



School Department Update

November 23, 2021

Topics

Our Mission, Core Values, & Vision

Strategic Priorities & Planning

Approach to the Current Year

Highlights

Challenges

Space and Enrollment & Student Demographics

Financial Overview

Closing Remarks

Our Mission

The Shrewsbury Public Schools, in partnership with the community, will provide students with the skills and knowledge for the 21st century, an appreciation of our democratic tradition, and the desire to continue to learn throughout life.

Our Core Values

Respect & Responsibility

Collaboration & Communication

Commitment to High Standards & Expectations

Equity

Our Vision

SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE



Our Strategic Priorities



Strategic Planning

The current plan is for 2018-2022. Some adjustments necessary due to the pandemic.

We will embark upon developing a new, five-year plan this coming fall.

Primary Goal for This Year

Provide full-time, in-school learning for students with minimal disruptions, while using mitigation strategies to minimize the risk of contracting COVID-19.

Our Approach This Year

- **Implement mitigation strategies that reduce the risk of transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19**
- **Create a sense of belonging and support students' social, emotional, & mental health needs**
- **Provide learning opportunities that support students' academic needs**

COVID-19 Cases

SPS COVID-19 DATA DASHBOARD 2021-2022

This data dashboard is published weekly on Mondays (or the first day of the school week when there is a holiday). Case data is updated as of the end of the previous week, Saturday through Friday.

**Weekly reported positive cases of students and/or staff as of
Friday, November 19, 2021**

Positive cases reported among SPS students and staff last week = 21 (cumulative total = 175)

Positive cases reported where students/staff were physically present in school during their infectious period (requiring contact tracing) = 17 (cumulative total = 139)

Positive cases determined to be due to *possible in-school transmission = 1 (cumulative total = 11)**

Positive cases determined to be due to *probable in-school transmission = 1 (cumulative total = 21)**

Highlights

- **All students attending full-time, in-person school**
- **Return of more “normal” student learning opportunities and co-curricular activities (academic teams, clubs, performing arts, athletics, etc.)**
- **Opening of the new Beal School**

Highlights

- **Excellent results for SHS Class of 2021 post-high school opportunities**
- **Newly hired and promoted staff are excelling**
- **Using adaptations forced by the pandemic to create new and different learning opportunities (e.g., technology in lower grades)**

Highlights

- **Increase in inclusive practices, including expansion of Unified Athletics (Parker Road Preschool newly named a Unified Champion School by Special Olympics)**
- **Exploring a new, community-based program to meet the needs of special education students in their post-high school years (ages 18-22)**
- **Continued success with philanthropic development (recent \$70,000 gift to the Colonial Fund from WIN Waste Innovation and \$40,000 gift from Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union)**

Challenges

- **Disruptions to learning due to the pandemic**
- **Difficulties reacclimating to a more typical school environment**
- **Delayed maturation of students**

Challenges

- **Significant issues with student social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health concerns**
- **Need for continued focus on equity and anti-racism (recent incidents at SHS of hateful language related to race and national origin)**

Challenges

- **State policy change will result in lack of access for current 8th graders to vocational technical high school admission next year**
- **Last year's MCAS data and initial internal assessment data signal some learning loss due to the pandemic**

Challenges

- **Staffing is very challenging due to economic conditions, especially substitute teachers (exacerbated by more stringent requirements to stay home with symptoms and other COVID-related issues)**
- **Feedback from staff is that this year has been extremely stressful due to the challenging circumstances; concerns regarding burnout and morale**

Space and Enrollment



The opening of the new Major Howard W. Beal School was a great success!

Many thanks to our community, elected officials, and the design, project management, and construction team.



Space and Enrollment

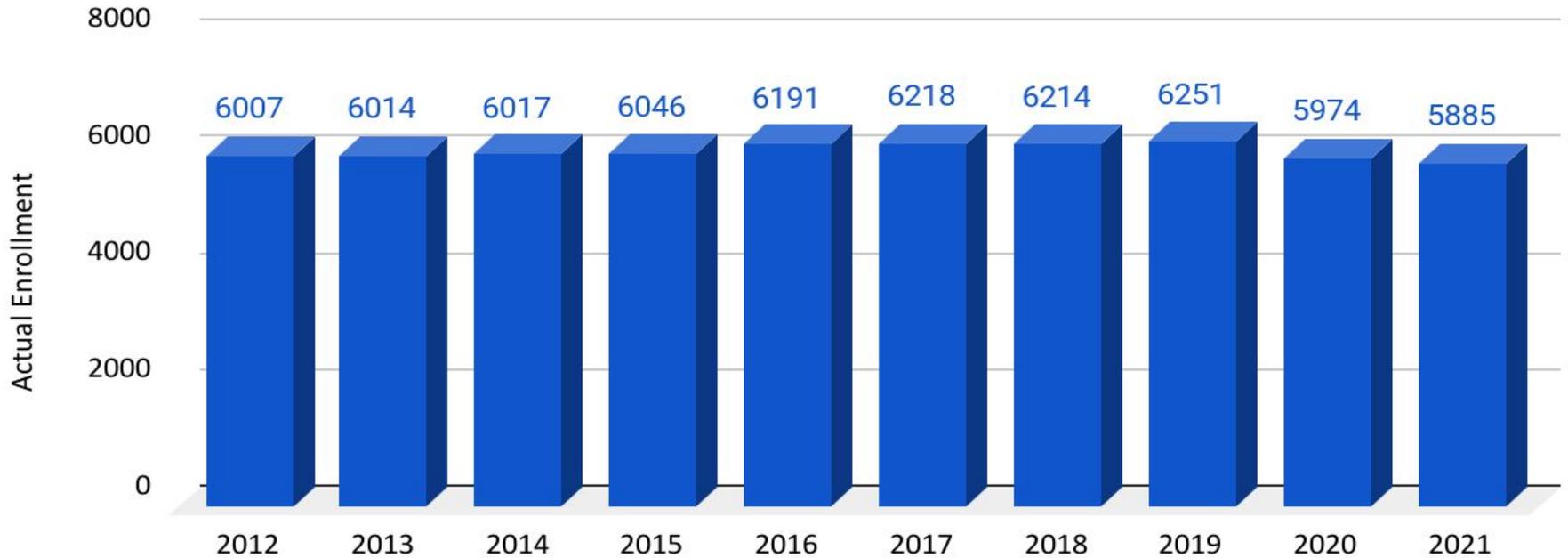
We are generally in very good shape with class sizes, especially at the PreK-4 and high school level, with middle grades at the upper end of the class size policy range. Redistricting elementary zones has relieved space pressures at Coolidge, Floral Street, Paton, and Spring Street.

We have seen a dip in overall enrollment since onset of the pandemic, primarily at the lower grades. We continue to be crowded at the middle level and overcrowded at the high school level (over 1800 students where SHS was designed for 1475).

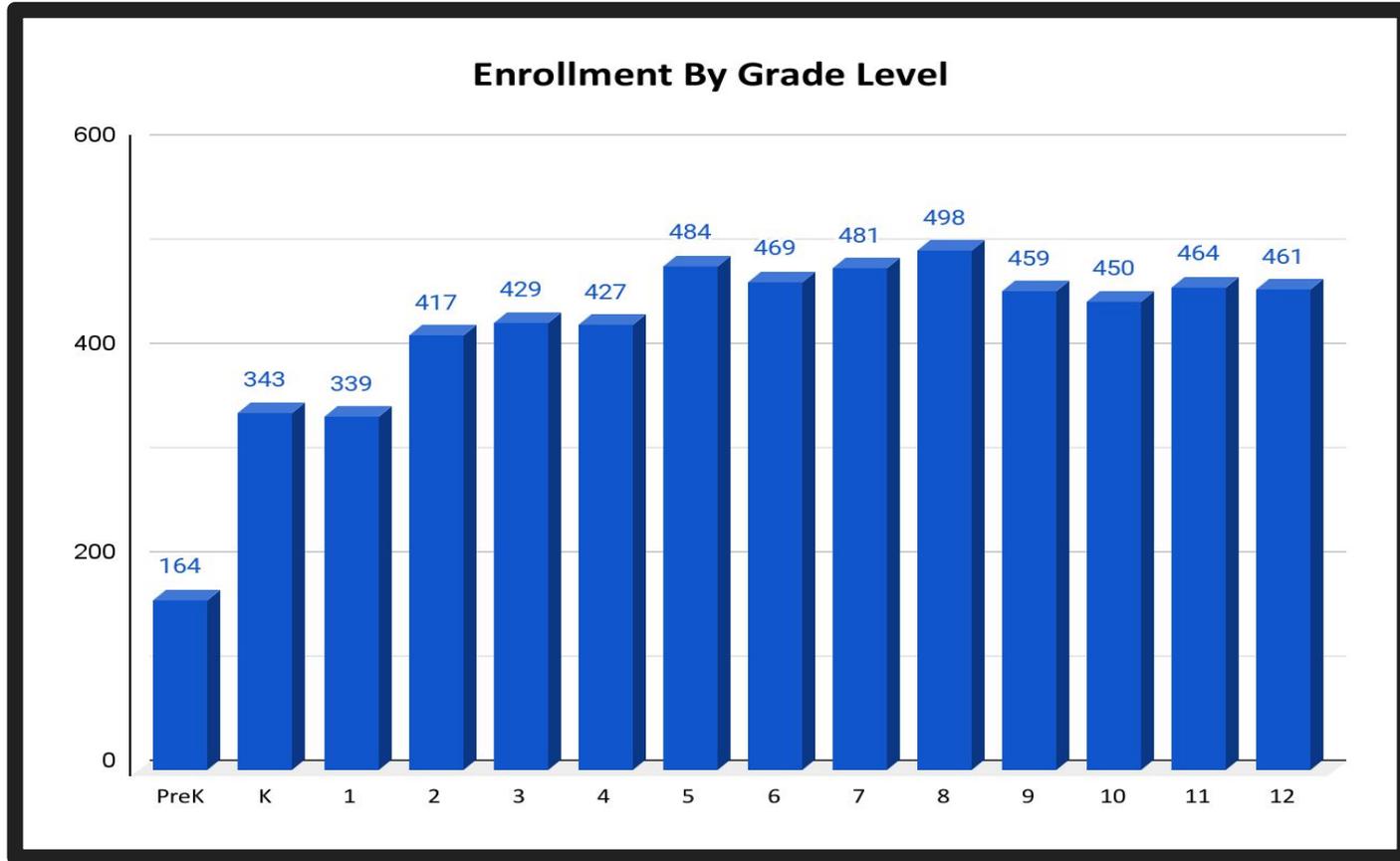
We are eager to engage in an updated PreK-12 Capital Inventory and Assessment Study to assist us in navigating future capital investments in context with enrollment projections.

Enrollment History Preschool - Grade 12

PreK to Grade 12 Enrollment History

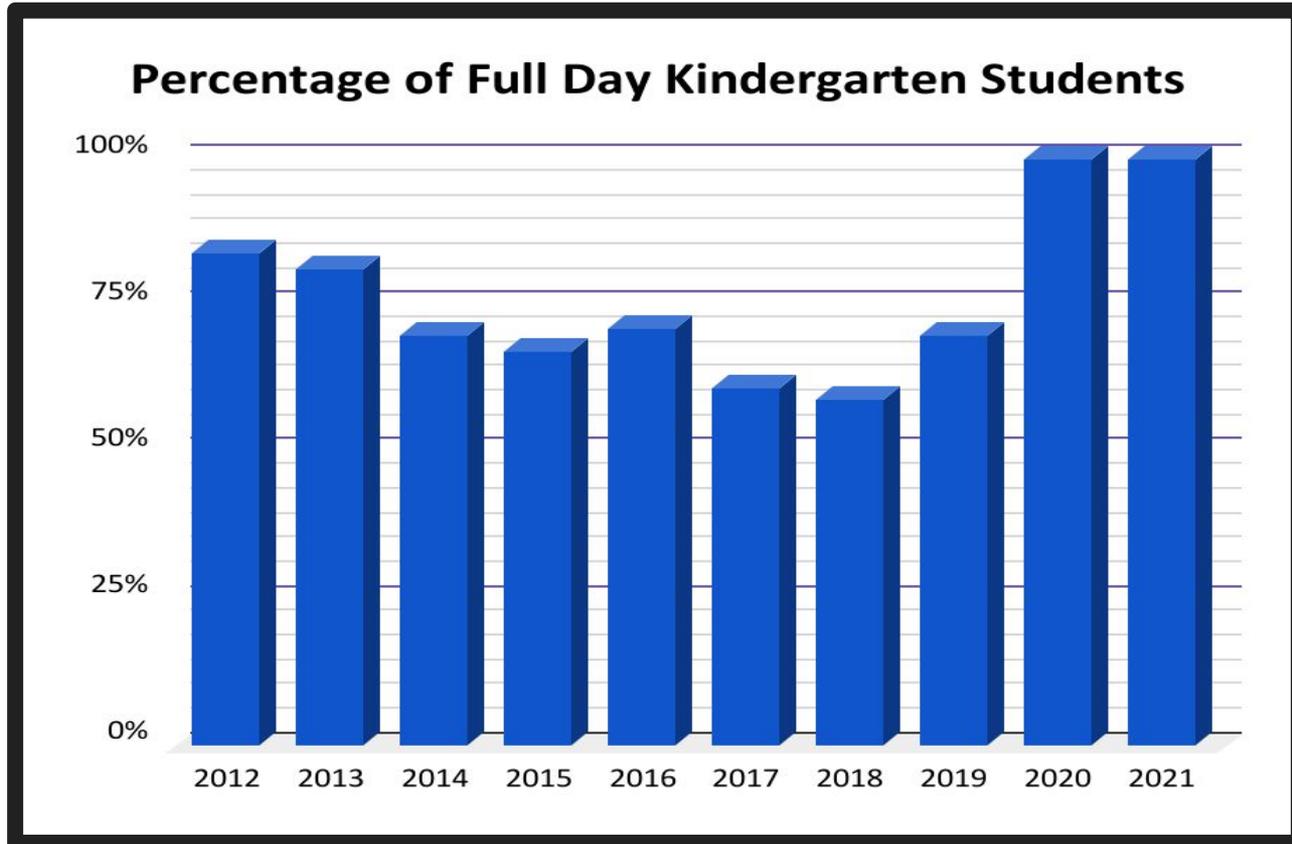


October 1, 2021 Enrollment by Grade Level



Percentage of Full-Day Kindergarten Students

*All 2020 Kindergarten students were full time due to to hybrid & remote learning
As of the 2021-2022 school year, all kindergarten students are in a tuition-free, full-day program.*



Student Demographics: Race/Ethnicity



Race	% of District	% of State
African American	3.4%	9.3%
Asian	33.6%	7.2%
Hispanic	9.5%	23.1%
Native American	0.6%	0.2%
White	48.2%	55.7%
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0%	.1%
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	4.6%	4.3%

Student Demographics: Selected Populations



Title	% of District	% of State
First Language not English	36.7%	23.9%
English Language Learner	2.7%	11.0%
Low-income	18.0%	43.8%
Students with Disabilities	14.6%	18.9%
High Needs	31.9%	55.6%

A student is considered “high needs” if he or she is designated as either low income/economically disadvantaged, as an English learner or former English learner, or as a student with disabilities.

Financial Overview

All school districts across the nation and Commonwealth of MA have received federal funds to mitigate the negative financial impact that the pandemic has caused.

These funds have played a critical role in Shrewsbury by providing much-needed support for additional staffing, logistics and warehousing, personal protective equipment, furniture purchases, and providing for more intensive student academic, social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs as a result of the pandemic.

We have been careful in planning uses of funds to avoid taking on recurring costs whenever possible and also extending their use for the maximum allowable time.

Financial Overview

Source	Grant	Amount	Uses*	End date
State	Coronavirus Prevention Fund	\$218,950	Direct Covid costs, PPE	6/30/2021
Fed.	Food Service Fund Relief	\$ 10,909	Support school food service operations	12/30/2020
Fed.	Pooled Testing Services	\$ 73,433	Covid pooled testing services	4/18/2021
Fed.	Coronavirus Relief Fund	\$1,390,050	Logistics, Reopening staff planning, Covid- Asst. staffing, Nursing, PPE etc..	12/31/2021
Fed.	Pandemic EBT Reimbursement	\$ 5,526	Reim. Costs for identifying reporting students receiving state meal benefits	6/30/2022
Fed.	ESSER-1	\$ 162,060	Warehousing, café cleaners, PPE	9/30/2022
Fed.	ESSER-2	\$ 557,280	Café cleaner staff, contact-tracing, substitute costs, PPE	9/30/2022
Fed.	American Rescue Plan-Special Education	\$ 388,999	Start-up costs for 18-22 y.o. transitions program	9/30/2023
Fed.	American Rescue Plan-Early Childhood Svcs	\$ 34,608	Communication technology devices and program consulting	9/30/2023
Fed.	American Rescue Plan- Homeless Children	\$ 5,118	Supporting homeless children	6/30/2024
Fed.	ESSER-3	<u>\$1,229,980</u>	Summer and after school academic programs, late bus services, counselors	9/30/2024
Total Funding		\$4,076,913		

**Each grant has its own set up regulations and restrictions on use of funds. This is a high-level overview.*

Financial Overview

We have also worked closely with the Town Manager, Town Accountant, and local Emergency Management Director, in order to maximize use of Town CARES funding and FEMA reimbursement.

We are grateful for their efforts to support and coordinate some School Dept. costs to those funding sources [i.e. some COVID-19 testing costs covered by FEMA].

Financial Overview

Currently in negotiations and seeking mediation for an agreement on a successor contract with the Shrewsbury Paraprofessionals Association

Three collective bargaining agreements will be open after this year (Shrewsbury Education Association Units A & B, Shrewsbury Cafeteria Workers). Negotiations with Unit A (teachers, counselors, psychologists, nurses, etc.) are beginning in December using “interest-based bargaining”

We are well into the FY23 budget development process, which will be aligned with the override agreement between the School Committee and Board of Selectmen.

Closing Remarks

- **Financial stability and predictability**
- **New approach to budget development**
- **Looking forward to partnering with the Board of Selectmen on strategic planning to enhance the future of our community**
- **Continuing to face challenging conditions related to the pandemic**
- **Grateful for the work of our staff, support from our families and community, and having our students in full-time, in-person school**