



**School Committee
Meeting Book**

**March 29, 2023
6:30 pm**

**Town Hall -100 Maple Avenue
Selectmen's Meeting Room**



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

AGENDA

**March 29, 2023 6:30pm
Town Hall—Selectmen's Meeting Room
100 Maple Avenue**

Items

Suggested time allotments

- | | | |
|-------|--|--|
| I. | Public Participation | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">6:30 – 6:35</div> |
| II. | Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports | |
| III. | Superintendent's Report | |
| IV. | Time Scheduled Appointments: | |
| | A. Student Recognition: SHS Girls Ice Hockey State Champions | 6:35 – 6:45 |
| | B. State of the District: Report | 6:45 – 7:10 |
| | C. Draft of Strategic Plan for 2023-2027: Report | 7:10 – 7:45 |
| | D. Mental Health and Clinical Services Resources: Report | 7:45 – 8:10 |
| | E. School Nursing: Report | 8:10 – 8:30 |
| V. | Curriculum | |
| VI. | Policy | |
| VII. | Finance & Operations | |
| | A. Public hearing on FY24 Budget | 8:30 – 8:40 |
| | B. Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Update | 8:40 – 8:50 |
| VIII. | Old Business | |
| IX. | New Business | |
| X. | Approval of Minutes | 8:50 – 8:55 |
| XI. | Executive Session | 8:55 – 9:15 |
| | A. For the purpose of addressing G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) "[t]o comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements" ("Purpose 7"), Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §§ 22(f), (g) – for the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes. | |



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

- B. For the purpose of addressing G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(3) “to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect of the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares” (“Purpose 3”) - the Shrewsbury Education Association Units A and/or B, the Shrewsbury Paraprofessional Association, and/or the Cafeteria Workers Association
- C. For the purpose of addressing G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(2) “to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel” – non-union administrators. (“Purpose 2”)

XII. Adjournment

9:15

Next regular meeting: April 12, 2023



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

ITEM NO: I Public Participation

MEETING DATE: **03/29/23**

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee hear thoughts and ideas from the public regarding the operations and the programs of the school system?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Copies of the policy and procedure for Public Participation are available to the public at each School Committee meeting.

ITEM NO: II. Chairperson's Report/Members' Reports

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee hear a report from the Chairperson of the School Committee and other members of the School Committee who may wish to comment on school affairs?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

This agenda item provides an opportunity for the Chairperson and members of the Shrewsbury School Committee to comment on school affairs that are of interest to the community.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

School Committee Members
Ms. Lynsey Heffernan, Chairperson
Mr. Jason Palitsch, Vice Chairperson
Mr. Jon Wensky, Secretary
Ms. Erin Boucher, Committee Member
Ms Sandra Fryc, Committee Member

ITEM NO: III. Superintendent's Report

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee hear a report from Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

This agenda item allows the Superintendent of the Shrewsbury Public Schools to comment informally on the programs and activities of the school system.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

ACTION RECOMMENDED FOR ITEMS I, II, & III:

That the School Committee accept the report and take such action as it deems in the best interest of the school system.



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

ITEM NO: **IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:** MEETING DATE: **03/29/23**
A. Student Recognition: SHS Girls Ice Hockey State Champions

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Shrewsbury High School (SHS) Girls Ice Hockey Team capped off an outstanding season (21-2-2) by defeating St. Mary's of Lynn 4-1 to become the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) Division 1 State Champions on Sunday, March 19, at the TD Garden in Boston. Mr. Bazydlo, who will present remarks himself and on behalf of Athletic Director Jason Costa (who was previously committed to emcee the state athletic directors' association event at their annual conference), will be in attendance along with members of the team and coaching staff. A complete roster with the names of players, captains, coaches, managers, and the athletic trainer is enclosed.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee recognize the SHS Girls Ice Hockey State Championship Team.

STAFF & GUESTS AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Mr. Bazydlo, Shrewsbury High School Principal
Head Coach Frank Panarelli
Assistant Coach Joe Joubert
Volunteer Assistant Coach Pam Panarelli
Please see the enclosed Girls Varsity Ice Hockey Roster



Shrewsbury Colonials Girls Varsity Ice Hockey Roster 2022-2023

1	Marisa Montoya	Junior	Goalie
2	Taylor Ryder*	Senior	Forward
3	Brianna Sawicki	Freshmen	Forward
4	Blaire Fay	Sophomore	Forward
5	Natalie MacCausland	Junior	Forward
6	Maddie Mrva*	Senior	Defense
7	Mia Ryder	Sophomore	Forward
8	Kealy Fay	Junior	Defense
9	Paige Umile	Junior	Forward
10	Katherine Vona*	Senior	Forward
11	Yasmine McKenzie	Sophomore	Defense
12	Lauren Albertson	Freshmen	Forward
13	Riley Manchester	Sophomore	Defense
14	Bridget McLaughlin	Junior	Defense
15	Audrey Scheffel	Freshmen	Forward
16	Jessie Kenney	Junior	Defense
17	Rachel Bunsick*	Senior	Forward
18	Sofia Gardula	Sophomore	Forward
19	Samantha Kelley	Freshmen	Forward
20	Hannah Army	Freshmen	Forward
21	Alivia Argentieri	Freshmen	Defense
22	Sadie Cusson	Junior	Forward
24	Emma Mania	Freshmen	Forward
30	Maggie McManus	Junior	Goalie

Head Coach: Frank Panarelli

Assistant Coach: Joe Joubert

Athletic Director: Jay Costa

Athletic Trainer: Walter Hildebrand

Manager: Paige Estaphan (Westborough High School)

*Captains





**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:
B. State of the District: Report

MEETING DATE: 03/29/23

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Dr. Sawyer will share his perspective regarding the current state of the Shrewsbury Public Schools. The report will be provided under separate cover in advance of the meeting.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee hear the report and take whatever steps it deems necessary in the interests of the Shrewsbury Public Schools.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

ITEM NO: IV. Time Scheduled Appointments: **MEETING DATE: 03/29/23**
C. Draft of Strategic Plan for 2023-2027: Report

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Shrewsbury Public Schools has partnered with the consulting firm Focused Schools to facilitate the process of creating an updated strategic plan for the district for the next five years. In December 2022 Focused Schools Managing Director Kerry Purcell provided an overview of the Strategic Planning work done so far. At the meeting, representatives from Focused Schools will provide an update on subsequent work done in the district and share a draft of the proposed 2023-2027 Strategic Priorities.

The draft plan will be provided under separate cover in advance of the meeting.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee hear the report and take such action as it deems in the best interest of the school system.

STAFF & GUESTS AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Amy B. Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment
Kerry Purcell, Focused Schools Managing Director
Ashley Santiago, School and District Improvement Manager, Focused Schools



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

ITEM NO: IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:

MEETING DATE: 03/29/23

D. Mental Health and Clinical Services Resources: Report

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Ms. Belsito, Ms. Millett, and Ms. Boisvert will provide an update regarding the mental and behavioral health of students at Shrewsbury Public Schools and be available to answer questions from the Committee. Their enclosed report includes information on mental health trends, the Shrewsbury Public Schools Clinical Department's staffing and the impact of additional positions added this year, professional development, and community partnerships.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee hear the report and take such action as it deems in the best interest of the school system.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Margaret M. Belsito, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services
Jamie Millett, Director of Counseling and Mental Health Services
Felicitie Boisvert, District Social Worker



**Special Education and Pupil Personnel Department
Mental and Behavioral Health Report
to the Shrewsbury School Committee
March 2023**

**Jamie Millett, MSW, LICSW
Director of Mental Health and Counseling**

**Felicite Boisvert, MSW, LICSW
District Social Worker**

*"You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."
-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

The Special Education and Pupil Personnel Department continues to prioritize equity and access for all students. This ongoing work has ensured that the Shrewsbury Public Schools continue to meet high expectations with efficient and thoughtful resources and programs to meet the needs of all learners. Student mental health is a shared responsibility and commitment for all members of the school community. Everyone is included in a community of care and compassion with equitable implementation of all efforts to promote and protect mental health.

Mental Health Trends

Child and adolescent mental health has been deemed a public health emergency by many experts following the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the [American Psychological Association \(APA\) 2023 Trends Report](#), feelings of sadness, hopelessness and thought and behaviors around suicide increased by 40% among young people. These preexisting trends were only exacerbated by the pandemic, particularly for females, LGBTQ+ youth, and minorities subgroups. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15-24 year olds ([National Alliance for Mental Illness](#)).

The latest from The Center for Disease Control (CDC)'s [Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#) (YRBS) yields similar data concerns. This survey is completed every two years and assesses a variety of

risky health-related behaviors including substance abuse, mental health, and suicide. While overall drug and alcohol use has shown a 10 year data trend decrease, mental health concerns are on the rise. Nationally, the percentage of students who seriously considered suicide has increased by 6% over the last 10 years. Statistically, out of the reported figure, 24% are students who identify as female and 37% are LGBTQ+ students made a suicide plan in the preceding year, and 3% of total students made a suicide plan that resulted in injury, poisoning or overdose.

The 2021 Regional Youth Health Survey (RYHS) data trends from [Shrewsbury High School](#) align with the national statistics. At the time of the survey, 38% of students reported feeling hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row which impacted their usual activities while 17% had seriously considered attempting suicide during the 12 months prior. Another 11% of Shrewsbury High School students had made a plan about how they would attempt suicide, 5% actually attempted suicide, and 2% made a suicide attempt which resulted in injury. All areas of data were elevated for male students versus their female counterparts and for students identifying as African American, Multi-Racial, Hispanic, or Other.

One thing is clear that schools can play a vital role in helping children and adolescents feel safe and secure by connecting students to vital services. CDC data supported that when youth feel connected to school they are less likely to experience poor mental health, sexual health risks, substance abuse, and violence.

Shrewsbury Public Schools Clinical Department

The Shrewsbury Public Schools Clinical Department consists of 35 staff members, including School Psychologists, School Adjustment Counselors, Clinical Coordinators, and the District Social Worker. For the 2022-23 school year, the district supported the addition of an adjustment counselor at Oak Middle School, two additional adjustment counselors at Shrewsbury High School, two additional District Clinical Coordinators, a District Social Worker, and a director level position. As a district we are proud to say that each building, Grades K-12, has a minimum of one school psychologist and one school adjustment counselor and that each class at SHS has their own dedicated adjustment counselor. The [American School Counselor Association \(ASCA\)](#) recommends that schools maintain a ratio of 250 students per counselor. Across the country, the average student to school counselor ratio is 464 per counselor. Shrewsbury Public Schools now fall under the recommended ASCA ratio except for SHS, which still falls below the national average.

Director of Counseling and Mental Health Services

Jamie Millett serves as the Director of Counseling and Mental Health Services for the district. This new role is responsible for the supervision of all clinical staff members and oversight of all mental health Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS). MTSS is a framework for enhancing

the implementation of evidence-based practices to achieve important outcomes for every student. The MTSS framework builds on a public health approach that focuses on organizing the efforts of adults within systems to be more effective. This includes coordination of data to inform practices, determine efficacy of interventions, and monitor progress at the student and district level. The Director aids in the design and implementation of policies and procedures that will support delivery and sustainability of inclusive practices, mental health services, and trauma sensitive training practices across all settings. This has included designing and implementing various professional development within the Clinical Department and across the district. The Director facilitates professional learning communities through full clinical department meetings and leveled clinical based team meetings on a monthly basis. This role is also responsible for coordination of referrals for Clinical Rounds, Clinical Coordinators, District Social Worker, and Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services. The Director is a member of the BRYT (Bridging Resilient Youth in Transition) supervision team. Additionally, the Director provides clinical consultation during crisis situations including the filing of 51As with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or determining appropriate level of care for students experiencing a mental health emergency.

District Social Worker

Felicite Boisvert serves as the District Social Worker. The role of the District Social Worker is to provide strategies, interventions, referrals, and wraparound support. Referrals include issues surrounding substance abuse, physical, emotional or sexual abuse, neglect, foster care, violence, pregnancy as well as healthcare, legal services, food, clothing, and housing needs. The District Social Worker collaborates with building administration, school counselors, school adjustment counselors, psychologists, nurses, and Clinical Coordinators as well as with community partners, to help support students and families. Through March 17, 2023, the District Social Worker has received 52 referrals: 22 (grades PK-4), 10 (grades 5-8), and 20 (grades 9-12).

The District Social Worker also serves as the McKinney Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act point of contact for the district. McKinney Vento is a program that works to ensure enrollment, attendance and the opportunity to succeed in school for homeless children and youth. This program collaborates with other state agencies and community providers to support homeless families and their students.

As the foster care point of contact, the District Social Worker is responsible for attending Best Interest Determination meetings with the Department of Children and Families for students in the foster care system, along with collaborating on transportation needs as they arise.

The District Social Worker also attends the Human Services Leadership Team Meeting to collaborate with other Shrewsbury town departments, as well as to build relationships with other area community agencies such as:

1. St Anne's Food Pantry helps SPS families obtain food and also provides gift cards, clothes, toys and games.
2. Andy's Attic is utilized for students who find themselves in need of clothes. Often this need has arisen when a family experiences homelessness, financial hardships, or when kids have been placed in foster care.
3. Department of Transitional Assistance program including SNAP food benefits, emergency shelter placements, MassHealth, and Social Security.
4. Connecting Shrewsbury residents with legal aid is an area of need. The District Social Worker has made referrals to many different legal aid agencies to help with issues from domestic violence, housing issues, and immigration status.

Clinical Coordinators (4)

The Clinical Coordinators are Master's level Board Certified Behavior Analysts who work with all students across the district. This year two additional Clinical Coordinators joined the department. Between the four Clinical Coordinators, two staff members are assigned PreK-4, and two remaining support Grades 5-12. They have been able to support students who are demonstrating challenging behaviors due to the severity of their disability or acute mental health challenges. The Clinical Coordinators serve as district consultants to guide staff in the implementation of evidence-based behavioral strategies and prevention intervention to purposefully re-engage students in their learning. This support may be provided through any of the following: consultation, staff training, conducting behavioral observations or more formalized evaluations, and/or the development of positive behavior support plans. The primary responsibilities within special education is to develop instructional procedures, develop data collection and analysis procedures, collaborate with home support programs, consult to district-wide programs, and provide professional development. In addition, the Clinical Coordinators work closely with building administrators, school psychologists, adjustment counselors and other service providers, using a problem-solving model to support students.

School Psychologists (12)

The school psychologists are responsible for assessing students who are initially referred to special education and re-evaluating students who are receiving services a minimum of every three years. They also meet with individual and small groups of students to provide counseling and social skills services, and may oversee support staff. The school psychologists help coordinate care with parents, guardians, and other outside providers. This may include interactions with representatives from state agencies such as the DCF, Department of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Developmental Services (DDS), or Department of Youth Services (DYS).

School Adjustment Counselors (18)

Adjustment counselors, available at the elementary, middle schools, and high school, play a vital role in identifying, supporting and intervening when students exhibit social, emotional or mental health related challenges in the school environment. They meet with the whole class, small groups of students, and individually in order to provide evidence-based therapeutic support. This may include consultation to the student and/or family to assist with any potential school or home issues that may prevent the student from achieving their academic potential. The adjustment counselors interact regularly with staff, guardians, and administrators in an effort to build relationships that will foster positive learning environments. They may also interact with representatives from state agencies such as the DCF, Department of Mental Health (DMH), Department of Developmental Services (DDS), or Department of Youth Services (DYS).

The following chart highlights our current building based staffing model:

Building:	<i>Parker Road</i>	<i>Beal</i>	<i>Paton</i>	<i>Floral</i>	<i>Spring</i>	<i>Coolidge</i>	<i>SMS</i>	<i>Oak</i>	<i>SHS</i>
Staff:	Psych	2 Psych 1 SAC	1 Psych 1 SAC	2 Psych 1 SAC	1 Psych 1 SAC	1 Psych 1 SAC	1 Psych 3 SAC*	1 Psych 4 SAC*	2 Psych 4 SAC*
Enrollment:	203	609	291	519	308	247	948	944	1823
Ratio Student:Staff	203:1	203:1	145:1	173:1	154:1	124:1	237:1	189:1	303:1

**Ratio does not include BRYT Clinical Coordinators.*

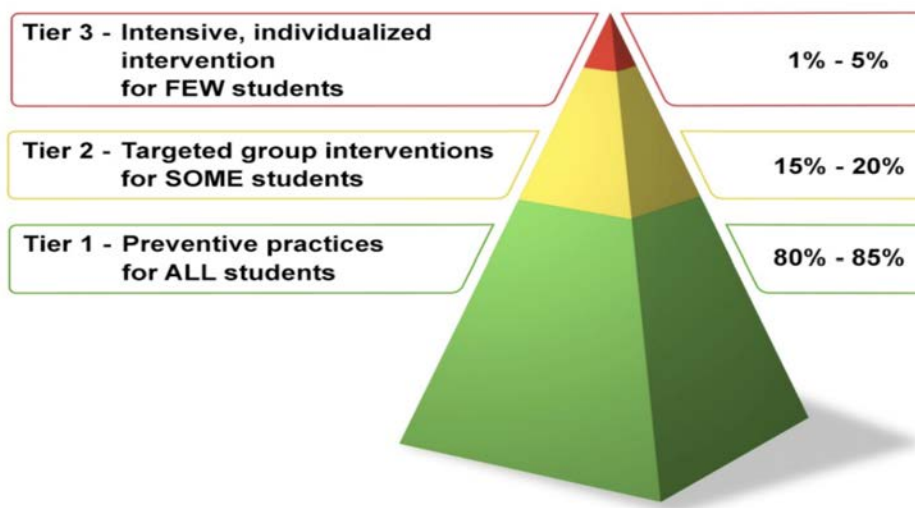
Shrewsbury Public Schools Clinical Department Data Analysis

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Approach

A collaborative approach is taken to working with students presenting with mental health, emotional, social, and/or behavioral challenges. School teams consisting of school psychologist(s), school counselor(s), school adjustment counselor(s), administrators, educators, and consultation with Director of Counseling and Mental Health Services, Clinical Coordinators, and District Social Worker, work together to identify students with identified needs in these areas and provide recommendations, interventions, and support, and closely monitor cases.

Identification of students is accomplished by a variety of means, which includes at a minimum, a staff to an MTSS team. In SPS these teams are called either the Early Intervening Teams (EIT) or Student Support Teams (SST), referrals by individual faculty members. Once a student has been identified, an individualized intervention plan is designed to meet a student's mental health

needs. This may include, but is not limited to, offering evidence-based interventions and strategies, progress monitoring, counseling in a group or 1:1 setting, or communication with families and outside providers. Evaluations can also be conducted within the district to answer questions related to a student's area of suspected educational disability. Finally, the district may assist families in obtaining outside mental health services as appropriate, via individual insurance policies.



Tier 1 Supports

All students access Tier 1 social emotional learning instruction. The district has adopted Character Strong and Advisory curriculum to be explicit and intentional with this topic. Tier 1 support may also include a clinical staff member helping to support whole group instruction or help create a targeted lesson within the classroom based upon teacher observation.

Tier 2 and Tier 3 Supports

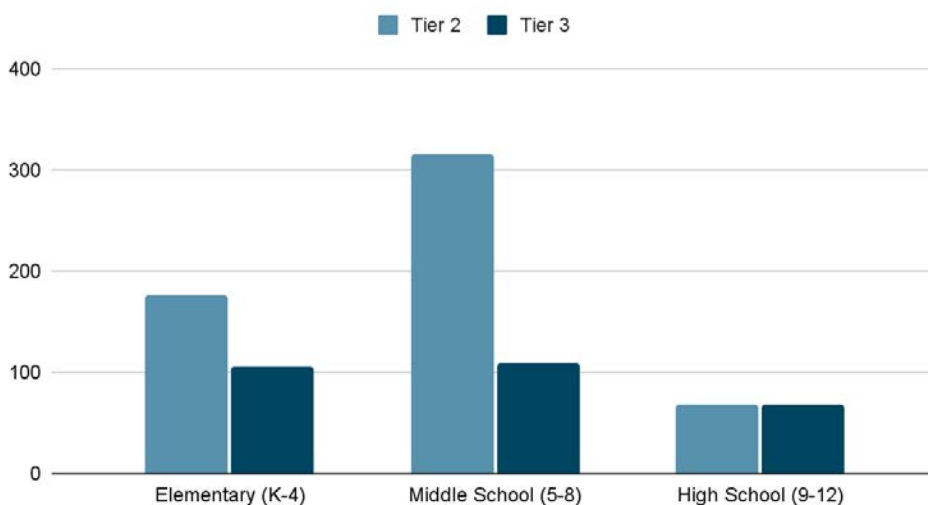
Some identified students may require more instruction and interventions based upon the individual child's current social-emotional and behavioral needs. This does not include replace accessing Tier 1 supports. Rather, it is in addition to Tier 1.

Data collected this school year through March 1, 2023 reflects that 791 students across grades K-12 accessed benefited from Tier 2 or Tier 3 behavioral and mental health supports. This accounts for 13.9% of all students across the district accessing clinical staff members for support services.

Tier 2 services are defined as drop in or as needed counseling support, short term counseling, or short term groups. "Short term" is defined as less than a trimester or 12 weeks. Tier 2 services may be provided by school counselors (high school only), school adjustment counselors (K-12) or school psychologists (PK-12). These interventions can include all students regardless of disability status.

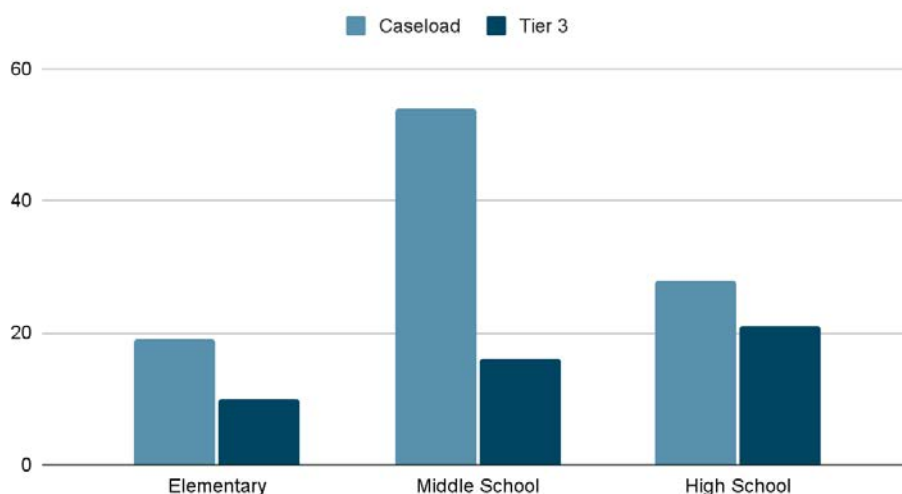
Tier 3 services are defined as scheduled 1:1 counseling sessions, long term regularly scheduled groups, or intensive case management. These may include Individual Education Plans (counseling services on service delivery grid with accompanying goal), 504 Accommodation Plans, or general education students. Tier 3 services may be provided by school adjustment counselors (K-12), school psychologists (Prek-12), District Social Worker, or a Clinical Coordinator. The graph below indicates data collected through March 1, 2023.

Number of Students Supported by Tier



The typical clinical caseloads vary by level. To date, average caseloads at the elementary school are averaging 19 students with a mix of both Tier 2 and Tier 3 support with an average of 10 students accessing Tier 3. Elementary clinical staff also teach whole classroom social emotional learning lessons. At the middle school level the average caseload size is 56 students. Many of these students receive Tier 2 support often in the form of short term counseling or drop in support as needed. The average Tier 3 long term counseling caseload at the middle school level is 16 students. High school clinical caseloads are averaging 28 students. This is a mix of short term Tier 2 support such as short term counseling or drop in support as needed and Tier 3 long term counseling support. The average Tier 3 caseload for high school clinicians is 21 students.

Average Active Caseload & Tier 3 Clinical Support



BRYT (Bridge for Resilient Youth in Transition) Program: Sherwood, Oak, & SHS

Partnering with The Brookline Center for Community Mental Health, BRYT provides Tier 3 clinical support, academic coordination, family support, and care coordination services to students at Sherwood, Oak Middle, and Shrewsbury High School who are transitioning back to a full schedule after missing extensive amounts of learning due to serious mental health, medical, and/or life transition challenges. BRYT is a short-term, intensive general education program open to students with and without disabilities; its supports are customized to each student's needs. These services pride themselves in being culturally competent, clinically informed, and flexible. Program staff strive to coordinate resources with the wider community, and partner effectively with families, to help each participating student make the most efficient transition possible and finish the school year on track for graduation.

Core BRYT Services:

- *Direct clinical support to students:* intentional/planned clinical supports that are customized to each student; on-demand supports; crisis intervention where needed.
- *Academic coordination:* direct academic support along with communication with a student's teachers to modify assignments and/or secure direct teacher support as needed for the student to demonstrate sufficient mastery to accrue credits.
- *Family engagement:* consistent, culturally-appropriate two-way communication with guardians about student progress needs; provision of support, learning, and leadership opportunities for family members.
- *Care coordination:* consultation and collaboration with all in-school supports and collateral providers available to each student to maximize her/his success.

Currently, Sherwood Middle School has 5 active students and 1 alumni student (drop in/as needed) while Oak Middle School has 6 active students and 12 alumni students accessing the program. Through March 1, 2023, SMS had a total of 9 referrals and OMS had 20 (with two students being referred twice). One third of students at SMS and half of the students at OMS were referred for mental health reasons with a high rate of absences related to being seen for mental health treatment through inpatient or partial hospitalization programming. Respectively, 44.44% and 25% were referred for functionally absent (attending school, but extended time out of the classroom or unable to access curriculum due to behavioral health symptoms). No students at SMS and 10% of students who were referred at OMS were due to medically related absence (i.e. extended illness, surgery, concussion).

BRYT at Shrewsbury High School currently has 19 active students, 10 alumni, and two pending intakes. At the mid-year point, a total of 48 students accessed the SHS BRYT for support. Out of the 48 students: 10 students were referred for concussion; 6 students for medically related absences. In addition, 68% of students were referred for mental health and 53% were admitted as proactively as “preventative” measures to support students to continue to access academic demands.

Emergency Response Services

The clinical staff are trained in assessing student mental and behavioral health. At times, a student may be struggling with an acute need. Emergency services may be called if a student presents with suicidal ideation, suicidal threat, self-injurious or self-harming behavior, or homicidal threat. Staff use Youth Mobile Crisis Intervention (YMCI) or Emergency Mental Health (EMH) in these cases.

Data collected throughout the clinical department validates trends of increased demand and need for therapeutic support services within a school setting. As of March 1, 2023, 19 students (0 elementary, 8 middle school, and 11 high school) across the district required inpatient level of care compared to 24 students last school year (February 2022 data). Another 17 students (0 elementary, 7 middle school, and 10 high school) may not have met inpatient criteria but rather were recommended for partial hospitalization or day programs. This specific data point was not tracked last school year. Students are recommended for a higher level of care (inpatient or partial hospitalization program) via an outside provider, Youth Mobile Crisis Intervention (YMCI) or Emergency Mental Health (EMH) referrals.

This school year, 43 students (9 elementary, 22 middle school, and 12 high school) across the district were recommended by Shrewsbury Public School clinical staff for an emergency mental health evaluation either via YMCI or EMH. This is compared to 73 students last school year (February 2022 data). It is important to note that this data point does not include students who

were assessed by district clinical staff and other interventions were deemed most appropriate., i.e. safety plan, parent/guardian contact, outpatient provider contact.

All Shrewsbury Public School employees are mandated reporters. Massachusetts law requires mandated reporters to immediately make an oral report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) when, in their professional capacity, they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 years is suffering from abuse and/or neglect. To date, the district has reported 37 cases to DCF (6 at elementary, 15 at middle school level, and 16 at high school). It is not the responsibility of a school employee to investigate and determine if there is abuse or neglect; DCF performs that function.

Clinical Coordinators

A formalized referral process was updated for staff to access Clinical Coordinator support. Referrals are reviewed by the team of clinical coordinators along with consultation with District Social Worker and Director of Counseling and Mental Health Services and appropriate tiered intervention follow up is determined. This may include Tier 2 support such as short term consultation or student observation, and/or Tier 3 support such as long term consultation, parents/guardian meetings, functional behavior assessments, or development of behavior support plans. Through March 17, 2023, 37 referrals were made for Clinical Coordinator support: 17 referrals were within the PreK-elementary level; 14 at the Grades 5-8; and 6 at Grades 9-12+. Currently there are 65 students actively receiving clinical coordinator support: 29 students (PK-4); and 36 students (5-12+).

Clinical Rounds

SPS maintains a contract with Dr. Kim Kusiak, consulting Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, and a Fellow through the UMass Psychiatry Department. Twice per month, Dr. Kusiak and a UMass Fellow meet with clinical staff, administration, teachers, and other support staff to provide clinical consultation for referred student cases. Clinical Round referrals have decreased in comparison to previous year's data likely as a result of the addition of two Clinical Coordinators who are able to provide behavioral consultation and Tier 3 intervention support. Through March 25, 2023 there have been 16 clinical round referrals with four cases requiring additional follow up consultations with Dr. Kim Kusiak.

Universal Mental Health Screeners

Currently, Shrewsbury Public Schools is actively utilizing mental health and social emotional learning (SEL) screening tools. Mental health screening tools assess the burden of psychological symptoms that may interfere with a student's ability to succeed and learn. Social emotional learning screeners evaluate competencies necessary for students to participate and interact effectively.

Screening is a process of helping staff gather data on student needs, and then using the data and information to plan supports and interventions for students to improve their well-being and functioning in school. Screening helps staff be more proactive, than reactive, in supporting students' success. The screening in social, emotional, and behavioral functioning is a brief rating scale completed by the student. This information is helpful to us to make effective plans at the whole schools, class, and individual level.

In Grades 3 through 12, students participate in a SEL screener through [Panorama Education](#). Panorama helps schools and districts transform their approach to education, so that every student thrives in school, every student benefits from an excellent education, and every student graduates prepared with the knowledge, skills, and mindsets they need to thrive in the modern, ever-changing world. SPS uses the Panorama surveys to gain information about students' competencies in the areas of emotional regulation, self efficacy, and self advocacy as well as the domains of cultural awareness and sense of belonging.

Grades 7 and 10 participate in SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment) utilizing the CRAFFT (Car, Relax, Alone, Forget, Friends, Trouble) tool to assess adolescent substance abuse. CRAFFT is administered by school adjustment counselors in collaboration with the Nursing Department.

Signs of Suicide (SOS) curriculum is delivered through Health classes in Grades 8 through Grade 11. As part of the curriculum, students complete the BSAD (Brief Screen for Adolescent Depression). School adjustment counselors at Oak and school adjustment counselors in collaboration with school counselors at SHS provide follow up for students who score in a clinically significant range for symptoms of depression.

Grade 7 Universal Screening Pilot

The universal screening tool, General Anxiety Disorder 7 (GAD-7), is an evidenced based assessment to be used with students in Grade 7 students at Oak Middle. This tool is used to assess symptoms related to anxiety and depression. Completing the screening is voluntary. Students may choose not to answer any or all of the screening questions. Results are confidential, but are not anonymous as emails will be collected with receipt of response. If students are deemed at moderate to high risk of symptoms related to anxiety and/or depression, a support staff member will follow-up with the students to provide resources and help identify trusted adults (both in and out of school).

Families have the option of not having their child participate in the mental health screening process. A letter was sent to all families which includes the ability to opt their child out of participating. Within the letter, it was outlined to guardians that they will be notified in the event of a safety

concern or if their child scores in the clinically elevated range. Parents/guardians are encouraged to reach out to their student's counselor if they wish to discuss their student's responses.

Universal Mental Health Screener and Universal Social and Emotional Learning Screener

	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
SBIRT/ CRAFT														
SOS/ BSAD								SY 23-24						
GAD-7									SPRING 2023					
PSWQ-C						TBD								
PANORAMA: STUDENT SEL														

CRAFT: adolescent substance abuse

BSAD: brief screen for adolescent depression

GAD-7: generalized anxiety symptom screener

PSWQ-C: penn state worry questionnaire for children

PANORAMA STUDENT SEL: social awareness, self-efficacy, emotional regulation

Social Emotional Behavioral Academy (SEB)

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Social Emotional Behavioral Academy's goal is to support schools and districts across Massachusetts to build evidence-based, data-driven, and culturally responsive systems of supports using an MTSS approach. Through this process SPS receives intensive coaching and technical assistance, and the opportunity to participate in professional development and peer-sharing events. The SEB Academy is a three-year process. The Social Emotional Learning and Mental Health Track focuses on integrating and aligning social emotional learning and mental health supports with the existing priorities, systems, and practices of the school and whole district. Throughout this process SPS will be supported in assessing and prioritizing, implementing and improving, and/or scaling and sustaining SEL and mental health supports across all intervention Tiers.

SPS has been partnered with a consultant/technical assistant from the Education Development Center (EDC). EDC is a global educational consultancy focused on building resilience and empathy to advance lasting solutions to education challenges. Our consultant meets with the SEB

team monthly and coaches the team through the work of the Academy. The final result of this partnership will be a rejuvenated comprehensive SEL MTSS system within each building.

Protocols/ Procedures

Policies, practices, and procedures continue to be reviewed at the district level. It is anticipated that in the next few years, revisions and updates may be made to protocols and procedures in an effort to universalize systems of support. To date this year, consent forms for therapeutic services were designed to ensure transparency of clinical services provided to students including regulations around confidentiality. This form was reviewed by our consulting attorney before full department implementation. Potential abuse and/neglect of children reporting (51A) was streamlined starting January 1st through a formalized district reporting process to assist in systematic follow up from District Social Worker, clinical staff, and building administrators. Additionally, the district's Emergency Response Plan was reviewed and updated to include mental health related crises and responses per new mental health legislation [An Act Addressing Barriers to Care for Mental Health](#).

Professional Development

Staff training on trauma-informed education for paraprofessionals in October and for elementary staff in February was completed. Training was developed by the District Social Worker and Director of Counseling and Mental Health Services. Both facilitated the training in October for all paraprofessionals in the district. In February, the training was adapted and implemented for elementary school staff across the district during a faculty meeting. Facilitators included District Social Worker, Director of Counseling and Mental Health Services and various school adjustment counselors. In April, elementary school staff will be provided a follow up training to include de-escalation and Tier 1 behavior management. This training is being facilitated and organized by Clinical Coordinator, Rob Parry-Cruwys. Learning objectives included understanding trauma, how trauma can present in student behavior, and practical trauma informed behavior management strategies. The goal is to implement trauma-informed training in additional grade levels in the 2023-24 school year.

Parent/Guardian Workshops

Parenting Strategies

The Clinical Department is pleased to be offering a Parenting Strategies Workshop for the 10th year. SPS Clinical Coordinator, Daryl Rynning, and District Social Worker, Felicitie Boisvert, along with Dr. Kim Kusiak, SPS Consulting Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, will be hosting a seven part Zoom series on useful information and tips for understanding developmental behavioral norms, behavior strategies, healthy social media habits, and resilience skills.

Safety Care for Families

Safety-Care is a crisis prevention training. However, Safety-Care is more than crisis management training; it provides the skills and competencies necessary to effectively prevent, minimize, and manage behavioral challenges with dignity, safety, and the possibility of change. Safety-Care for Families is a training program for family members and other stakeholders working with behaviorally challenging individuals in a home or home-like setting. SPS Clinical Coordinator, Rob Parry-Cruwys and Beal Educational Learning Center (ELC) Coordinator, Colleen Callahan, will lead this innovative course. It provides an adapted version of the Safety-Care curriculum, designed to provide parents, family members, and others with the skills and interventions needed to improve behavior and to prevent, minimize, and manage potentially dangerous incidents in the home or home-like setting.

Community Partnerships

Shrewsbury Public Schools values partnerships in our community and with national organizations in order to provide a variety of support and resources to our students, staff and families. Our partners include:

1. Shrewsbury Public Schools continues its longstanding partnership with Shrewsbury Youth and Families Services (SYFS) to provide school-based counseling services and wraparound case management.
2. The district and the town of Shrewsbury continue to contract with William James College INTERFACE referral system. This service helps to provide community members to access support in navigating referrals and connect with outpatient behavioral health health providers. This past year, this service was extended to any resident of Shrewsbury. Last year, it only supported SPS students.
3. Massachusetts Partnership for Youth (MPY) membership has given all staff the ability to access various professional development opportunities in various areas of social, emotional, and behavioral health and wellness. The professional development designed by MPY is targeted to support both adult and student wellness.
4. Shrewsbury Public Schools has partnered with [The JED Foundation](#) for review of existing practices, policies and procedures. JED will provide ongoing technical support and recommendations throughout our two year commitment. JED will focus its review on mental health crisis management protocols, discipline practices as they relate to new mental health legislation, and practices around truancy and chronic absenteeism prevention.
5. [The Brookline Center](#) continues to offer consultation and professional development for the BRYT clinical and academic staff.

Recommendations

Shrewsbury Public School's Clinical Department in collaboration with district leadership is committed to increasing the district's capacity to support student social, emotional, and mental health. Therefore, the following have been highlighted as recommendations to prioritize over the next several years:

1. Systematically implement universal mental health and social emotional learning screening tools across the district.
2. Continue to assess and implement universal practices, protocols, and procedures to ensure integrity of a comprehensive and effective Multi-Tiered Systems of Support.
3. Provide additional professional development around social emotional learning best practices and trauma informed education for staff across all grade levels.
4. Design and implement universal policies and protocols with priorities around discipline, truancy, chronic absenteeism to comply with new mental health legislation.
5. Design and implement universal policies and procedures around mental health crisis management.
6. Explore and pilot electronic health record systems for the clinical department to provide a platform for documentation and increase our capacity to make data informed decisions.

Conclusion

Our staff are diligently providing direct whole class, individual and small group student services. They also support each building by facilitating and/or participating in important school teams to design individualized interventions based upon student data. Our Department is an integral part of the district crisis team, responsible for supporting all schools following a community crisis. The department works closely with various partners to strengthen social, emotional and behavioral health support available to our students and schools.

In Shrewsbury, we recognize and acknowledge the critical connection between social, emotional and behavioral health, well-being and academic success. The Clinical Department is composed of licensed behavioral health providers supporting all schools. The District is committed to creating safe and supportive learning environments where mental health is valued and trusted adults are readily available to support student's needs. We work to ensure that ALL students have a safe and supportive school environment where they can be successful. As we know, social, emotional and behavioral health support can have an impact on student engagement, ability to learn, self-advocacy, self-esteem, capacity to build positive relationships, and make healthy decisions.



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

ITEM NO: IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:
E. School Nursing: Report

MEETING DATE: 03/29/23

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Periodically, the School Committee receives updates on the breadth and scope of nursing services provided within the schools. The enclosed information provides details regarding the nurses' work during the past year, statistics regarding the number of students served, and staffing ratios. Ms. Freeman will make a brief report and answer any questions the Committee has about this topic. A memorandum from Ms. Freeman with nursing statistics and information is enclosed.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee accept the report and take whatever action it deems necessary in the best interest of the Shrewsbury Public Schools.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Ms. Noelle Freeman, Director of Nursing



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Department of School Nursing

Noelle Freeman, BSN, RN, NCSN - Director

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Date: 3/23/2023

To: School Committee

Re: Nursing Services 2022-23 Report

Introduction

As was evidenced more than ever over the past few years, Shrewsbury Public Schools (SPS) is fortunate to have a team of talented, dedicated, experienced school nurses who manage the health needs of our students and school community. According to the [CDC](#), "In the United States, more than 40% of school-aged children and adolescents have at least one chronic health condition, such as asthma, diabetes, seizure disorders, food allergies, or poor oral health. For these students, school nurses—who are often the only health care provider in a school—play a large role in the daily management of their conditions. School nurses or other school health services staff may also be the first to identify chronic health conditions in students through routine health exams."

Visits to the Nurse

Statistics and percentages for visits to the nurse by category remain relatively consistent over several years, with some anomalies that were precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The total number of visits for the 2022-23 school year to date indicates a return to "pre-COVID" patterns of activity in the SPS health offices.

The table below details several data points beginning in the 2018 -19 school year and through the present school year. The 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years include full year data that were affected by COVID-related school closure and the hybrid model. Unless otherwise noted, all numbers include visits for the students and staff in all of our buildings.

The definition of "illness" and "injury" event visits is self-explanatory. Students or staff are seen and evaluated for symptoms of illness or an injury that occurs in or outside of school. Treatment is provided, families are notified at the discretion of the school nurse, and students return to class or are dismissed from school as needed.

Visits classified as "management" refer to encounters that are in large part a sharing or management of information. As evidenced by the numbers below, school nurses spent enormous amounts of time providing information regarding COVID protocols and procedures during the 2020-21 and 2021-2022 school years.

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

The percentage of visits to the nurse for “mental/behavioral health” concerns has remained consistent over a 10 year period, with an average of 5% of total in-person visits documented for this reason between 2013 and 2023. As noted in previous reports, capturing this data can be challenging as many students present to the nurse with physical complaints (headaches, stomach aches, trouble breathing, etc) when the root cause may be social/emotional. The addition of mental health professionals at all levels across the district has provided a valuable referral resource for school nurses when visits for somatic complaints become a pattern for a particular student. School nurses collaborate with the mental health colleagues in our buildings on a daily basis to support these students.

The “other health” category includes a variety of needs including things like providing a change of clothes, non-specific complaints of discomfort, irritated/allergy eyes, dental concerns, skin issues, etc.

The “total in-person visits” category reflects student and staff encounters for illness, injury, mental/behavioral health, and other health visits. This total does not include in-person visits for scheduled medication administration or treatment (tube feedings, diabetes glucose checks, etc) ; these totals are listed as a separate category as they add a significant number of daily in-person interactions. The “total in-person encounters” category reflects the grand total of in-person visits plus scheduled medication and treatment visits.

The return to class rate reflects the percentage of students who return to class and learning after a visit to our health offices. This rate has increased from 93% in 2018-19 to 96% in the current school year. This may be attributed to the tendency of many families to follow public health recommendations and keep children home if they are sick, resulting in less illness at school that requires dismissal.

The final row of the chart below indicates the number of individual students who visited the health office at some point in the school year. Assuming an average population of about 6,000 students in any given school year, the percentage of students who access our services is quite high. The exception to this is the 2020-21 school year when we were experiencing the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and were in a hybrid model for the majority of the school year. During this time period students were less likely to feel comfortable spending time in the health office environment.

Primary Concern	2018-19	2019-20 (full remote began 3/13/20)	2020-21 (hybrid Aug - May)	2021-22	2022-23 (YTD as of 3/20/23)
Injury event	7,930	5,605	2,661	8,432	5,540
Illness event	30,788	18,461	12,886	26,238	20,197
Management	9,424	10,556	30,581	41,038	10,517
Mental/ Behavioral Health	2,169	1,988	1,109	3,041	1,673
Other health	10,762	7,776	4,431	12,127	10,096
total in-person visits for above categories	50,725	33,119	20,526	48,617	36,742

Medication administration and scheduled treatment visits (these are not included in above categories)	27,402	15,155	7,168	16,529	12,970
TOTAL OVERALL IN-PERSON ENCOUNTERS (does not include management encounters)	78,127	48,274	27,694	65,146	49,712
Return to class rate	93%	97%	95%	95%	96%
# of individual students that visited nurse	5,086	4,598	3,340	5,125	4,754

School Nurse Staffing

The Shrewsbury Public Schools (SPS) community benefits from the presence of at least one full time nurse in each of our 9 school buildings. According to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the recommended school nurse to student ratio is as follows: *1.0 full time equivalent (FTE) professional school nurse (RN) in each building with 250 to 500 students. In buildings with more than 500 students, an additional 0.1 FTE is recommended for each additional 50 students. For buildings with fewer than 250 students, the recommended ratio is 0.1 FTE: 25 students.* Due to a state funded Comprehensive School Health Services Workforce grant that began in the 2021-22 school year, SPS has come closer to meeting this recommendation in all of our buildings. The table below details current school nurse staffing levels, including grant funded FTE. Workforce grant funding will end at the close of the 2022-23 school year. Continued funding of these FTE will allow school nurses at the middle schools and high school to provide safe, comprehensive care to their students.

Building	# School Nurse FTE	Grant funded portion of current FTE	# Students	Nurse:student ratio	Recommended FTE (per above formula)
Shrewsbury High School	3.0	0.3	1,823	1:607	3.6
Oak Middle School	1.8	0.4	944	1:524	1.9
Sherwood Middle School	1.8	0.4	948	1:526	1.9
Beal School	1.5	0	609	1:406	1.2
Coolidge School	1.0	0	247	1:247	1.0
Floral St School	1.5	0	519	1:346	1.0

Paton School	1.0	0	291	1:291	1.0
Spring St School	1.0	0	308	1:308	1.0
Parker Rd Preschool	1.0	0	203	1:203	0.8
District Float Nurse	1.0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a

Emergency Response

Students have been transported by ambulance from the nurses' office on 8 occasions to date this school year. Six incidents were related to physical health needs, and 2 calls were for mental health needs.

Epinephrine was administered one time for a student who was experiencing symptoms of anaphylaxis; stock epinephrine was utilized in this incident.

Mandated Screenings

The table below represents the health screenings that are required by [state laws and regulations](#) to be completed at school annually. School nurses collaborate with colleagues in the Physical Education and Mental/Behavioral Health Departments in order to ensure that these screenings are completed. Parents/guardians have the right to opt out of any screening by submitting a request in writing.

Screening	grade levels required	Screenings performed by
Vision	pre K, K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10	school nurses
Hearing	K, 1, 2, 3, 7, 10	school nurses, department administrative assistant
Height, Weight	1, 4, 7, 10	PE teachers, school nurses
Postural	5, 6, 7, 8, 9,	PE teachers, school nurses
SBIRT*	7, 10	school adjustment counselors, school psychologists, school (guidance) counselors

[Massachusetts Vision Screening protocols](#) were revised by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health in 2021 and implemented by districts in 2022-23. These updates required the purchase of new screening equipment and school nurses received professional development and training on the use of these new tools. Comprehensive School Health Services grant funds were used in the purchase of new equipment.

*SBIRT = Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment. This verbal screening regarding drug and alcohol use is coordinated by school nurses and conducted in conjunction with school adjustment counselors, guidance counselors and school psychologists. Students in grades 7 and 10 are now screened annually.

Case Management

Case management and collaboration is a large component of the work that school nurses do each day; as noted above, this was more true than ever throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. In the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years combined, nurses recorded over 70,000 communications with parents, school staff, and community providers. School nurses kept abreast of evolving public health regulations and district protocols, providing accurate and timely information to countless families and staff across the district. It is fair to say that their skill and dedication helped the community to successfully navigate unprecedented times.

School nurses strive to support students with chronic and acute health conditions by collaborating with school colleagues, families, outside providers and the students themselves. This is achieved through the development of Individualized Health Care Plans, and attendance at student-related meetings such as Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Accommodation Plan meetings.

Emergency Equipment

Emergency preparedness is critical for school nurses. Our schools have several mechanisms in place to allow our nurses to respond to various emergency situations:

- Stock auto-injectable epinephrine for use in case of an anaphylactic reaction
- Stock naloxone (Narcan) at each school building for use in the case of suspected opioid overdose
- Automated External Defibrillators (AED) in each of our buildings; staff trainings in CPR and the use of AEDs are offered annually
- Tourniquets are stocked in each nurse's emergency bag and in AED cases throughout the district for use in bleeding emergencies.

Comprehensive School Health Services Grant

In the 2018-19 school year, the district applied for and was awarded the Comprehensive School Health Services (CSHS) Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health School Health Unit in the amount of \$100,000 per year for a period of up to ten years (an initial contract of four years with three, two-year grant extensions available). We were notified in January 2023 that the district will continue to receive \$100,000 in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years (first two-year extension period).

Based on district data and experience, the Shrewsbury Public Schools priority population identified in the grant application process was students with mental and behavioral health challenges. To that end, this grant has provided partial funding for the addition of a [Bridge for Resilient Youth in Transition \(BRYT\)](#) program at Sherwood Middle School. The program, which serves students who are experiencing mental or behavioral health challenges that interfere with their ability to attend or be successful at school, began at Sherwood Middle School in 2019-20 and was expanded to include Oak Middle School beginning in 2021-22. The program is staffed by one shared full time clinician (school adjustment counselor) and an academic support professional in each building. BRYT provides clinical, academic, and family support, as well as care coordination with other school staff and community providers.

Remaining CSHS grant funds are used to provide school nurse specific professional development and to purchase durable equipment for school health offices.

In the 2021-22 school year, the district applied for and was awarded an additional \$100,000 per year in CSHS Workforce Grant funding for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years. As noted above, this funding was used to expand school nurse coverage at Shrewsbury High School, Oak Middle School, and Sherwood Middle School, bringing the school nurse to student ratio closer to the recommendation of 1:500. The Workforce portion of the CSHS grant expires at the end of this fiscal year.

Community Partnerships

School nurses in various buildings have hosted students from the University of Massachusetts Graduate School of Nursing and Quinsigamond Community College. Student nurses spend time in our health offices in order to fulfill the clinical requirement for their Community Health Nursing courses. This experience provides insight into the often misunderstood role of school nursing.

Throughout the pandemic, school nurses partnered with public health nurses from the Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA). When the pandemic began in March of 2020, schools transitioned to fully remote mode; school nurses were trained in COVID specific contact tracing practices by CMRPHA staff and worked from home to contact individuals in the greater Worcester community who were diagnosed with COVID. This training provided much needed support to the CMRPHA team at that time, and then proved to be invaluable experience when we returned to school and contact tracing was required in our buildings. As we all navigated the evolving pandemic, collaboration with our public health colleagues at CMRPHA and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health became a critical part of daily operations.

St. Anne's Human Services and St. Anne's Free Medical Clinic are crucial resources for people in need in Shrewsbury and surrounding communities. School nurses collaborate directly with the Free Medical Clinic nursing coordinator to schedule appointments for students who do not have insurance or a primary care provider and require immunizations or a physical exam in order to meet Massachusetts school entry requirements. Nurses work together with the district social worker to refer families who are in need to the Human Services food pantry and to the Holiday Giving and winter clothing programs.

The Director of School Nursing is currently working with the District Wellness Coordinator/Nurse Leader of the Public Schools of Northborough and Southborough in the planning of a professional development opportunity for school nurses across the state. A two day school nurse conference will be hosted at Shrewsbury High School in conjunction with the SPS Summer Institute in late June. We are collaborating with UMassMemorial Hospital to obtain approval for contact hours in order to offer continuing education credits to the professional nurses who attend.



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **V. Curriculum**

MEETING DATE: **03/29/23**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF & STUDENTS AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **VI. Policy**

MEETING DATE: **03/29/23**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS/STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: VII. Finance & Operations
A. Public hearing on FY24 Budget

MEETING DATE: 03/29/23

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The public and members of the School Department are invited to provide input to the Committee and the administration regarding the FY24 Budget. This public hearing meets the requirements of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 38N, which requires school districts to provide an opportunity for members of the public to be heard regarding the proposed school district budget.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the Committee hold a public hearing in order to listen to feedback on the topic of the FY24 Budget.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**ITEM NO: VII. Finance & Operations
B. Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Update**

MEETING DATE: 03/29/23

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Mr. Collins will provide an update on the current status of the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee accept the report and take whatever action it deems necessary in the best interest of the Shrewsbury Public Schools.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations



Shrewsbury Public Schools

Patrick C. Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations

24 March 2023

To: School Committee

Subj: FY2023 BUDGET STATUS UPDATE

Overview

Attached you will find the FY23 Budget Status Update. It is a recap of our \$79,318,971 district appropriated budget as approved by Town Meeting. You will recall that this plan provided for an 4.75% increase over FY22 in connection with the Override Agreement between the Board of Selectmen and School Committee. While the agreement indicates a School Department increase cap of 4.25%, it also allows for additional funding up to an additional .5% provided the revenue forecast from the Town Manager supports it.

The enclosed report retains the reporting format started in FY16 which expands the reportable categories from 11 to 19 while remaining a high-level, one-page summary. For context it is important to note that reported expenditures and encumbrances are as of 3/15/2023 which is approximately 70% of the way through our fiscal year, and 64% into the school year based on the number of school days.

This forecast is projecting a very modest availability of \$264,793 as we approach the close of the fiscal year. These funds could be leveraged for one-time expenses and we need to make decisions in April in order to have time for procurement processes and to ensure a smooth close of the fiscal year.

In this way, we will fully expend our FY23 General Fund [Town Meeting] Appropriation by June 30th.

Covid Funding

As you know, the District, like all other school districts, received significant federal and state Covid Relief Funding via grants. In the table below is the summary status of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds, or so-called "ESSER grants", which is one-time federal funding received by all school districts across the nation depending on student population and socio-economics.

The remainder of ESSER-2 funds are committed for renewal of the Renaissance learning software subscription [a two-year subscription], lease payments on rented warehouse space in Worcester, and contract cleaning services through the end of school year.

As you recently reviewed, ESSER-3 funds will continue to be used in fiscal year 2024 [23-24 school year] to support programs directed towards the remedy of learning loss from Covid-19 per the grant amendment plan you voted on January 18, 2023.

	Amount	Expended + Encumbered	Percent Expended & Encumbered as of 3.21.23	Deadline for Use of Funds
EESER-1	\$ 162,060	\$ 162,060	100%	9/30/22
ESSER-2	\$ 557,280	\$ 557,280	100%	9/30/23
ESSER-3	\$ 1,229,980	\$ 614,158	50%	9/30/24
Totals	\$ 1,949,320	\$ 1,333,498	68%	

General Fund [Town Meeting] Appropriated Budget

Detailed on the following page is more information on the various categories of our budget.

Despite various categorical variances, we are running very close to our overall budget plan with 58% of our funds expended, 38% encumbered, and 4% remaining.

Category	Description	Projected Variance Percent	Notes: Includes some major examples of reason for over/under budget variances
A1	Administrative Central Office, Principals, & Unit B	.1% over	Slightly over estimated budget for individual contract market adjustments and the Unit B contract.
A2	Unit A [Teachers & Nurses]	.2% over	Required 1.9 FTE unbudgeted positions for class size and mandated programming.
A3	Aides/ABA/Paraprofessionals	.9% under	Costs for additional move-in students requiring paraprofessional support offset by savings in ongoing vacancies and staff turnover.
A4	Secretaries, Technology & Other Non-Represented	1.3% over	Running slightly over budget as some salary shifted from grant funded source.
A5	Substitutes: Daily, Long-term, and Nurses	90.4% over	A combination of contributing factors leading to this projected overage. See information provided under separate cover.
A6	Other Wages	1.6% over	Greater staffing costs for summer special education program based on student enrollment needs.
A7	Employee Benefits	9.6% under	Fewer retirees requiring Sick Leave payouts. Running under budget on tuition reimbursement.
B1	Regular Education & Voke Transportation	7.4% under	Operating under budget for homeless and regular day transportation thus far.
B2	Special Education Transportation	4.2% under	Running under budget for bus monitors and summer program busing.
C1	Special Education Tuitions	14.2% under	Year end forecast assumes \$100,000 in new placement costs between now and end of year.
C2	Vocational & Recovery High School Tuitions	26.2% under	Budgeted for a total of 77 students incl. 8 freshmen. Oct. 1 st enrollment was 63 students incl. 2 freshmen.

Category	Description	Projected Variance Percent	Notes: Includes some major examples of reason for over/under budget variances
D1	Administrative Contract Services	34.3% Over	Over budget on staff recruitment advertising, building security equipment repairs, and legal settlements.
D2	Educational Contract Services	23.2% Under	Under budget on special educ. contract services and contract nursing services.
All other D categories are expected to close out near their budgeted amounts due to the “discretionary” nature of the categories [equipment, supplies, conferences etc...]			

Circuit Breaker Fund

We began FY23 with a fund balance of \$3,142,421 on account and not committed for use in the FY23 budget. Also, in FY22 we deliberately ended the year with a strong balance so as to provide greater mid-year budget stability and resiliency in future fiscal year budget cycles to shield us should unexpected out of district placements occur, for example.

Many districts have taken the approach to retain up to one-year of Circuit Breaker funding on account [the MA DESE maximum allowed] so as to achieve the aforementioned financial goal and reduce budgetary risk and volatility.

As previously indicated as part of the FY24 budget development process, I expect we will end FY23 with \$3.4M which is this year’s maximum allowable amount.

Day-to-Day and Long Term Substitutes

The year-end projection is using current year trend data based on the first six and a half months of school.

There are a multitude of factors contributing to the higher-than-expected run rate for this cost category. The primary reason of course is staff absences and we have had a number of staff still impacted by Covid. Secondly, in order to thwart the lack of daily substitutes in our region we hired building-based substitutes by making a commitment to them for work every school day at a higher rate of pay (\$140 per day).

You have received detailed information on this topic under separate cover.

Closing Note

Per usual, I will continue to monitor all costs and update projections during the course of the year.

SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FY23 BUDGET STATUS- as of 3/15/2023

School Committee Recap Sheet	Description	FY23 Budget	YTD Actual	Encumbrance	Remaining Balance	Year End Projection	Dollar Variance	Percent Variance
A1	Administrative Central Office, Principals & Unit B	\$ 3,967,121	\$ 2,889,613	\$ 1,079,874	\$ (2,366)	\$ 3,969,487	\$ (2,366)	-0.1%
A2	Unit A (Teachers & Nurses)	\$ 48,679,635	\$ 27,915,318	\$ 20,636,785	\$ 127,532	\$ 48,770,134	\$ (90,499)	-0.2%
A3	Aides/ABA/Paraprofessionals	\$ 8,159,917	\$ 5,039,610	\$ 2,963,583	\$ 156,724	\$ 8,082,730	\$ 77,187	0.9%
A4	Secretaries, Technology & Other Non-Represented	\$ 3,037,213	\$ 1,945,943	\$ 1,021,931	\$ 69,339	\$ 3,076,374	\$ (39,161)	-1.3%
A5	Substitutes - Daily, Long Term & Sub Nurses	\$ 919,500	\$ 562,038	\$ -	\$ 357,462	\$ 1,751,000	\$ (831,500)	-90.4%
A6	Other Wages	\$ 1,039,296	\$ 760,033	\$ -	\$ 279,263	\$ 1,055,983	\$ (16,687)	-1.6%
A7	Employee Benefits	\$ 454,000	\$ 134,562	\$ -	\$ 319,438	\$ 410,403	\$ 43,597	9.6%
B1	Regular Education & Voke Transportation	\$ 3,100,904	\$ 2,092,123	\$ 769,066	\$ 239,715	\$ 2,871,208	\$ 229,696	7.4%
B2	Special Education Transportation	\$ 1,092,216	\$ 560,873	\$ 467,049	\$ 64,294	\$ 1,046,422	\$ 45,794	4.2%
C1	Net Special Education Tuitions	\$ 3,538,248	\$ 860,760	\$ 2,074,189	\$ 603,299	\$ 3,034,949	\$ 503,299	14.2%
C2	Vocational Tuitions	\$ 1,474,526	\$ 545,169	\$ 542,871	\$ 386,486	\$ 1,088,040	\$ 386,486	26.2%
D1	Administrative Contracted Services	\$ 643,707	\$ 616,644	\$ 220,610	\$ (193,547)	\$ 864,754	\$ (221,047)	-34.3%
D2	Educational Contracted Services	\$ 707,240	\$ 254,566	\$ 113,881	\$ 338,793	\$ 543,413	\$ 163,827	23.2%
D3	Textbooks/Curriculum Materials	\$ 279,995	\$ 186,969	\$ 16,382	\$ 76,644	\$ 279,995	\$ -	0.0%
D4	Professional Development	\$ 196,774	\$ 115,081	\$ 64,962	\$ 16,731	\$ 196,774	\$ -	0.0%
D5	Educational Supplies & Materials	\$ 433,265	\$ 273,526	\$ 36,610	\$ 123,129	\$ 433,265	\$ -	0.0%
D6	Other Miscellaneous (i.e. Off. Supp., Ref. Mat.)	\$ 853,509	\$ 706,472	\$ 62,800	\$ 84,237	\$ 853,509	\$ -	0.0%
D7	Equipment	\$ 694,405	\$ 344,265	\$ 150	\$ 349,990	\$ 694,405	\$ -	0.0%
D8	Utilities - Telephone Exp.	\$ 47,500	\$ 19,294	\$ 4,338	\$ 23,868	\$ 31,333	\$ 16,167	34.0%
Total Budget:		\$ 79,318,971	\$ 45,822,859	\$ 30,075,081	\$ 3,421,031	\$ 79,054,178	\$ 264,793	0.3%
Percentage of Budget			58%	38%	4%	99.7%		



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **VIII. Old Business**

MEETING DATE: **03/29/23**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

MEMBERS/STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **IX. New Business**

MEETING DATE: **03/29/23**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

ITEM NO: **X. Approval of Minutes**

MEETING DATE: **03/29/23**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The minutes from the School Committee Workshop and from the School Committee Meeting held on March 15, 2023, will be provided under separate cover.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the Committee accept the minutes from the School Committee Workshop and from the School Committee Meeting held on March 15, 2023.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Ms. Lynsey Heffernan, Chairperson

Mr. Jon Wensky, Secretary



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

ITEM NO: **XI. Executive Session**

MEETING DATE: **03/29/23**

- A. For the purpose of addressing G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) “[t]o comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements” (“Purpose 7”), Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §§ 22(f), (g) – for the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes.**
- B. For the purpose of addressing G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(3) “to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect of the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares” (“Purpose 3”) - the Shrewsbury Education Association Units A and/or B, the Shrewsbury Paraprofessional Association, and/or the Cafeteria Workers Association**
- C. For the purpose of addressing G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(2) “to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel” – non-union administrators. (“Purpose 2”)**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Executive Session is warranted for these purposes.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

Request a motion to adjourn to Executive Session:

- A. For the purpose of addressing G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) “[t]o comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements” (“Purpose 7”), Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §§ 22(f), (g) – for the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes;**
- B. For the purpose of addressing G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(3) “to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect of the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares” (“Purpose 3”) - the Shrewsbury Education Association Units A and/or B, the Shrewsbury Paraprofessional Association, and/or the Cafeteria Workers Association; and**
- C. For the purpose of addressing G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(2) “to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel” – non-union administrators (“Purpose 2”) where deliberation in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body; and return to Open Session only for the purpose of adjourning for the evening.**

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Barbara A. Malone, Executive Director of Human Resources

Mr. Patrick C. Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **XII. Adjournment**