



**School Committee  
Meeting Book**

**April 12, 2023  
7:00 pm**

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



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**AGENDA**

**April 12, 2023 7:00pm  
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;">7:00-7:05</div> |
| II.   | Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports  |  |
| III.  | Superintendent's Report  |  |
| IV.   | Time Scheduled Appointments:   |  |
|       | A. Student Recognition: Middle School Select Music Performance Groups  | 7:05 – 7:20  |
|       | B. 2023-2027 Strategic Plan Draft: Public Hearing  | 7:20 – 7:35  |
| V.    | Curriculum   |  |
| VI.   | Policy   |  |
|       | A. Homework Policy Revision: First Reading   | 7:35 – 8:00  |
|       | B. Charter Schools & School Choice: Report, School Choice Public Hearing, & Vote   | 8:00 – 8:15  |
| VII.  | Finance & Operations   |  |
|       | A. Fiscal Year 2024 Final School Department Appropriated Budget Recommendation: Presentation & Vote  | 8:15 – 8:40  |
|       | B. Food Service Substitute Pay Rate: Vote  | 8:40 – 8:50  |
|       | C. Acceptance of Gifts: Votes  | 8:50 – 8:55  |
| VIII. | Old Business   |  |
| IX.   | New Business   |  |
| X.    | Approval of Minutes  | 8:55 – 9:00  |
| XI.   | Executive Session  | 9:00 – 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 |  |



## **SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

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”)

XII. Adjournment

**Next regular meeting: April 26, 2023**



## **SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **ITEM NO: I      Public Participation**

MEETING DATE: **04/12/23**

#### **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: **04/12/23**  
**A. Student Recognition: Middle School Select Music Performance Groups**

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Oak Middle School (OMS) students recently participated in the Massachusetts Instrumental and Choral Conductors Association (MICCA) Music Concert Festival. The festival included the Select Choir, Select Band, and Select Orchestra. The OMS Select Choir earned a gold medal at the MICCA Festival, the Select Orchestra also received a gold medal, and the Select Band received a silver medal for their performance.

Student musicians from each of these performance groups will join the School Committee, along with teachers Mr. Bryant Clark (Chorus) and Mr. Anthony Ugliandolo (Band). Mr. Joshua Lennox (Orchestra) is unable to participate, as he is performing in an ensemble in Boston.

### **ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

That the School Committee recognize students from various Middle School Select Music Performance Groups.

### **STAFF & STUDENTS AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:**

Dr. Jane Lizotte, Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships & Well-Being  
Thomas O'Toole, Director of Music & Performing Arts  
Bryant Clark, Music Teacher, Oak Middle School  
Anthony Ugliandolo, Music/Band Teacher, Oak Middle School

#### **Oak Middle School Students:**

Graham Liporto, 7th Grade Oak Select Choir  
Jaedyn McCabe, 8th Grade Oak Select Choir

Anya Lai, 8th Grade Oak Select Orchestra  
Angelina Tie, 8th Grade Oak Select Orchestra  
Anna Menyalkin, 8th Grade Oak Select Orchestra  
Cecilia Quintero Johnson, 8th Grade Oak Select Orchestra  
(These students will be playing "Blue Rhythmico" by Kirt Mosier)

Pratham Pai, 7th Grade Oak Select Band (Percussion)  
KC Crosby, 8th Grade Oak Select Band (Trombone)



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**ITEM NO: IV. Time Scheduled Appointments: MEETING DATE: 04/12/23**  
**B. 2023-2027 Strategic Plan Draft: Public Hearing**

**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. At the meeting on March 29 Focused Schools Managing Director Kerry Purcell and School and District Improvement Manager Ashley Santiago provided an update on the work done in the district and shared a draft of the proposed 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. The draft has been posted for viewing and tonight the Committee will hold a public hearing in order to listen to feedback on the draft and on the proposed 2023-2027 Strategic Priorities.

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

That the School Committee hold a public hearing in order to listen to feedback on the draft 2023-2027 Strategic Plan and proposed 2023-2027 Strategic Priorities.

**STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:**

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **V. Curriculum**

MEETING DATE: **04/12/23**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF & STUDENTS AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



## **SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **VI. Policy**

MEETING DATE: **04/12/23**

### **A. Homework Policy Revision: First Reading**

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

This is a first reading of an updated Homework Policy (School Committee Policy #523) for review by the Committee. Beginning prior to the pandemic, and continuing through this year, Ms. Clouter coordinated a thorough process to examine research regarding best homework practices, to review the current policy, make suggestions for improvement, and gather feedback. The draft is enclosed and includes major revisions to the extant policy. Ms. Boucher and Mr. Palitsch are members of the Policy Subcommittee. Dr. Sawyer, Ms. Clouter, and Mr. Bazydlo will present information regarding the particulars of the updated policy draft and be available to answer questions. The draft will be posted for public viewing and feedback in advance of a planned vote by the Committee at the meeting on April 26, 2023.

#### **ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

That the School Committee hear the first reading of the revised policy and take whatever steps it deems necessary in the interests of the Shrewsbury Public Schools.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS/STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:**

Ms. Boucher, Member of Policy Subcommittee  
Mr. Palitsch, Member of Policy Subcommittee  
Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools  
Ms. Amy Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction  
Mr. Todd Bazydlo, Principal, Shrewsbury High School



# Shrewsbury Public Schools

Amy Clouter

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

To: School Committee

Re: Proposed Updated Shrewsbury Public Schools Homework Policy

Date: April 12, 2023

## I. Summary

A district policy is a reflection of shared needs and aspirations. As such, it takes considerable time and effort to craft a good one. Shrewsbury's initial homework policy, which applies to students and educators in grades 1-8, was enacted in 2002 after two years of sustained study. The same spirit of thoughtful consideration went into updating the policy to reflect current research and emerging needs.

## II. Context

A comprehensive review of Shrewsbury's homework policy and practices originated with the adoption of the 2018-2022 district goals. The effort to revisit and update the 2002 homework policy began in earnest in the spring of 2019 when the district elicited feedback from students, families and staff about homework practices using ThoughtExchange, an online survey tool.

At a joint meeting of all School Councils (which consist of parents/caregivers, educators, and administrators) in October of the same year, stakeholders analyzed district survey results. Each school group reflected on the data shared by their community. A comparison of these [notes](#) revealed common values as well as shared hopes.

Results from the survey were reviewed by expert [Dr. Cathy Vatterott](#), professor

emeritus of education at the University of Missouri–St. Louis, to better understand the feedback in the context of the latest research on homework. Ms. Vatterott consulted with district leaders with the goal of aligning homework practices accordingly. Just as importantly, these findings were carefully considered by members of the SPS Homework Committee, a group composed of SPS educators, administrators and families. Specifically, these community stakeholders suggested that a revised homework policy should include five components:

1. A statement of purpose (Students should be assigned meaningful tasks and given chances to practice executive functioning skills.)
2. Guidance regarding assigning homework during weekends and holidays
3. Flexibility for educators regarding type of assignments and for families regarding how due dates are established at different age-levels (e.g., daily vs. weekly)
4. Choice/options (Including enrichment calendar ideas, opportunities to connect or apply learning outdoors / beyond assigned tasks for students and families and allowing students choice of homework task)
5. A recognition of the importance of balancing homework responsibilities with family life / other interests

Subsequently, district leaders and representatives on the Homework Committee held several meetings with the purpose of reviewing current research and revising the existing district policy. After engaging in prolonged learning, self-study and discussion of current best practices in the field, representatives from each grade span agreed that Shrewsbury’s updated policy should apply to students at all levels and that the policy itself should also include a mix of “old” and new components. Many sections of the original homework policy (2002) were found to be helpful, and additional sections were also proposed. The committee agreed that a new policy should include a rationale for why the district supports homework, a definition of homework, information about the purpose of homework, and the roles and responsibilities that

each stakeholder has with regard to homework. The Committee was beginning to draft an updated document in March of 2020 when the pandemic hit.

### **III. Post-Pandemic Progress**

Districtwide discussions about the homework policy resumed in 2022 with the return of in-person learning. With existing time allocations in place, the focus of this next phase centered on including students in grades 9-12 in the policy. Educators at SHS considered various solutions to address student workload, a key factor students reported in their experience of stress.

In the absence of an updated policy, educators suggested that clarity of terms and implementation guidelines would be helpful to students and families , including information about support for students and families struggling with homework. The latest proposed draft includes input solicited at faculty meetings, PTO and/or School Council forums, and Faculty Advisory groups when implementation of these homework guidelines by level was discussed. In addition, policy language was added to better reflect the current use of technology and other tools.

In March of this year a final homework survey was sent to faculty and district administrators at each level. The proposed policy language included in the proposed draft of the updated policy was created to reflect the initial recommendations of the Homework Committee as well as lessons learned from implementing updated homework guidelines at each level.

I look forward to a discussion of the proposed draft at our next meeting.

#### IV. Appendix

##### Research Regarding “Best Practices” on Homework

Alleman, J., Ley, R., Knighton, B., Botwinski, B., & Middlestead, S. (2010, September) [Homework Done Right](#) *Educational Leadership* p 1-5

Cushman, K. (2010, September) [Show Us What Homework’s For](#) *Educational Leadership* p. 74-78

Marzano, R. & Pickering, D. (2007, March) [Special Topic: The Case for and Against Homework](#), *Educational Leadership* p 74-79

Terada, Y. (2018, February 23). [What’s the Right Amount of Homework?](#) Edutopia

Vatterott, C. (2011, November) [Making Homework Central to Learning](#) *Educational Leadership* p 60-64

##### [A Selection of Homework Policies from Area Districts](#)

POLICY FAMILY	EDUCATION PROGRAMS	500
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**DRAFT Policy 523: Homework Policy**  
**Adopted 06/19/02 (Grades 1-8)**

**Amended xx/xx/xx**

**Guiding Principles**

Learning is a responsibility shared between school and home, and completing school-assigned work independently enables students to both practice and demonstrate their skills. The completion of assigned tasks over time strengthens a student’s ability to successfully pursue a goal. Shrewsbury’s homework policy is designed to support and empower children, educators and families as they work together to further student learning.

The school district recognizes and affirms that co-curricular activities and other commitments are important aspects of students’ lives that can significantly improve their physical and mental health and well-being. It is a shared responsibility between home and school to ensure that students have balance in their lives while pursuing educational excellence. This policy is intended to help our students achieve that. Further, the district recognizes that vacations, long weekends, and holidays are opportunities to enjoy family time and fun. In order to protect this time for students and staff, the district will implement a “no homework” calendar that specifies times when homework will not be assigned. In addition to promoting family time and recreation, “no homework” periods can provide a respite from new assignments that allows for a focus on other responsibilities or needs, such as religious observances for students with their families, performing community service, or completing college applications.

The assignment of extra academic tasks for homework shall not be used as a behavior management tool or as a form of punishment. However, students are expected to submit high quality work on time, and may be required to make up for late or missed work in addition to their regular homework assignments. Educators and families are encouraged to communicate in a timely manner when homework completion or quality is not meeting expectations in order to support the student’s improvement.

This homework policy will apply to students in grades 1 through 12. Students in preschool and kindergarten will not have formal homework assigned to them. Educators at the preschool and kindergarten level will provide parents and caregivers with suggestions regarding how to

provide support and enrichment for their child's learning at home, including reading aloud and reading together frequently with their child to foster language and literacy skills.

### *Definition*

Homework is defined as tasks that are assigned by teachers to be completed by students outside of class time, including work done using pencil and paper and/or digital tools. These tasks include, but are not limited to: skills practice; reading; viewing of video content; studying or preparation for quizzes or tests; creating written, audio, or visual content; and completion of reports or projects.

### *Purposes of Homework*

Research affirms the importance of independent reading, skills practice, and the development of learning routines for young children, and the value of regular homework assignments for older students. The purposes of homework in the Shrewsbury Schools are to practice newly taught skills, review previously mastered skills, develop independent study habits, and motivate students to pursue personal goals.

Homework is most effective when it provides students opportunities to prepare, study, or extend their learning. Homework will reflect Massachusetts and Shrewsbury Public Schools curriculum standards and related instructional practices, and where appropriate will promote an understanding of the importance of life-long learning by helping students develop independent and self-directed learning skills, executive functioning skills, and work habits.

Every learner is different, and variability among students should be expected. Homework should encourage personal reflection. Educators are empowered with the flexibility to match assignments to meet a child's individual needs.

## **Homework Policy Components**

### **1. Frequency of Homework Assignments**

All students in Grades 1-12 are expected to spend time on homework on weeknights (Monday through Thursday). Due dates assigned by teachers may vary according to the nature of the assignment; for example, assignments could be due the next day, by the end of the week, or could be part of a longer-term project.

All students in Grades 5-12 may also have homework assigned over the weekend at the discretion of the teacher. Weekend assignments are considered as one night of homework per the time guidelines below. Students in Grades 1-4 will not have weekend assignments. Long-term projects must be assigned so that there are at least two weekends, not including “no homework” dates, before a project is due.

Educators are expected to consider the overall homework load for students when assigning due dates and to collaborate with colleagues to avoid situations where students have multiple projects due or are required to study for multiple tests due in close proximity (such as near the end of grading periods or right before school vacations). Educators will provide advance notice of assignments and due dates to the extent possible in order to assist students and families with planning for homework completion. School administrators will issue specific guidance to teachers regarding the coordination of homework load with consideration for different subjects, departments, etc. at their grade span.

Administrators and educators at each grade span will provide guidance regarding how students can communicate requests for extensions of homework due dates. Reasonable accommodations will be provided through extensions for due dates with regard to absences related to student illness, family obligations, religious observances, etc. Flexibility to respond to other student-specific situations will be provided as appropriate, with the goal of promoting student academic progress in light of personal circumstances. Schools and educators will communicate what supports are available for students who need assistance with completing homework, as well as consequences for students who do not meet homework expectations.

## 2. Time Guidelines By Grade Level

The guidelines below provide for the approximate maximum amount of focused time that homework assignments should take each night. It is understood that different students will require different amounts of time based on a variety of factors. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to speak with their child’s teacher(s) if homework is routinely taking much more or much less time than called for in the guidelines.

Required reading assignments are included within the time allotments at each grade level. Because reading is crucial to academic success, voluntary reading beyond homework time guidelines is encouraged.

*Time Guidelines for Homework by Grade Level:*

- Grade 1: 15 minutes Monday-Thursday
- Grade 2: 20 minutes Monday-Thursday
- Grade 3: 30 minutes Monday-Thursday
- Grade 4: 40 minutes Monday-Thursday
- Grade 5: 50 minutes Monday-Friday
- Grades 6-8: 60-90 minutes Monday-Friday
- Grades 9-10: 20 minutes per course Monday-Friday
- Grades 11-12: 25 minutes per course Monday-Friday

At the High School level, Advanced Placement (AP) Courses follow a national curriculum that includes a final exam. In order to provide opportunities for students taking AP courses to learn, practice, and reinforce concepts and to stay on pace, homework that requires greater amounts of time than found in the guidelines above may be assigned in AP courses.

3. Accommodating Religious Observances by Students

Per School Committee Policy #291, students who miss school or cannot complete homework due to any religious observance will be provided with the opportunity to make up work without penalty. Families are encouraged to communicate with educators regarding any situation where religious observances may impact their student's attendance or homework completion.

4. "No Homework" Dates

To meet the guiding principle regarding "no homework" periods throughout the school year, the superintendent will annually present a recommended calendar of "no homework" dates for the following school year for the approval of the School Committee. The superintendent will base this recommendation on evolving educational practices and needs of the school community. Once the "no homework" calendar is approved, the district administration and school principals

will communicate the specific dates and expectations for “no homework” periods to students, families, and educators, both in advance of each school year and periodically throughout the year.

For “no homework” periods, homework shall not be assigned on the school day prior to the “no homework” date(s), and no assignments will be due and no tests or other assessments that require studying will occur on the school day following the “no homework” date(s).

## 5. Shared Responsibilities

The mission of the Shrewsbury Public Schools urges that the schools work “in partnership with the community.” Such a partnership includes not only students, teachers and families, but also coaches, advisors, and counselors. The spirit of collaboration and collective responsibility to support students is particularly important in the area of homework.

The availability of devices and software enables educators to differentiate homework efficiently. Increased access to learning tools means that all stakeholders share responsibility for maintaining good communication using both traditional and digital means.

Maintaining a strong partnership requires good communication as well as flexibility, because students in different grade spans may need different levels of support in managing their workload and/or schedules.

### Responsibilities of Students

Students are expected to check their planner, device, and/or learning management system (e.g., Schoology, Seesaw, etc.) for assignments, and to reach out to educators if they are unsure about how to access or submit assignments, complete work online, or if they need help managing their assigned workload. Students at the middle and high school levels are expected to use their device, a paper planner and/or the calendar function in the learning management system to manage due dates for major assignments, exams and projects.

On receiving homework, students are expected to work independently to complete it. This means students will, in a manner appropriate for their grade level:

- Ask for help if the assignment is not clear to them.
- Copy all assignments into their planner and/or device, carefully recording due dates and important information.

- Set a time each day to do homework.
- Check work and, if necessary, explain it to an adult.
- Maintain high quality work on homework assignments.
- Take home all necessary resources, such as electronic devices, packets, textbooks, notes and study guides to accurately complete homework.
- Bring the completed homework back to school or submit it electronically as directed when it is due.
- Be responsible for getting assignments when absent from school.
- If experiencing a challenge that is interfering with managing their workload and completing their homework in a quality manner, communicate with the teacher to seek assistance or to request an extension of a homework deadline.
- Be responsible for taking care of, and returning, any borrowed resource materials.
- Demonstrate academic integrity when completing assignments. Students are expected to use technology tools, including artificial intelligence, only in ways that are authorized by the teacher to complete assignments.

### *Responsibilities of Parents/Caregivers*

Homework should not be done by parents and caregivers. However, support at home is critical to student success. For that reason, parents and caregivers have responsibilities, including to:

- Promote a positive attitude toward homework as part of the learning process.
- Understand and reinforce expectations for the quality of student work.
- Provide structure, space, and tools needed to help the child organize for the completion of homework.
- Be available to provide supervision, but do not do the assignment for the child.
- Have an understanding of the amount of assistance appropriate for homework assignments.
- Communicate often with the student about their homework and as necessary with teachers, giving feedback to the teacher when there is a homework concern.

- Communicate with the teacher(s) if there is an individual situation or need regarding the child's homework, in order to partner with the teacher(s) regarding a plan for quality homework completion. This includes providing information about the need for accommodations for religious observations or family obligations; seeking flexibility in order to manage their child's workload so that the student can complete their assignments in a quality way; or other specific circumstances that could affect homework. As a student becomes older and more mature, the parent/caregiver is encouraged to have their child communicate with their teacher about their situation.
- Learn strategies/techniques for helping the student with homework, through sources such as school and teacher communications, parenting workshops, community forums, and PTO presentations.
- Help your child to balance homework with other responsibilities and activities.
- In the interest of maintaining good communication, check the student's planner and/or digital learning management system dashboard regularly.

### *Responsibilities of Educators*

Educators will familiarize parents with the digital tools they use to assign and evaluate homework with the goal of ensuring that all families know how to view student assignments. Educators will use the digital learning management system as required by the district at their grade span to post due dates for major assignments, exams, and projects.

Teachers may assign homework during class time or outside of class time using the district's learning management system, within the guidelines set by their school administration regarding when homework completion can be expected based on the time of day that an assignment is posted.

As they consider options for homework, educators will:

- Communicate expectations to students for how the assignment should be completed and the learning goal(s) being addressed (e.g., practicing a new skill, preparing for an assessment, etc.)
- Consider the amount of time an assignment will require in order to align with the targets for time spent each night on homework, including special projects.
- Establish objectives and guidelines for special projects, including any expectations for

parent/caregiver participation.

- Be clear about the appropriate use of technology tools, including artificial intelligence, so that students and parents/caregivers understand what is expected regarding academic integrity.
- With as much advance notice as possible, communicate all assignments and due dates to students and post them as required, and provide time for students to record them where students use a paper planning tool.
- Model homework strategies and provide exemplars to clarify expectations as appropriate throughout the school year.
- Establish a system for recording and monitoring homework completion and quality, including reading assignments.
- Review homework and provide feedback in a timely manner. Feedback does not require grading or responding in writing to every homework assignment; educators are expected to communicate frequently enough to signal whether the quality of the homework is meeting expectations and whether there are concerns about missing assignments or late submissions, so that the student has an opportunity to improve.
- Ensure that resources and materials required for homework projects are easily obtained by the student, and work with families and school administration as needed to ensure that no student will be unable to complete an assignment due to lack of financial resources.
- Provide ways for parents and caregivers to communicate with teachers about homework, using translation tools where appropriate.
- Notify parents/caregivers when poor homework quality or missing assignments are cause for concern, using translation tools where appropriate.
- Assign long term projects so that the completion time includes more than one weekend (not including “no homework” dates), and is not limited to a school vacation period.
- Discuss homework practices with colleagues and align them with these policy guidelines; while it is not expected that homework assignments are the same in different classes, the volume and types of homework assigned to students in the same grade level or course should be consistent across different teachers and teacher teams.
- Work with students to provide flexibility in order to promote quality completion of assignments while responding to student needs. This may include extending deadlines

where warranted and using strategies to accommodate individual situations.

- Follow the guidelines in the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) and meet all legal requirements of a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Accommodation Plan that may be related to homework.

Student voice is important. For this reason, educators are strongly encouraged to periodically consider student feedback regarding the homework they assign and to include options where students have opportunities for self-direction where appropriate.

Having choice develops motivation and purpose. Where appropriate, give students responsibility for setting and monitoring progress toward personal learning goals and provide choice of topics, methods, tools, etc. to demonstrate understanding and empower students.

### *Responsibilities of Leadership*

District and school leaders, including the superintendent and assistant superintendents, principals, assistant principals, directors, and curriculum coordinators/instructional coaches are responsible for supporting the implementation of this policy; monitoring how effectively students, educators, and families are in meeting their roles and responsibilities listed above; and ensuring that district practices are aligned with this policy and implemented with fidelity.

Leaders will:

- Communicate the following information annually to students, families, and staff and provide reminders at appropriate times throughout the school year: the guidance and expectations found in this homework policy; the “no homework” calendar; and the information in School Committee Policy 291 regarding accommodations to make up work when students miss school for a religious observance.
- Ensure that homework is consistent with the educational goals of the Shrewsbury Public Schools.
- Facilitate communication between general education, English language education, special education, and subject specialist teachers concerning homework.
- Support educators in the implementation of the homework guidelines in this policy and best educational practices regarding homework.
- Consider the impact of homework on students' overall educational program in the context of evolving research on best practices.

- Support the need for balance among the many learning activities in the life of a student.
- Facilitate the communication process between the school and home and help maintain the home/school partnership regarding homework.

This policy will be reviewed within five years of its effective date.



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **VI. Policy**

MEETING DATE: **04/12/23**

**B. Charter Schools & School Choice: Report, School Choice Public  
Hearing, & Vote**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Mr. Collins will provide enrollment and financial information relative to Charter Schools, School Choice, Virtual Schools, and students who are homeschooled in the district. The report is enclosed.

The School Committee is required to hold an annual School Choice Hearing and vote on whether or not they wish to accept any School Choice students from other communities for the upcoming school year. Tonight's public hearing will satisfy the requirements of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, Section 12B which requires a public hearing prior to a potential School Committee vote to not participate in or to otherwise restrict the provisions of the interdistrict School Choice program. The Committee will vote on whether or not to participate in School Choice following this public hearing.

Given space constraints at the secondary schools, the Shrewsbury School Committee Priorities & Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Development included an assumption for administration that no new School Choice seats would be voted by the School Committee for approval in the initial FY24 School Department Budget. The recommendation for 2023-2024 is to not open any new seats for School Choice students due to space limitations at upper grade levels.

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

That the School Committee hear the report and hold a public hearing in order to listen to feedback on the topic of the potential for participation in interdistrict School Choice in the 2023-2024 school year.

That the Committee vote to not participate in interdistrict school choice for the 2023-2024 school year.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS/STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:**

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

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

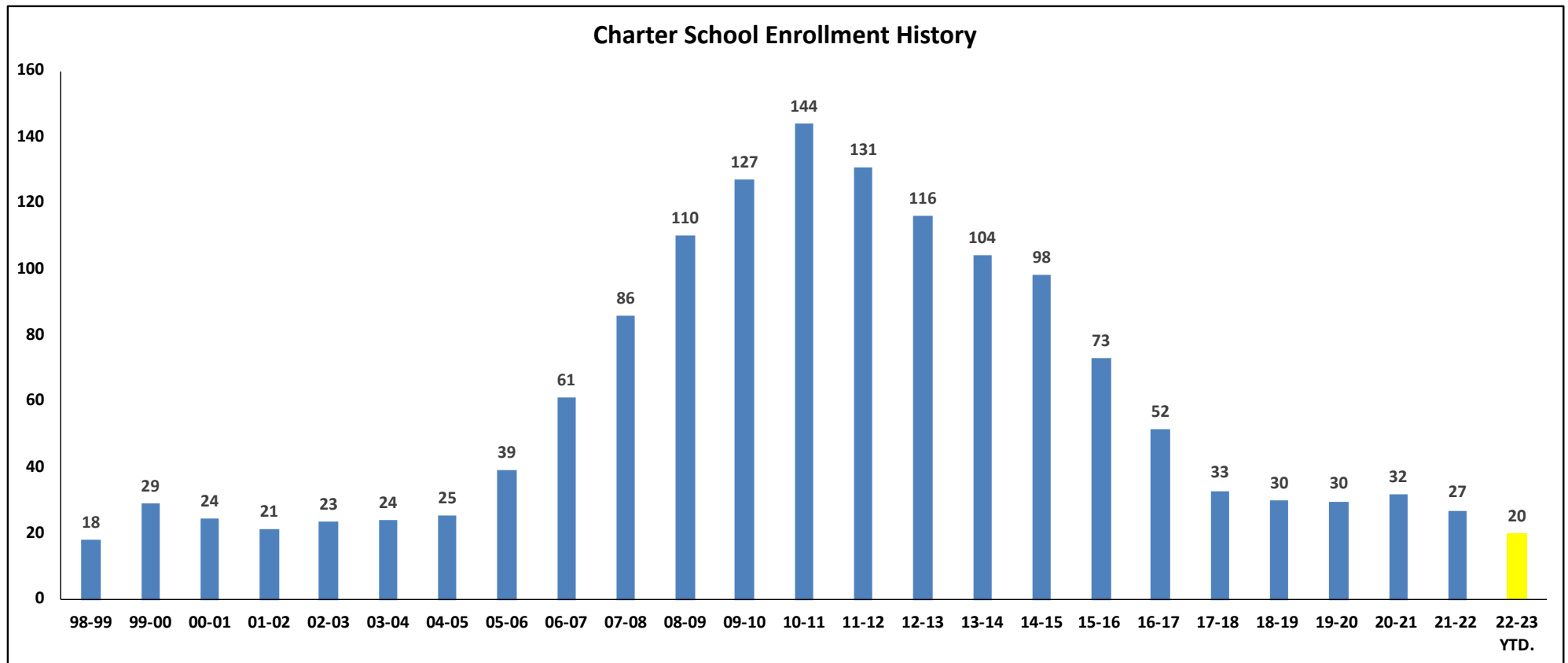
# School Choice, Charter School Enrollment and Homeschool Students

Patrick C. Collins  
12 April, 2023

# Topics

- Enrollment and finances related to:
  - Charter Schools
  - School Choice
    - Virtual Schools
  - Homeschool Students
- School Choice Hearing for 2023-2024 school year
- School Choice Vote for 2023-2024 school year

# Charter School Enrollment History: Shrewsbury Resident School-Age Children



# Charter School Enrollment by School 2022-2023 [as of Dec. 2022]

- Enrollment of the 20 students by school:
  - Advanced Math & Science Academy [Marlboro]
    - 16 students
  - Abby Kelley Foster Charter School [Worcester]
    - 3 students
  - Learning First School [Worcester]
    - 1 student

# FY23 Charter School Students: Grade Levels

FDK	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12		Total
		1			2	1	1	8	2	3	1	1		20
						K-4	1	5%						
						5-6	3	15%						
						7-8	9	45%						
						9-12	7	35%						
							20							

# Current FY23 Charter School Tuition & Reimbursements

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Office of District and School Finance

Preliminary FY23 Charter School Tuition Payments and Reimbursements for Sending Districts (Q3)

		DISTRICT PAYMENT					STATE REIMB TO DISTRICT			NET DISTRICT COST	STATE REIMBURSEMENT SUMMARY						STATE REIMB AT FULL FUNDING
LEA	DISTRICT	FTE	LOCAL FOUNDATION TUITION	LOCAL TRANSPOR- TATION TUITION	LOCAL FACILITIES TUITION	LOCAL PAYMENT	FACILITIES REIMB	100/60/40 TRANS- ITION REIMB	TOTAL CHARTER REIMB		FACILITIES REIMB	FTE FOR PRIVATE/ SIBLING/ HOME- SCHOOLED	STATE REIMB FOR PRIVATE/ SIBLING/ HOME- SCHOOLED	FACILITIES FOR PRIVATE/ HOME- SCHOOL/ SIBLING	100/60/40 TRANS- ITION REIMB	TOTAL STATE REIMB	
271	SHREWSBURY	20.0	296,952	0	21,758	318,710	21,758	(40)	21,718	296,992	21,758	0.0	0	0	(40)	21,718	21,718
999	STATE TOTALS	45,868.5	820,269,077	4,640,529	49,614,902	874,524,508	49,614,902	136,537,242	186,152,144	688,372,364	49,828,878	196.6	4,071,344	213,976	136,537,242	190,223,488	190,223,488
																	100.0%

► Annual average cost per pupil is \$15,936 per student for FY23.

In FY23 the state did fully fund Charter School Reimbursement account per their reimbursement model.

# Tuition, Aid, & Net Cost History

► The fundamental objection to the funding scheme is that when a student attends a charter school, the average cost in dollars is diverted to that school. Yet the marginal cost for us to educate is close to \$0 because most of the costs to educate are fixed costs.

► Returning all the charter students would decrease costs to the town by \$408K in FY23 as students would be “absorbed” into the district across all grade levels.

## Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

OFFICE OF DISTRICT AND SCHOOL FINANCE

Historical Sending District Charter School FTE, Tuition, and Reimbursements, FY96 to present\*

*Select your district using the drop down menu:*

271 SHREWSBUR ▼	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
FTE	98.19	73.17	52.00	33.77	30.24	29.81	31.84	27.05
Tuition	1,221,904	923,221	693,667	447,475	421,564	460,898	457,622	408,666
Facilities Aid	85,270	63,281	45,963	29,507	25,957	27,950	29,061	25,372
Transition & Other Aid	81,365	-71	0	0	0	30,999	6,722	4,961
Total Aid	166,635	63,210	45,963	29,507	25,957	58,949	35,783	30,333
Net Cost to District	1,055,269	860,011	647,704	417,968	395,607	401,949	421,839	378,333

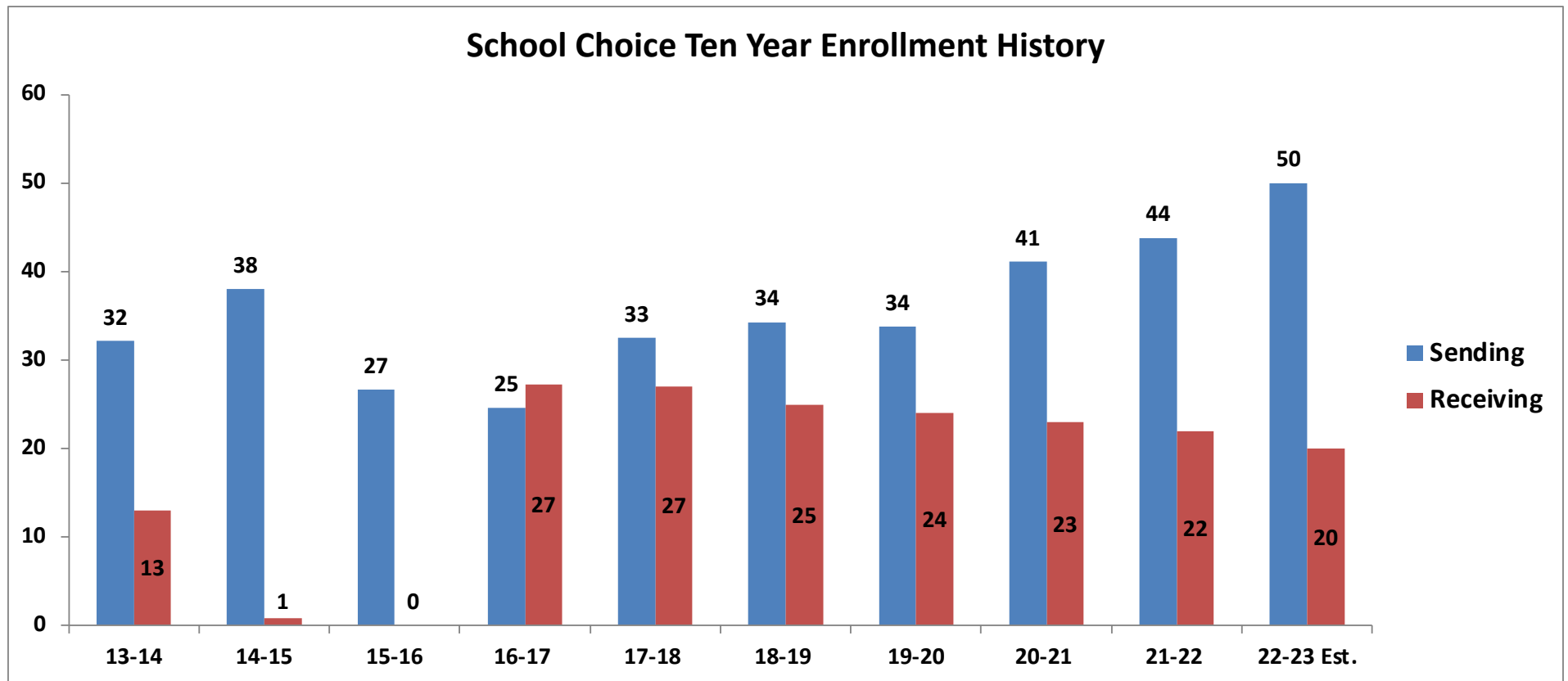
# 2023-2024 Pre-Enrollment

- Projected Enrollment of 21 students by school:
  - Advanced Math & Science Academy [Marlboro]
    - 16 students
  - Abby Kelley Foster Charter School [Worcester]
    - 4 students
  - Worcester Cultural Academy Charter School [Worcester]
    - 1 student

# School Choice History

- The last time the School Committee voted to accept School Choice students was in 2016.
- It was limited to a total 30 students spread across four grade levels.
- The primary reason was financial due to a lack of resources to maintain programs and staff.

# School Choice History: Enrollment



# 2022-2023 School Choice: Sending Students by Grade Level

On the following slides is a headcount of all the students attending a School Choice placement in another district.

The decision to attend another School Choice receiving district is sometimes related to parental employment situations, size of school, or other issues not related to comparative quality of S.P.S. versus other school districts.

# FY23 School Choice Sending Students: Grade Levels

FDK	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12		Total
		2	1		1	5	3	6	9	3	6	14		50
						K-4	3	6%						
						5-6	6	12%						
						7-8	9	18%						
						9-12	32	64%						
							50							

**Note:** Since we began offering tuition-free, full day kindergarten, there have been no kindergarten students in School Choice Program.

# School Choice Sending ['22-23]: Destination Districts

Receiving District	Grade
Auburn	10
Berlin-Boylston	06
Berlin-Boylston	08
Berlin-Boylston	09
Berlin-Boylston	10
Berlin-Boylston	12
Grafton	12
Uxbridge	09
Uxbridge	12
Uxbridge	12
Uxbridge	12
West Boylston	08
West Boylston	09
Worcester	02
Worcester	03
Worcester	05
Worcester	09
Worcester	11
Worcester	11
Worcester	12
Worcester	12

[illegible]

# School Choice 10-year History: FTE & Tuition [Sending & Receiving]

FY	Receiving FTEPupils	Tuition		Sending FTEPupils	Tuition
2013	13	\$ 69,167		28.61	\$ 144,191
2014	13	\$ 68,725		32.14	\$ 185,881
2015	0.81	\$ 4,989		38.01	\$ 220,220
2016	0	\$ -		26.69	\$ 162,855
2017	27.27	\$ 139,913		24.61	\$ 139,287
2018	27	\$ 145,604		32.5	\$ 230,088
2019	25	\$ 141,547		34.27	\$ 243,040
2020	24	\$ 131,092		33.84	\$ 247,941
2021	23	\$ 119,226		41.14	\$ 295,750
2022	20	\$ 105,229		43.84	\$ 330,983

- Tuition is \$5,000 per student per year and pro-rated by month if not enrolled for full-year.
- A cost “increment” is applied for special education students depending upon services provided.

# Virtual School Enrollment

- A subset of School Choice Program
  - Currently have 28 students enrolled at the The Education Cooperative Connections Academy [TECCA]
  - Currently have 1 student enrolled at the Greater Commonwealth Virtual School
- Virtual school enrollment is 58% of all Shrewsbury School Choice students
- Tuition for Virtual Schools is \$9,259 per student.

# Students in School Choice: Attending a State Virtual School

	School Year					
	<i>17-18</i>	<i>18-19</i>	<i>19-20</i>	<i>20-21</i>	<i>21-22</i>	<i>22-23 YTD</i>
<b>Enrollment</b>	17	14	16	22	24	29

# School Choice Receiving 2022-2023

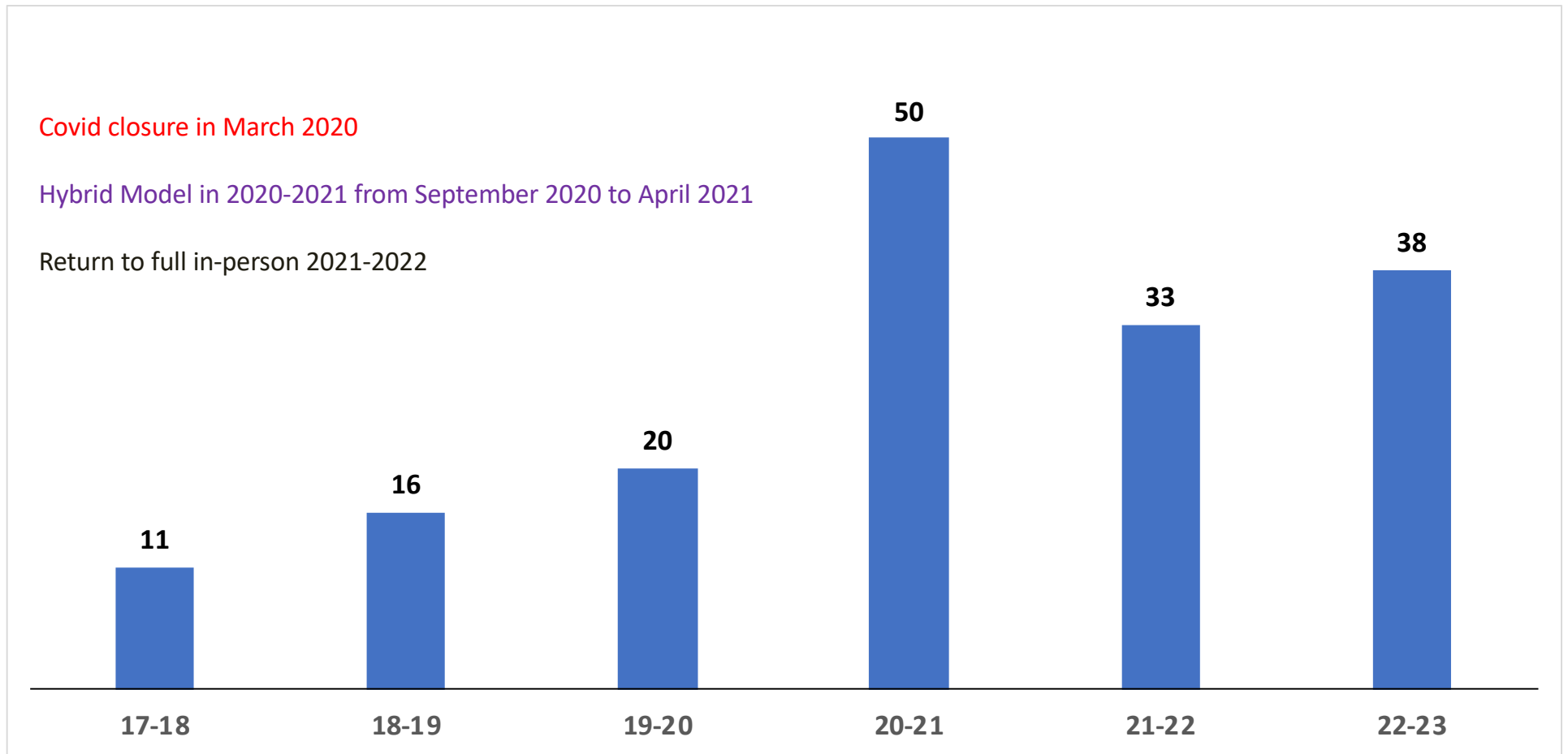
- Worcester= 15
- Wachusett= 1
- Boylston= 2
- Millbury= 1
- Westboro= 1

	<i>Grade 8</i>	<i>Grade 9</i>	<i>Grade 10</i>	<i>Grade 11</i>	<i>Grade 12</i>		<i>Total</i>
Enrollment	5	0	4	2	9		20

Expected School Choice revenue for FY23 is \$105,229. It's \$5,000 per student plus \$5,229 additional funding for two students with Individual Education Plans.

- Total= 20

# Homeschool Students



# Summary Notes

- Charter School enrollment has **declined** which is a significant net benefit to Town of Shrewsbury/School Dept. finances.
  - State is currently fulfilling its reimbursement commitment per their reimbursement model.
- School Choice sending enrollment **increased** for '22-23.
  - Virtual School enrollment has increased since Covid-19.

# Summary Notes

- School committee, by law, must vote each year to accept or not accept School Choice students into S.P.S.
  - The recommendation for 2023-2024 is to NOT open any new seats for School Choice students due to space limitations at upper grade levels.
  - Once students are enrolled at any grade they have a right to stay through Grade 12.

# Final Note

- The general public policy of creating student choices in public education is one that has *“creating a competitive environment”* at its core.
- To this end, the community’s continued investment in our district is necessary to maintain the high-quality educational and co-curricular programs at all levels.
- This will lead to student retention and forestall the outflow of tuition dollars to other districts.

# School Choice Hearing & Vote

- The School Committee is required to hold an annual School Choice Hearing [scheduled for tonight] and vote on whether or not they wish to accept any School Choice students from other communities for the upcoming school year, 2023-2024.



## **SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **VII. Finance & Operations**

MEETING DATE: **04/12/23**

**A. Fiscal Year 2024 Final School Department Appropriated Budget  
Recommendation: Presentation & Vote**

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Dr. Sawyer and Mr. Collins presented the Superintendent's initial recommendation for the Fiscal Year 2024 School Department Budget at the meeting on February 15, 2023. Since that time, the school district has made updated cost projections, and the School Committee has suggested areas for strategic investment to address key needs identified through the strategic planning process. Dr. Sawyer and Mr. Collins will provide an updated recommendation for a budget plan for the School Department Appropriated Budget for Fiscal Year 2024 which the School Committee will be asked to vote to recommend to Town Meeting. A memo from Dr. Sawyer and an updated line-item budget will be provided under separate cover.

### **ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

That the School Committee vote to recommend a Fiscal Year 2024 Town-Appropriated School Department Budget of \$83,086,622 as presented for Town Meeting approval.

### **STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:**

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

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



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **VII. Finance & Operations**

MEETING DATE: **04/12/23**

**B. Food Service Substitute Pay Rate: Vote**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

In the current tight labor market the district's Food Service Department has had difficulty maintaining a pool of on-call substitute workers. The last time the substitute rate for food service workers was adjusted was June 2021. In the enclosed memo, Mr. Collins recommends increasing the current rate in order to maintain a pay rate that is attractive enough to keep a ready pool of candidates available and willing to work when needed.

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

That the School Committee vote to increase the food service substitute hourly pay rate from \$14.25 to \$15.50 effective April 17, 2023.

**STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:**

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



# Shrewsbury Public Schools

Patrick C. Collins

Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations

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6 April 2023

To: School Committee

Subj: RECOMMENDATION TO INCREASE FOOD SERVICE SUBSTITUTE HOURLY PAY RATE

## **Background**

As with other industries and workplace environments, our Food Service Department has had difficulty maintaining a pool of on-call substitute workers. The labor market for food service workers in both retail and institutional marketplaces has changed considerably since the onset of Covid 19 with many employers experiencing shortages. On many days, we have been unable to fill vacancies due to staff illness and this impacts the efficiency and quality of our daily meal services.

One leverage point we have is to maintain a pay rate that is attractive enough to keep a ready pool of candidates available and willing to work when we need them.

The state minimum wage [which does not apply to us as a municipality] is \$15.00 per hour.

The last time our substitute rate for food service workers was adjusted was June 2021.

As a reminder, the Food Service Department operates exclusively on the revenues they generate through serving breakfast and lunch meals and the a la carte sales.

Raising this rate will have no negative impact on the district operating budget. Further, there is sufficient funding in the Food Service Account to fund this increase.

## **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the School Committee vote to increase the food service substitute hourly pay rate from \$14.25 to \$15.50 effective April 17, 2023.



## **SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**ITEM NO: VII. Finance & Operations**  
**C. Acceptance of Gifts: Votes**

**MEETING DATE: 04/12/23**

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Per School Committee Policy 911, gifts of \$5,000 or more must be formally accepted by the School Committee.

WIN Waste Innovations, formerly Wheelabrator Technologies, has offered to make a donation of \$35,000, with \$17,500 allocated for supporting the start up of the Reaching Independence through Supported Employment (RISE) Program, and \$17,500 allocated for supporting ongoing and future efforts for student career exploration activities and programs. The district would like to acknowledge Mr. Don Musial, Director of Ash Monofills, for his ongoing and generous support of Shrewsbury Public Schools.

The Class of 2022 has offered to make a donation of \$7,500 to support the replacement of mountain bikes as part of the Lifetime Fitness Physical Education Program at Shrewsbury High School.

### **ACTIONS RECOMMENDED:**

That the School Committee vote to accept a gift of \$35,000 from WIN Waste Innovations, with \$17,500 allocated for supporting the start up of the Reaching Independence through Supported Employment (RISE) Program, and \$17,500 allocated for supporting ongoing and future efforts for student career exploration activities and programs.

That the School Committee vote to accept a gift of \$7,500 from the Shrewsbury High School Class of 2022 to support the replacement of mountain bikes as part of the Lifetime Fitness Physical Education Program at Shrewsbury High School.

### **STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:**

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools  
Mr. Patrick C. Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations  
Dr. Jane Lizotte, Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships & Well-Being



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **VIII. Old Business**

MEETING DATE: **04/12/23**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

MEMBERS/STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **IX. New Business**

MEETING DATE: **04/12/23**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

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

MEETING DATE: **04/12/23**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on March 29, 2023, are enclosed.

**ACTION RECOMMENDED:**

That the Committee accept the minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on March 29, 2023.

**STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:**

Ms. Lynsey Heffernan, Chairperson

Mr. Jon Wensky, Secretary

**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
100 MAPLE AVENUE  
SHREWSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS**

**MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday, March 29, 2023**

Present: Ms. Lynsey Heffernan, Chairperson; Mr. Jason Palitsch, Vice Chairperson; Mr. Jon Wensky, Secretary; Ms. Erin Boucher; Ms. Sandra Fryc; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; Ms. Amy B. Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment; Ms. Meg Belsito, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services; and Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools.

A complete audio/visual recording of this meeting is available on the Shrewsbury Public Schools website.

The meeting was convened by Ms. Heffernan at 6:30 pm.

**I. Public Participation**

**None.**

**II. Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports**

Ms. Heffernan thanked the Shrewsbury Finance Committee and Town Administrators for facilitating recent Public Hearings at which the School Committee and Shrewsbury Public School (SPS) Administrators presented Fiscal Year 2024 budget information.

**III. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Sawyer reported SPS was not affected by swatting (false 911 calls) that impacted several nearby districts the prior day and described the work being done at SPS to plan for any potential future similar incidents; displayed a copy of the most recent Shrewsbury School Journal and expressed appreciation to all contributors; and congratulated Maj. Howard W. Beal Principal Christian Girardi - who was in the audience - on his appointment to the role of Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations beginning July 1, 2023.

**IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:**

**A. Student Recognition: SHS Girls Ice Hockey State Champions**

Shrewsbury High School (SHS) Principal Todd Bazydlo, Head Coach Frank Panarelli, Assistant Coach Joe Joubert, and Girls Ice Hockey Senior Captains Maddie Mrva, Taylor Ryder, Katherin Vona, and Rachel Bunsick addressed the Committee and shared their perspectives on the team's successful season and State Championship win. Mr. Bazydlo shared a video from Athletic Director Jay Costa (who was away at the Massachusetts State Athletic Directors Conference and unable to attend the meeting) and Westborough Public Schools Athletic Director Johanna DiCarlo congratulating the team. Team members and coaches were invited up to be recognized by the Committee and Dr. Sawyer and were presented with certificates. Dr. Sawyer added that the cooperative team included players from Westborough High School, Milford High School, and Wachusett Regional High School.

### **B. State of the District: Report**

In his report, Dr. Sawyer addressed: the district's use of technology (trends, challenges, opportunities); its academic health; student mental, behavioral, and emotional health; Diversity, Belonging, Inclusion, & Equity (DBIE) and how it supports educational excellence and well-being; the district's financial and operational health; how strengthening systems (safety/security, professional development, etc.) empowers people; and feedback themes gathered from multiple focus group meetings in schools with over 200 students in grades 3 through 12, asking them what is working well in our schools and what could be better. One key theme was the importance of making connections with and among students.

Committee members expressed appreciation for the financial predictability provided by the 2021 Override Agreement, student access to district iPads, and the transparency of the report relative to assessing both strengths and challenges in the district.

### **C. Draft of Strategic Plan for 2023-2027: Report**

Focused Schools Managing Director Kerry Purcell and School and District Improvement Manager Ashley Santiago gave the report, which noted the process timeline to date, provided data highlights, and summarized feedback from all stakeholders by theme. They described the three identified Commitments (Educational Excellence, Enhanced Well-Being of All, Optimization of Resources), detailed the Strategic Priorities supporting each, and provided sample action steps that could be utilized to assess their impacts. Ms. Purcell and Ms. Santiago concluded the report by sharing recommended next steps and providing a suggested timeline through June 2024.

Ms. Boucher noted the importance of utilizing the proposed check-in tools, and Ms. Fryc suggested that continual course improvement and assessment be included as an action step.

### **D. Mental Health and Clinical Services Resources: Report**

Ms. Belsito provided introductory remarks and introduced presenters Jamie Millett, Director of Counseling and Mental Health Services, and Felicitie Boisvert, District Social Worker. In their report, Ms. Millett and Ms. Boisvert provided information on: the most recent (2021) SHS Regional Youth Health Survey (RYHS); SPS Clinical Department staffing and student/staff ratios; Behavioral Health Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), and shared associated data by tier and by level; the Bridging Resilient Youth in Transitions (BRYT) program, and shared data by school (Sherwood and Oak Middle Schools; Shrewsbury High School); Emergency Responses Services and shared data by level; the work of Clinical Coordinators and shared referral, caseload, and Clinical Rounds data; the role of the District Social Worker (Ms. Boisvert), shared referral data by type, and provided data on homeless students and students in foster care in the district; the procedure for implementing universal screening tools and the rationale for utilizing them; district participation in the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) Social Emotional Behavioral (SEB) Academy; Trauma Informed Education Training that was provided during Paraprofessional Professional Development and at elementary faculty meetings; Mental Health & Athletics/After School Activities; community partnerships; and future recommendations. They concluded the report by sharing resources with the community for identifying behavioral changes and seeking help for mental health emergencies.

Committee members and Dr. Sawyer expressed appreciation for the recently added roles and staff who are providing much-needed mental health support and clinical services in the district.

### **E. School Nursing: Report**

Ms. Belsito provided introductory remarks and Director of Nursing Noelle Freeman gave the report, which included historical (since 2018-2019) and current year-to-date data on student visits to the Health

Office by type; noted the average (for the past five years) return to class rate was 95%; and compared Massachusetts Department of Public Health school nurse/student recommended ratios with those at SPS, by school. In response to a question from Ms. Fryc, Ms. Freeman advised the number of students seen by nurses for mental health issues had stayed consistent since additional mental health staff were added, probably because nurses' offices are always available and are often the first point of contact for students seeking help.

## **V. Curriculum**

None.

## **VI. Policy**

None.

## **VII. Finance & Operations**

### **A. Public hearing on FY24 Budget**

Ms. Heffernan opened the Public Hearing at 9:19 pm.

Christa Duprey spoke and asked for clarification on information (including funding sources, operating costs, transportation, fundraising, corporate partnerships) about the RISE (Reaching Independence through Supported Education) program presented at the prior School Committee meeting (March 15, 2023).

After determining there were no additional Public Hearing participants (9:28 pm) Ms. Heffernan referred Ms. Duprey to the meeting materials presented on the RISE program at the March 15, 2023 School Committee meeting that are posted on the SPS website. Dr. Sawyer provided additional information on funding and funding sources for the program, and Mr. Collins advised that three vans (one is currently on order) will be utilized for transportation to meet the needs of the RISE program.

### **B. Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Update**

Mr. Collins provided a current status on COVID relief grant funds and on Town Meeting (Appropriated Budget) funds, noting that a stable, moderate surplus (\$264,793) is projected for June 30, 2023. Mr. Collins went on to share more detailed information on those budget categories (including Substitute Teachers, tuition reimbursements, and transportation) with projected variances that are greater than 5% (over or under). In response to a question from Ms. Fryc, Mr. Collins advised that March (2023) represented the first month of the current school year that substitute costs were on par with the same month of the previous school year (other months in the current year were all higher than the same month in the previous year).

## **VIII. Old Business**

None.

## **IX. New Business**

None.

## **X. Approval of Minutes**

Without objections from the Committee, the minutes from the School Committee Workshops held on March 15 and March 22, 2023, and from the School Committee Meeting held on March 15, 2023, were accepted as distributed.

## **XI. Executive Session**

Ms. Heffernan requested 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”) 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”); 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” – (“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. On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Boucher, on a roll call vote:

Ms. Fryc, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Ms. Boucher, yes; and Ms. Heffernan, yes; the School Committee voted to adjourn to Executive Session at 9:54 pm.

## **XII. Adjournment**

On a motion by Ms. Fryc, seconded by Ms. Boucher, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 10:09pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Palitsch, yes; Ms. Boucher, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; and Ms. Heffernan, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

SHS Girls Varsity Ice Hockey Roster

Superintendent’s State of the District Report Slide Presentation

2023-2027 Strategic Plan Draft

2023-2027 Strategic Plan Draft Slide Presentation

Mental Health & Clinical Services Report

Mental Health & Clinical Services Slide Presentation

School Nursing Report

School Nursing Slide Presentation

Fiscal Year 23 Budget Update

Set(s) of minutes as referenced above



## SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

ITEM NO: **XI. Executive Session**

MEETING DATE: **04/12/23**

- 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**