



School Department Budget & Operational Override

April 28, 2021



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“Failure to provide value and an overemphasis on cost cutting can drive away customers.”

~ Crandall & Parnell *Howard Johnson's: Rise and Fall of an American Icon*

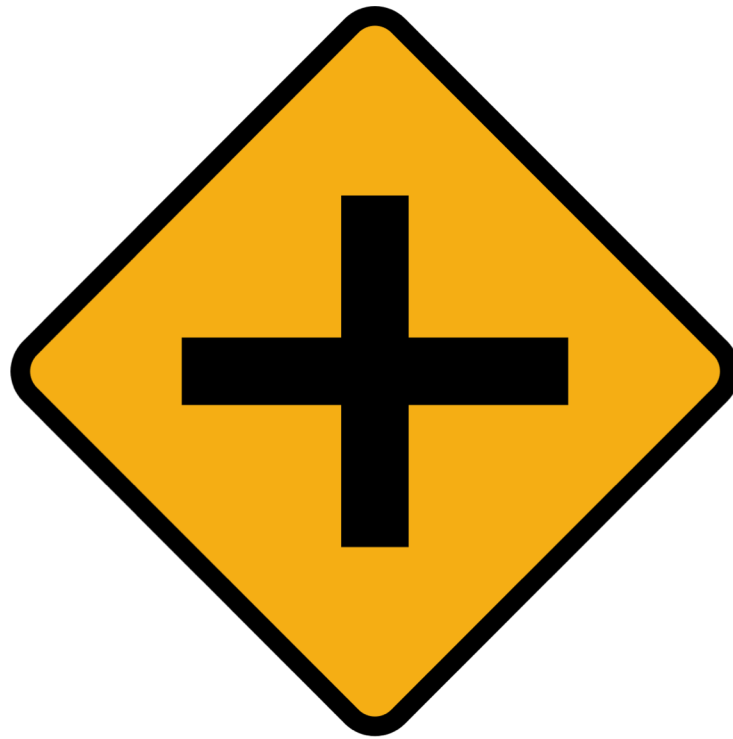


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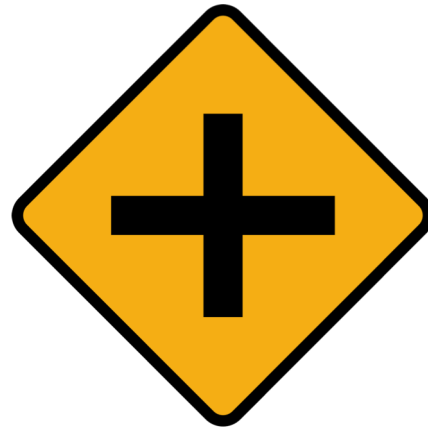
Our School District is Facing an Education Emergency



Our Town is at a Crossroads



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Will we invest in Shrewsbury in order to preserve and enhance our town's quality of life?



Question #1: May 4, 2021 Town Election Ballot

The Board of Selectmen, School Committee, and Finance Committee unanimously support the following ballot question before Shrewsbury voters at the May 4, 2021 town election:

QUESTION 1

Shall the Town of Shrewsbury be allowed to assess an additional \$9,500,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of funding municipal and school operating expenses for the fiscal year beginning July first, two thousand twenty one?



A “Yes” Vote on Question 1: Significant Benefit to Our Town

- Additional revenue generated for municipal departments and School Department operating expenses
- Financial stability for our town government



A “Yes” Vote on Question 1: Fiscal Responsibility & Transparency

- Groundbreaking agreement between the School Committee and Board of Selectmen to exercise fiscal discipline and commit to no additional Proposition 2 ½ override questions for at least 4 years



A “Yes” Vote on Question 1: Sufficient Resources for Our Schools

- Maintaining current staffing and programming
- Adding the staff necessary to properly open the new Beal School



A “Yes” Vote on Question 1: Sufficient Resources for Our Schools

- Providing tuition-free, full-day kindergarten for all
- Incrementally restoring positions, programming, and supports that have been cut in previous years



A “Yes” Vote on Question 1: Success for Our Students Next Year

- Add 32.6 full-time equivalent staff to relieve elementary overcrowding, provide full-day K for all, and open the new Beal School as planned
- Keep all current positions and programming and add back four teaching positions cut this year (two 5th grade teachers and two SHS teachers)



If Question 1 Fails: Failure to Provide for Our Students Next Year

- Cut \$2.94 million and 48.7 full-time equivalent positions from the budget across all grade spans
- Do not open the new Beal School as planned
- Significant increases in class sizes and less academic support



If Question 1 Fails: Failure to Provide for Our Students Next Year

- Closing of all elementary school library media centers
- Reduction of special subject/allied arts programming in Grades K-8
- High school students not able to take expected AP courses and electives



If Question 1 Fails: Failure to Provide for Our Students Next Year

Without sufficient local revenue, the school district will need to make major cuts to personnel and programming and will not be able to properly open the new Beal School, which will severely compromise our schools' ability to meet our students' needs at a critical time when they need our strong support.



If Question 1 Fails: Failure to Provide for Our Students Next Year

Severely reducing our schools' resources next year will compound the negative effects of the pandemic on our students' well-being and academic progress.



The Importance of a “Yes” Vote

A YES vote on Question 1 on May 4 will provide our schools with the resources they need to ensure that our town’s children receive an excellent education.



Question:

I thought we already voted to fund the new Beal School?

Fact:

The community voted to fund the construction of the new Beal School, and **the project is on time and under budget.** Additional funding is needed for adding the staff necessary to properly open the new school in order to reduce overcrowding at all elementary schools. Savings from the building project can't be used for operations – they result in a lower tax bill than originally projected for construction.



Question:

Is it true that the School Department has threatened to make cuts in the past but they always “find the money” and the cuts haven’t happened?

Fact:

The school district has made many cuts to academic programming and personnel over the years that have never been restored (world language instruction in grades 3-6, health classes in elementary schools, reductions in aide and tutor support, advanced math coaches, drama teacher, library media personnel, etc.) **This year alone the district cut approximately 30 positions and \$2 million from our budget.**



Question:

Have School Department staff made any financial sacrifices during these challenging times?

Fact:

This year the unions representing all teachers and other professional educators and the assistant principals agreed to reduce their contractual salary increases by half, and all other administrators, administrative support staff, and information technology support staff took compensation freezes, **saving the district over \$1 million to avoid further budget cuts.**



Question:

Is it true that Shrewsbury spends much more than other districts on administration?

Fact:

The district is ranked 301st out of 320 school districts in per pupil expenditures on administration (**bottom 6% of the state**). This is less than the overall district ranking for per pupil expenditures, which is in the bottom 11% in Massachusetts.



Question:

Is it true that Shrewsbury has many more assistant superintendents than other districts?

Fact:

Every school district has district-level administrators with key responsibilities for curriculum and instruction, finance and operations, and special education, and Shrewsbury has assistant superintendents for these functions.* Larger districts like Shrewsbury tend to call these positions assistant superintendents given their large span of responsibility. With over 6,000 students, Shrewsbury is the 27th largest district in MA and the **5th largest district out of 281 non-city districts in the state (top 2%)**. A recent study by the Collins Center at UMass Boston indicated that Shrewsbury was understaffed for district administration given its size.

*An additional assistant superintendent position for community partnerships and well-being was added for one year in 2019 at no cost to the district (funded by Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union); that role has not been staffed since last year, as that leader served as acting principal at Paton School this year and will again next year.



Question:

What is happening with parent fees and tuitions next year? Are they changing if the override passes?

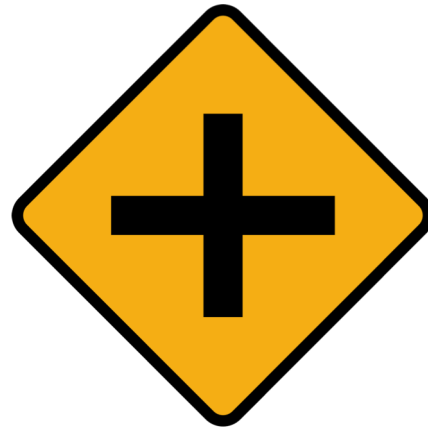
Fact:

The School Committee voted to freeze fees and tuitions at their original levels that would have been in place this year (some were adjusted or not required due to the pandemic). However, the full-day kindergarten tuition will be eliminated if the new Beal School opens as planned, as promised when the new school was proposed.

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Neugroup.com

When you get where you're goin'
Don't forget to turn back around
And help the next one in line
~ Lori McKenna, *Humble & Kind*



Recommended Fiscal Year 2022 Budget

Additional funds needed to bring program forward with no cuts and restore 4 teaching positions = \$6,034,050 (8.87%)

Additional funds needed to provide staffing to open the new Beal School = \$1,692,835 (2.49%)

Total additional funds recommended = \$7,726,885 (11.36%)

Recommended School Department Town Appropriated Budget for Fiscal Year 2022 = \$75,722,168