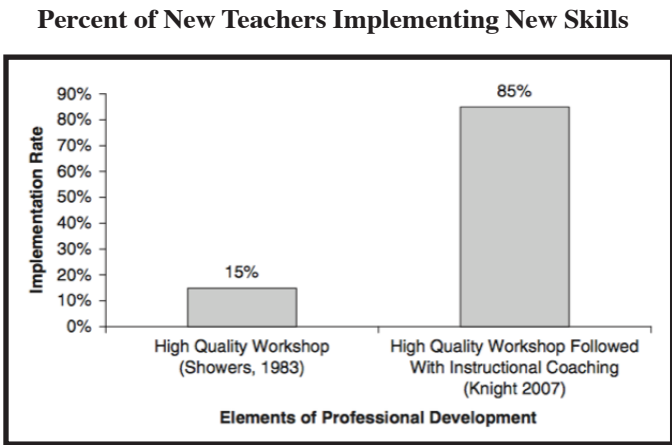
MARY BETH BANIOS
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

Structure of the Coach/
Curriculum Coordinator Roles -
Elementary level

As a result of the successful override vote, the instructional coach role has been expanded to include curriculum coordination responsibilities. Each of the individuals hired for this role serve as instructional coaches to the educators in each of their assigned schools, additionally, they also work closely with the Assistant Superintendent on issues related to curriculum coordination, program implementation, and assessment across all schools. This district level work ensures a high degree of consistency across all of our elementary programs. At the elementary level they are: *Rebecca Dumphy, Parker Road/Beal; Donna Rice, Spring Street; Shelley Hoey and Gina Kelly, Floral Street; Lisa Papazian, Paton and Susan Conley, Coolidge.*

The Work of An Instructional
Coach/Curriculum Coordinator
District Level

- Plan and provide training to district educators on Professional Development and Early Release Days
- Coordinate district level assessments at the elementary level
- Support new curriculum implementations including aligning curriculum to state frameworks,



- working with groups of pilot teachers, investigating and assisting in the selection of best resources for initiative, and leading summer work associated with initiatives
- Ensure that there is consistency in curriculum and practice across

- all elementary buildings and engage in transition conversations with Middle Level Curriculum Coordinators
- Ensure there is vertical alignment between the elementary grade level curriculum and instructional practices
 - Communicate with parents and community by offering parent workshops, writing articles for the Shrewsbury Journal, participating in School Talk programming, and presenting to the School Committee
- Building Level**
- Provide job embedded professional development for classroom teachers in the form of modeling lessons, co-teaching, and observing lessons and providing non-evaluative feedback
 - Provide focused team based coaching
 - Orient and support new educators and educators that change grade levels
 - Provide professional development to paraprofessionals
 - Ensuring vertical alignment within the building

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Research on the coaching model

The likelihood of using new learning and sharing responsibility rises when colleagues, guided by a coach, work together and hold each other accountable for improved teaching and learning (Barr, Simmons, and Zarrow 2003; Coggins, Stoddard, and Cutler 2003; WestEd 2000). And because instructional coaching takes place in a natural setting – the classroom rather than a hotel ballroom – observation, learning, and experimentation can occur in real situations (Neufeld and Roper 2003).

Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University

“Professional Development Strategies: Instructional Coaching”, January 2004

The Annenberg Institute “supports and encourages” the using of instructional coaching noting that this model is instrumental in creating “coherence, focus, and alignment” at all levels in a school system. Specifically they outline four key benefits of the coaching model:

Investment in human capital: the coaching model aligns with the knowledge base around adult learning and change theory

Sustainability: Allows for initiatives to be sustained over time as the coach orients new teachers to the previous work and training and supports teachers who may be struggling with the initiative

Equity and Internal accountability: Provides greater consistency of instruction between classrooms; “What you get doesn’t depend on who you get.” Coaches are used to support new teachers and teachers who are struggling with their practice. They also facilitate team meetings and help to build professional learning communities in buildings.

Connecting school and district: In Shrewsbury all 6 instructional coaches and the Assistant Superintendent meet weekly to ensure consistency of communication and practice across all elementary schools. At various times during the year the Middle Level Curriculum Coordinators attend this meeting to ensure alignment between the elementary and middle level.

University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning: Kansas Coaching Project

The head of the Kansas Coaching Project at the University of Kansas is Dr. James Knight. He has been studying professional development and coaching for over 20 years. The link to the Coaching Project can be found below. This site contains research, articles, and video archives of experts speaking to the efficacy of using coaching models in schools.

www.instructionalcoach.org

Structure of the Curriculum Coordinator-
Roles -
Middle level

Another result of the successful override vote, is the restoration of curriculum coordinator roles for all core subjects at Sherwood and Oak Middle Schools. Prior to the override, only the ELA and Science positions remained, and the science role was heavily focused on launching the 1:1 initiative at the middle level. With additional funding, the mathematics and social studies curriculum coordinator roles have been restored, and with the restoration of a Director of Instructional Technology position, the science curriculum coordinator is now able to focus on her content area full time. These coordinators work across Sherwood and Oak to support their

designated content areas. The individuals listed below serve as both secondary supervisors and coaches to the educators in each of their assigned departments. Like the elementary instructional coaches, they also work closely with the Assistant Superintendent on issues related to curriculum coordination, program implementation, and assessment across all the middle schools. This district level work ensures a high degree of consistency across 5-8 departments and allows for stronger transitions between both the elementary schools and the high school. Finally, these coordinators teach in our Curriculum Connections program at Sherwood Middle School. Current staff shared by Sherwood and Oak Middle Schools are - *Lisa Daly, English Language Arts; Robert Dunn, Social Studies;*

- Melissa McCann, Math and Pamela Poitras, Science.*
- The Work of A Middle Level Curriculum Coordinator**
- District Level**
- Plan and provide training to district educators on Professional Development and Early Release Days
 - Coordinate department common assessments in grades 5-8
 - Support new curriculum implementations including aligning curriculum to state frameworks working with groups of pilot teachers, investigating and assisting in the selection of best resources for initiative, lead in-summer work associated with initiatives
 - Ensure that there is consistency in curriculum and practice

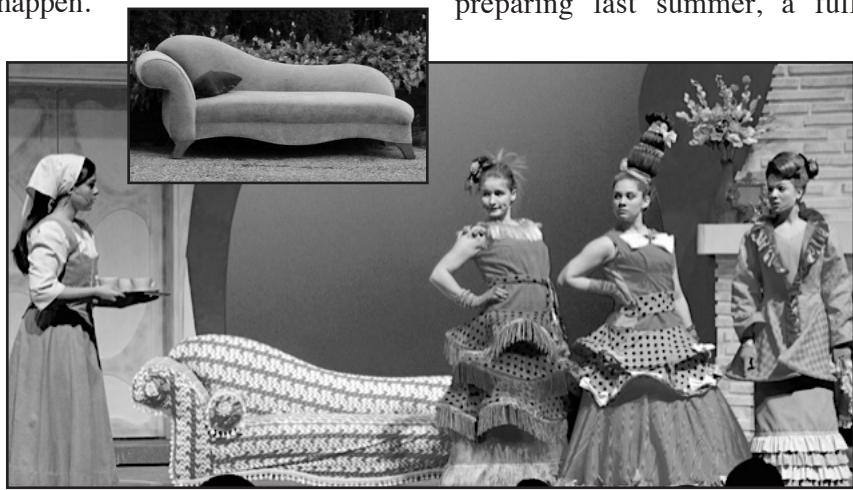
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Shrewsbury Theatre creates a separate reality

BRIDGET ZHOU
SHS STUDENT - CLASS OF 2016



The Performing Arts Department at Shrewsbury High School is known for putting on its shows. But for the people behind the show, a show is so much more than a performance. It is an escape into a separate reality. For a show to be great, you have to create your own world, complete with its own story, culture, and vocabulary. No matter if it's the competition play or spring musical, theatre, in its essence, is the same. Theatre is about working with what you have and making the impossible happen.



Pictured above in the background is the chaise lounge (the "roadside find") mentioned in the article. Also pictured from left-right are Celine Mende (Cinderella); Sierra Decatur and Carly O'Brien (Cinderella's stepsisters) and Katie Hester (Cinderella's stepmother). Pictured in the inset photo, where it was found by the side of the road, is the original chaise lounge before it was reupholstered.

Spring Musical

As both director/designer of the spring musical, Nathan Colby is the master of doing exactly that. Not only is he directing the spring musical, but he is also designing and building the elaborate set that is bound to accompany such a show as Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella. When it comes to set design, it's all about taking advantage of what you have. "People are always trying to push the envelope of what they can accomplish and maximize the

impact," says Mr. Colby. With an auditorium as state-of-the-art as Shrewsbury High School's, the opportunities are endless. "When this building [referring to the current Shrewsbury High School] came online, it really changed what we were able to do," Mr. Colby says. "I'm always trying to reinvent a space and push it to its limits of what it could do." A big reason why Shrewsbury productions are so phenomenal is that we incorporate the entire theatre into our shows—we aren't confined to the stage.

In this year's spring musical, Cinderella, the adults involved—including Nathan Colby, Michael Lapomardo, Virginia Snowdon, Elizabeth Ushinski, and Martha Deering—are pushing all limits and taking advantage of every resource they can; they began preparing last summer, a full

year in advance. When it comes to set and costume pieces, you can't actually build everything (or buy everything) on your own. "You've got to be shameless and take advantage of buying things at Savers and Salvation Army when it's available. If you see it out for free, take it!" Mr. Colby says. In fact, quite a few of Shrewsbury High School's beloved set pieces have been free of charge. "I've had good luck

with furniture on the side of the road," Mr. Colby says. For example, the chaise lounge featured in Cinderella came from the streets; previous productions have even had furniture pieces from the directors themselves. By the time performances roll around, you would never be able to tell that anything wasn't custom made. "You have to reinvent stuff in order to make it work for what your needs are. We'd never be able to go out and purchase things," Mr. Colby says. "We've come up with a lot of ways to try to save and make more out of what we have." In fact, many staple set pieces in the spring musical have been reused multiple times over the years—it's as simple as applying a fresh coat of paint. Other large set pieces have been broken down and their parts redistributed. Making more out of what you have may save money, but it costs a lot of time. Both students and adults involved with set construction set aside dozens of hours. A show doesn't just appear overnight, much like set pieces don't just appear; one of the biggest parts of getting involved in a production is the time commitment. In the end, the whole point of a set—and putting in the hours—is to help narrate your story. You have to ask yourself, "In this world of this play what is the reality?" Your reality, your world of the play, only gets as real as you make it.

Competition Play

In the world of competition play, theatre is all about realism. "In essence real art is about reflecting what's going on in society back to the public and it's trying to make them [the audience] shift or move or consider," says Mrs. Jennifer Webb, director of the competition play. "Good theatre makes an audience feel which then makes them react in emotional and physical ways. Really it's about developing good organic interactions between the characters within this world of the play and having them relate to imagined circumstances in a very realistic way." For Mrs. Webb, realism is more meaningful to her because it can move people to action—through realism, she has the power to make people think, reconsider, reevaluate. When going through the process of choosing a student-written original piece for this year, Mrs. Webb asked herself these questions: Which piece serves a purpose? Which piece has the most possibility in terms of set? Whose writing is the most organic?

She treated the process very similarly to how she would treat her students in her Playwriting class, having potential contenders write teasers for their shows. In addition, she also screened all candidates in an interviewing process. She found what she was looking for and more in *Heartwired*, authored by student Rich-



The refurbished chair above used in Cinderella's home is the companion piece to the chaise lounge. It is pictured at left, in its original state.



The photo above shows backstage crew being instructed by Liz Ushinski and Virginia Snowdon on how to hang lanterns, used in the ballroom scene pictured at right, on the fly bar. The lanterns were an inexpensive yet tasteful touch that added to the ambiance.



Superintendent's Corner

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attain and the fact that our success is achieved in a very cost effective manner. However, there is much more to the quality of a school district than its academic and financial statistics. The community should know that not only are our students obtaining important skills and knowledge, but they are also learning important values such as respect, responsibility, and service to others. Visitors to our schools often comment on the respectful behavior of our students and the professionalism of our staff. The recent accreditation report for Shrewsbury High School, which included evidence from a multi-day site visit by educators from all over New England, commended our high school for "the safe, positive, respectful, and supportive culture that permeates the school and fosters student responsibility for learning and results in shared ownership, pride, and high expectations for all."

We should all be rightfully proud of the results our schools attain and the fact that our success is achieved in a very cost effective manner.

The value our schools provide goes beyond the secondary benefits that come from having strong results and a program that engages young people in constructive activities, as our students are also providing a significant amount of direct service to our community. For example, a few years back Shrewsbury High School began its "10,000 Hour Challenge", where the student body is challenged to complete 10,000 hours of community service that year, and with each class expected to achieve that same amount in its four years of high school (Freshmen 1,000 hours, Sophomores 2,000, Juniors 3,000, and Seniors 4,000). Our students have been shattering this expectation, and for this school year alone SHS students had already completed over 12,000 hours of community service as of February! I am so proud that Shrewsbury students are volunteering so much of their time to provide help where it is needed in our town, Worcester, and the surrounding area.

Our community makes a large investment in its public schools. I think the evidence is clear that this investment is paying off by providing an excellent education for our town's young people and by providing an exceptional value for the taxpayer.

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Promises kept
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every level, is going up faster than inflation and rivals health care in cost inflation.

But, there is value there for everyone. Public education was deemed a right because an educated populace is a benefit to the entire community. Good schools attract young families that renew and enliven communities. Businesses thrive on the consumption that follows. Educated communities experience less violence and have less call for many entitlements. The more education people have the healthier they are and the longer they live (it has been estimated that a college degree can add seven years to the average lifespan). So, we are not just paying for the education of someone else’s kids. We are investing in a better, safer, more economically viable community.

That being said, know that your School Committee is committed to maintaining the gains that came with last year’s override. Class sizes are down. Morale among students, teachers and parents is up. The curriculum is being modernized. Information technology is being introduced cautiously but at a rate that keeps us on the forefront of education. Computerized applications are keeping information up to date, customizing lessons, taking each student to their potential and allowing teachers to quickly see the results of homework assignments and know how to target their lessons to

Morale among students, teachers and parents is up. The curriculum is being modernized. Information technology is being introduced cautiously but at a rate that keeps us on the forefront of education.

reach each individual. If there is any way to mitigate the rate of inflation of education, it is likely through adoption of technology and we can be proud of how this is being introduced in Shrewsbury.

As we enter our budget season we have to hold on to the educational gains that we have gotten over the past year. We also have to stay true to our commitment to keep the rise in costs at a minimum. It will never be zero without costing something in quality. Last spring we projected an increase of about 1.9 to 2.9 million dollars out of a current town appropriation for the schools of about 59 million in order to sustain our program. So far, we feel that

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Colonial Fund update

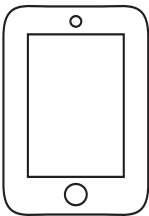
MICHELLE BISCOTTI &
KATHLEEN KEOHANE
CO-COORDINATORS OF
DEVELOPMENT AND VOLUNTEER
OPPORTUNITIES



Fourth Grade Digital Classroom Pilot is Launched!

Thanks to your donation to the Colonial Fund and money from last spring’s Garden Party, we were able to launch a 4th Grade Technology Pilot in selected classes in all our elementary schools this January. This pilot is designed to discover how we might best improve student access to technology at the elementary level.

Please visit the Colonial Fund website



for videos and photos of students and teachers using technology in the classroom.

Dine & Donate raises \$800 for the Colonial Fund!

Since the fall, we’ve run a series of successful benefit nights at local restaurants. On select dates, *2Ovens, Papa Gino’s, Noodles & Company and Buffalo Wild Wings* all donated 15-20% of the bill when diners said they support Shrewsbury Public Schools.

Next up: Dean Park Pizza

Dine in or take out throughout the month of March and support the Colonial Fund. For more information, please “Like” our Shrewsbury Public Schools Colonial Fund Facebook page.



Use this flyer!



(508) 842-2584

DINNER AND DONATE
TUESDAY, MARCH 24

VISIT DEAN PARK GRILL AND PIZZA
ON TUESDAY, MARCH 24
FROM 4:00 TO CLOSE (9 PM)
15% OF ALL SALES THAT ARE ACCOMPANIED
BY THE FLIER WILL BE DONATED TO
SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
THIS IS EXCLUDING THE PURCHASE OF ALCOHOL.



749 MAIN STREET, SHREWSBURY, MA • (508) 842-2584

There’s still time to help!

In November, we announced our goal of raising \$25,000 and attracting 100 new donors by the end of this school year. So far, we’ve raised \$6,235 and have 24 new donors. Visit the Colonial Fund website to donate and help fund classroom innovation for the next school year.

Go to the Colonial Fund website to donate and for more information about all of these initiatives and events:

<http://shrewsburyyps.wix.com/colonialfund>

Middle level coordinators

CONTINUED, from page 2

across all department classrooms and engage in transition conversations with both the elementary instructional coaches and the high school department heads.

- Ensure there is vertical alignment between grade 5-8 curriculum and instructional practices
- Communicate with parents and community by offering parent workshops, writing articles for the Shrewsbury Journal, participating in School Talk programming, and presenting to the School Committee

Building Level

- Provide job embedded professional development for classroom teachers in the form of modeling lessons, co-teaching, and observing lessons and providing feedback
- Write observation reports
- Facilitate 5-8 department meetings
- Orient and support new educators and educators that change grade levels
- Ensuring vertical alignment within the building

- Assist educators in administering assessments and using associated data to inform instruction
- Facilitate hiring committees
- Provide support for 1:1 technology integration within content area
- Foster teacher leadership
- Provide direct instruction to students in the form of Curriculum Connections at Sherwood Middle School

Current Projects

- **5-8 Math Initiative**

The Middle Level Math Curriculum Coordinator, Melissa McCann, has been responsible for ensuring that all newly purchased materials and resources have been distributed to teachers and for informing Central Office of any outstanding material needs. In conjunction with math pilot teachers, has led all grade level professional development this year with very positive feedback from the educators in these sessions. She spends time in classes modeling the new instructional practices that are required of the key shifts being made in the math curriculum. This year, Melissa facilitated the “Math Night at Sherwood Middle School” that took place on November 18th and has written an article

about the math initiative for the Shrewsbury School Journal and has participated in Dr. Sawyer’s School Talk program. In addition, Melissa is helping our middle level math educators prepare for the new PARCC assessment.

- **Integrating Literacy Skills Across All Content Areas**

The Middle Level English Language Arts Coordinator, Lisa Daly, is starting the second of a two year project to integrate literacy skills into the core content areas as is required by new state standards. This initiative is particularly focused in the areas of persuasive writing and research. Lisa has trained and supported all English language arts, science and social studies teachers around how these writing elements can be successfully integrated into their content area courses. Lisa has also initiated work around “close reading” in Sherwood ELA classes and is supporting the curriculum development work around a new book study. Finally, Lisa is supporting our middle level English language arts teachers in preparing for the new PARCC assessment.

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Our next big event!

Save the date: Sunday, April 12 is the 8th annual Shrewsbury Road Scholars Race!

Registration is now open for the 8th annual Shrewsbury Road Scholars Race. Sign up now for the 5k or 1 mile fun run. All are welcome!

For more information and race updates, please “Like” our Shrewsbury Road Scholars Facebook page and visit our registration website at:

www.shrewsburyroadscholars.org



Shrewsbury Road Scholars 5k Race & 1 Mile Fun Run

APRIL 12, 2015
Oak Middle School
45 Oak Street
Shrewsbury, MA 01545

\$20 Pre-registration
\$25 Day of registration
\$10 Registration for 1mi Fun Run

To register, please visit:
<http://shrewsburyroadscholars.org>

Grab your sneakers and join the fun!

All proceeds benefit
Shrewsbury Public Schools
Colonial Fund

What kind of schools?

CONTINUED from page 4

1.9 million should do it and allow us to continue down our path of improvement- this puts us on the lower end of our projection last spring. By comparison, the town approved increases have exceeded this in 7 of the past 10 years. It still places us among the lowest cost school districts in the state. We feel that this is a good value for our students and for our town and is in line with the promises made when our voters supported the override.

Bus Registration

Bus registration *opens on April 1 and runs through June 1* each year. This year, there’s something **NEW!**

We want to show our appreciation for all the families who complete* their registration on-time. For families who are required to pay the fee (\$250 for one student or \$500/family cap)**, we have created several special offers.



Shrewsbury Public Schools
Introduces a

TRANSPORTATION FEE REBATE DRAWING

For families required to pay the fee who have ridership of two or more students

FIRST PRIZE is a FULL refund for TWO students (\$500)

SECOND PRIZE is a FULL refund for ONE student (\$250)

For families required to pay the fee who have ridership of only one student

FIRST PRIZE is a FULL refund for ONE student (\$250)

SECOND PRIZE is a HALF refund for ONE student (\$125)

For families that do not owe a fee, we have some special **SURPRISES** to show our appreciation for your on-time registration. (Information will be communicated soon.)

A complete description of the registration process for Shrewsbury Public School students, in-town private school students and Assabet Valley Regional Tech students can be found online under the Transportation Department main page and will be communicated via email and social media outlets.

**Registration is a two-step process - register AND pay before the deadline!*

***Fees are required for all students in grades 7-12 and for students in grades K-6 that reside less than 2.01 miles according to our Versa Trans system.*

Shrewsbury Public Schools 2015-2016 School Year Calendar

Final Approved
March 4, 2015

AUG/SEP 20 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
24	25	26	27	28
31	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

OCTOBER 20 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

NOVEMBER 16 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

DECEMBER 17 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

JANUARY 19 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

August/September

8/27 & 28 New Teachers' Orientation
8/31 Opening Program for Teachers/No School
9/1 Students Return/Full Day
9/4 Professional Development/No School
9/7 Labor Day/No School

October

10/9 Professional Development/No School
10/12 Columbus Day/No School

November

11/3 Parent Conferences/No School
11/11 Veterans Day/No School
11/25 - 27 Thanksgiving Vacation

December

12/8 Professional Development/Early Release
12/24 - 1/1 December Vacation

January

1/18 M.L. King Day/No School

February

2/2 Professional Development/Early Release
2/15 Presidents Day/No School
2/16 - 2/19 Winter Vacation

March

3/1 Professional Development/Early Release

April

4/5 Professional Development/Early Release
4/18 Patriots Day/No School
4/19 - 22 Spring Vacation

May

5/3 Professional Development/Early Release
5/27 Last Day for Seniors
5/30 Memorial Day/No School

June

6/2 Graduation Day
6/14 Last Day for Kindergarten & Preschool
6/16 Last Day/Half Day for Students

February 16 Days				
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29				

MARCH 23 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

APRIL 16 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

MAY 21 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

JUNE 12 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

0 snow days = 6/16 last day
1 snow day = 6/17 last day
2 snow days = 6/20 last day
3 snow days = 6/21 last day
4 snow days = 6/22 last day
5 snow days = 6/23 last day

🍏 Parent Conference Day: 11/3/15

Elementary coaches

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- Assist educators in administering assessments and using associated data to inform instruction
- Take a lead role in regular education interventions
- Serve on hiring committees
- Foster teacher leadership

Current Projects

• K-4 Math Initiative

Elementary Instructional Coaches/Curriculum Coordinators have been responsible for ensuring that all newly purchased materials and resources have been distributed to teachers and for informing Central Office of any outstanding material needs. They have led all grade level professional development this year with very positive feedback from the educators in their sessions. They are spending time in classes modeling the new instructional practices that are required of the key shifts being made in the math curriculum. This year, the coaches have prepared a handout for parents around helpful homework tips and have written an article about the math initiative for the Shrewsbury School Journal. In addition, this group has set up a data collection tool that allows for close analysis of student performance on the end of unit assessment and is working with educators on reteach plans for students who are experiencing areas of difficulty.

• Shrewsbury Writing Project

Elementary Instructional Coaches/Curriculum Coordinators continue to work with grade specific Shrewsbury Writing Project pilot teachers on the refinement of district-wide writing assessments. They will also be training all elementary teachers on the administration and scoring of these assessments in Spring 2015.

• PARCC

Elementary Instructional Coaches/Curriculum Coordinators are training educators on the expectations associated with the new PARCC assessment and walking them through the practice tests.

• Using Data to Inform Instruction

Four out of the six coaches are taking part in a three graduate credit course focused on the effective use of data throughout a unit of study. They are working with their grade level teams to clarify learning targets and success criteria for key instructional lessons, and are working with educators on criteria analysis of student work. This analysis is then used to inform teaching in the various classrooms.

• New Teacher Support

Given the large number of educators that were hired this year, our Elementary Instructional Coaches/Curriculum Coordinators are working with the new educators to orient them to the curriculum and the high standards of instructional practice expected in the Shrewsbury Public Schools.

The coaching/curriculum positions that are now funded in all elementary schools provide a tremendous support for our district, building principals, and educators. Their work indirectly has an enormous impact on student achievement and our ability to maintain the quality of programming that Shrewsbury citizens rightly expect from their school system.

SHS silver medal gymnasts



Congratulations on a successful season!

The photo to the left shows the Shrewsbury High School Girls Gymnastics team holding their silver medals. They finished second in the state finals.

Theatre continued from page 3

ard Peng. *Heartwired* is about struggling to connect with the real people in our lives when we are so dependent on our virtual “friends” online.

Heartwired has been a work in progress since the spring of last year; like any production, planning starts long before the actual rehearsing. In the particular case of *Heartwired*, Mrs. Webb was gearing up to do something completely new. “I wanted to do something that was unlike anything I had done,” Mrs. Webb says. “I have not done something more abstract, I have not done something where the characters are teenage characters. I felt like we needed to shake things up a bit and make things more contemporary. Richard really stepped forward and was able to hit all of those elements.” The pair worked throughout the summer and fall of 2014 to finalize *Heartwired*. Even now, they are still tweaking things as the production moves along in both the script and the set, created and built by junior Stan Pearson. “Stan designed the whole set, by himself.” Mrs. Webb says. “This is the first time a student has been given complete control to design and build. He has literally built the set.” Stan has been designing on a smaller scale since his freshman year. Unlike a musical, a competition play doesn’t get the luxury of having an adult to build the set. Everything in a competition play is done by the students. “We’ve been working every weekend from seven in the morning to ten, eleven at night,” says Mrs. Webb. All in all, *Heartwired*, according to Ms. Webb, “has been real, collaborative art”.

Biographies

Nathan Colby has been working as tech director for the SHS spring musical since his junior year in high school. After graduating from the Hartt School with a degree in Performing Arts, Mr. Colby returned to SHS. He has been tech directing ever since. Starting about five or six years ago, he has been gradually picking up productions in the middle schools as well.

Jennifer Micarelli-Webb has been directing fall play and competition play at SHS for the past six years. She also teaches a playwriting class at the high school and has been the drama teacher at Oak Middle School for the past ten years.



Pictured above are student actors and stage crew members getting direction from the set creator/designer Stan Pearson, SHS junior, in the center of the photo on where to place the portable pieces that make up the set.

Michael Lapomardo is musical director of the SHS spring musical for the past 15 years and technical director of the fall play for the past six. He is also a teacher at SHS, directing all four choirs—Freshman, Mixed, Women’s, and A Cappella—and teaching a Theatre Arts Class. Prior to this year, he also directed Orchestra. Mr. Lapomardo has been teaching in Shrewsbury for the past 15 years.

Virginia Snowdon is responsible for everything props in the spring musical, as well as the adult supervising stage right. Also an SHS graduate, she has been part of the spring musical for the past 18 years, in addition to when she was in high school herself. Outside of the hundreds of hours she dedicates to the musical, she is a physical therapist and has been working for the Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) for the past 30 years.

Elizabeth Ushinski is the spring musical’s own personal artist and the adult supervising stage left. Over the years, she has put in innumerable hours as a scenic painter, pipe bender, puppet builder and more. She has been working on musical for the past 17 shows and has been teaching at Floral Street Elementary School for the past 15 years.

Martha Deering is our costumes director for the spring musical. As head of costume crew, she controls any and all things that have to do with costumes. Also an SHS gradu-

ate, Mrs. Deering has been working on the musical for the past fifteen years. Outside of SHS’s musical, she was a professional actress on and off Broadway and has worked as a mental health and substance abuse counselor; she currently works at Adcare Hospital in the outpatient center as a group facilitator.

Nancy Freeman, is the production manager and is fashioning the hair design for the musical. Since moving to Shrewsbury in 1999 Nancy has been an active supporter of the performing arts in Shrewsbury. All four of her boys have performed in Shrewsbury theatre and have continued to perform post graduation. Nancy has become increasingly involved over the years and her talents as production manager, costume and hair design have extended to encompass Shrewsbury productions at Sherwood, Oak and the High School.

Jennifer Agbay, a SHS graduate, is responsible for the show’s choreography. Although this is Agbay’s first time choreographing for Shrewsbury she has choreographed countless shows in the Worcester area. After studying and working in NYC Jennifer returned to central MA ultimately starting her own school and dance company. Ballet Arts Worcester and the Youth Ballet of Worcester can be found performing throughout the area, including their annual production of the Nutcracker at the Hanover Theatre in Worcester.

Award winning ideas & effort



The annual Shrewsbury Education Foundation (SEF) awards dinner took place this past January 24, 2015. The packed event honored recipients of nine grants and the John P. Collins Award for Excellence. Fundraising efforts from events throughout the year and donations from sponsors (Central One Federal Credit Union, Staples, Danielson Flowers, Austin Liquors and Arukor Communications) provide the funds used to grant these opportunities and enhance the awards dinner.

Prior to selection, the committee evaluates and ranks grant applications using the following metrics:

- Creativity and Innovation
- Clarity of Goals and Objectives
- Quality and Longevity of Impact
- Evaluation Plan
- Realistic Budget
- Collaborative Effort (is encouraged and recognized but not required)
- Quality of Presentation

In addition, projects should meet as many of the following criteria as appropriate:

- Involve as many students as possible
- Stimulate creativity in or out of the classroom
- Meet students’ needs and increase motivation to learn
- Encourage unique ideas
- Enhance or enrich the curriculum



Pictured above are grant recipients Miya Hanna, Occupational Therapist, and Michelle Lemay, School Psychologist from Spring Street School receiving their grant award from SEF co-president Chris Jutten for their for “Coping and Sensory Interventions” Plan.



This award honors the exemplary efforts of those whose work brings to life the mission of the Shrewsbury Public Schools: to provide students with the skills and knowledge for the 21st century, an appreciation of our democratic tradition and the desire to continue to learn throughout life. The award is named for former Superintendent, John P. Collins, PhD, who served for 16 years in Shrewsbury (1978-1994) and continues to exemplify the highest standards of professionalism and a commitment to lifelong learning.

Awards are presented in the following categories:

Leadership

Todd Bazydlo – Shrewsbury High School

Professional

Maura Egan – Oak Middle School

Brenda Filiere – Shrewsbury High School

Pamela Johnson – Shrewsbury High School

Kelly O’Connell – Sherwood Middle School

Paraprofessional

Andrea Collins – Oak Middle School

Lynn Skavis – Calvin Coolidge Elementary School

Purposes of the program are to:

- Develop new resources for schools
- Encourage extraordinary curricula

The SEF Grant Winners for 2014-2015 school year are:

“WHAT IS CLASSROOM JEOPARDY?”

Jason Ponticelli, 8 Grade World History, Oak Middle School

“Classroom Jeopardy” is an active, fun, and innovative tool where individuals or teams from an entire class can play America’s favorite game show right in the classroom!

TAKING ROOT AT PARKER ROAD PRESCHOOL

Kristen Stewich, RN, Parker Road Preschool

This grant will support expand the Parker Road school garden by building an outdoor classroom/sensory garden that will be accessible and inclusive to all students.

KEEPING YOUR COOL AT SCHOOL: SENSORY STATIONS FOR SELF-REGULATION

Deidra Lincoln, COTA/L and Laureen McGourty, MS, OTR/L, Calvin Coolidge School

This grant will enable us to acquire materials to set up school-wide sensorimotor areas also known as “Tune-Up Stations,” for gross motor and sensorimotor activities. Also available will be smaller Sensory Tool Kits for each regular education classroom. We are special educators who work with children with a wide range of challenges in collaboration with regular and special education teachers and other service providers.

YOUNG SCIENTISTS AT PLAY: THE POWER OF STEM AT PARKER ROAD PRESCHOOL

Melissa Johnson, Classroom Teacher, Parker Road Preschool

Teachers will be able to use their background knowledge to create STEM kits that will provide the best possible learning experience for all preschool students. Centrally located for access to all classrooms, teachers will be able to sign-out STEM kits for a two week period. The use of non-fiction text, recyclable/re-usable materials, as well as opportunities to collaborate with peers to reflect upon and record what they have learned, will give students a chance to explore the materials multiple times in a variety of ways.

ENHANCING WORD STUDY IN FIRST GRADE WITH HANDS-ON MANIPULATION

Lisa Cantin, First Grade Teacher, Calvin Coolidge School

Enhancing word study in the first grade is designed to enhance current curriculum. The grant involves acquiring a wide variety of word study manipulatives. One of the manipulatives is a set of two sided letter tiles and resource books that will provide teacher hands-on word study: phonics, vocabulary, and spelling lessons one on one, small or whole class

CONTINUED, at right

Support

Theresa Collier – Shrewsbury High School

Pat Tighe – AA Transportation, Bus #53

Culminating the evening’s celebrations was the Community Service Award. SEF chose to award Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Shrewsbury Public Schools with this award which recognizes a town leader who, goes above and beyond in delivering outstanding services to the community and to the Shrewsbury Public Schools. See more details on the SEF site:

<http://www.shrewsbury-edfoundation.org>



Pictured above on left is Kelly O’Connell, Adjustment Counselor at Sherwood Middle School who was a JPC Award recipient in the Professional category. She is being congratulated by SEF co-presidents Melanie Petrucci, foreground, and Chris Jutten, background.

Middle level Coordinators

CONTINUED from page 4

• Integrating Technology into Science Instruction

The Middle Level Science Coordinator, Pamela Poitras, is working with middle level science educators to integrate technology at high levels into their content area. Pamela is also working with our High School Science Department Head to keep abreast on information coming out at the state level around new science standards and the implications for Shrewsbury’s science programming. Each year, Pamela also facilitates the “Women in Science Conference” that takes place at Oak Middle School.

• Fostering Critical Thinking Skills Through Performance Based Assessments in Social Studies

The Middle Level Social Studies Coordinator, Robert Dunn, has been modeling a performance based assessment approach for 5-8 social studies educators. With this approach, students are given an opportunity to “show what they know” in a variety of ways while at the same time being expected to demonstrate the ability to synthesize at high levels their understanding of the delivered content.

Award winning

CONTINUED, from same page

groups of children based on their needs and grade level expectations.

SHARED READING, SHARED EXPECTATIONS

Angelina Ciccantelli, School Psychologist, Paton School

Our goal is to have every student at Paton School own the concept and expectation of Whole Body Listening and Thinking with their Eyes.

COPING AND SENSORY INTERVENTIONS

Michelle Lemay, School Psychologist

Miya Hanna, Occupational Therapist

Spring Street School

Providing our classrooms with access to sensory integration materials and resources, teachers will be able to teach and reinforce sensory and coping strategies and techniques for their students. Access to these materials will promote a healthy learning environment for all students.

‘KIDFIT’ FOR THE FUTURE

Carol Virzi, Grade 5 Teacher and Student Voice Advisor, Sherwood Middle School

This grant provides Sherwood Middle School students with the opportunity to explore health and wellness through a multi-disciplinary enrichment experience. Students will analyze aspects of personal wellness, will travel to a local farm for hands-on learning, will incorporate technology, and will share their learning with the greater Shrewsbury community.

BOOKS 2 COUNT ON: Using Children’s Literature to Address Mathematical Standards Differentiate Instruction and Engage ALL Students.

Kristine Gustafson, Teacher and Ann Early, Teacher, Paton School

This grant will enable students to use children’s literature to develop a deeper understanding of the Math concepts presented in our district’s newly adopted Math curriculum. The grant is innovative because leading Math educators recognize the potential that children’s literature has to engage, motivate and challenge students through meaningful real world problem solving.



Why does Jason care so much about Shrewsbury's schools?
He's a product of them.

As a School Committee member, Jason knows first-hand the challenges our districts face as a result of increasing financial pressure, mounting mandates, and rapid changes in education. As a product of Shrewsbury Schools, he has a passionate commitment to being a strong voice for our districts.

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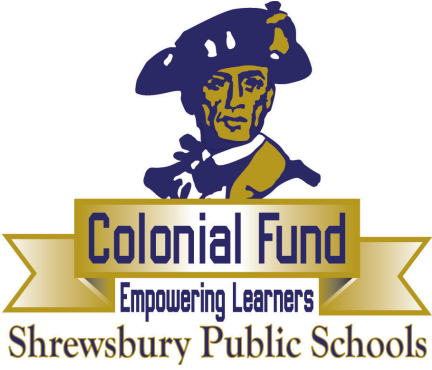
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- Mom of 3 children at Floral and Oak
- Co-chaired successful Ballot Committee to pass new Sherwood Middle School
- Campaign strategist for successful override last June
- President, Shrewsbury Public Schools Foundation
- Chair, Celebration in the Garden Party SPS fundraiser
- Led efforts to raise over \$400,000 for SPS
- President, Floral Street School PTO
- Member, Oak School Council

"I'm running for State Representative to be a strong advocate for Shrewsbury on Beacon Hill, fighting to restore local aid, increase education funding and end unfunded mandates. I have significant private and public sector business experience and have been a committed volunteer, fundraiser and advocate for the Shrewsbury Public Schools and many charitable endeavors in our community. I hope to earn your support!"

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