

Shrewsbury High School Athletic Report 2020-21



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Overview of 2020-21

Governance

The Shrewsbury High School Athletic program is governed by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) and subscribes to the value the association places on the importance of athletics in students' social and emotional development.

Philosophy

We adhere to the MIAA Educational Athletics Committee's belief that:

“Interscholastic athletic competition is an extension of the classroom and an educational activity that provides outstanding opportunities to teach life lessons. Through participation in such programs, young people learn values and skills that help prepare them for the future. Leadership, goal setting, teamwork, decision making, perseverance, integrity, sacrifice, healthy competition and overcoming adversity are inherent in the interscholastic athletic framework and also support the academic mission of schools. Student-athletes earn the privilege to participate by succeeding academically, and the resulting positive outcomes continue far beyond graduation. Athletic programming exists to prepare young men and women for the next level of life, not the next level of athletics. Wins are achieved through athletics by developing successful athletes and teams, but more importantly, wins are achieved through the educational experience by developing successful and responsible students, leaders and community members.”

Programming

During the 2020-21 school year, Shrewsbury High School and Oak Middle School offered reduced athletic opportunities as a result of Covid-19 restrictions set forth by the MIAA and public health officials. The number of athletic competitions were reduced for all seasons. Additionally, football, volleyball, unified basketball, and indoor track were moved from their traditional fall season to a “Fall II” season which started in February and concluded in April. The indoor track team did not have meets, and practiced on our outdoor track. Furthermore, all sports required the wearing of masks and modifications were made to sport specific rules in an effort to reduce the likelihood of Covid-19 transmission between participants. The Athletic Department offered 19 different sports, which accounted for 51 teams and approximately 444 contests played this past year. In 2020-2021, our coaching staff comprised 75 positions and 26 volunteer coaches at the high school level. The Athletic Department athletic trainer position was a full-time school position for the 2020-21 school year.

SHS was able to offer and support the Unified Basketball program during the Fall II Season. Unified sports programming allows students with and without disabilities to participate on the same team. The overarching goal of Unified Sports is to allow students access to athletic programming, while developing understanding and camaraderie. Central Massachusetts has

been a leader in this space and currently there are 19 schools in the Midland-Wachusett League that offer Unified sports. The 2020-21 season Unified basketball was divided into two squads. Each squad performed different skills and drills. The season finished with a game between Shrewsbury (Blue) vs. Shrewsbury (Gold). In the spring season, Unified Track was offered at a modified schedule that consisted of 3 meets against other schools.

During the 2020-2021 school year Oak Middle School (OMS) reduced its athletic program as a result of the pandemic. During this time OMS offered only baseball and softball during the spring season. Due to health concerns OMS did not offer the following sports in 20-21:

- Boys' and Girls' cross-country
- Field hockey
- Cheerleading
- Boys' and Girls' basketball
- Boys' and Girls' outdoor track

During a typical year these sports would provide athletic opportunities for over 350 students. Last year OMS had a total of 32 student-athletes (baseball- 18 and softball- 14) during the spring season.

II. Teams, Seasons, Levels and Contests

During the 2020-2021 school year, Shrewsbury High School offered a total of 19 competitive sports to the student body. There were 51 teams that participated at various levels of play ranging from junior varsity level to the varsity level and athletes competed in a restricted amount of contests throughout the school year. As you can see below SHS currently offers eight junior varsity-2 (freshman) athletic teams.

Sports Offered/Levels of competition (Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Freshman)

Fall Season I (Sept-Nov)

Boys' Sports

Soccer (V, JV1, JV2)
Golf-Coed (V, JV)
Cross Country (V)

Girls' Sports

Soccer (V, JV1, JV2)
Golf-Coed (V, JV)
Cross Country (V)
Field Hockey (V, JV)

Winter Season (Nov-Feb)

Boys' Sports

Basketball (V, JV1, JV2)
Swimming-Coed (V)
Ice Hockey (V, JV)
Skiing-Coed (V)

Girls' Sports

Basketball (V, JV1, JV2)
Swimming-Coed (V)
Ice Hockey (V)
Skiing-Coed (V)
Gymnastics (V)

Fall Season II (Feb-April)**Boys' Sports**

Football (V, JV)
 Track (V) (Practice only)
 Unified Basketball

Girls' Sports

Unified Basketball
 Track (V) (Practice only)
 Volleyball (V, JV1, JV2)
 Cheerleading (V)

Spring Season (Apr - June)**Boys' Sports**

Track (V)
 Tennis (V)
 Baseball (V, JV1, JV2)
 Crew (V, Novice)
 Lacrosse (V, JV)

Girls' Sports

Track (V)
 Tennis (V)
 Softball (V, JV)
 Crew (V, Novice)
 Lacrosse (V, JV)

III. Comparative Data Information Sheet**Programming and Participation**

The following tables provide you a snapshot of programming and participation pre-pandemic and during the pandemic. (**Note:** numbers in parenthesis indicate the number of girls on a co-ed team.)

Number of sports offered:	<u>18-19</u>	<u>20-21</u>
Boys	15	15
Girls	19	19

Number of teams offered:	<u>18-19</u>	<u>20-21</u>
Boys	26	26
Girls	30	29

Number of athletes per season:	<u>18-19</u>	<u>20-21</u>
Fall	511	261
Winter	364	213
Fall II	n/a	312
Spring	458	417
<i>Total</i>	<i>1333</i>	<i>1203</i>

Participation of athletes by sport:

	<u>18-19</u>	<u>20-21</u>
Football - Boys	96(1)	92 (1)
Fall Crew - Boys	47	Did not offer
Fall Crew - Girls	46	Did not offer

Soccer - Boys	65	66
Soccer - Girls	71	60
X-Country - Boys	53	39
X-Country - Girls	30	35
Golf - Co-Ed	15(3)	18 (2)
Fall Cheering - Girls	22	24
Field Hockey - Girls	39	41
Volleyball - Girls	48	42
Basketball - Boys	39	38
Basketball - Girls	36	32
Basketball- Unified	n/a	50
Indoor Track – Boys	104	50 (Practice Only)
Indoor Track - Girls	87	53 (Practice Only)
Swimming - Co-Ed	17(19)	10 (20)
Ice Hockey - Boys	45	53
Ice Hockey – Girls	23	25
Skiing - Co-Ed	2(14)	8(11)
Gymnastics - Girls	19	16
Winter Cheering	14	Did not offer
Spring Track - Boys	128	59
Spring Track - Girls	83	49
Unified Track	n/a	39
Tennis – Boys	17	18
Tennis – Girls	11	16
Baseball – Boys	55	59
Softball – Girls	33	25
Lacrosse - Boys	40	36
Lacrosse – Girls	44	37
Spring Crew – Boys	43	38
Spring Crew – Girls	57	41

Class of 2021 Collegiate Participants

- Class of 2021 had 4 students sign National Letters of Intent (NLI) to participate in NCAA athletics. The student-athletes signed NLIs in the following sports: soccer (1), field hockey (2), track and field (1).

IV. Athletic Administration and Support Groups

Athletic Administration

- **Coaches' Education:** The landscape of coaching high school athletics is becoming more complex as there are numerous mandates to complete prior to coaches working with student-athletes. New coaches are required by the MIAA to complete the state coaches' education course. The course reviews and outlines expectations and responsibilities of being a coach. Coaches also have to complete a concussion course to help assist them in identifying students who may have suffered a concussion. Lastly, all coaches are required to be certified in CPR, First Aid and AED. The addition of these mandates has added to the complexity of managing the Athletic Department. The training is important in helping coaches support our student-athletes, however the training creates additional logistics of managing requirements, coordinating and offering programming, and has increased the financial burden of coaches and the athletic department paying for the training.
- **Athletic Internship** - No participants due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- **Student Leadership** - No participants due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- **Coordinate and Manage Visits of College Recruitment** Numerous college recruiters contact the athletic department to schedule meetings with student-athletes. The athletic director manages all recruiting visits with student-athletes. Coaches and/or the athletic director attend meetings with students and college/university representatives.
- **Pre-season meetings** Prior to the start of each season, student-athletes and their families were required to attend a pre-season virtual meeting with the athletic director (4-meetings for the 2020-21). The meetings were approximately 45 minutes and reviewed the expectations for student-athletes and their parents. Coaches met with individual programs to go over program expectations with parents and athletes.
- **Covid-19 Pool Testing for Athletes:**
During the Fall II and Spring seasons all student-athletes were required to participate in weekly pool testing to maintain eligibility for sports. Student-athletes were required to pick up a test kit on Monday in the athletic office or during their lunch period and were required to turn in the sample to the Athletic Department in the Fieldhouse lobby on Monday afternoons.

Support Groups

- **Shrewsbury High School Athletic Boosters Association** This past year has been very active for our parent-run SHS Athletic Boosters Association. Their primary functions are to raise funds to support athletic programming, foster overall spirit for SHS sports teams, organize parent volunteers to provide support for contests, provide post contest-refreshments for athletes, and help coordinate end of the season banquets for individual teams to bring formal closure to their season. The Athletic Boosters Association has provided funding for replacement uniforms and equipment. The athletic

program is very appreciative for the parental support it receives. The athletic department will continue to partner and work with the dedicated parent volunteers to help support and maintain a quality athletic program.

The SHS Athletic Boosters Association held monthly virtual meetings during the year. The 2020-21 school year marked the fifteenth year in which all athletic teams at SHS became members of the Boosters Association. One of their primary functions is to raise money to help provide student-athletes equipment and materials not covered through the appropriated budget. They continue to provide funding for uniforms, equipment, senior scholarships, athletic fee scholarships, athletic awards, and other athletic needs by holding fundraisers each year. In the fall, the annual “Gold Card” fundraiser brings in approximately \$40,000, during 2020, sales were approximately \$15,000.

- **Friends of Shrewsbury Crew (FOSC)** Financial need and increased participation led to a need for an additional source of funding for the crew program. FOSC purchases specific pieces of equipment, including costly shells. The athletic program is very appreciative of all that the Friends of Shrewsbury Crew does to benefit athletes in the crew program.

V. Athletic Financials 2020-21

Fees 2020-21

The fall of 2021 marked the fifteenth year of athletic fees. The fee structure and registration process were explained at Parent/Athlete Nights conducted via Zoom, which are held at the beginning of each season. Athletes and parents were informed that all fees, medical and permission forms are due to the athletic department on a specified date. The Shrewsbury School Committee agreed to a \$50 reduction in athletic fees for the 2020-21 seasons due to the reduction in contests due to COVID-19 Pandemic. The athletic department used an on-line payment in the form of *SchoolPay* located in the Parent Portal of *PowerSchool*. Total Athletic Fees collected for the 2020-21 school year was \$265,580.

VI. Future Considerations

The Shrewsbury High School Athletic program provides significant opportunities for student-athletes and decidedly contributes to our positive school culture. As we reflect upon the program, we have identified areas that need to be considered as we move forward. Below are four areas in need of consideration:

1. Review and Implement the 5-year strategic plan on the replacement of crew shells and equipment.
2. Create seasonal stipend positions for an Part-Time Athletic Trainer and Seasonal Site Supervisor to ensure coverage and supervision of expanded athletic programming at OMS and SHS.

3. Add Middle School Girls' and Boys' Soccer programming.
4. Continue maintenance and improvements to Athletic Facilities:
 - Replacement of the Shrewsbury High School press box.
 - Installation of a storage facility near the stadium field.
 - Improvements to the baseball and softball fields. (dugouts, storage, and fencing)
 - Netting around the lower soccer field. (former Field Hockey/lacrosse field)
 - Screen protectors around the tennis courts.

VII. Conclusion

The Shrewsbury Athletic Program provided students an outlet for students to socialize and compete during a very difficult time in our history. Athletic programming helped get students active and re-engaged after months of isolation and quarantine. Co-curricular programming such as athletics also helped cultivate and improve students' social and emotional well-being and allowed students to continue to expand essential skills such as collaboration, personal responsibility, leadership, perseverance, and resilience. We hope to put the pandemic behind us soon and build upon our programming to offer enriching experiences and opportunities for our student-athletes.