



## **Shrewsbury School Committee Priorities & Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Development**

### **Overview**

This document provides the community with information about the School Committee's priorities for the Fiscal Year 2021 School Department Budget. It is also designed to provide guidance to the Superintendent of Schools and the School Department administration regarding the development of its initial Fiscal Year 2021 School Department Budget proposal.

The FY21 School Department Budget should be designed to enable progress toward the School Committee's aspirations for student success outlined in the [Portrait of a Shrewsbury Graduate](#) and the [Strategic Priorities & Goals 2018 – 2022](#).

### **Budgetary Priorities**

The initial FY21 School Department Budget proposal shall include resources to address each of the following priorities:

- To sustain the improvements in class size realized through the Fiscal Year 2015 budget by keeping as many sections as possible within School Committee guidelines for class size. These guidelines are: Preschool: 15; Kindergarten: 17-19; Grades 1 & 2: 20-22; Grades 3-8: 22-24; Grades 9-12: 18-20.
- To continue investing in instructional materials, curriculum personnel, and staff professional development in order to ensure that the district's educational program meets local expectations for academic rigor, as well as state mandates.
- To make sufficient investments in technology in order to realize the educational and operational benefits available through digital resources and to provide sufficient capacity for the state's new testing system, while creating opportunities to benefit from short and long-term cost efficiencies.
- To make investments in district-based programming and resources in order to provide high quality, cost effective opportunities to educate students with all forms of

specialized needs within their own community's schools rather than specialized placements outside of the district.

- To further fulfill the recommendations of the University of Massachusetts [Edward J. Collins Center for Public Management] Central Office Organizational Study by providing resources to address district capacity related to personnel, organization, space, and technology.

### **Assumptions & Guidance**

The initial FY21 School Department Budget proposal should:

1. Provide adequate resources to meet all legal mandates required of the school district.
2. Reflect the terms of collective bargaining agreements and other contractual obligations.
3. Provide sufficient resources to maintain a) the existing educational program and b) staffing levels necessary to meet mandates and priorities.
4. Utilize the best available information to project changes in costs (such as tuitions) and revenues (such as state funding through the Chapter 70 and Circuit Breaker programs, grants, etc.).
5. Estimate the level funding of all federal and state grants and factor known increases or reductions from FY20.
6. Review fee levels for all programs and adjust, as necessary, to reflect market price conditions and specific cost structure of each program; this will include reducing full-day kindergarten tuition to continue the gradual shift of costs from families to the district in anticipation of providing tuition-free, universal full-day kindergarten when the new Beal School opens in FY22.
7. Examine ways to reduce or shift costs in order to achieve district priorities without requiring additional funding allocations wherever possible.
8. Assume, due to space constraints, that no new School Choice seats will be added and therefore no additional revenue will be available from this source.
9. Consider the town's tax levy constraints, consistent with prior practice.
10. Display data and information in new and different ways. In an effort to enhance the understanding of the School Department budget by all constituents, including Town Meeting Representatives, additional charts and graphs will be incorporated into the process. In addition to print materials, the *ClearGov* budgeting platform will be initiated to communicate data via infographics with drill-down features for detailed information. This will be a coordinated effort with the Town Manager's Office which is using *ClearGov* to display municipal budget information.
11. Separate information regarding "status quo" or "level services" budget requirements from information regarding any new resources required to meet the district's strategic priorities and goals.