

March 2020 News



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Stay safe, stay healthy

A Message To Our Donors

As we navigate these unprecedented times in our community and in our world, we are inspired by the evidence of comradery and neighbor-helping-neighbor that we are seeing here in Shrewsbury. Residents are posting advice to social media about where to purchase hard-to-find items, volunteers are delivering meals to homebound seniors and, while we can't dine out, people are making the effort to order take out from locally owned restaurants. We see evidence every day that, *together, we will get through these challenging times.*

Nowhere is that spirit of collaboration stronger than in our school community. The Shrewsbury Public Schools have been working tirelessly, almost overnight, to create innovative ways to connect with over 6,100 students and families. The school district and local agencies are supporting families with food insecurity and other life challenges. Educators are trying new ways to offer optional learning opportunities through YouTube, Zoom, and digital media. One elementary school PTO is even planning a virtual spirit week for their school community!

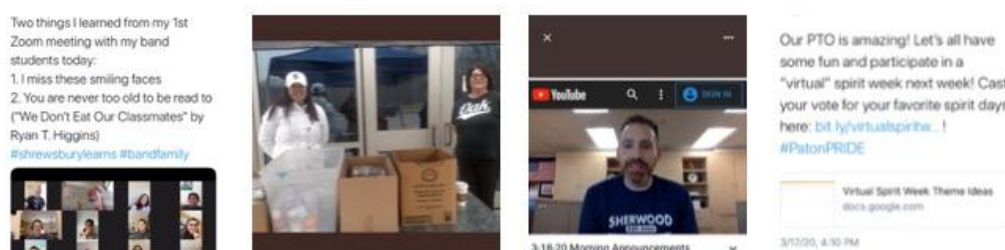
On Wednesday evening, during a regularly scheduled School Committee meeting (the first "virtual" meeting to be held), school Superintendent Joe Sawyer provided an update regarding our district's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Click [here](#) to watch a video of that report, and click [here](#) to see the report slide deck. Dr. Sawyer shared three key messages:

- The health & well-being of students, families, & staff is priority #1.
- This is an extraordinary time in history, and everyone in our community has a collective responsibility to respond to this challenge.
- Even though our schools are closed, we will continue to support our students, families, and staff from a distance and empower our students with opportunities for learning.

"These are trying times, so it is important for us all to show empathy, patience, kindness, and goodwill toward one another, and to model these things for our children. If we do, courage, fortitude, and perseverance will follow."

~ Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Shrewsbury Public Schools

The work we see happening in our town and in our schools is truly inspiring. We are proud that the Colonial Fund plays a part in making our schools, and even our community, truly extraordinary. We look forward to doing more of our work in the future with your support, but until then, stay safe and stay healthy.



From left to right: Twitter post from Band Director Brian Liporto; Cafeteria staff Lisa Phipps and Patti Saniuk ready for food distribution to families; Sherwood Middle School Principal Johnathan Kelly making his morning announcements on his YouTube channel; Twitter post from Paton Elementary School Principal Wendy Bell about upcoming Virtual Spirit Week sponsored by the Paton PTO.

COVID-19 Updates

Click [here](#) for the most up-to-date information about Shrewsbury Public School's

response to Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Managing Stress & Emotions

Since September, Shrewsbury Public Schools has been working with Mindfulness Director Initiative (MDI) to offer mindfulness courses to parents, students, staff, and alumni of Shrewsbury Schools.

In this challenging time, **MDI will offer free online *Introduction to Mindfulness* classes to our community starting the week of March 23** . Classes will meet virtually for one hour 1x/week for 8 weeks starting the week of March 23rd.

Participants will learn the basics of mindfulness meditation in order to learn how to reduce stress, manage emotions, and gain greater control over thoughts and actions—all more important now than ever. Classes will be led by Marc Waxman, the co-founder of MDI. Marc has 20+ years of public school experience as a teacher and administrator, and has been leading mindfulness classes in Shrewsbury for staff and students.

To register for the Wednesdays @ 8 PM Mindfulness Course, click here.
To register for the Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. Mindfulness Course, click here.

If you have any questions, you can reach out to Marc at mwaxman@mindfulnessdirector.org.

Can't commit to a class? Try these **11 Things You Can Do To Manage Your Coronavirus Anxiety**

Activities For Students K-12

Recognizing the challenge of managing children at home while limiting contact with friends and neighbors, the Shrewsbury Public Schools curriculum team has developed a list of resources that can be used as learning opportunities for children. Click here for a list of those resources organized by grade level. You will find a variety of activities to engage students as diverse learners, citizens, and community contributors.



**Thank you for your support of the
Shrewsbury Public Schools Colonial Fund**

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