



2/27/19

To: Shrewsbury School Committee

From: Karen Isaacson, Director of Extended Learning

RE: Extended Learning Programs – Report and Tuition Recommendation

Shrewsbury's extended learning programs are thriving. During the last school year and summer, over 1750 individual students participated in one or more of our offerings.

The Extended School Care program has a record enrollment of 717 FTE students in its before and after school programs, an increase of 31 FTE since last year that was achieved through maximizing student scheduling with available space. Parent satisfaction remains high, staff turnover remains low, and demand for the program exceeds capacity, with 152 students still on the waitlist for the 2018-2019 school year. These students cannot be accommodated due to space limitations.

The vacation week enrichment programs continue to be well attended. This year's February vacation program attracted 250 students, in grades K-8. 34 classes were offered with subjects in the areas of STEM, fitness, art, literature, dance, yoga and world cultures. Each half-day class costs \$75, and early drop off and extended hours are available for an additional fee of \$25 and \$75 respectively. A family utilizing all aspects of the program would pay \$250 for the week (Tuesday-Friday.) A similar program is planned for April vacation.

The 2018 summer enrichment programs maintained high levels of enrollment. 711 elementary students participated in 197 classes at Floral, and 325 middle school students participated in 84 classes at Sherwood. Each student could register for up to 8 classes. The total number of registrations (seats filled in each class, for all 4 weeks) exceeded 4000.

After School Activities Program (ASAP)

- Elementary ASAP classes run one hour per week for 6 weeks. There are four sessions throughout the year, with different class offerings each time. Classes cost \$40 per session.
- Middle school ASAP classes run one hour per week for 8 weeks. There are three sessions per year, and classes cost \$30 per session
- Classes for elementary students cost more than middle school classes to cover the cost of an additional stipend for an on-site coordinator. Middle School students do not need the same level of supervision as they transition from the school day, to ASAP, to parent pickup, and so no coordinator is necessary.
- During the 2017-2018 school year, 884 students participated in 66 different classes

Extended School Care Financial Forecast

After several consecutive years of financial losses, Extended Day is projected to restore \$70K to the reserve fund. Last year's tuition increase, coupled with higher than anticipated enrollment and careful cost control has corrected our course, but our fund balance remains well below the recommended 3-months of operating expenses. With no change to tuition, and only a modest cost of living increase for

staff, ESC would face a loss of \$33K for FY20. Even without a cost of living increase, we anticipate a loss of \$14K.

Local Rate Comparison

Shrewsbury ESC charges among the lowest tuition for similar services in the region. A survey of 30 local programs shows an average monthly tuition of \$376 for after school services.

Town/Program	Program type	2018-2019 Monthly Rate (based on 5-day enrollment)
Holliston	public	\$593
YMCA - Westborough	private	\$500
Acton-Boxborough	public	\$475
Dover-Sherborne	public	\$468
Uxbridge	public	\$450
Marlborough	private	\$445
Hingham	public	\$445
Natick	public	\$425
Westborough	public	\$425
Franklin	public	\$425
Little Beginnings Shrewsbury	private	\$420
Southborough	private	\$415
Sudbury	public	\$411
Watertown	public	\$408
Northborough	private	\$390
State reimbursement rate		\$390
Boxborough	public	\$382
Berlin Boylston	public	\$360
Nashoba Regional	public	\$360
Ashland	public	\$342
Norfolk	public	\$330
Framingham	public	\$300
North Andover	public	\$299
Millis	public	\$297
Wilmington	public	\$294
Westwood	public	\$280
Shrewsbury ESC	public	\$276
St. Mary's - Shrewsbury	private	\$270
Hudson	private	\$270
Leominster	public	\$260
West Boylston	public	\$240

Rate History

Prior to 2018, ESC only raised its tuition rates once in ten years. For FY18 we proposed a small increase for several consecutive years rather than a large increase all at once. Rates reflect 5 day/week enrollment. Options are also available for 2, 3 or 4-day enrollment.

Fiscal Year	After School Rate	Before School Rate
2008	\$226/month	\$102/month
2013 - 15% increase	\$260/month	\$118/month
2018 - 3% increase	\$268/month	\$122/month
2019 - 3% increase (eliminated sibling discount and added \$25 early release day fee)	\$276/month	\$126/month
2020 - 3.5% proposed	\$286/month	\$130/month

Expenses

- 87% of the total ESC budget is for personnel (wages and benefits)
- ESC pays \$50,000 annually to offset the cost of electricity (3% of budget)
- ESC provides approximately 5% of families with financial aid (\$87K for FY19)
- The remainder of the budget is discretionary spending, and approximately 40% of that is allocated for field trips and other events related to early release days.
- Charging students \$25 per early release day mitigates the cost of these days, but does not cover it entirely.
- ESC now accepts on-line payments via School Pay, and absorbs the 3% transaction fee (estimated cost for FY19 is \$40,000)

Extended Day Reduced Fee Policy

Current policy

- ESC offers a sliding scale, with discounts ranging from 30%-90%
- Eligibility guidelines and parent fees are in alignment with the Massachusetts child care financial assistance guidelines (child care vouchers)
- Families must submit a reduced fee application and documentation of income (pay stubs and tax returns) to the Director of Extended Learning, who determines their eligibility

Proposed change

- Align eligibility with Free and Reduced Lunch guidelines
- Families inquiring about financial aid will be asked to provide their lunch status, and the Director of Extended Learning will ask for verification from the Director of Food Services.
- Families who are eligible for reduced lunch will receive a 60% discount on their extended day tuition. Families who are eligible for free lunch will receive an 80% discount on their extended day tuition.
- ESC will no longer need to view and maintain confidential financial documents and families will not need to apply for assistance multiple times for different programs

Impact of change

- 47 students will pay the same or less in FY20
- 7 students will pay more in FY20 (most will pay 10% more)
- 9 students may lose their financial aid
- ESC subsidy will increase by \$18K-20K

Proposed Changes to Extended School Care for FY20

- 3.5% tuition increase
- 1.5% cost of living increase for employees
- Align reduced fee with lunch status. Reduced lunch = 60% discount, Free lunch = 80% discount