



Shrewsbury Public Schools

Patrick C. Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations

7 August 2019

To: School Committee

Subj: RECOMMENDATION TO ACCEPT SAFER SCHOOLS GRANT: \$70,000

Background

In March 2019, the Governor Baker Administration announced a competitive grant program to improve school safety. \$7.2M was made available through the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security with specific parameters, a scoring scheme, and grant limits by size of community.

We applied for a replacement emergency communications/public address system for Shrewsbury High School. This is the same system that has already been installed at Parker Road Preschool, Coolidge School, Spring Street School, Paton School, and Oak Middle School. The system has the capability of placing the entire school into lockdown via the PA system with a push of button. That lockdown button broadcasts a pre-recorded lockdown message from the school principal and simultaneously notifies by text and email the School Resource Officers, Central Office administrators, all building principals that the school has gone into lockdown mode. Additionally, there is a web-based interface that allows Central Office staff to remotely [from our office] place one or more schools into lockdown mode if we have information that would warrant such action.

As we all know, in the event of an emergency seconds count in terms of the effectiveness of a response. This system shortens the time and allows multiple staff at each school to initiate a lockdown and notify multiple people simultaneously.

Process

We completed the application in April 2019 and provided supporting documentation to justify our request. We showed the state that we had been installing this system over time in all of our schools but had not done so at Shrewsbury High School due to lack of budget resources. The total cost of equipment, installation, and training is \$70,000 due to the size of the high school and type of existing system in place.

We were pleased to receive news in mid July that we had been awarded our full request of \$70,000.

Contingent upon your acceptance, we plan to install the system in mid October. This will afford us the time to receive funds, order equipment, and coordinate an orderly installation with minimal disruption to school operations.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the School Committee vote to accept the funds using the following motion:

“I move that the Committee accept the \$70,000 Safer Schools Competitive Grant and use such funds for their intended purpose of improving safety and security communications at Shrewsbury High School.”