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Central Office Organizational Study

Shrewsbury Public Schools Shrewsbury, Massachusetts

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Executive Summary

The Shrewsbury Public Schools (District) is a Pre-K-12 school district with nine schools and a student enrollment of 6,214 (DESE: 2017-2018). The nine schools include a pre-school, five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. The District has faced increased student enrollment for several years, and the local and state educational initiatives continue to create pressure on the district's capacity, in particular on the central office staff. The District will also be opening a new elementary school within the next two years, which will add to the District's organizational challenge.

Within this context, the District contracted with the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center at UMass Boston to conduct three major analyses and to develop a set of recommendations for review and possible adoption in the FY20 District budget process (See Project Background).

The Collins Center project team conducted 40 interviews, 1-1 interviews or in small focus groups, with the District leadership staff. The project's goals were two-fold: (1) to understand the functions and relationships of their departments and to solicit their insights into areas of strengths, limitations, and omissions, as well as suggestions for program improvements, and (2) to ascertain their perception of the level of support provided by Central Administration. Representatives were identified for the following functions, at a minimum: curriculum, instruction and assessment, grants and special project administration, student services, business operations, budget development and monitoring, human resources, payroll, transportation, information technology services, intergovernmental relations, student registration, and school security. The project team also reviewed the central office organizations of mutually agreed upon similar size Massachusetts school districts, in particular those with similar resource challenges. The project team sent an online survey to 11 similar size Massachusetts school districts, supplemented by follow-up telephone interviews where necessary. The goal of this research was to highlight best practices and alternative means to administrative functions, where appropriate. A number of organizational charts that supplement the review and analysis have been included in Appendices B – G.

The project team's findings and recommendations, which are detailed in the full report, include 12 major categories of findings, a total of 35 separate findings within those categories, and a total of 44 recommendations within those categories.

The project team presents specific findings in 12 areas:

- 1. Superintendent's Office Overall Central Office Collaboration
- 2. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (CIA)
- 3. Assistant Superintendent for Student Services
- 4. Human Resources
- 5. Technology, Data Analysis and Reporting
- 6. District Registrar
- 7. Central Office Space Needs

- 8. Payroll
- 9. A/P, A/R, Grants and Purchasing
- 10. Transportation
- 11. New Middle-Management Position in the Business Office
- 12. New Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-Being

The recommendations included adding or implementing several positions in Central Office, including the following:

- Add an educational data analyst position within Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (CIA) to facilitate access to data collection and data analysis in order to make curriculum, instruction, and professional development decisions. The project team also recommended that the District provide training for existing staff to augment this needed service.
- Implement a budget analyst/data reporting position within Student Services as one of the 4 current administrative support positions.
- The project team believes that the Human Resources staff should not serve as a Central
 Office receptionist. Central Office would benefit from a full-time Welcome Center
 administrative assistant to welcome and assist all visitors to Central Office. This staff
 member should also be cross-trained to assist with Student Registration during busy
 times.
- The District should implement a **new middle-management position** in the Business Office.
- The District should implement the **new Assistant Superintendent for Community**Partnerships and Well-Being leadership position.

Finally, it should be noted that all the District staff who were interviewed could not have been more open or constructive in their assessment of their own position and that of the Central Office as a whole. They all recognize the need for continual improvement and have made excellent recommendations as to what would be needed to become a high performing Central Office.

Project Background

The Shrewsbury Public Schools (District) is a Pre-K-12 school district with nine schools and a student enrollment of 6,214 (DESE: 2017-2018). The nine schools include a pre-school, five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. The District will also be opening a new elementary school within the next two years. The District's administrative team includes the Superintendent of Schools, three Assistant Superintendents (Curriculum and Instruction, Finance and Operations, and Special Education and Pupil Services), a Director of Human Resources, and nine school principals.

The District has faced increased student enrollment for several years, and the local and state educational initiatives continue to create pressure on the district's capacity, in particular on the central office staff. As noted above, opening a new elementary school will add to the organizational challenges. The District has asked the Collins Center for Public Management (Center) to conduct an organizational study of the District's Central office, and by extension the District's full administrative team. This study would focus on three major analyses and the development of a set of recommendations for review and possible adoption in the FY20 district budget process, as follows:

- 1. A study of the organizational structure, staffing, and practices of central administration operations;
- 2. A study of the organizational structure, staffing, and practices of the instructional and academic program leadership and the special education administration;
- A survey of central office and leadership positions in similar size school districts, particularly those who have faced and addressed increased student enrollment and facility and staffing challenges; and
- 4. Recommendations for an enhanced central office organizational structure that will properly support the District's mission.

Project Methodology

As outlined in the original proposal, the Collins Center project team studied the organizational structure and practices of the District's central administration with the goal of developing recommendations for maintaining a high standard of support for District schools and programs.

The project team conducted 40 interviews, 1-1 interviews or in small focus groups, with District central office and district leadership staff (see Appendix A). The goals were two-fold: (1) to understand the functions and relationships of their departments and to solicit their insights into areas of strengths, limitations, and omissions, as well as suggestions for program improvements, and (2) to ascertain their perception of the level of support provided by Central Administration. Representatives were identified for the following functions, at a minimum: curriculum, instruction and assessment, grants and special project administration, student services, business operations, budget development and monitoring, human resources, payroll,

building services, transportation, information technology services, intergovernmental relations, student registration, and school security.

The project team also reviewed the central office organizations of mutually agreed upon similar size Massachusetts school districts, in particular those with similar resource challenges. The project team sent an online survey (See Appendix H) to 11 similar size Massachusetts school districts, supplemented by follow-up telephone interviews where necessary. The goal of this research was to highlight best practices and alternative means to administrative functions, where appropriate.

The findings and recommendations that follow are the result of a thorough analysis of the feedback from the multiple District interviews and focus groups and the online survey.

Findings and Recommendations

1. Findings: Superintendent's Office – Overall Central Office Collaboration

Based on in-person interviews, it is apparent that Shrewsbury administrators and staff generally have a positive attitude, work hard, support the mission of the district, and are proud to work as part of the Shrewsbury team.

Central Office administration consists of the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, and Director of Human Resources. The Superintendent is responsible for supervising more staff than typical. In addition to the Central Office administration positions listed above, the Superintendent has the following direct reports: Director of Information Technology, Director of Extended Learning, District Registrar, and 2 part-time Coordinators of Development and Volunteers, School Principals (9), and an Administrative Assistant.

Superintendents of designated comparable districts have between 11 and 16 direct reports, while the Shrewsbury Superintendent has 19 direct reports. The current Massachusetts educator evaluation system requires significant time and attention in order to implement the system with fidelity. Districts across the Commonwealth struggle to meet the requirements while focusing on providing useful feedback to enhance students' educational experience and opportunity as well as to advance professional practice. Previous administrative staffing is typically insufficient to meet the demands of the evaluation process without sacrificing other important work. This is indeed the case in Shrewsbury.

Of the comparable districts with more than 5,000 students (Andover, Lexington, Natick, Needham), superintendents have 16, 15, 16, and 13 direct reports respectively. The project team found no other comparable district where the Registrar reported directly to the superintendent with one exception where the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent served as the registrar. The project team found no other comparable district where part-time development/engagement staff report directly to the superintendent. The higher number of direct reports contributes to a lack of time for big picture, organizational thinking, communication, and operations.

The chart below indicates the number of direct reports for Superintendents in comparable districts:

District	# of Direct Reports - Superintendent	# of Schools
Andover	16	10
Belmont	12	6
Burlington	11	6
Chelmsford	15	8
Lexington	15	10
Melrose	14	8
Natick	16	8
Needham	13	8
Sharon	11	6
Walpole	15	8
Winchester	12	7
Comparables Average	13.6	7.7
Shrewsbury	19	9

Central Office administrators and staff expressed concerns regarding workload and their ability to do things in the high-quality manner they desire. A consistent theme of concern regarding rollout of initiatives and clarity of responsibility also emerged along with the understanding that Central Office administrators have a heavy workload.

While considering the addition of another District administrator (See Finding #11), it is important to recognize that there is a lack of sufficient physical space at the Central Office. Physical space is an area of concern for many Central Office administrators and staff. A sense of disconnectedness exists for the Student Services department, due to physical location separate from the Central Office. In addition, the lack of confidential space to meet with families and/or employees is a need to be addressed, in particular for school registration purposes as well as Human Resources operations.

Findings:

- A. With 19 direct reports, the Shrewsbury superintendent has more direct reports than typical for comparable districts.
- B. Administrators require and desire more time to collaborate and communicate initiatives and their implementation. The lack of this time and process has created a lack of clarity regarding responsibility for and implementation of key initiatives.
- C. Space needs exist in order to create confidential work spaces for Human Resources and Registration. Additional space is required in order to locate all Central Office departments in proximity to one another.

- 1.1 Reduce the number of direct reports to the Superintendent. Implement an additional Assistant Superintendent position as planned after a review of all Central Office administrative position job descriptions focusing on equity regarding evaluation and supervision responsibilities. There also may be a need in the future to add administrative support for the new Assistant Superintendent position.
- 1.2 Remove the following positions as direct reports to the Superintendent: Registrar, Coordinators of Development and Volunteers, and Director of Information Technology. Supervision of these positions would move to two other Central Office administrators (See Appendix G).
- 1.3 Review the current collaboration and communication structure with Central Office administrative team, and consider options to address the need for additional communication and collaboration among central office administrators.
- 1.4 Continue to pursue space needs for Central Office team, including the ability to create additional confidential spaces and have the Student Services department at the same location.

2. Findings: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment oversees K-12 programming for general education. The Assistant Superintendent is supported by seven K-12 Directors (Performing Arts, English Language Learners, Physical Education, Health, and Family Consumer Science, Foreign Languages, Visual Arts, Instructional Technology and Media Centers, and Title I). The department is also supported by site level curriculum Directors and Coordinators. At the High School level, curriculum content Directors include English, Mathematics, Science and Engineering, and Social Sciences. At the Middle School, Curriculum Coordinators for English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies support learning. Finally, at the elementary level there are six Instructional Coach/Curriculum Coordinator positions supporting the work of the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment department.

Assistant Superintendents for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment in comparable districts have evaluation responsibilities for between six and 15 staff members. Only Belmont, Winchester, and Shrewsbury have responsibility for more than 15 staff members, with Shrewsbury at 22. Of the comparable districts with more than 5,000 students (Andover, Lexington, Natick, Needham), assistant superintendents for teaching and learning have 11-15, 11-15, 6-10, and 6-10 staff evaluations, respectively. Within Shrewsbury, the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment has responsibility for supervision and evaluation of 22 staff members (eight as primary evaluator and 14 as secondary evaluator).

The chart below specifies the number of evaluations assigned to assistant superintendents for teaching and learning in comparable districts. The shaded districts have more than 5,000 students.

District	# of Evaluations – Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	# of Schools
Andover	11-15	10
Belmont	>15	6
Burlington	6-10	6
Chelmsford	6-10	8
Lexington	11-15	10
Melrose	6-10	8
Natick	6-10	8
Needham	6-10	8
Sharon	6-10	6
Walpole	6-10	8
Winchester	>15	7
Shrewsbury	22	9

The Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment department administrative assistant is responsible for generating employment letters, and facilities booking for the district, in addition to directly supporting the work of the Assistant Superintendent. These are tasks typically fulfilled in departments other than Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. Time spent on these tasks could better be used to support the needs of the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment department. There is a need for support in the area of data collection and analysis. The technology department works very hard to meet the District needs. However, staffing is not sufficient to meet the diverse needs of the District and, in particular, the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment department. Reduction of manual task strategies and investment in professional development for staff to fully utilize available technology is a clear need and a desire among staff.

Findings:

- A. The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment has evaluation responsibility for more staff than typical among designated comparable districts.
- B. The Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment department uses non-technological strategies to keep data related to lane changes and professional development points for each educator. The process is unnecessarily time-consuming.
- C. There is a need for access to data and data analysis in order to make curriculum, instruction, and professional development decisions.
- D. Tasks typically completed by other departments are the responsibility of the only administrative assistant to the Assistant Superintendent.

- 2.1 Move the supervision of the Director for Physical Education, Health, and Family Consumer Science to the new proposed Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-Being position.
- 2.2 Reduce the evaluation responsibilities of the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. With a focus on equity and effectiveness, consider the evaluation responsibilities of the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, as well as those of the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, when finalizing responsibilities for the new Assistant Superintendent position.
- 2.3 Analyze supervision caseloads of K-12 Directors and site administrators (not part of this study), and consider increasing evaluation responsibilities for site content directors, curriculum coordinators, and instructional coaches.
- 2.4 Add an educational data analyst position to facilitate access to data collection and data analysis in order to make curriculum, instruction, and professional development

- decisions. Provide training for existing staff to augment this needed service.
- 2.5 Investigate utilization of technological systems for professional development and lane change advancement data collection and reporting. In order to implement new systems or fully utilize current systems, provide adequate professional development on usage of technological systems to ensure efficiency.
- 2.6 Move generation of employment letters and lane change process to the Human Resources Department.
- 2.7 Move facilities use scheduling to the Finance and Operations Office.

3. Findings: Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

The Student Services department is responsible for a wide range of student services, including special education as well as general education supports and services. The Central Office Student services administrative team includes the Assistant Superintendent, Assistant Special Education Director, and Director of Specialized Services. In addition to Central Office administrators, the high school has a Special Education Director, and there is a middle school Special Education Director, and a vacant elementary Special Education Director position. The Assistant Superintendent supervises and evaluates 16 staff members, the Assistant Director supervises and evaluates 32 staff members, and the Specialized Program Director supervises and evaluates 17 staff members. There are four administrative support staff positions in the Student Services office performing a variety of duties and working for varied portions of the calendar year. Similar to the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment department, there is a need to focus on implementing technological solutions for recurrent processes, as well as collecting, analyzing, and reporting data. Similar school districts include administrative support positions such as "budget analyst" and "data coordinator," in addition to an administrative assistant to the Assistant Superintendent or Director for Student Services. The nature of work in the department has changed over the years, and it is necessary to shift responsibilities of support staff, as staff report working during lunch and/or at home as needed (but not required) to complete tasks.

Findings:

- A. The Assistant Superintendent for Student Services has an evaluation and supervision workload that is at the upper end of comparable districts.
- B. The Assistant Director for Special Education has an excessive evaluation and supervision workload.
- C. Administrative support varies throughout the calendar year due to different work year calendars for specific positions (one full year and three school year plus).

- 3.1 With a focus on equity and effectiveness, consider the evaluation responsibilities of the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services planning for an additional Assistant Superintendent position. (See recommendation 2.2.)
- 3.2 Begin the process of shifting to electronic processing of IEPs and all related notices, planning time for appropriate professional development for staff.
- 3.3 Implement a Budget Analyst/Data Reporting position as one of the four current administrative support positions.
- 3.4 Explore processing purchase orders electronically (as mentioned in the A/P, A/R, Grants, and Purchasing section of this report).

4. Findings: Human Resources

The recent addition of a staff member in the Human Resources department has proven helpful in managing the responsibilities of the department. The department is in the process of fully utilizing the staffing to accomplish and equitably assign necessary tasks. This additional staffing has brought the department in better alignment with staffing in comparable districts. However, it should be noted that there is variation in the responsibilities of Human Resources departments within the comparable districts. Additionally, some districts have more or less support from Town Human Resource departments. And, finally, some Human Resources departments are under the supervision of the Assistant Superintendent/Director of Finance and Operations, while others are directly supervised by the Superintendent. In some cases, Human Resources staff are responsible for certain payroll and benefit related tasks. Therefore, when considering adequate staffing and efficiency of operations, the analysis must be made after reviewing responsibilities of the department in the specific context of the school district. There is a need for confidential work and meeting space for all members of the Human Resources department. Currently two staff members have spaces that are not confidential, and the work of these staff members may be interrupted when they serve as receptionists for the Central Office.

Findings:

A. The Shrewsbury Human Resources Office appears to be appropriately staffed due to recent hires and considering the responsibilities of the department in Shrewsbury and the varying duties of Human Resources departments in different communities.

District	# Human Resource Staff, including Director/Asst. Supt.	Notes
Andover	7	6 staff shared with Town
Belmont	2	
Burlington	0.5 Director	1.0 position Shared with Town
Chelmsford	3-4	
Lexington	>4	
Melrose	3-4	
Natick	2.5	0.5 is Data Entry
Needham	>4	
Sharon	2	
Walpole	2	
Winchester	2	
Shrewsbury	3	

B. There is a need for confidential work space for all members of the Human Resources Department.

C. There is a need for continued cross-training and analysis of workload within the Human Resources Department.

- 4.1 The Director should analyze workload and consider delegating additional duties to Human Resources staff members.
- 4.2 The Human Resources Department should assume responsibility for generating all assignment letters as well as collecting and managing Lane Change process and data.
- 4.3 Human Resources staff should not serve as a Central Office receptionist. Central Office would benefit from a full-time Welcome Center administrative assistant to welcome and assist all visitors to Central Office. This staff member should also be cross-trained to assist with Student Registration during busy times.
- 4.4 The District should work toward identifying confidential office space for all members of the Human Resources department.

5. Findings: Technology, Data Analysis, and Reporting

The Shrewsbury Central Office includes a Director of Technology who oversees technology (operational and educational) for the District. The Technology Office is supported by Data, Network, and Audio/Visual specialists, as well as IT Support Technicians. Central Office operations across several departments require additional support with data collection, analysis, and reporting. Comparable districts employ a wide variety of staff to address data analysis and reporting needs. Many districts employ data specialists, while some employ data managers for various needs, including, for example, educational data, budget analysis, student information data, and general database management. Comparable districts maintain these positions within multiple departments in the district to address the specific needs of each.

Findings:

- A. Central Office operations across several departments require additional support with data collection, analysis, and reporting.
- B. The Shrewsbury Central Office Technology team work very hard to meet the diverse needs for data collection, analysis and reporting however, the workload is varied and is more than can be accomplished by current team members.
- C. There is an opportunity and need (across departments) to shift some manual and basic spreadsheet strategies for data management to software solutions. While shifts have been made in some areas, it will be important to continue to work toward efficiency and workload balance.

- 5.1. Move the Technology Department to become a direct report to the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations to coordinate services across district departments. The Director of Technology should be a dotted line report to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment to coordinate educational technology needs.
- 5.2. Central Office administrators should review the data needs within each department, analyze the tasks that are being accomplished efficiently, and identify areas for updating strategies. This may help free up time of current staff for enhanced data analysis.
- 5.3. Add staff with data analysis expertise in order to meet the needs of the district. Recommendations have been made (Recommendation 2.3 and 3.3) for additional staff in this area.
- 5.4. Access to data is extremely important, as is the integrity of the data. Review how data is collected, stored, and analyzed within each department, and make any necessary adjustments to enhance security of data and access to data. In particular, be aware of

any instances where data is collected and kept by an individual. Be able to answer the question "what happens if an individual is out of the office and access and/or action is needed relative to any type of data?"

6. Findings: District Registrar

As the District prepares to hire a new Registrar due to the departure of an 18-year veteran in the position, there is an opportunity to address some of the issues related to the workload of the position. The District has had increased enrollment over the years and the requirements for State reporting have also increased. Similar to other positions noted in this report, there are tasks being done manually that could be made more efficient solely through the use of technology. During busy times, it has been noted that delays may occur in having students enter school when registering during the school year. There is a need to increase support for this important District function. Registration is one of the first interactions a family has with the school district, and it is extremely important for families to feel welcome. It is apparent that the administration and staff in Shrewsbury place a high priority on welcoming families and providing adequate support.

Findings:

- A. The Registrar position will need to be filled for FY20, and this creates an opportunity to address department needs.
- B. A shift to reliance on available technology is necessary for efficiency and effectiveness.
- C. Further support is necessary to meet the demands of registration, year-round, and required State reporting.

- 6.1 Hire a new full-time Registrar and provide robust professional development on technological systems in place in the district. (i.e., PowerSchool).
- 6.2 Implement Recommendation 4.3 to provide cross-training and support during busy registration periods.
- 6.3 Consider establishing "registration hours" similar to some comparable districts to facilitate workflow and provide information to schools quickly. This will provide time within the work day to process paperwork and attend to State reporting requirements. For example, registration hours could include mornings on M-F and afternoons on Tu/Th. During non-registration hours, the Welcome Center Administrative Assistant recommended in 4.3 could provide support to families who may "walk in".

7. Findings: Central Office Space Needs

As indicated earlier in this report, the District has important needs for space to allow for confidential tasks and meetings. In addition, communication, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Central Office administrative team is somewhat compromised due to the location of the Student Services office outside of Town Hall, while the remaining departments are housed together at Town Hall.

Findings:

- A. Shrewsbury Central office administration is fragmented due to the Student Services department being housed outside of Town Hall.
- B. There is a lack of confidentiality for some Human Resource functions due to the location of the Human Resource Assistants desks.

Recommendations:

7.1 Continue to pursue options to relocate the Student Services department to Town Hall and to provide confidential work spaces for Human Resources staff.

8. Findings: Payroll

The staff who work on payroll consistently incur overtime (2-3 hours), and even more on payroll weeks (5-6 hours). When asked about ways to reduce overtime, staff identified placing payroll online as an enormous potential time saver. They also believe that training on the upgraded MUNIS system may also result in time savings. They cited the stipend payment as being very time consuming and would recommend processing payments on a phased basis. These also require individual data entry for every stipend, and they recommended batch processing instead. A number of other issues were raised during interviews to reduce overtime or improve efficiency of the payroll staff:

- 1. The current payroll calendar leaves little time to research and resolve issues, often leading to the need for overtime;
- 2. The issue of mandating direct deposit was mentioned; however, that may require introducing the issue during collective bargaining for inclusion in any of the District's existing contracts;
- 3. The need for a Policies and Procedures Manual was identified with clear expectations for submitting information to payroll; and
- 4. Better information regarding leaves of absence with timely and complete information shared with payroll.

One important note about the relationship between Human Resources and Payroll/Business Office staff. The support staff in these two critical areas have instituted an informal monthly meeting, which they have called COAST (Central Office Administrative Support Team), where issues and problems are discussed and solutions developed between and among these two areas. The agenda is developed by one of the members of this group, and notes are kept. This working group has evolved "organically" and was not mandated or structured by anyone other than the participants, all of whom should be commended for their work to increase efficiency and communications within the Central Office.

Findings:

- A. The payroll calendar/schedule leaves little time to resolve payroll issues and incurs significant overtime as a result.
- B. The payroll calendar/schedule leaves little time to resolve payroll issues and incurs significant overtime as a result.
- C. Leaves of absence that require significant research for information often result in the need for overtime.
- D. Payment of stipends requires individual data entry and significant time commitment to manage.
- E. Staff lack time to engage in MUNIS upgrade training.

- 8.1 Explore the possibility of changing the payroll calendar/schedule with Town Accountant and Town Treasurer, who are responsible for municipal payroll, to see if there may be mutual interest in such a change.
- 8.2 Develop a system to share information between Human Resources, Business Office, and Town Treasurer's Office for benefits coordination.
- 8.3 Automate and phase the stipend payment process.
- 8.4 Dedicate specific times for staff availability by posting "office hours" so that staff can access training and professional development.
- 8.5 Develop a Payroll Policies and Procedures Manual that has clear instructions and expectations for the administration of payroll.
- 8.6 Cross train others in the administration of payroll to ensure that payroll staff can be covered when they are absent. (This is currently done through the good graces of a staff member in Business Office who came from Payroll and is familiar with its operations.)
- 8.7 Explore mechanisms to automate and become more efficient with bi-weekly payroll processing to include a further assessment of the MUNIS add-on payroll module, ExecuTime.

9. Findings: A/P, A/R, Grants and Purchasing

There appears to be some confusion as to whom questions about finance should be addressed other than to the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations. There is a sense that the purchase order process is "archaic," and that it takes too long for purchase orders to be processed. The process for reimbursements is also viewed as slow and discouraging to staff who submit for reimbursement. Business Office staff would like to be able to report out financial data/budget reports the way that the School Committee and Town Meeting would like to see the data. However, current response to requests for financial data require extensive manual input and preparation, resulting in some duplication ("green sheets" and budget reports). Staff also expressed concern that timelines for submission of data to the Business Office or requests for additional data or information are often delayed creating processing problems across the office.

Findings:

- A. District lacks clarity with regard to roles and responsibilities of various staff in the Business Office.
- B. Many processes are still manual and time consuming.
- C. Compliance with timelines/data gathering is inconsistent.

Recommendations:

- 9.1 Clarify roles and responsibilities of staff in the Business Office and reorganize or restructure positions. Develop new organizational chart with areas of responsibility detailed.
- 9.2 Explore with Town Accountant the possibility of moving to an automated system with electronic purchase order workflow.
- 9.3 Set up User Roles for all Budget Managers, and provide training on how to do budget inquiries, print reports, download past year data in Excel, etc.
- 9.4 Establish and promote deadlines for submittal and receipt of information to ensure timely processing of payments by meeting necessary deadlines.

The current staffing in the Business Office is barely adequate to maintain the status quo for business operations, as evidenced by the amount of overtime staff need to do their jobs. However, the Office also needs to move ahead on a number of fronts, especially the automation of systems and the training of end users to access financial data themselves and not have to await the Business Office accessing that data for them. In addition, there are

several recommendations herein that will require working closely with the Town Accountant and the Town Treasurer in order to make any progress toward improving staff efficiency and service to the district. The Business Office currently has a vacant position (District Courier) and should revisit the need to fill that position as it was a full time, year-round position that could be restructured to a half time position. This creates an opportunity to reallocate some funds that could be used to address areas of improvement that cannot be done by existing staff. This, in combination with some restructuring and possible reorganization, might give the Business Office the range of staffing needed to address many of the areas that need improvement.

10. Findings: Transportation

There are a number of concerns about the current management of both regular day transportation and Special Education transportation with respect to who is responsible for addressing concerns and the absence of follow-through that results from this lack of clarity as to responsibility. Schools find it difficult to get timely information from the Transportation Office. There is a lack of efficient and effective follow-through on transportation issues that impacts principals, team chairs, and parents, who must invest additional time seeking information or answers. In many instances, it is not clear where the responsibility for addressing an issue resides, whether at the vendor level or at the transportation staff level, and thus follow through on issues is erratic, at best. Transportation complaints normally occur via telephone or email, but there is no data logged about the type of service complaint, bus number, or even the source of the complaint, nor is there any documentation of complaint resolutions.

Findings:

- A. Combining transportation with safety and security in one position results in uneven attention to one area or the other, as both need dedicated, consistent time and attention.
- B. There is significant downtime during vacation periods and summer vacation when there are reduced transportation needs, as well as reduced safety and security issues when students are not in school.
- C. The District does not have clear lines of responsibility for managing transportation.
- D. The District does not record transportation issues, complaints, and their resolution in a system or database. Doing so would provide the ability to track and assess trends on the whole and with specific bus routes, print reports, and track outstanding issues.

- 10.1 Re-evaluate the staffing structure that supports these functions with goal of improving communications and services.
- 10.2 Consider assigning/contracting for these responsibilities as school year only (i.e., when students are in school).
- 10.3 Better define District responsibilities for managing transportation and share that information with District staff and parents.
- 10.4 Research and implement a simple tracking system or leverage technology to track transportation issues/complaints/resolutions.

11. Finding: Additional Capacity in the Business Office in the form of a new middle-management position

As evidenced by the above information in all three areas — payroll, accounting, and transportation - there are a number of findings and recommendations that will require considerable time and attention to resolutions that involve either other school departments, outside vendors, or other departments within the Town. Because of the "horizontal" structure of the Business Office (all staff reporting directly to the Assistant Superintendent), all of this work to improve the efficiency and service in the Business Office will rest solely on the Assistant Superintendent. The lack of middle management in the Business Office also contributes to the perception that any and all issues or problems with any services of the Business Office must be directed to the Assistant Superintendent, which staff are hesitant to do on a regular basis.

The project team believes that it is this lack of "verticality" (i.e., a reasonable chain of command that allows problems or concerns to be addressed by "middle management," as opposed to either line staff or the Assistant Superintendent) that may be the root cause for the apparent confusion about who is responsible for what, which staff feel when attempting to bring issues to the Business Office. The Business Office needs to have a position between staff and the Assistant Superintendent to drive the needed initiatives for improvement, as well as to provide an interim level of authority to make decisions, direct or redirect issues to appropriate staff, and provide relief for the Assistant Superintendent, so that he can engage in addressing the need to enhance the District's financial reporting and provide the financial and operational leadership for the schools in all District, town and state level matters.

Finding:

A. There is the need for the creation of a new middle-management position that can support the efforts of the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

Recommendation:

11.1 The District should implement a new middle-management position in the Business Office.

12. Finding: Additional Capacity at the District Leadership Level in the form of an Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Community Partnerships and Well-Being

The Superintendent of Schools has been clear in the need for additional assistance at the District leadership level in order to properly implement and support the District's 2018-2022 Strategic Priorities and Goals, and the 2018-2020 District Goals, particularly as they relate to a new Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-Being. The project team's findings indicate that the team concurs with this assessment of the need for an additional Assistant Superintendent to facilitate oversight of important District strategic goals and initiatives. This additional administrative position should be implemented with responsibilities and direct reports determined after a review of all Central Office administrator's responsibilities. This position should assume some of the current direct reports to the Superintendent.

The District's strategic priority of creating robust partnerships with the community to advance experiential learning and career awareness is aligned with the Massachusetts Department's strategic focus on "Providing high quality career pathways for our high school students." Further, a focus on Social-Emotional Learning in schools has become an important initiative locally and nationally.

Locally, Shrewsbury has been an active participant in the Rennie Center's Excellence through Social Emotional Learning Network (https://www.renniecenter.org/exSELnet). At the state level, social-emotional learning is a core component of one of the Massachusetts Department of Education's five strategic priorities: "Support 2 social-emotional learning, health, and safety". Further information is available on the MA Department of Education website focused on Social and Emotional Learning http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/SEL/.

Nationally, the 2018 Aspen Institute's National Commission on Social, Emotional and Academic Development report, <u>From a Nation At Risk to a Nation of Hope</u>, cites six recommendations that seek to accelerate efforts in states and local communities by strengthening six broad categories that impact student outcomes. Recommendation #5 (V.), in particular, supports the proposed Colonial Connections MOU and the improved district focus and support for this work:

"V. Align resources and leverage partners in the community to address the whole child: Build partnerships between schools, families, and community organizations to support healthy learning and development in and out of school. Blend and braid resources to achieve this goal." (http://nationathope.org/)

The project team strongly supports the creation of such a position for a number of reasons. The team agrees, based upon interviews and analysis, that the District needs an additional Assistant Superintendent to assist with oversight of important district strategic goals, with a focus on community partnerships, social-emotional learning, resource development, and the general well-being of students and staff. While this position was proposed previously and was not funded in the current budget, it certainly appears that the Colonial Connections MOU will

provide the impetus and significant funding for this new position, which, ultimately, is truly focused on student outcomes.

As regards making an investment in district-level administrative leadership, the Superintendent has noted that in the most recent state statistics on per pupil expenditures, Shrewsbury Public Schools ranks near the bottom of districts (7.4%) in the state for investing in administration. Likewise, there has not been a central office position added in the district since 2000, while the student population and staff have grown dramatically, along with a significant increase in administrative responsibilities for the current Central Office leadership team.

Finding:

A. There is the need for an Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-Being to facilitate oversight of important district strategic goals and initiatives.

Recommendation:

12.1 The district should implement the new Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-Being leadership position.

Conclusion

It should be noted that all the District staff who were interviewed could not have been more open or constructive in their assessment of their own position and that of the Central Office as a whole. They all recognize the need for continual improvement and have made excellent recommendations as to what would be needed to become a high performing Central Office. They are committed to be the best that they can be and work hard to make sure the Central Office provides the best service that it can, often committing to working overtime to ensure they meet their timelines. They are well aware of what needs improvements and, in many cases, how to achieve that improvement, but they lack the resources, time, and/or training to reach their goal. With a thoughtful and creative restructuring and reorganization, it may be possible to give the Central Office staff that which they presently lack and a realistic chance to dramatically improve their service to the district.

Appendices

Appendix A: Individuals Interviewed for Shrewsbury Central Office Organizational Study

Name Office
Diane Abbott Registrar

Denise Bairos Special Education Office
Meg Bartlett Special Education Office
Todd Bazydlo High School Principal
Wendy Bell Walter J. Paton School

Meg Belsito Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

Michelle Biscotti Superintendent's Office Erin Canzano School Committee Member

Amy Clouter Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Pat Collins Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations

Kim Fitzpatrick Business Office
Dotty Flynn Business Office
Christine Fowler Business Office

Katie Fox Human Resources Office
Sandra Fryc School Committee Member
Kathy Gaudette Special Education Office

Christian Girardi Beal Early Childhood Center Principal

Kristin Herrick Special Education Office
Ann Jones Oak Middle School Principal
Kathleen Keohan Superintendent's Office
Michelle Liberty Special Education Office

Jane Lizotte Sherwood Middle School Principal Barb Malone Director of Human Resources

Donna Manzoli Administrative Assistant – Assistant Superintendent for CIA Office

Christine Mattero Human Resources Office Bryan Maybie Spring Street School

Beth McCollum Administrative Assistant – Superintendent's Office

Lisa McCubrey Floral Street School Principal
B. Dale McGee School Committee Member
Tiffany Ostrander Calvin Coolidge School Principal
Jason Palitsch School Committee Member
Robert Parry-Cruwys Special Education Office

Sue Rapp Business Office Sherry Robbins Registrar Office

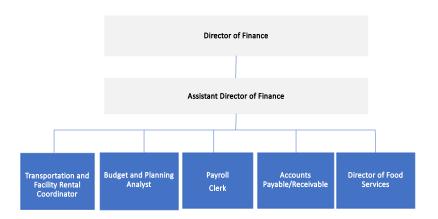
Lisa Robinson Parker Road Preschool Principal

Steve Rocco Business Office

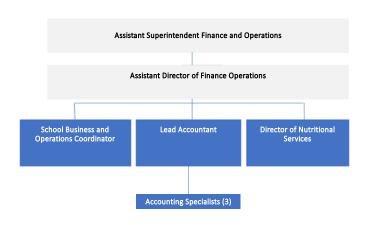
Daryl Rynning Special Education Office
Joseph Sawyer Superintendent of Schools
Anne Marie Tyler Special Education Office
Jon Wensky School Committee Member

Appendix B – 3 Districts: Business Office Organizational Charts

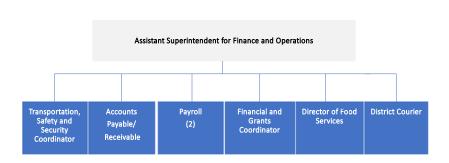
Natick Public Schools Business Office Organizational Chart



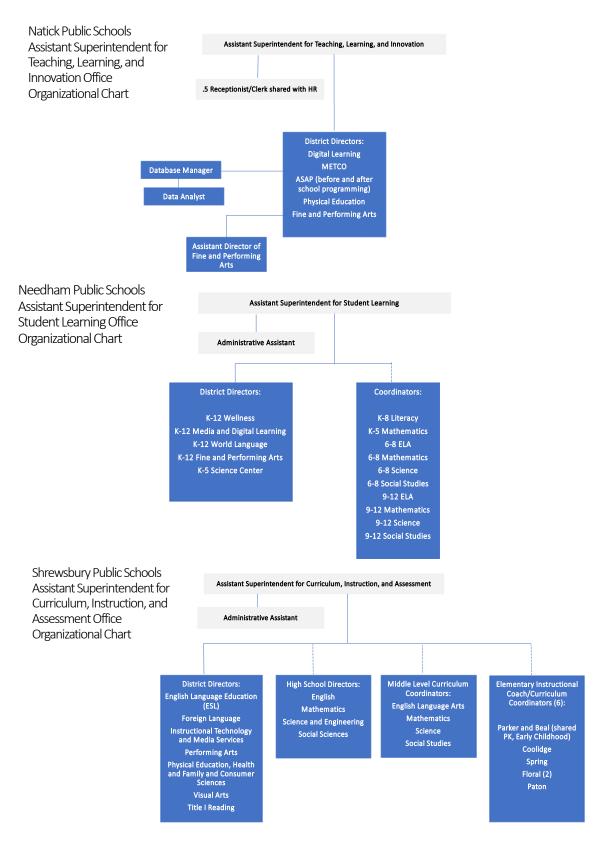
Needham Public Schools Business Office Organizational Chart



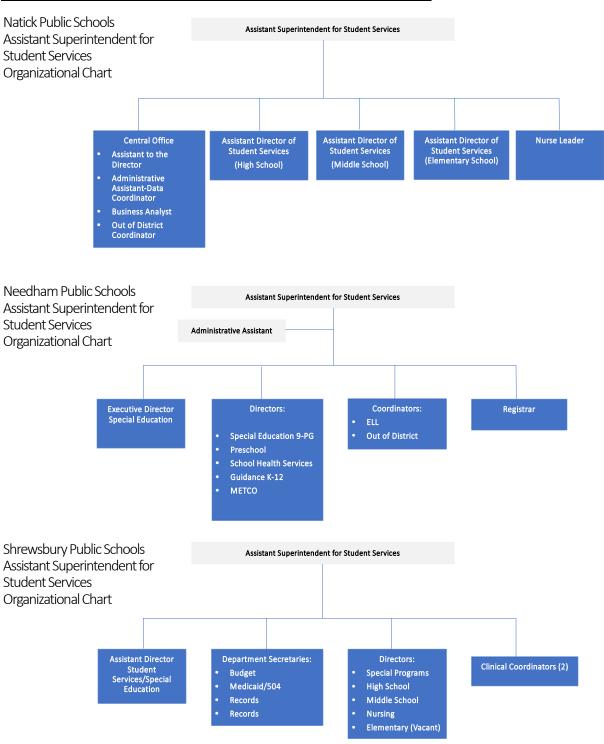
Shrewsbury Public Schools Business Office Organizational Chart



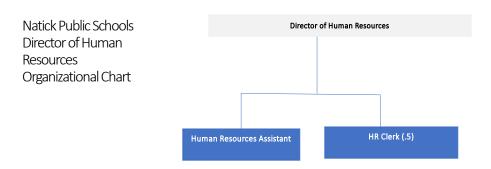
Appendix C - 3 Districts - CIA/Teaching and Learning/Student Learning

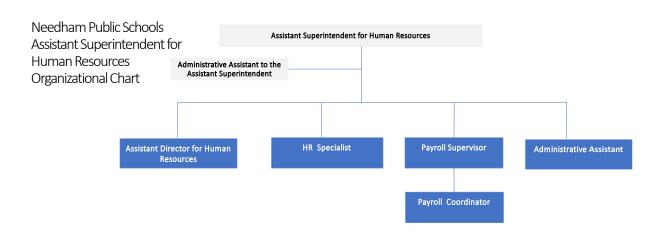


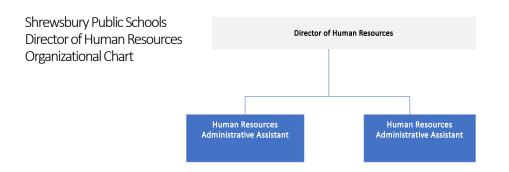
Appendix D – 3 Districts – Student Services Organizational Charts



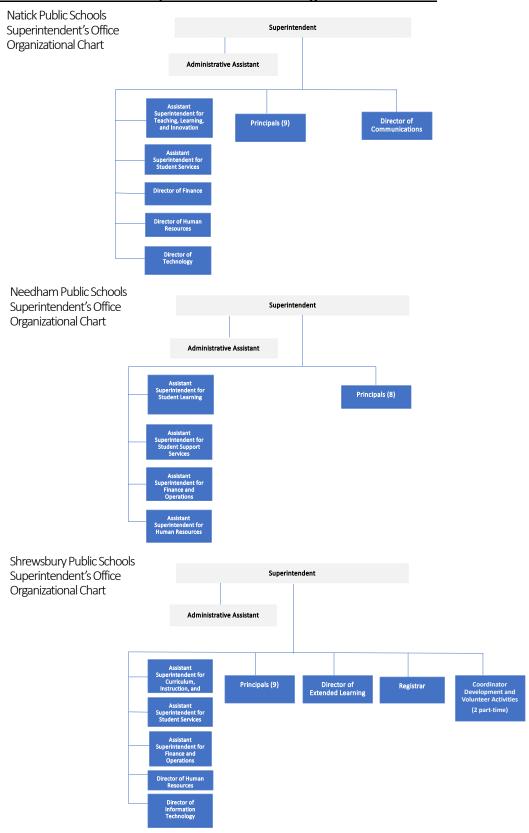
Appendix E – 3 Districts – Human Resources Organizational Charts



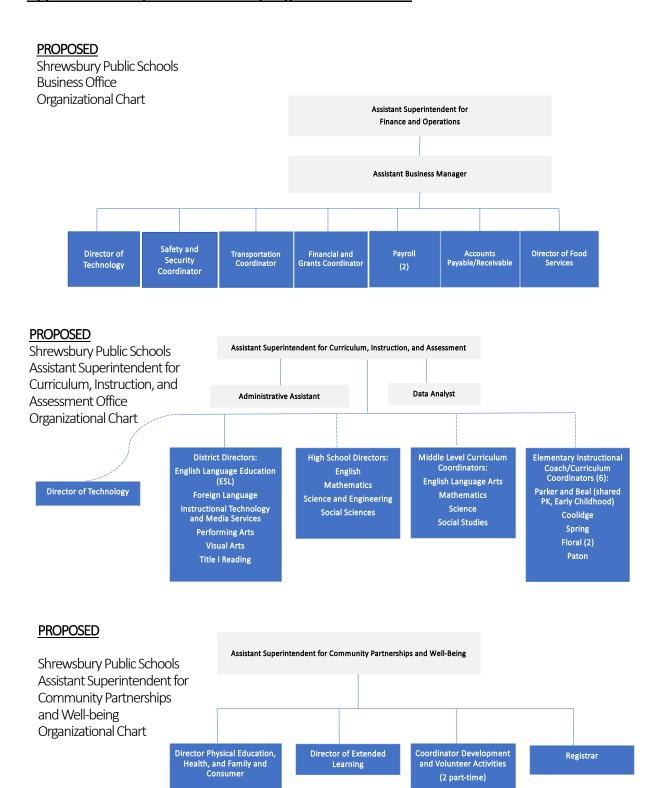


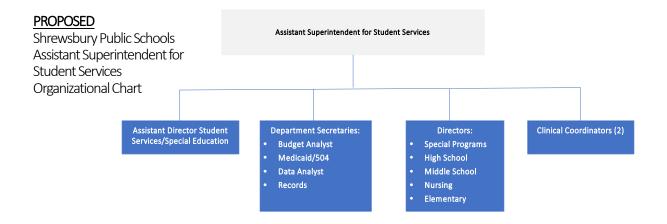


Appendix F - 3 Districts - Superintendent Office Organizational Charts



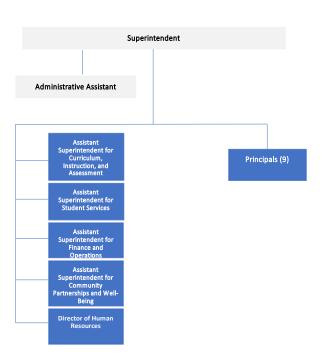
Appendix G - Proposed Shrewsbury Organizational Charts





PROPOSED

Shrewsbury Public Schools Superintendent's Office Organizational Chart



Appendix H: Central Office Online Organization Survey

SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS CENTRAL OFFICE ORGANIZATION SURVEY

Edward J. Collins , Jr. Center for Public Management UMASS BOSTON MICROSOFT

1. Please select all roles that report directly to the Superintendent of Schools. List any roles not included in the list below in the "other" space provided.

11 responses

District Role Reporting to Superintendent	# of Districts
	Reporting
Assistant Superintendent (multiple responsibilities)	7
Assistant Superintendent/Director Business and Finance	11
Assistant Superintendent/Director Student Services	8
Assistant Superintendent/Director Special Education	3
Assistant Superintendent/Director Teaching and Learning	5
(Curriculum/Instruction)	
Assistant Superintendent/Director Human Resources	8
Director of Early Childhood	0
Director of Technology	4
Administrative Assistant	10
Other: 8 Principals, METCO Director	1
Other: Director of Strategic Innovations, Principals	1
Other: Director of Digital Learning	1
Other: Director of Operations	1
Other: Principals	1
Other: Director of Facilities	1
Other: 9 Principals	1

2. Does your district have a Parent Information Center? If yes, who manages the Center and to whom do they report?

No
No.
We have a registrar who reports to the Business Manager
We have a Student Information Office. The manager reports to the Director of Technology.
no

3. If your district does not have a Parent Information Center, who (indicate title) is responsible for student registration and to whom do they report?

10 responses

We have a PreK-12 registrar who reports to the assistant superintendent.

IT Department and Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning

We have an office/department devoted to student registration overseen by the Assistant superintendent for Finance and Operations.

Student Information Office Manager

Data and Information Specialist reports to the Assistant Superintendent of C&I

Registrar/Data Assistant

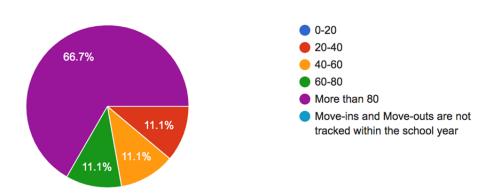
multiple people as part of the multiple tasks they have

Central Registrar (also serves as receptionist at main office) who reports to the Director of Business & Finance

Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent (reports directly to the Superintendent)

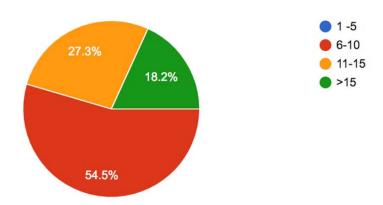
Summer at CO, PT admin asst, online, at schools. Reports to Asst Supt T&L

4. Typically, how many new students are registered within a school year (not including PK and Kindergarten)?

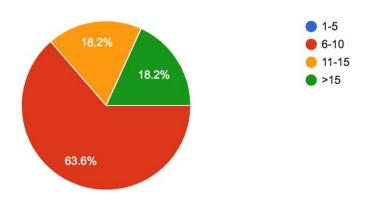


5. How many direct reports does the Assistant Superintendent (or Director) for Teaching and Learning/Curriculum and Instruction supervise?

11 responses

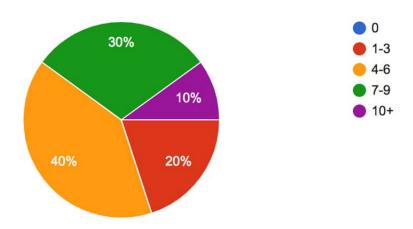


6. How many staff members are evaluated by the Assistant Superintendent (or Director) for Teaching and Learning/Curriculum and Instruction (as primary or secondary evaluator)?



7. How many different grants does the Teaching and Learning/Curriculum and Instruction department manage?

10 responses



8. Does the Business/Finance office play a role in management and/or submission of Grants? If so, please list staff members (by job title) involved and areas of responsibility.

11 responses

Director of Operations and Finance and payroll/grants manager.

Manages financial monitoring, oversees purchase orders and hiring process associated with grants.

Yes. The entire staff works on various aspects of grants.

One Special Revenue Funds Manager

Business Manager, coordinates payroll activity if connected to a grant.

Yes, Accounts Receivables/Grants Specialist

Yes. Ass't Superintendent for Finance and Operations, bookkeepers, and Director of Community Education, Communication, and Planning

yes - fiscal and accounting support

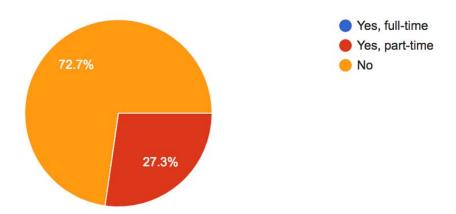
Yes, Director of Business & Finance and Assistant Business Administrator. These individuals handle all of the financial reporting and requesting of funds associated with the grants received (all non-programmatic elements of the grants).

The Business Office does not play a role in submission or management of grants

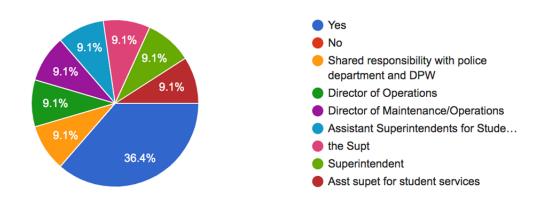
bookkeeper, planning and budget analyst

9. Is there a full or part time grant writer in your district?

11 responses

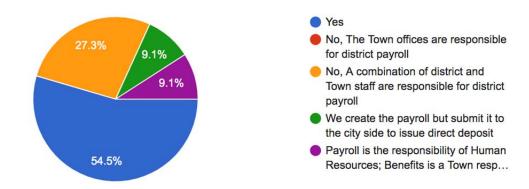


10. Does the district Business/Finance department manage Safety and Security? If, no, please indicate who is responsible (by job title) and to whom they report (by job title) in the "other" option below.



11. Is the district Business/Finance department responsible for district payroll?

11 responses



12. Please list all Central Office staff who manage or support payroll operations by their job title.

Payroll coordinator
Financial Assistant, Payroll Assistant, Asst. to the Director for Personnel, Personnel Assistant
School Accountant; Payroll Coordinator; Finance Office Administrative support staff
Assistant Director of Finance, Payroll Specialist, Financial Analyst
Business Manager, Financial Analyst, Business Office Clerk, 2 payroll confidential secretaries
Payroll Specialist
Payroll Supervisor and Payroll Assistant
payroll clerk - one person - we are a 5000 student district with over 550 staff
Director of Business & Finance, Assistant Business Administrator and Payroll Coordinator
Payroll Clerk Human Resources Secretary
planning and budget analyst, payroll bookkeeper, HR admin asst, Director of HR, Dir of Finance

13. Please list all Central Office staff who manage or support staff benefits by their job title.

11 responses

Personnel director

Same as above

Director of Human Resources; Benefits Specialist; Benefits and Compensation Manager; Human Resource Coordinator

HR Specialist

0.5 FTE Human Resource Coordinator and 2 payroll confidential secretaries

Human Resources Specialist

Assistant Director of Human Resources assists school staff and is contact with Town staff

two - human resources director and the administrative assistant for HR

Director of Personnel & Professional Learning and the HR Administrative Assistants (2)

Payroll Clerk

Human Resources Secretary

Town side

14. Please list Central Office staff responsible for management of instructional technology for the district by job title(s).

11 responses

Network administrator

none. The CIO is a shared position with the city -60% city/ 40% schools. He reports to the CFO of the city and the Superintendent.

Director of Instructional Technology

Director of Digital Learning, Technology Coordinator

Asst. Superintendent for Learning, Director of Operations, Director of Technology, Director of Technology Integration

Director of Curriculum and Instruction and Technology Supervisor

Administrator of Information Technology Services

no one - the Assistant Supt for curriculum and the Tech Director share it

Director of Information, Communication and Technology Services

Director of Digital Learning

Dir Tech, deployment specialist, data manager curric and assess systems, help desk manager, Technician!, Technician 2

15. Please list Central Office staff responsible for administrative/operational technology for the district by job title(s).

11 responses

assistant superintendent

none. Building based technician report to the CIO.

Chief Information Officer, shared with the town, who is supported by a staff of about 15 people with various titles staff housed in the High School will be moving to CO next year - District Systems Administrator, District Network Administrator, Technical Support Specialists (3), System and Network Associates (2)

Director of Operations, Director of Technology

Director of Curriculum and Instruction and Technology Supervisor

Assistant to the Administrator of Information Technology Services

director of tech

Director of Information, Communication and Technology Services

Director of Digital Learning

Dir Tech, network manager, network engineer, help desk manager

16. Is there a Central Office administrator or staff member responsible for data reporting and analysis? If "yes", please list the title of the person responsible. If "no" please indicate "no" in the space provided.

Data clerk
yes Data Specialist
Yes. Educational Administration Applications Specialist
Database Administrator, Assistant Database Administrators (2)
Student Information Office Manager
Data and Information Specialist
Data Manager
no - tech staff
Yes, Student Database Administrator
Software Application Support Specialist
manager of data, quality and control; data, budget and control analyst,

17. Please list all Central Office staff, by title, who are responsible for data reporting and data analysis.

11 responses

N/A
same as above

We have two other data specialists

Database Administrator, HR Specialist

Student Information Office Manager and 2 support staff

Data and Information Specialist

Data Manager, Registrar/Data Assistant
none

Student Database Administrator

Software Application Support Specialist

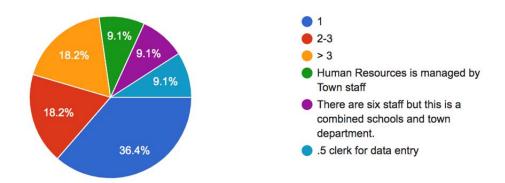
manager of data, quality and control; data, budget and control analyst,

18. Please list the title of the Central Office administrator responsible for Human Resources.

Director of Human Resources
Personnel Director
Director for Finance and Administrative Affairs (aka Business Manager)
0.5 FTE Director of Human Resources (split position with the Town)
Director of Business Operations and Human Resources along with the Human Resources Specialist
Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
HR Director
Director of Personnel & Professional Learning
Human Resources Coordinator
Director of HR

19. Aside from the Central Office administrator, how many staff members are in the Human Resources department?

11 responses

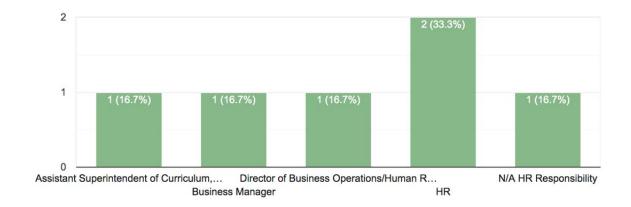


20. Please indicate areas of data gathering and input that are the responsibility of the Human Resources department. Please check all that apply.

Area of Data Collection by Human Resources Department	# of Districts
	Reporting
Employee personal information (initial entry and changes)	10
Employee work assignment	9
Staff attendance	7
DESE performance evaluation reports	5
EPIMS	6
EEO reports	6
Lane change information	9
Professional Development information	4
Substitute teacher information	10
Teacher appointment letters	10
Administrator appointment letters	9
Other: Searches, benefits, transitions, health	1
Other: Collective bargaining prep, administrative searches	1

21. Who manages Lane Changes if not included as an HR responsibility?
Please list the title of person responsible.

6 responses

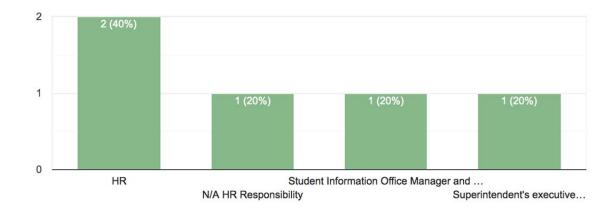


22. Who manages record keeping associated with Professional Development if not included as an HR responsibility? List all staff and/or administrators responsible by title.

HR
Administrative assistant to assistant superintendent
Secretary to the Asst. Superintendent for Teaching and Learning
Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning
Curriculum and Instruction Office, Secretary
Assistant Superintendent of C&I Director of C&I Human Resources Specialist
assistant supt and her administrative assistant
Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction
Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction and Grants
Asst Superintendent for T & L, within Teachpoint

23. Who generates teacher/administrator appointment letters if not included as an HR responsibility? List staff responsible by title.

5 responses



24. Please list the types of data analysis provided by the Human Resources department for use by district staff and administrators (please record "none" if this is not a function of your Human Resources department).

None
attendance, seniority, leaves, benefits, sick leave and personal day accruals
Staff attendance data; all salary and benefit data; evaluation completion data; sick leave bank data; union contract data.
HR works with the Data team for all DESE reporting.
There is some data provided but mostly not from this office
Staff attendance, staffing levels and assignments (FTE).
attendance reports, (new hires, terminations spreadsheets), salary surveys for negotiations

Shrewsbury Public Schools – Central Office Organizational Study
Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management