



Shrewsbury Public Schools

Budget Recommendation FY13

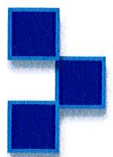
July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013

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Shrewsbury Public Schools

FY 2013 Budget

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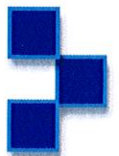
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Shrewsbury Public Schools Mission & Core Values



MISSION

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.

CORE VALUE: RESPECT & RESPONSIBILITY

All members of the school community will treat one another with consideration, integrity, and honesty. We honor each person's individuality, celebrate our community's diversity, and support school cultures of mutual acceptance and respect. We accept the responsibility to work hard and persevere in all that we do and to take responsibility for our actions.

CORE VALUE: COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATION

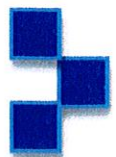
All members of the school community accept shared responsibility for the learning of all students. Teaching and learning take place in collaborative school cultures that are based on trust, respect, and mutual accountability. Collaboration and effective communication with parents, town government, local businesses, and community members is foundational to our culture. In our schools students gain collaboration skills needed to become successful citizens, learners, and teammates in a global society.

CORE VALUE: COMMITMENT TO HIGH STANDARDS & EXPECTATIONS

All members of the school community commit to upholding high standards and expectations for all students. We work to engage students in important learning through excellent teaching and we foster the belief that effective effort is the most important element of success. We prepare students for future success by supporting their capacity for using technology, thinking independently, solving problems, and learning throughout life.

CORE VALUE: EQUITY

The school community strives to create opportunities for all students to achieve success. We provide all students with appropriate and rigorous curriculum and high-quality instruction that recognizes differences in needs and learning styles. We advocate for the resources necessary to support successful teaching and learning and we use our resources responsibly for the maximum benefit of students.



Shrewsbury Public Schools

District Goals



Our mission:

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.

Our core values:

- Respect and responsibility
- Collaboration and communication
- Commitment to high standards and expectations
- Equity for all students

District “foundational” goals:

Goal #1: Continuous improvement of student learning

Goal #2: Continuous improvement of learning environments

Goal #3: Continuous improvement of professional practice

Goal #4: Continuous improvement of community relationships



Shrewsbury Public Schools

Strategic Priorities: 2012 – 2016

Approved by the Shrewsbury School Committee on December 14, 2011

Increase Value to the Community

- Continue our school district's reputation for excellence.
- Provide the personnel, resources, and infrastructure needed to ensure the quality of education necessary for our students to meet the challenges of the 21st century.
- Serve community needs through volunteerism.

Five Year Goals

- A) Continue to achieve results that consistently place Shrewsbury among top performing school districts.
- B) Prepare students to be successful with the next generation of assessments that will measure 21st century skills.
- C) Raise \$2.5 million in new, supplemental funding through a capital campaign, competitive grants, and/or sponsorships.
- D) Provide 50,000 hours of student community service.

Engage & Challenge All Students

- Ensure that all students participate in rigorous learning experiences that require the application of knowledge and skills, with an emphasis on writing across all content areas.
- Empower students to meet future college, military, and workplace demands in a globally connected environment by building proficiency at the 21st century skills of communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity.

Five Year Goals

- A) All students will participate in learning projects that require real world problem solving with clear benchmarks for proficiency.
- B) Full implementation of the *Shrewsbury Writing Project* to ensure students achieve high levels of proficiency in written communication across all content areas.
- C) All educators will participate in collaborative professional development in teaching 21st century skills and successfully apply this in the classroom.
- D) 90% of students, parents, and educators will agree that student learning experiences are engaging and that students participate in appropriately challenging coursework that meets their needs.

Enhance Learning through Technology

- Provide staff and students access to the technology needed to strengthen teaching and learning in ways that are not possible with traditional tools in order to help students master 21st century skills.
- Utilize technology to provide better access to information and interactive media, a wide range of assessment and feedback tools, and the ability to make learning connections locally, nationally, and globally.
- Promote innovative uses of technology that advance the district's educational and operational goals and monitor new approaches for equity, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Educate students to use technology productively and responsibly.

Five Year Goals

- A) All Preschool – Grade 4 core classrooms will employ interactive technology daily to improve learning.
- B) All students in Grades 5-12 will utilize individual digital devices daily to improve learning.
- C) All educators will participate in collaborative professional development in the use of educational technology and successfully apply this in the classroom.
- D) Deploy technology tools and utilize digital content to enhance learning, communication, and customer service for students, staff, parents, and community members.

Promote Health & Wellbeing

- Reinforce respectful, positive school cultures in order to empower members to act with kindness, empathy, and compassion.
- Communicate and model the importance of proper nutrition, exercise, and healthy living habits.
- Ensure a systematic response to students who are struggling with social, emotional, and/or mental health issues.

Five Year Goals

- A) 90% of students, parents, and educators will agree that their schools' social and emotional cultures are healthy.
- B) 75% of students will participate in at least sixty minutes of physical activity each day (both during and outside of school).
- C) Develop a comprehensive approach to support students experiencing significant social, emotional, and/or mental health issues.



Shrewsbury Public Schools

Joseph M. Sawyer, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Superintendent's Budget Message

March 14, 2012

Dear Shrewsbury Community Members,

It is with mixed feelings that I present to you our administrative budget recommendation for the Shrewsbury Public Schools for Fiscal Year 2013. I am conflicted because I continue to be enormously proud of the exceptional results our students and educators have continued to achieve in an extremely cost effective manner, yet I am very concerned about the impact the reductions recommended within this plan will have on our educational program.

The School Department delivers superb value to our stakeholders. As many of you are aware, a national study recently noted that Shrewsbury placed in the top 2.8% of over 9,000 school districts in the nation with regard to "return on investment" relative to the academic results achieved for the amount of funding provided. The College Board has named Shrewsbury to its Advanced Placement Honor Roll for the second year in a row for increasing the number of students participating in rigorous courses while simultaneously maintaining very high performance. Our results on various exams rank our schools as among the best in Massachusetts, while our students continue to earn accolades and recognition for excellence in music, the visual arts, speech and debate, and athletics. Our schools have a well-deserved reputation for having strong cultures, where students act respectfully, make meaningful connections with caring educators, develop good citizenship skills, and contribute thousands of hours to serving their community. The excellence of our schools contributes significantly to the quality of life in our town and substantially to the value of our property, and it is remarkable that all of this has been achieved with a cost per student that continues to be in the lowest 10% in the state. Unfortunately, while we have been able to maintain very strong performance with this level of investment, it is important to note that we have made difficult decisions to reduce positions and program over time to stay within the limits of the financial resources available, and without additional investment over time our performance will be unsustainable.

Those of you who know the recent history of the School Department budget know that we have implemented a variety of cuts over time. These include the loss of reading specialist teachers, technology specialists, professional

librarian/media specialists, and curriculum leaders in our elementary schools; the elimination of foreign language programming in grades three through five; the disbanding of our auto shop program at the high school; higher class sizes and special subject caseloads; and reductions in specialty programming such as video technology in our middle schools – just to name a few. Textbook purchases have been postponed, funds for supplies and materials have been cut back, and investment in educational technology hardware deferred. Additionally, other programming has been sustained only by shifting the cost burden to families through a variety of fees for transportation, athletics, co-curricular activities, and music lessons.

Given the structural deficit our town has faced for some time, many of these cost mitigation measures occurred prior to the economic downturn, and others more recently. Our educational program has actually weathered the recession fairly well to date, largely due to the availability of millions of dollars in federal stimulus funding that made up for reductions in state and local funding. We have also benefited from contractual agreements with employee groups that made adjustments to compensation and health care contribution rates that enabled the district to preserve jobs that would otherwise have been cut. However, next year the combination of the loss of federal funds that directly and indirectly support our current budget; stagnant state funding; wage and inflationary pressures; and the need to support a variety of mandates have brought us to a tipping point where we cannot sustain our current program with the resources that will be available to us. The difficult reality we face is that we cannot close the gap created by cost increases and lost funding without significant reductions in personnel that will result in higher class sizes and reduced services across the district.

This budget recommendation is based on a variety of factors. Over the past several months, input has been solicited from students, staff, parents, and the public regarding what our school district's priorities should be. In December, the School Committee approved a set of strategic priorities and goals for the next five years, and these have guided the administration's decision-making regarding what resources to try to preserve while considering how cuts might damage our long-term ability to implement these priorities, as well as what kinds of positions stand a greater chance of restoration when the fiscal environment improves, as historically it has been more difficult to restore cuts related to programs. We were also guided by our district's core value of equity, and as a result this reduction plan is spread across the entire district and across different job categories and programs; it also takes recent history into account as to where previous reductions have been made. Another key consideration was minimizing the impact of cuts on employees by using attrition wherever possible in order to reduce positions while minimizing layoffs of successful newer employees in whom we have invested time and resources and whose talent and commitment we wish to retain for the long term.

In January, the administration identified a \$5.4 million budget gap consisting of about \$2.4 million in lost funding due to the exhaustion of federal stimulus money and Circuit Breaker reserves that were made possible by federal funding,

combined with just under \$3 million of projected increased costs. When I presented this information, I noted that some of the projections would change as we became more certain of actual costs for next year, and I am sorry to report that our obligations have increased by about \$200,000 since that time, mainly due to evolving special education costs for specialized placements outside of the school district. The current, updated gap between what would be required to advance our current program and this year's funding level is slightly more than \$5.6 million as a result.

In his initial town budget recommendation, Mr. Morgado, our Town Manager, recommends an increase of \$2,541,140 to the School Department's appropriation, which helps close this gap significantly. However, an additional \$3.2 million would still be needed to maintain our current program. As the resources that will be available cannot provide this level of funding, the budget recommendation that follows cuts \$2,312,977 of the remaining gap, mainly through the reduction of personnel as well as through the reduction of some operational costs to offset necessary increases in others. A summary of the budget recommendation is illustrated in the table below.

Fiscal Year 2013 School Department Budget –Recommendation

Fiscal Year 2012 – current year appropriation	\$47,139,676
Lost funding (federal stimulus & Circuit Breaker reserves)	\$2,451,140
Projected operational cost increases before adjustments	\$1,422,031
• Special education out of district tuition and in district cost increases - \$706,879	
• General operations increases (staff continuing education, transportation, substitutes, general inflation, etc.) - \$715,152	
Projected personnel cost increases before adjustments	\$1,735,895
• Based on contractual obligations	
• No new positions	
Total required for level service budget	\$52,748,742
Proposed personnel cost reductions	(\$2,061,612)
Proposed operational cost reductions	(\$251,365)
Total proposed reductions	(\$2,312,977)
Town Manager's initial recommended increase	\$2,451,140
School Department additional recommended increase	\$844,949
Total School Department FY13 recommendation	\$50,435,765
Recommended increase in appropriations FY12 to FY13	\$3,296,089
Recommended percentage increase over FY12 appropriation	6.99%

The \$2.31 million in proposed reductions will have a significant impact on our educational program next year. The table on the following page lists these reductions.

Fiscal Year 2013 School Department Budget – Proposed Cost Reductions

<p>Early Childhood/Elementary Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiatus – 1.0 FTE Beal principal • Offset cost of 1.55 FTE instructional coaches through eligible grants/tuition • Reduction – 3.0 FTE Grade 1 classroom teachers at Beal (overflow returns to Floral site increases class size at Floral; shift Beal FTE to full day kindergarten tuition account) • Reduction – 1.0 FTE Grade 2 classroom teacher @ Coolidge • Reduction – 1.0 FTE Grade 4 classroom teacher @ Coolidge • Reduction – 1.0 FTE Grade 4 classroom teacher @ Paton • Reduction – 1.0 FTE Grade 1 classroom teacher @ Spring Street • Reduction – 1.0 FTE Grade 4 classroom teacher @ Spring Street • Reduction – 4.0 FTE paraprofessionals (or equivalent hours) <p>(Note: Position offsets through grants/additional full day kindergarten results in net elementary position loss of 8.0 FTE)</p>	<p>\$810,594</p>
<p>Middle Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction – 2.0 FTE curriculum coordinators • Hiatus – 0.2 FTE foreign language director (Nov. retirement) • Reduction – 1.0 FTE technology teacher @ Sherwood • Reduction – 2.0 FTE Grade 6 team teachers @ Sherwood • Reduction – 2.0 FTE Grade 7 team teachers @ Oak • Reduction – 2.0 FTE Grade 8 team teachers @ Oak • Reduction – 1.0 FTE special education teacher @ Oak • Reduction – 4.0 FTE paraprofessionals (or equivalent hours) <p>(Net position loss = 14.2 FTE)</p>	<p>\$659,160</p>
<p>High School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiatus – 0.6 FTE foreign language director (Nov. retirement) • Reduction – 0.4 FTE foreign language teacher • Reduction – 1.0 FTE English teacher • Reduction – 1.0 FTE mathematics teacher • Reduction – 0.6 FTE science teacher • Reduction – 1.0 FTE social science teacher • Reduction – 1.0 FTE visual arts teacher • Reduction – 4.0 paraprofessionals (or equivalent hours) <p>(Net position loss = 9.6 FTE)</p>	<p>\$591,858</p>
<p>Operating Costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational tuition decrease due to enrollment • Elimination of tutoring requirement – No Child Left Behind • Reduction in contracted services for special education • Various miscellaneous reductions 	<p>\$251,365</p>
<p>Grand Total Proposed Cost Reductions</p>	<p>\$2,312,977</p>
<p>Total FTE positions removed from budget</p>	<p>38.35</p>
<p>Total FTE positions removed from the educational program</p>	<p>31.80</p>

Impact on the Educational Program

The effects of the proposed budget plan include:

- Class sizes well beyond School Committee guidelines in all sections of Grades 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, with averages of 29 students per class across those grades.
- A small number of other elementary classrooms will have class sizes slightly above guidelines, including Grade 1 classes at Floral Street and Spring Street (23 students) and Grade 2 at Floral Street (23 students).
- Class sizes will go beyond guidelines in many high school classes, but the actual enrollment in courses will not be determined until late spring after registration and scheduling is completed.
- The high school will also reduce the number of offerings in the visual arts.
- Sherwood will have fewer technology class sections.
- There will be reduced administrative capacity as follows:
 - Shared principal position between Beal and Paton
 - No foreign language director for most of the year
 - Less support for curriculum and instruction and less capacity to supervise and evaluate staff at the middle schools
- Level funding for athletic programming may require additional revenue or program cuts to cope with rising costs.
- Level funding for textbooks and school-based budgets will continue to squeeze operations and require deferral of investments.
- Small increase in technology funding will delay implementation of some strategic initiatives and keep the district behind the curve in replacing aging technology hardware, unless alternative funding can be accessed.

Mitigation Efforts

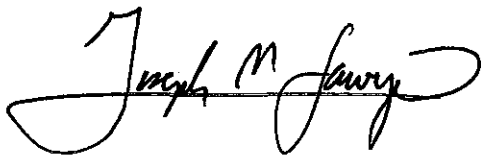
The school district has put two major mitigation efforts into place to reduce the human cost of these reductions. The first is to take available classroom space due to reductions and convert the majority of our half day kindergarten positions into full day positions. This will open significantly more slots for tuition-paying students, and this tuition will offset the cost of shifting teacher assignments from two half day sections to one full day section, providing slots for teachers who otherwise would have been laid off. The second was to offer a retirement incentive to those teachers who had not already declared they would retire at the end of June. At this time, eight staff members will take advantage of this program, and we only will need to replace two of them – the differential in savings between not replacing a veteran staff member who retires and a layoff of a newer teacher with a lower salary, plus unemployment costs, is substantial. As a result of these efforts, and by taking advantage of retirements and leaves of absence that were already planned, the actual number of layoffs of professional staff should be in the single digits despite removing over 30 positions from our budget.

Conclusion

I truly wish I was presenting a different budget recommendation than this one, as the cost reductions contained within will compromise our ability to deliver the quality of education our students will require for them to be successful in the decades ahead. It is important to note that this recommendation still requires about \$850,000 in funding beyond the Town Manager's current recommendation. If the School Department is required to reduce costs further, there will be additional personnel reductions that will increase and intensify the negative impact this plan already includes, including pushing class sizes higher and the likely elimination of some programming. It is my hope that between state and local resources, this additional funding can be provided so that further cuts beyond these recommendations will not be required.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions or feedback regarding the budget. I may be reached at 508-841-8400 or jsawyer@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph M. Sawyer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Joseph M. Sawyer, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



Shrewsbury Public Schools

Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Development Timeline

Date	Event
January 9	School Committee budget workshop
January 18	Administration presents report on initial budget gap
February 1	Administration presents report on special education budget development
February 15	Public budget hearing # 1
March 6	School Committee meets with Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee
March 14	Administration presents initial recommendation for FY13 Budget (Special Meeting)
March 21	Public budget hearing # 2
March 22	School Committee meets with Finance Committee
April 11	School Committee votes on recommended budget to Town Meeting
April 25	School Committee regular meeting
May 2	School Committee regular meeting
May 16	School Committee regular meeting
May 21	Annual Town Meeting Begins