



# **Shrewsbury Public Schools FY25 Budget Recommendation**

**March 23, 2024**

Sandy Fryc, School Committee Chair and Finance Subcommittee

Lynsey M. Heffernan, School Committee Finance Subcommittee

Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent

Christian A. Girardi, Asst. Superintendent for Finance & Operations

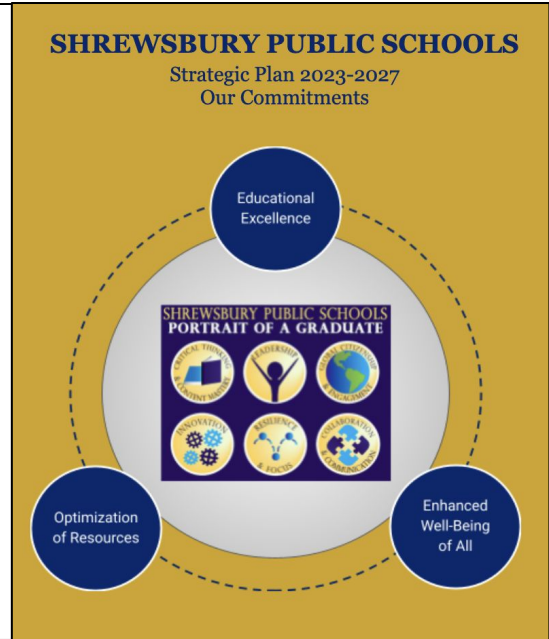


# Shrewsbury Public Schools: Strategic Plan 2023-2027

-Shrewsbury Public Schools is completing year one of a five year Strategic Plan (2023-2027)

-The FY25 Budget Recommendation is reflective of the Strategic Plan's Three Commitments:

- Commitment to **Educational Excellence**
- Commitment to the **Enhanced Well-Being of All**
- Commitment to **Optimization of Resources**





# Accomplishments

**Educating our expanding  
EL population**



*ELE Teacher Allison Berkeley and SHS EL students completing a lab in Biology.*

**Shrewsbury community working  
together to support our emergency  
shelter students**



**Shrewsbury is a Special Olympics  
'Unified Champion' district**



**Literacy Initiative**





# Accomplishments



**Staff Professional Development around supporting behavioral and mental health needs**



**Maple and Main**



**RISE**  
*Reaching Independence through Supported Employment*





# Accomplishments

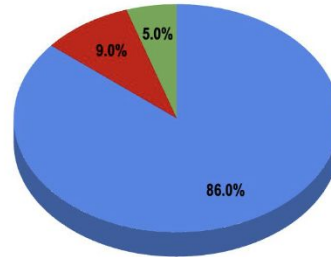


**New school start & end times**

## Future plans for SHS students

### Class of 2023 Future Plans

- 4-Year Colleges
- 2-Year Colleges
- Military, Undecided, Employment



**Expanding Career & Technical Education for SHS students**



# Cost Efficient & Cost Effective

- Over time, Shrewsbury Public Schools has consistently ranked among the top public school districts in Massachusetts on measures such as MCAS state testing, AP testing, etc. (and Massachusetts has consistently been ranked at the top of national rankings for public education)
- Twice, a policy think tank (Center for American Progress) conducted a national study on public school districts “return on investment” regarding performance and cost, and in both cases Shrewsbury was in the top 2% nationally out of over 7,000 districts
- In 2024, Niche ranked Shrewsbury 12th in its ranking of “Best School Districts in Massachusetts”
- The Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials recently presented the Donald Johnson *Operational and Cost Efficiency Award* to Shrewsbury Public Schools, recognizing the great success the school district has achieved in creating a variety of innovative ways to generate alternative revenue streams to fund its operations beyond local appropriations and state aid

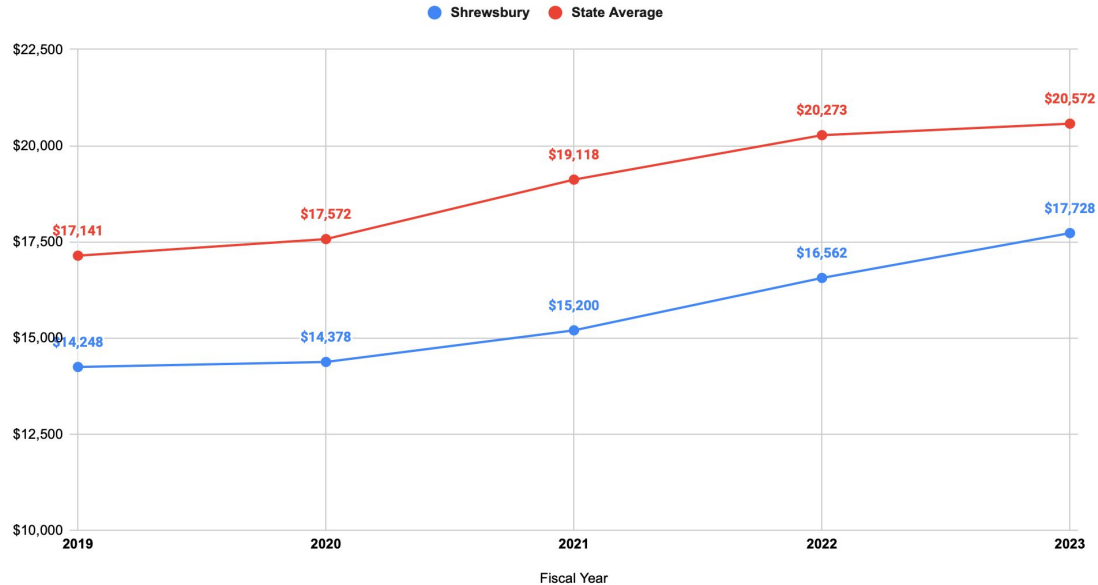


# Per Pupil Expenditure



# Per Pupil Expenditure Data

Shrewsbury vs State Average- 5 Year Trend



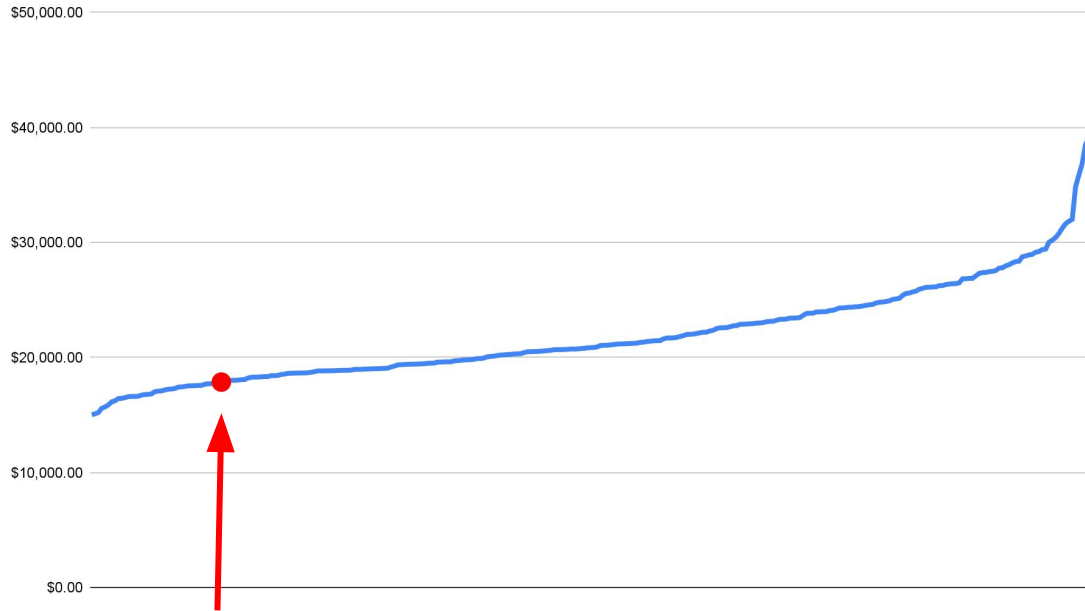
**FY23- \$ below average (\$2,844) / % below average (14%)**





# Total Per Pupil Expenditure: Statewide Array

FY23 Per Pupil Expenditure- Statewide Array



**Ranked  
267 of 314  
districts**

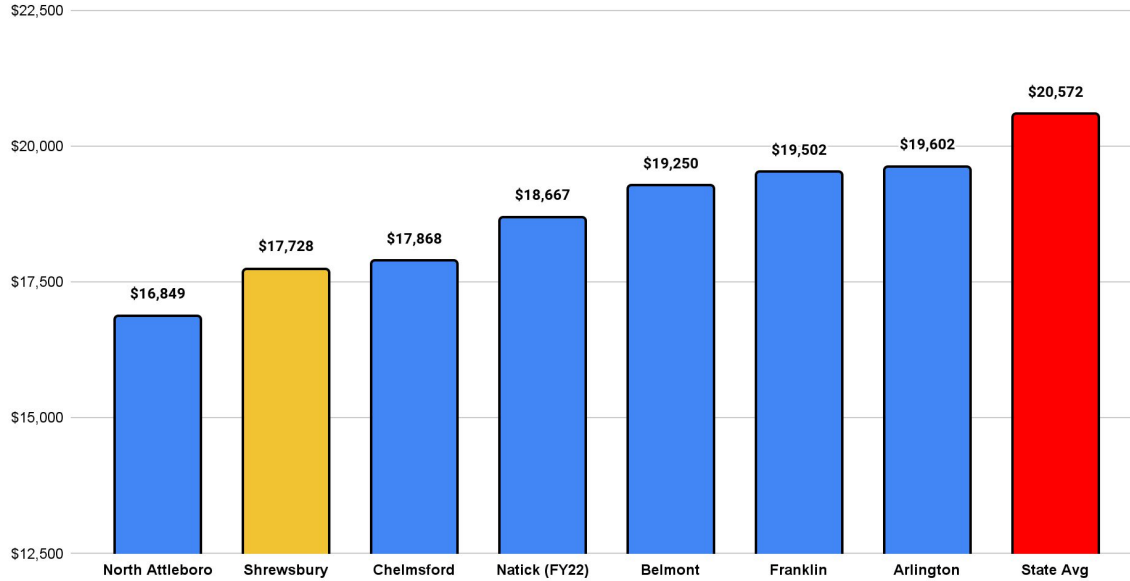
**Bottom  
15th  
Percentile**

**Shrewsbury- \$17,728**



# Average Cost Per Pupil Comparison: ClearGov Determined Comparable Communities

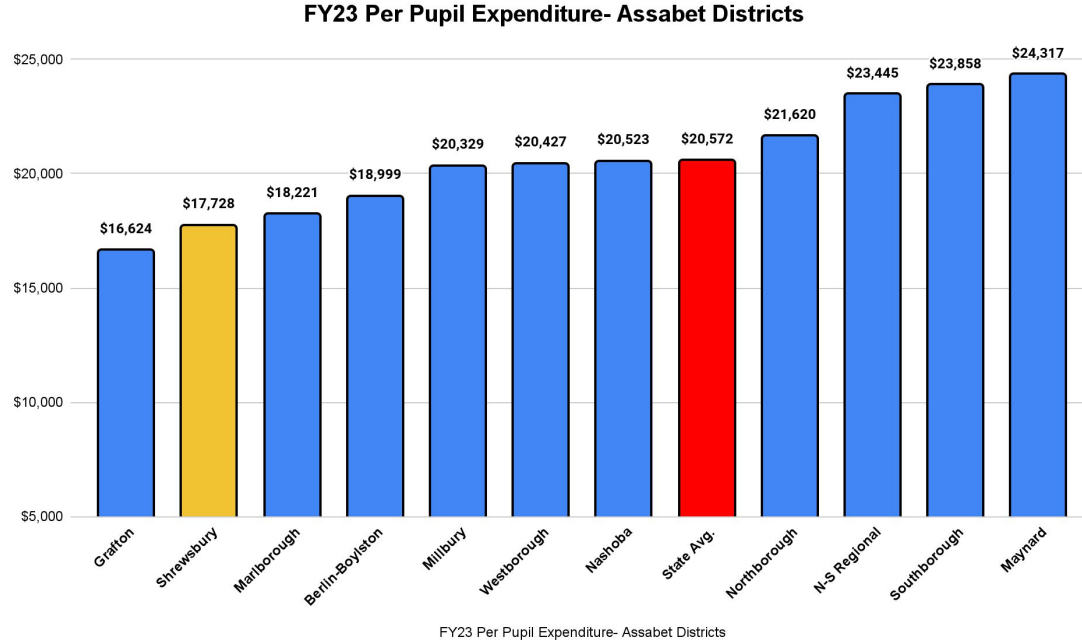
FY23 Per Pupil Expenditure- Communities with Similar Socio-Economics per ClearGov



Communities with Similar Socio-Economics per ClearGov



# Average Cost Per Pupil Comparison: Assabet Valley Collaborative Districts



Source: MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education



# State Comparisons

- For FY23, Shrewsbury **ranks #267 of 314 school districts** reported thus far  
[Data for 15 districts is not yet published]
  - This is the bottom 15<sup>th</sup> percentile
  - As a point of reference, in FY21, the last fiscal year prior to the most recent override, Shrewsbury ranked #304 of 319 reported school districts (bottom 5<sup>th</sup> percentile)
- Shrewsbury **ranks #73 of 351 Commonwealth communities** in income per capita at \$65,138
  - This is the top 21<sup>st</sup> percentile
  - State average income per capita is \$53,161
  - State median income per capita is \$42,470
- Shrewsbury **ranks #54 of 351 Commonwealth communities** in equalized property valuation at \$7.22 billion (last updated 2022)
  - This is the top 15<sup>th</sup> percentile
  - State average equalized property valuation is \$4.51 billion
  - State median equalized property valuation is \$2.15 billion
- The state uses income and equalized property valuation as variables to determine Chapter 70 funding for education; Shrewsbury will remain a “minimum aid district,” with an increase of a minimum of \$30 per pupil in additional Chapter 70 aid.



# Per Pupil Expenditure Conclusions

- The different data sets all affirm Shrewsbury Public Schools is a comparatively very “cost-efficient” organization
- If Shrewsbury were spending at the state average per pupil, its expenditures on public schools would have to increase by \$18.3M



# **FY25 Budget Proposal**



## Updated Fiscal Year 2025 Superintendent's Recommendation School Department Town-Appropriated Budget

*Original:* \$86,825,520

*Updated:* \$86,515,520

*Increase over FY24:*

*Original:* \$3,738,898, or 4.50%

*Updated:* \$3,428,898, or 4.13%

Based on collaboration between the School Committee and the Select Board, the difference of \$310,000 to be provided through an alternative source to fund requested investments in curriculum materials/textbooks



## Key Factors in Fiscal Year 2025

- Challenging post-pandemic environment
  - Learning gaps
  - Student mental and behavioral health needs
- Evolving student population needs and requirements (English language learners, students with disabilities)
- Needs for updated texts and curriculum materials
- Access to career and technical education for high school students

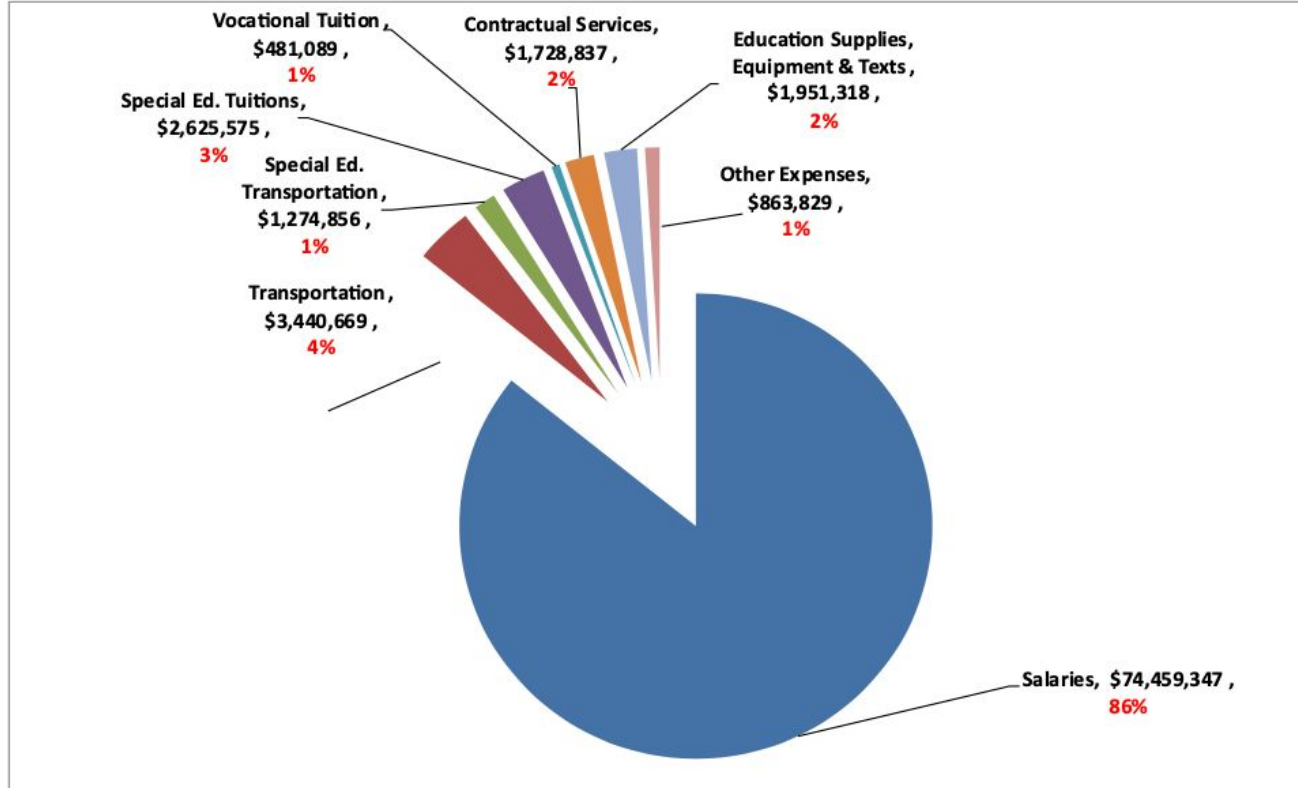




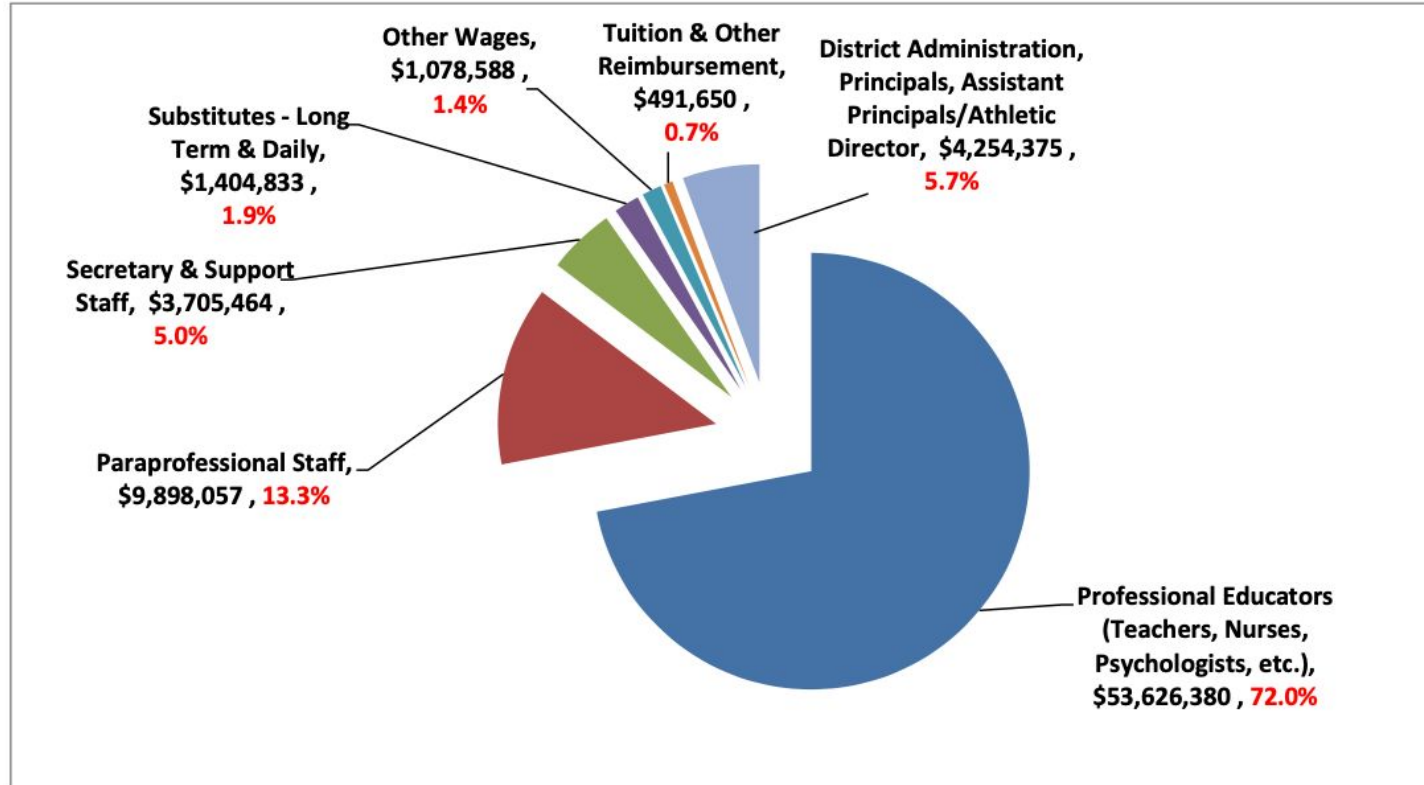
## Key Factors in Fiscal Year 2025

- Technology needs
  - Cybersecurity threats
  - Increased scope of and reliance upon IT systems for education and operations
- Completion of ESSER 3 federal Covid grant funding
- Emergency homeless shelter funding – question of continuity
- Paraprofessional (Unit D) negotiations for a successor contract

# FY25 Budget- Allocation of Resources



# FY25 Budget- Allocation of Salaries and Wages





# Cost Projections to Fund Programming

Major Category	FY24	FY25	Difference	Percent of Total Increase
Salaries (All Category A)	\$ 70,308,881	\$ 74,459,347	\$ 4,150,466	5.9%
Transportation (All Category B)	\$ 4,302,333	\$ 4,715,525	\$ 413,192	9.6%
Tuitions (All Category C)	\$ 4,408,695	\$ 3,106,665	\$ (1,302,030)	-29.5%
Supplies, Materials, Contract Services, Equipment (All Category D)	\$ 4,066,713	\$ 4,543,983	\$ 477,270	11.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 83,086,622</b>	<b>\$ 86,825,520</b>	<b>\$ 3,738,899</b>	<b>4.5%</b>



## **FY25 Cost of Living Allowances (COLA) Increases by Labor Group (Category A)**

- Unit A [teachers, nurses, counselors]
  - 2.25% salary scale increase plus a step increase for those eligible
- Unit B [assistant principals and athletic director]
  - 3.0% salary scale increase plus a step increase for those eligible
- Unit D [paraprofessionals, media aides, ABA technicians, tutors]
  - Currently under negotiation
- Non-Represented
  - To be determined during budget process



## School Transportation (Category B)

- FY25 will be the second year of a five year contract with AA Transportation with 6% annual increases in rates for a total 30% increase over five years.
- FY25 Regular Education Transportation includes the addition of the late bus service that is currently grant funded in FY24 = \$175,000
- Programs that require out-of-district van use are projecting higher than historical market rate. Assabet Valley Collaborative is currently in the process of procuring a 3-year contract for out-of-district special education transportation – initial projection is an 11.99% increase
- Transportation fee funds will again be used to moderate the FY25 operating budget increase. The current fee offset for transportation FY25 is calculated to be \$700,000, plus \$181,461 to offset the cost of two of the 39 daily in-district buses



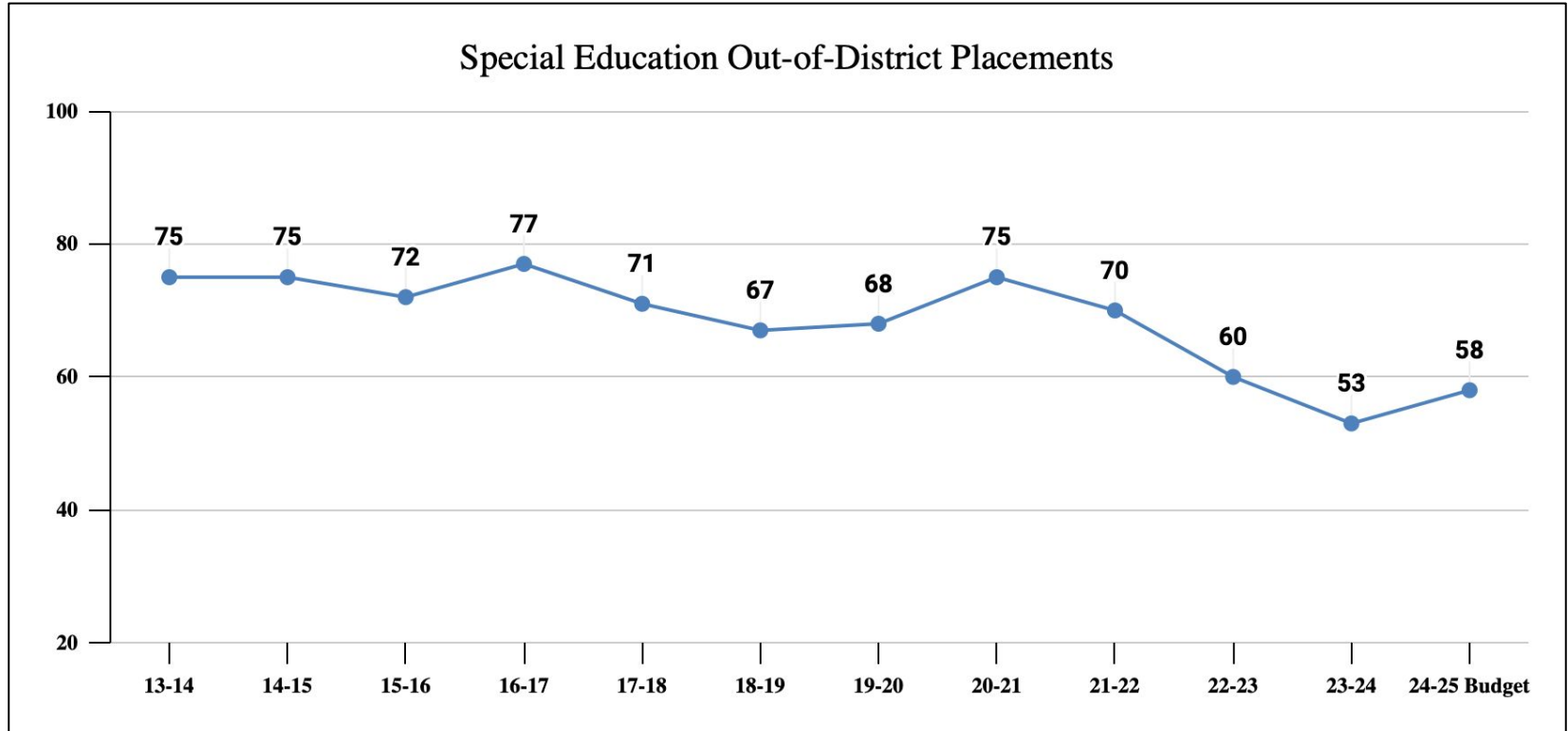
## FY25 Transportation (Category B)

Category	Description	FY24 Amount	FY25 Amount	Difference	Percent Change
B1	Regular Education & Voke Transportation (includes McKinney-Vento, Foster Care, Vocational, Student Activity, and Athletics)	\$3,163,993	\$3,440,669	\$276,676	8.74%
B2	Special Education Transportation	\$1,138,340	\$1,274,856	\$136,516	11.99%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,302,333</b>	<b>\$4,715,525</b>	<b>\$413,192</b>	<b>9.60%</b>
B1	McKinney-Vento- Homeless Transportation	\$81,885	\$154,429	\$72,544	88.6%
B1	Foster Care Transportation	\$16,000	\$60,420	\$44,420	277.6%

**Note: Category B1 includes \$175,000 for continuation of late bus service currently funded through the federal ESSER-3 grant**



## FY25 Special Education Out-of-District Placements (Category C)







## **Special Education: Net Change in Out-of-District Tuition Budget (Category C)**

- Projected overall savings in entire School Department appropriated budget in FY24 of \$400,000 shifted to FY25 using Circuit Breaker as the mechanism (one-half of one percent of current budget, mainly due to ongoing staffing vacancies)
- Current projections for out-of-district tuition and expected Circuit Breaker reimbursement in FY25 result in a net reduction of \$139,906 in this category



## Circuit Breaker Funding Recap and Projection

<b>Circuit Breaker Funding: Planned Fund Use FY24 &amp; FY25</b>	
FY24 Beginning Balance	\$3,402,264
FY24 Circuit Breaker Reimbursement for FY23 Costs	\$3,520,580
FY24 Planned Use of Circuit Breaker Funds	-\$4,274,091
End of FY24 Planned Circuit Breaker Balance (75% of max allowed)	\$2,648,753
FY25 Original Planned Beginning Balance	\$2,648,753
Est. FY25 Additional Funds Carried Forward from FY24 (Est. Overall Positive Budget Variance in FY24)	\$400,000
Est. FY25 Circuit Breaker Reimbursement for FY24 Costs	\$3,833,464
Est. FY25 Planned Use of Circuit Breaker Funds	-\$4,007,119
Est. End of FY25 Planned Circuit Breaker Balance (75% of max allowed)	\$2,875,098



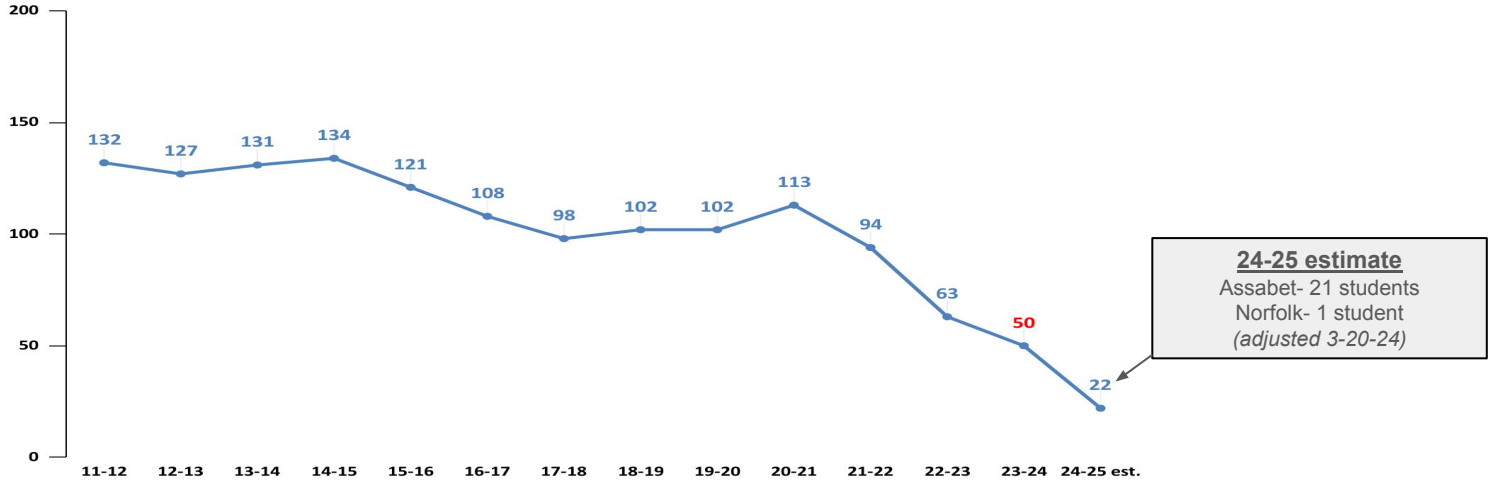
# Circuit Breaker Guideline Recommendation

	Circuit Breaker (CB) Year End Balance Models				Circuit Breaker Balance as a Percent of Operating Budget					
	100%	75%	50%	25%	Est Budget Amount	Est. Oper Budget Increase	100% CB as Percent of Operating budget	75% CB as Percent of Operating budget	50% CB as Percent of Operating budget	25% CB as Percent of Operating budget
FY24	\$3,520,870	\$2,640,653	\$1,760,435	\$880,218	\$83,086,622	4.75%	4.2%	3.2%	2.1%	1.1%
FY25 est.	\$3,833,450	\$2,875,088	\$1,916,725	\$958,363	\$86,825,520	4.50%	4.4%	3.3%	2.2%	1.1%
FY26 est.	\$3,910,119	\$2,932,589	\$1,955,060	\$977,530	\$90,515,605	4.25%	4.3%	3.2%	2.2%	1.1%
FY27 est.	\$3,988,321	\$2,991,241	\$1,994,161	\$997,080	\$94,362,518	4.25%	4.2%	3.2%	2.1%	1.1%
FY28 est.	\$4,068,088	\$3,051,066	\$2,034,044	\$1,017,022	\$98,372,925	4.25%	4.1%	3.1%	2.1%	1.0%
	superior	strong	adequate	inadequate			superior	strong	adequate	inadequate



## FY24 Out of District Tuitions: Vocational/Technical High School (Category C)

Number of SPS students attending vocational/technical high school



Category	Description	FY24 Amount	FY25 Amount	Difference	Percent Change
C2	Occupational Day High School (Vocational/Technical)	\$1,011,219	\$488,886	-\$522,333	-51.7%



## FY25 Materials, Equipment, Contract Services, & All Other (All Category D)

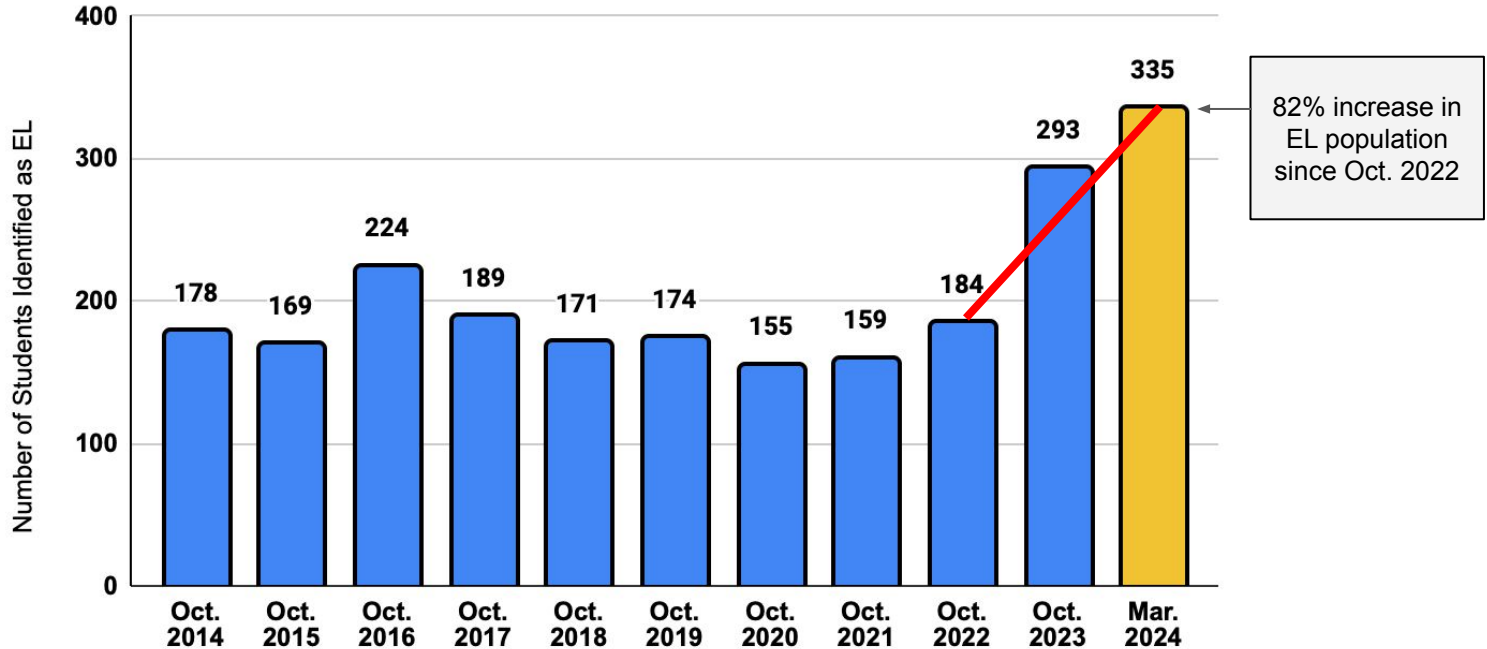
- Strategic increases in Category D are and will continue to be attributed to investments in Literacy texts and curriculum materials, SHS History texts and curriculum materials, and critical IT hardware and software upgrades and purchases
- Most accounts project a 3.75% to 4.25% increase to account for price inflation based upon FY24 trends, lower where needs are estimated to be less

Major Category	FY24 Amount	FY25 Amount	Difference	Percent Change
Supplies, Materials, Contract Services, Equipment (All Category D)	\$ 4,066,713	\$ 4,543,983	\$ 477,270	11.7%



# K-12 EL Population District-Wide

## 10 Year History of EL Growth in Shrewsbury Public Schools





## Personnel Needs - FY25 Overall Budget Plan

Personnel Investment	Cost	Notes
Special Education Teacher at Coolidge - 0.5 FTE	\$37,500	For mandated services
Occupational Therapist (District) – 1.0 FTE	\$75,000	For mandated services
Speech Language Pathologist (Specific Location TBD) – 1.0 FTE	\$75,000	For mandated services
English Language Education Teacher – 1.0 FTE (Specific Location TBD)	\$75,000	For mandated services; currently 3.0 FTE new positions in place and funded through emergency shelter grant; 2.0 FTE expected to be funded through these grant funds next year
Clinical Coordinator (District) – 1.0 FTE	\$90,000	Additional board-certified behavior analyst role to support students with significant behavioral health concerns
Kindergarten Teacher at Floral Street School – 1.0 FTE	\$68,000	To keep class sizes within guidelines, based on current kindergarten enrollment projections
Adjustment Counselor at SHS – 1.0 FTE	\$77,000	Currently in place and funded through the ESSER-3 grant; key position for student mental health needs
English Language Education Coordinator (District) – 1.0 FTE	\$115,000	Significant need to provide state mandated screenings, assessments, and program support



## Personnel Needs - FY25 Overall Budget Plan cont.

Personnel Investment	Cost	Notes
Reading Specialist at Middle Level– 1.0 FTE	\$100,000	Additional capacity to address student reading instructional needs
Career and Technical Education Coordinator at SHS – 1.0 FTE	\$0	Position needed to coordinate significant increase in internships, job shadowing, capstone projects in Career Innovation Pathways programs, etc. Funded through shift of \$75K of current start-up funding for CTE programming from contracted services to personnel
Well-Being Coordinator (District) – 1.0 FTE	\$0	Position to advance the district’s strategic plan “commitment to the enhanced well-being of all.” Position will be designed to coordinate well-being supports for both students and staff to address needs related to stress management, emotional regulation, etc. Funded by shifting \$85K in funds for the current mindfulness contracted service position
Information Technology Project Manager (District) – 1.0 FTE	\$125,000	Demands on IT Department for implementation of technology programs for educational and operational purposes are beyond capacity of current personnel
Information Technology Network Manager (District) – 1.0 FTE	\$110,000	Cybersecurity and network maintenance to ensure continuity of IT services and to protect student and staff confidential records has become substantially more demanding
Portuguese Teacher at SHS – 0.2 FTE	\$15,000	To add fourth year of the Heritage Portuguese course sequence
<b>Total 12.7 FTE</b>	<b>\$962,500</b>	<b>Total of recommended personnel investments in the appropriated budget</b>





## Operations Needs - FY25 Overall Budget Plan

Operations Investment	Cost	Notes
Texts and Curriculum Materials to Fully Implement New Literacy Program	\$250,000	Total cost of texts and materials estimated at \$500K, offset by competitive Dept. of Elementary & Secondary Education grant of \$250K procured by the district
Texts and Curriculum Materials for SHS World Civilizations, U.S. History I, and U.S. History II courses	\$60,000	Textbooks last updated in 2009
Late Bus Service	\$175,000	Currently funded by ESSER-3 grant; to provide equitable access to after school academic help and co-curricular activities
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$485,000</b>	<b>Total of recommended operations investments in the appropriated budget</b>



## Tuition & Fees

School Committee will vote on the following fees/tuitions on March 27th:

1. Programs co-funded by the town appropriated budget and fee revenues
  - a. Preschool tuition
  - b. Transportation
  - c. Athletics
  
2. Programs that are 100% self-funded by fee revenue
  - a. Extended School Care
  - b. Music lessons

*\*The initial budget assumes all tuitions and fees in category 1 above remain at current rates*



## **FY25 Budget Process: Evolving and Fluid**

It is very important to note that the projections on which this budget recommendation is based will evolve over the course of the coming months.

- Projected costs for operations (e.g., new contract for out-of-district transportation)
- Student enrollment and student needs projections (especially English learners and students with disabilities, kindergarten enrollment numbers)
- Contract negotiations with Collective Bargaining Unit D (Paraprofessionals)
- Grant or alternative funding opportunities
- Potential efficiencies across all departments



## Budget Process Going Forward

- Reports to the School Committee for specific categories
  - Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment – February 28th
  - Information Technology – February 28th
  - Special Education & Student Services – March 13th
  - English Language Education – March 13th
  - Career Technical Education/ Innovation Career Pathways – March 27th
  - Student and Staff Wellbeing – March 27th
  - Mental & Behavioral Health – April 10th
- **Hearing with the Finance Committee – March 23rd**
- Discussion and vote on fees for FY25 – March 27th
- Updates as projections evolve; School Committee votes to approve recommended budget to Town Meeting – April 2024
- Annual Town Meeting – May 20th

# Questions



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request**