Dear Shrewsbury Families,

Our schools are extremely busy as we enter the last month of the school year, and our students and educators are working very hard to ensure that they reach their goals. I am excited for the many end-of-year events coming up, especially Commemoration and Graduation for the SHS Class of 2015 the week after next!

**The School Committee meets tonight** to hear a report on community service learning program at SHS and their “10,000 hour challenge,” to vote on the Sherwood and Oak Middle School Improvement Plans, and to hear a report on tuition and fees. **I am pleased to welcome Mr. Jon Wensky to the Shrewsbury School Committee**. Mr. Wensky ran unopposed for the single seat that was up for re-election, and he began the work of his three-year term at last week’s School Committee meeting. Mr. Wensky grew up in Shrewsbury and attended Shrewsbury Public Schools. He is the parent of two children who attend Oak Middle School and Paton School, and his wife, Melissa, is President of the Paton PTO. Mr. Wensky works as an operations manager for Staples, Inc., in Framingham. Based on my conversations with him to date, I am confident that he will be a strong advocate for public education in Shrewsbury.

**I also wish to thank Mr. Jason Palitsch** for completing his three years of service on the School Committee. Mr. Palitsch's leadership was critical during the budget crisis, and he was a key architect of the successful override campaign. While he chose not to run for re-election in order to focus his considerable skills elsewhere, he has proved to be an excellent public servant who made a significant impact during his time in office. I know you join me in wishing him the best in his future endeavors.

Please note the following informational items:

**Student successes**: Do you know any of these top performing students? Congratulations to this year’s **Senior Scholars**, the top ranked students in the SHS Class of 2015, who were recognized at last week’s School Committee meeting. Their names and bios are at the end of this message, and their achievements are certainly impressive. Congratulations also to the **SHS students who placed in the State Science Fair** that was recently held at MIT, including Aryan Naik, who earned a 1st place award for his project. Please scroll to the end of this message to see the students’ names and the titles of their projects, which you’ll see are quite sophisticated.

**Fiscal Year 2016 Budget to be voted on at Annual Town Meeting**: The School Committee, Board of Selectmen, and Finance Committee are all recommending a modest 2.20% increase to the School Department’s town budget appropriation for the next fiscal year. The recommendation will be discussed and voted on as part of the total town budget at the Annual Town Meeting which will begin on Monday, May 18th at 7:00pm in the Oak Middle School auditorium. The meeting will be broadcast live on SELCO Channels 30/230 and streamed live on the [Shrewsbury Media Connection website](http://www.shrewsbury-ma.gov/department/?fDD=20-0). For both a summary and detailed information regarding the School Department’s budget recommendation, click [here](http://schools.shrewsbury-ma.gov/egov/docs/14315468246344.pdf).

**Website survey**: The district will be making a much needed update to its website for the start of the next school year. Brian L’Heureux, our Director of Information Technology, and his team have created a user preference survey to help ensure that the update is successful. Please click [here](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NewSPSWebsite) to take this short survey - thank you to the almost 500 of you who have already taken the survey!

**Bus Registration and Fee Payment Reminder**: Only a couple more weeks to go - don’t miss out on being eligible for this year’s **Transportation Fee Rebate & Prize Drawing** for families who both register AND (if necessary) pay by the June 1 deadline. See [this flyer](http://schools.shrewsbury-ma.gov/egov/gallery/1611426700264170.jpg) for more information, and go [here](http://schools.shrewsbury-ma.gov/department/division.php?fDD=20-18) to register.

Thanks for your continued support of our schools.

Respectfully,

Joe Sawyer

Superintendent of Schools

**Shrewsbury High School Class of 2015 Senior Scholars**

(Biographical sketches written by each student’s guidance counselor)

**1.** **Hannah Eckstrom**

Hannah Eckstrom is an outstanding student with a GPA of 5.189 and a cumulative percentile of 0.24. Hannah has distinguished herself not only through her academics but also through her activities and commitments. Moving from Pennsylvania last year has not stopped her from continuing her interests through community service and her church. As a member of a local church, she is very active in the Youth Group as she volunteers as a mentor, helping middle school girls. Her devotion to helping others is evident in her participation on multiple Mission Trips. She has immersed herself in the Shrewsbury High School community and has been chosen to be a Mentor Volunteer at our school, helping underclass students in their homerooms and providing mentoring one on one and through groups. She is musically talented and is a member of the SHS Orchestra. She was formerly a member of the York Youth Symphony Orchestra. In her junior year she was awarded the Wellesley Book Award and she is a member of the National Honor Society. Hannah plans to attend Messiah College in Pennsylvania and wishes to pursue a career as a Spanish teacher for gifted children.

**2.** **Kayla Freeman**

Kayla is an outstanding young woman who has multiple accomplishments during her high school career. She is an intelligent and exceptional student, earning a 5.038 and has a 0.48 percentile. Kayla maintains an impressive academic record of challenging classes including multiple AP level classes. She is a recipient of the Harvard Book Award and has been inducted to the National Honor Society, National Math Society and the National Latin Honor Society, where she was elected treasurer. Kayla has taken on multiple leadership roles within our school and outside in the community. The one leadership role that stands out the most is her involvement with Relay for Life. Through her strong commitment and dedication, she received the “Top Youth Volunteer” award for the American Cancer Society in Central Massachusetts. Kayla’s strong desire to help others is also evident in her involvement with Habitat for Humanity, and Linking Learners at Coolidge Elementary School and Spring Street School. She tutors high school students in Math and works part time for Maria Laurence and Associates. Kayla plans to double major in math and secondary education to eventually teach high school math. Kayla plans to attend Colby College in the fall.

**3.** **Sonali Razdan**

“Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will”. This quote from Gandhi is what Sonali Razdan lives by and exemplifies in her everyday actions. She has been involved in numerous extracurricular activities and has held many leadership positions – most notably a two year district champion and one year state finalist in girls tennis; as well as placing in the state science fair for her topic: “Producing Renewable Energy from Biowaste”, and taking part in All-State and All-Eastern Honors Choir. Sonali will be part of the Class of 2019 at Cornell University in the fall.

**4.** **Ethan Wei**

Those who know Ethan Wei would describe as diligent, motivated, and resilient. He has earned a spot in the top of his class and has been recognized for excellence in several areas. His accomplishments have been recognized at the school level, through induction into the Tri-M Music Honor Society, as a member of the Science Competition Team, as a member of the Varsity tennis team, and also through his involvement with the Engineering club and the band. Ethan was part of the Science competition team that won sixth place in the “Disease Detectives” Event at the 2014 Massachusetts Science Olympiad. With his passion for science, he has decided to pursue a career in research, in the hopes of helping others combat diseases like cancer. Ethan will be attending Northeastern University in the fall and will be majoring in Biochemistry.

**5.** **Hilary Wong**

Hilary Wong is not only a top student academically, but she has also devoted time and energy to various clubs and organizations. She has also been the first to raise her hand and volunteer whenever students were asked to assist with events. Her parents describe her as honest, hard working, perseverant, friendly and outgoing. Among some of her outstanding accomplishments, she has mastered the Chinese dulcimer and the art of public speaking through Speech and Debate, participated on the Shrewsbury Public Library Advisory Team, the Mentor Volunteer Program, and represented SHS on the NEASC committee. She has won several accolades including the Smith College Book Award as a junior and has been recognized for her volunteerism. Hilary is a true leader and always has a big, infectious smile on her face. In the fall, she will be attending Northeastern University and plans on majoring in Biochemistry with a Pre-Med track.

**6.** **Margaret Gach**

Margaret is an outstanding young woman here at Shrewsbury High School. She is a stellar student and individual who has truly shined academically, socially, musically and through leading others.

Margaret has been a top student with impressive academic record taking multiple AP level classes and earning a perfect 800 on her Critical Reading (SAT) and on her US History (SAT Subject Test). In the top 1.45 % in her class, she has a GPA of 4.866. Margaret is a member of the National Honor Society where she also serves as President. She is a member of the Tri M National Honor Society. In addition, she has been President, Secretary, Fundraising Chair, and currently Publicity Chair of her Girl Scout Troop where she has been a member for 13 years. She has been instrumental in their various fundraising activities, earning enough money for the troop to travel to Switzerland to the Girl Scout/Girl Guide International Center in the Alps. Her excellent public speaking skills make her a standout as she acts as Master of Ceremonies for many of the town’s scouting activities. Margaret has graduated from a two summer long Counselor–in-Training Leadership Program through the Girl Scouts, which encompasses group dynamics, and conflict resolution with young girls. Margaret continues to be a leader in the school as well as her community. At SHS, she has excelled as a Mentor Volunteer for the past two years, as she has mentors freshman and sophomore students. Margaret holds leadership positions in the Robotics Team, Speech and Debate and NHS. Margaret will be attending Georgetown University.

**7.** **Grant Xu**

Grant Xu has had tremendous success throughout his high school career including his impressive GPA, almost perfect SAT score and being one of the founding members of the Science Team. He has also been an active member of the National Honor Society, is First Violin in the Orchestra, and competes for the Math Team. He has countless volunteer and service hours. Grant has challenged himself in AP level courses and has also self-studied for several AP exams. He has devoted energy and time to Soccer and Chess outside of school. He describes himself as determined, sarcastic, ambitious and spontaneous. Grant will be attending Carnegie Mellon University this fall and is planning on double majoring in Computer Science and Economics.

**8.** **Marissa Hollyer**

A member of National Honor Society and National Latin Honor Society, Marissa Hollyer earned the distinction as a National Merit Commended student. Marissa has pursued her interest in writing since freshman year by participating in the Excelsior magazine at the high school. She eventually earned a spot as Co-President of the magazine for senior year. Her passion for the written word has remained constant, even attending a young writer’s workshop at Bard College. Also dear to Marissa’s heart is the volunteering that she does at the elementary schools in the district. For the past two years, Marissa has volunteered once a week to Paton and Coolidge schools to tutor and connect with the students after school. Marissa plans to double major in Biology and English at Boston College in the fall.

**9.** **Megan Wilson**

Megan Wilson has had tremendous success throughout her high school career including her impressive GPA and involvement in SHS activities. In addition to her excellent academic record, Megan has been involved in many activities, both within the school and the outside community. A talented singer, Megan was selected to be the President of the A Cappella choir at Shrewsbury High School this year, as well as given supporting roles in the school’s musical productions over the past four years. As a sophomore, Megan was part of a team that competed in the Massachusetts High School Drama Festival, where their adaption of “What I Did Last Summer”, by A.R. Gurney earned them a spot in the state finals. In addition to her singing, Megan has been a dedicated member of the crew team for the past three years and was selected in her junior year to the Mentor Volunteer program. Other volunteer work includes helping middle school students to put on a talent show and raising money for the Make A Wish Foundation. Her friends would describe her as outgoing, friendly and determined.

Megan will be attending Elon University this fall and is majoring in Biology.

**10.** **Sierra Decatur**

Sierra Decatur is a high achieving student who has maintained great grades and has earned highest honors every quarter. She has earned a GPA of 4.05 and is in the top 2.42 percentile of her class.

She has been inducted to the Tri M Music Honors Society, Spanish National Honors Society, and the National Honor Society where she holds the office of secretary. Sierra loves a challenge and is determined to be successful at everything that she does. She is multi talented and is involved in music, acting, sports, academics and leadership roles.

Musically talented, Sierra has been in our Honors Women’s Choir for the past three years. She has a passion for performing and is no stranger to our stage at Shrewsbury High School as she has participated in our musical productions. Athletics come naturally for Sierra as she sails, horseback rides and, dances. She has also been a long-term member of the SHS Volleyball Team. Sierra plans to major in interior design and business. She is excited to enter the Class of 2019 at New York University this fall.

**10.** **Catlain McCarthy (Tied for 10)**

“School has always been important to me so I want it to be known that I value every experience that I get, although I may not voice my thoughts in the process.” As early as fifth grade, when Catlain McCarthy’s teacher, Miss Lubke (now Mrs. Marcigliano), commented about qualities in Catlain that would lend themselves to being a teacher, Catlain knew she wanted to teach – witnessing learning as it happens. She feels especially inspired when surrounded by the buzz of eager and energetic children who are filled with wonder. Over the years, the connections made with children through teaching CCD classes, babysitting neighbors, coaching students as an elementary tutor and studying Child Development and ECE, in addition to Honors and AP classes, have brought Catlain to the decision to study Early Childhood Education at Bridgewater State University in the fall.

**Shrewsbury High School State Science Fair Award Winners**

**Aryan Naik**, **Grade 10, First Place**

“Does Social Isolation Increase Glucose Preference in Zebrafish?”

**Rohan Oberoi**, Grade 10, Second Place

“Texting and Talking, How Do You React?”

**Urvi Savant**, **Grade 10, Second Place**

“Antibiotic Resistance: Antibiotics Just Make More Problems”

**Saachi Gopal**, **Grade 11, Third Place**

“Project ENCA: In Search of Natural Mechanisms to Reverse Acne”

**Matthew Huang**, **Grade 10, Honorable Mention**

“A Test for Detection of ESAT-6 Mycobacterium Tuberculosis Specific Protein