



Shrewsbury School Committee Priorities & Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Development

Overview

This document provides the community with information about the School Committee's priorities for the Fiscal Year 2023 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 2023 School Department Budget proposal.

Clearly, the Coronavirus pandemic has significantly impacted all aspects of our lives, including our daily routines, work lives, social lives, and our public educational systems. Our top priority must continue to be the health and safety of our students and staff and we must plan for sufficient resources to support this.

With health and safety as our top priority, we acknowledge that some of the goals and objectives included in our Strategic Priorities & Goals Plan for 2018-2022 will take longer to achieve.

Priorities

The initial FY23 School Department Budget proposal shall include resources to address each of the following priorities:

1. *Meet commitments as detailed in the March 16, 2021 Override Statement to the Residents of Shrewsbury and agreed upon between the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee*

This compact includes specific commitments towards budget planning transparency, engagement with the community, and limitations on annual budget increases.

2. *Coronavirus Planning and Resources*

To provide adequate staff, equipment, services, and supplies to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment in all of our schools as we continue to deal with the Coronavirus pandemic. Planning must necessarily include consideration of costs related to personnel, materials, technology, etc. with regard to direct management of health and safety (e.g., nursing services and contact tracing) as well as educational, social, and emotional impacts that may require resources not covered by the grant funds provided for these purposes.

3. *Resources for Continued Progress Towards Fulfillment of the 2018-2022 Strategic Priorities*

- To maintain class sizes within School Committee guidelines.
- To consider what additional resources may be necessary to provide support for mental, emotional, and behavioral health and social-emotional learning initiatives.
- To consider what investments will advance the district's commitment to its core value of equity, particularly as it works to advance equity and anti-racism throughout our school communities.

Resources for Continued Progress Towards Fulfillment of the 2018-2022 Strategic Priorities
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- To make sufficient investments in technology in order to realize the educational and operational benefits available through digital resources 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 in 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

It is assumed that the initial FY23 School Department Budget proposal will:

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 level funding for all federal and state grants and leverage COVID-related grants to best manage the temporal impacts of the pandemic.
6. Review fee levels for all programs and adjust, as necessary, to reflect market price conditions and specific cost structures of each program.
7. Examine ways to reduce or shift costs in order to achieve district priorities without requiring additional funding allocations wherever possible.
8. Given space constraints at the secondary schools, the administration should assume no new School Choice seats would be voted by the School Committee for approval.
9. Display data and budget information in new ways including further use of the *ClearGov* web-based platform.