

**School Committee
Meeting**

**March 4, 2015
7:00 pm**

**Town Hall
Selectmen's Meeting Room**



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
AGENDA
March 4, 2015 7:00pm
Town Hall—Selectmen's Meeting Room
REVISED



Items

Suggested time allotments

- | | | |
|-------|--|-------------|
| I. | Public Participation | 7:00 – 7:10 |
| II. | Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports | |
| III. | Superintendent's Report | |
| IV. | Time Scheduled Appointments | |
| V. | Curriculum | |
| VI. | Policy | |
| VII. | Budget | |
| | A. Per Pupil Expenditures: Five Year Comparison | 7:10 – 7:30 |
| | B. Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Recommendation: Public Hearing | 7:30 – 8:15 |
| VIII. | Old Business | |
| | A. 2015-2016 School Calendar: Report & Vote | 8:15 – 8:30 |
| IX. | New Business | |
| X. | Approval of Minutes | 8:30 – 8:35 |
| XI. | Executive Session | 8:35 – 9:00 |
| | A. Potential discussion of collective bargaining negotiations with cafeteria workers association and/or paraprofessionals association; potential discussion of compensation guidelines for administrator contract negotiations and/or contract negotiations with non-union personnel | |
| XII. | Adjournment | 9:00 |

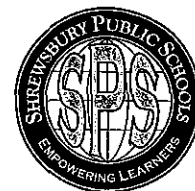
Next meetings:

March 7, 2015 9:00am (budget meeting with Finance Committee)

March 11, 2015 7:00pm (regular meeting)



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Committee



ITEM NO: I. Public Participation

MEETING DATE: 3/4/15

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 Dr. B. Dale Magee, 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:

Dr. B. Dale Magee, Chairperson
Mr. Jason Palitsch, Vice Chairperson
Ms. Erin Canzano, Secretary
Ms. Sandra Fryc, Committee Member
Mr. John Samia, 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



ITEM NO: IV. Time Scheduled Appointment

MEETING DATE: 3/4/15

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Committee



ITEM NO: **V. Curriculum**

MEETING DATE: **3/4/15**

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Committee



ITEM NO: VI. Policy

MEETING DATE: 3/4/15

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

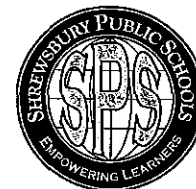
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Committee



ITEM NO: VII. Budget

MEETING DATE: 3/4/15

A. Per Pupil Expenditures: Five Year Comparison

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee hear a five year comparative report on the school district's expenditure per pupil?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. The Shrewsbury Public Schools has consistently spent less on a per pupil basis than the vast majority of school districts in Massachusetts.
2. The enclosed information shows the history of per pupil spending over the last five or six fiscal years for which the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provides data. In some categories this represents FY09-FY13, and for others it represents FY09-FY14.
3. The line graphs included show a comparison of Shrewsbury's data against different groups, including the Assabet Valley Collaborative districts, the District Analysis and Review Tools (DART) comparison districts selected by the DESE based on size and demographics, and a group of other districts selected for this report due to similar size that are comparable in various ways. The graphs show that in almost all categories Shrewsbury's expenditures are lower than comparison districts.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

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

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools



Shrewsbury Public Schools

Joseph M. Sawyer, Ed.D.
Superintendent

February 27, 2015

To: School Committee
Re: Per Pupil Expenditure History

The Shrewsbury Public Schools have long been known for generating a superb return on investment when considering the amount of money spent and the educational success of students. As you know, twice in recent years the Center for American Progress, a Washington D.C. policy organization, conducted a national study of educational return on investment, and both times Shrewsbury was among a very small percentage of school districts to score the highest rating in each category, including where the study was controlled for demographics. In the 2014 study, Shrewsbury was one of only 126 out of 7,153 districts nationally to receive the highest rating (top 1.76%). In Massachusetts, Shrewsbury was one of only 4 out of 174 districts to receive the highest rating (top 2.3%).

The typical comparative measure used for school district expenditures is per pupil cost. The data that follow in this report show that, when compared to geographic and demographic peers, the Shrewsbury Public Schools spend less per pupil in almost all instances, both overall and by category.

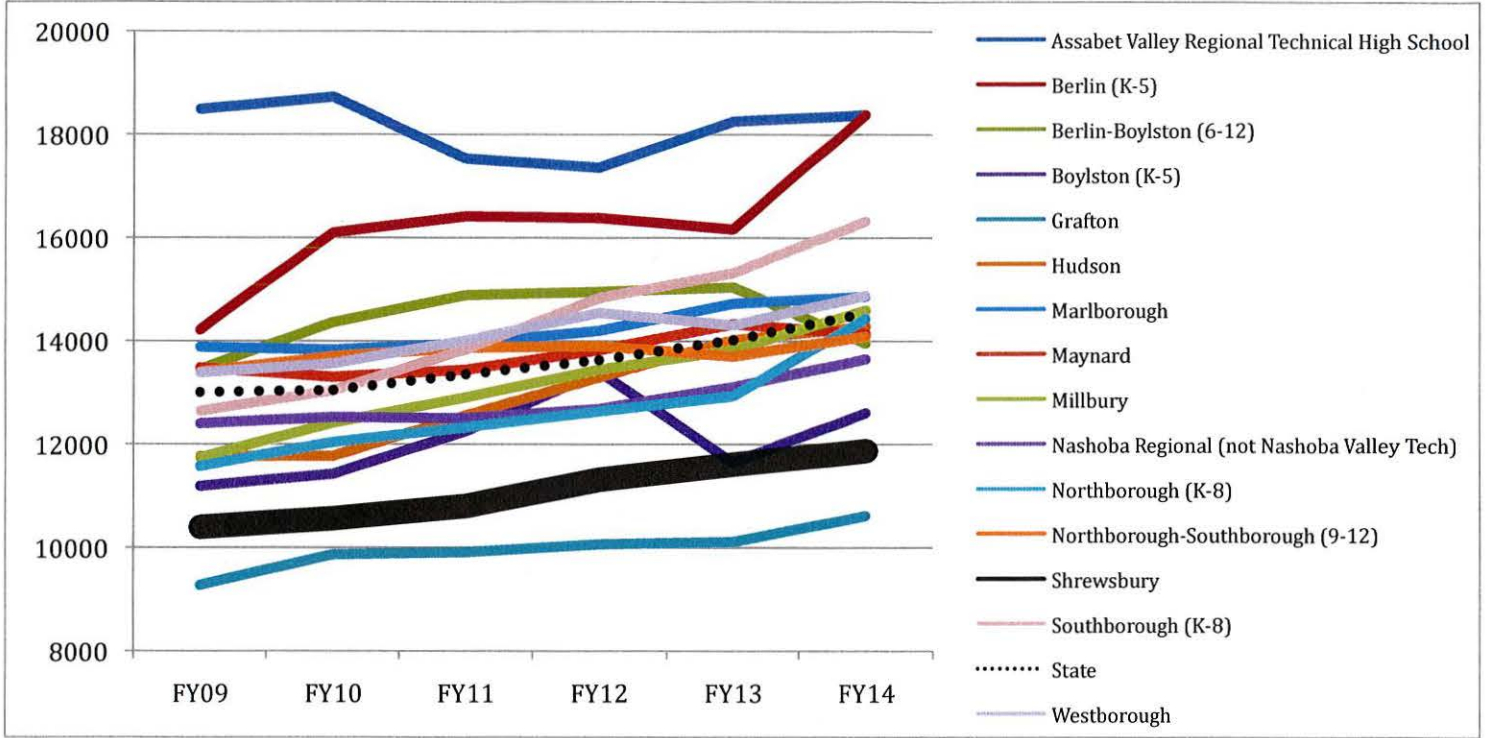
The graphs that follow show the history of per pupil spending over the last five or six fiscal years for which the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provides data. In some categories this represents FY09-FY13, and for others it represents FY09-FY14. Please note that the FY14 statistics were posted by DESE prior to the audit of the district's End of Year Report, so they may change slightly once finalized.

The line graphs included show Shrewsbury's per pupil expenditures compared to different groups, including the Assabet Valley Collaborative districts, the District Analysis and Review Tools (DART) comparison districts selected by the DESE based on size and demographics, and a group of other districts selected for this report due to similar size that are comparable in various ways. The graphs show that in almost all categories Shrewsbury's expenditures are lower than comparison districts.

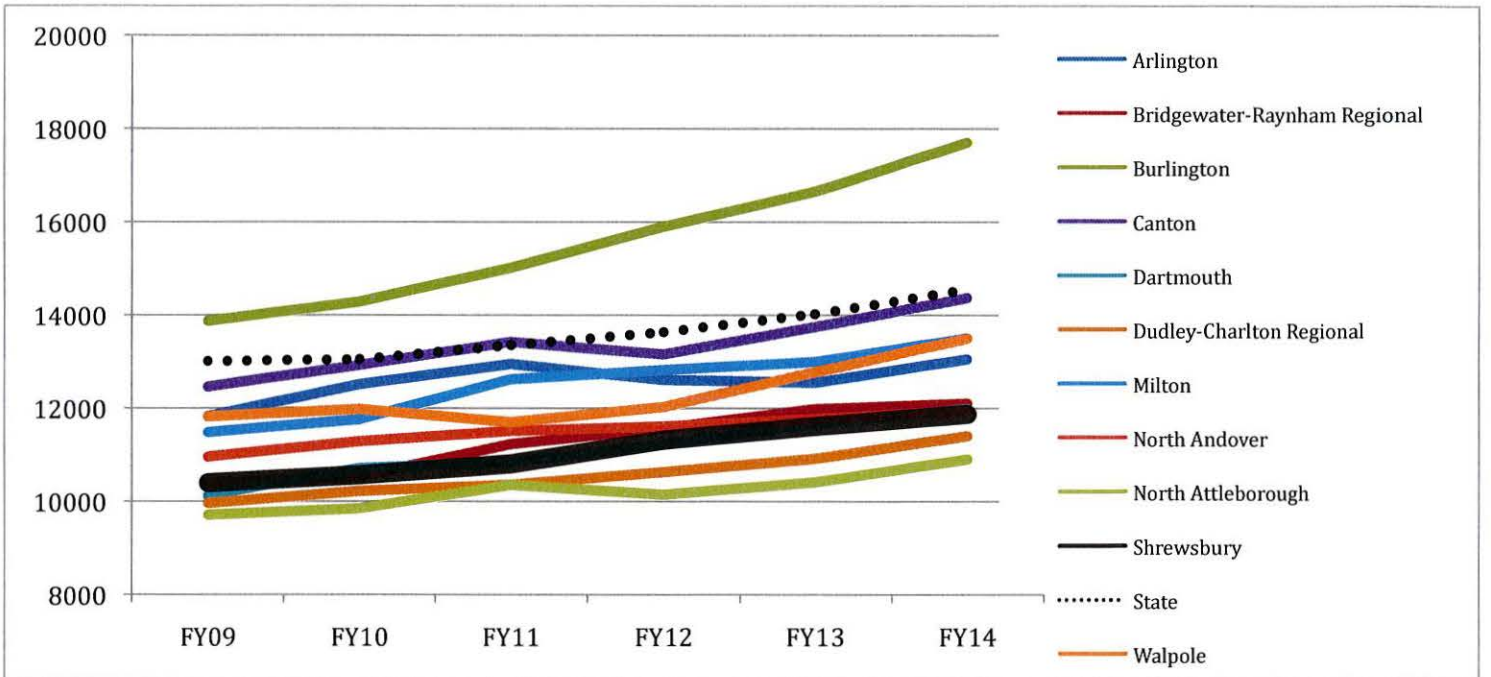
Further analysis of this data will be provided when presented at your March 4, 2015 meeting.

Total Per Pupil Expenditure

Assabet Valley Collaborative

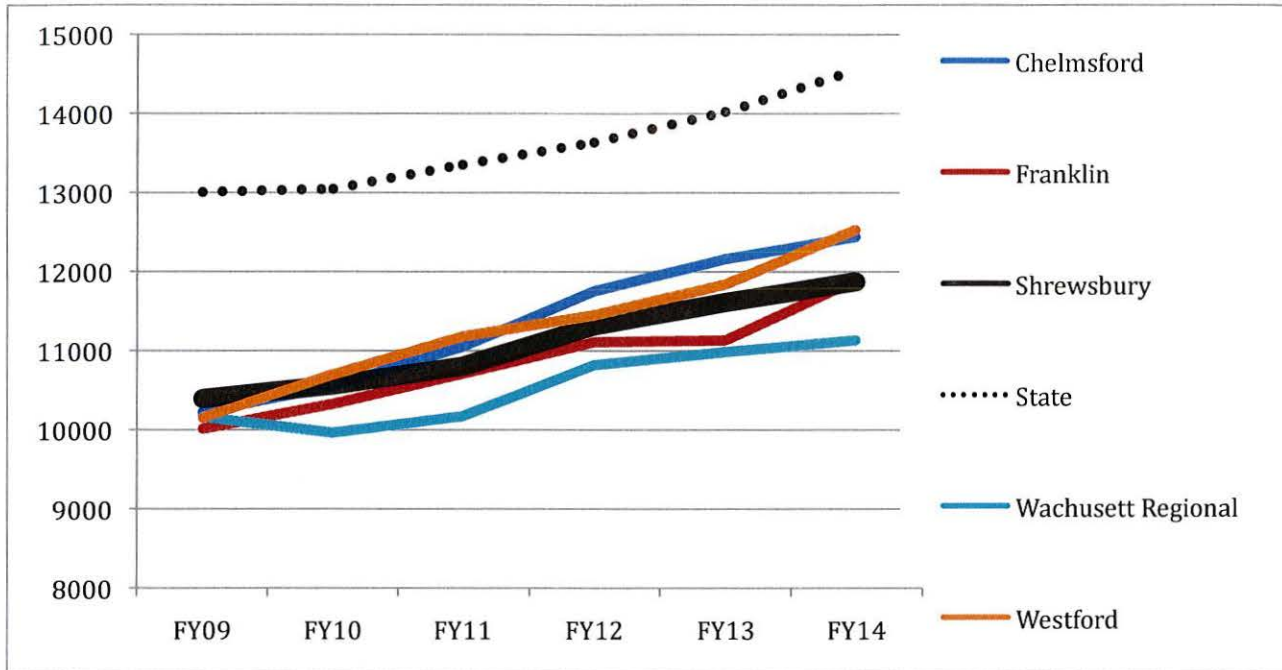


Current DART Districts



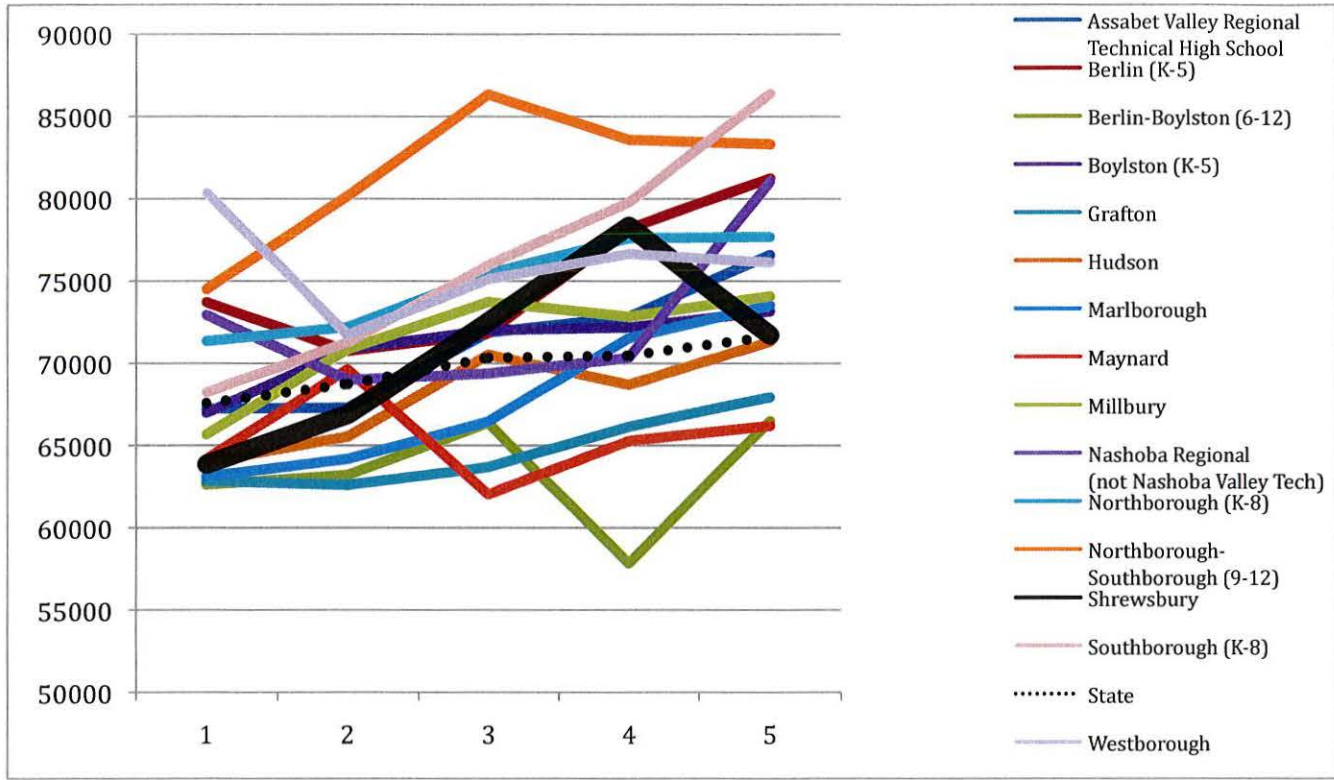
Total Per Pupil Expenditure (continued)

Additional Similar Districts

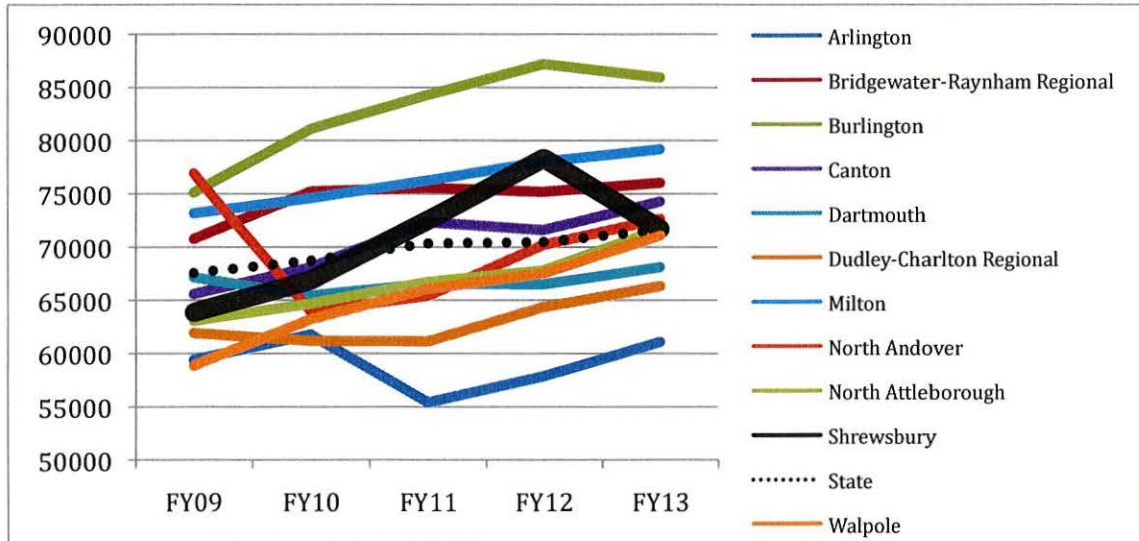


Average Teacher Salary

Assabet Valley Collaborative

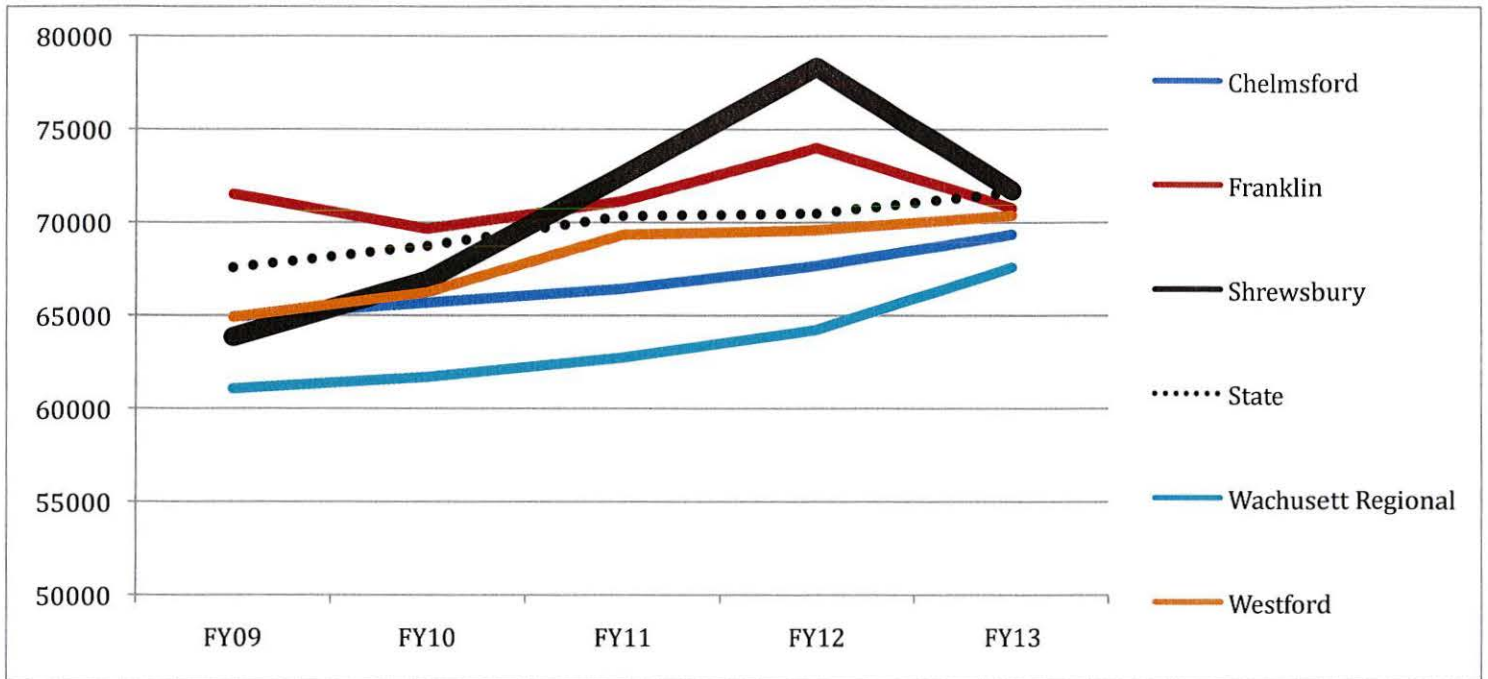


Current DART Districts



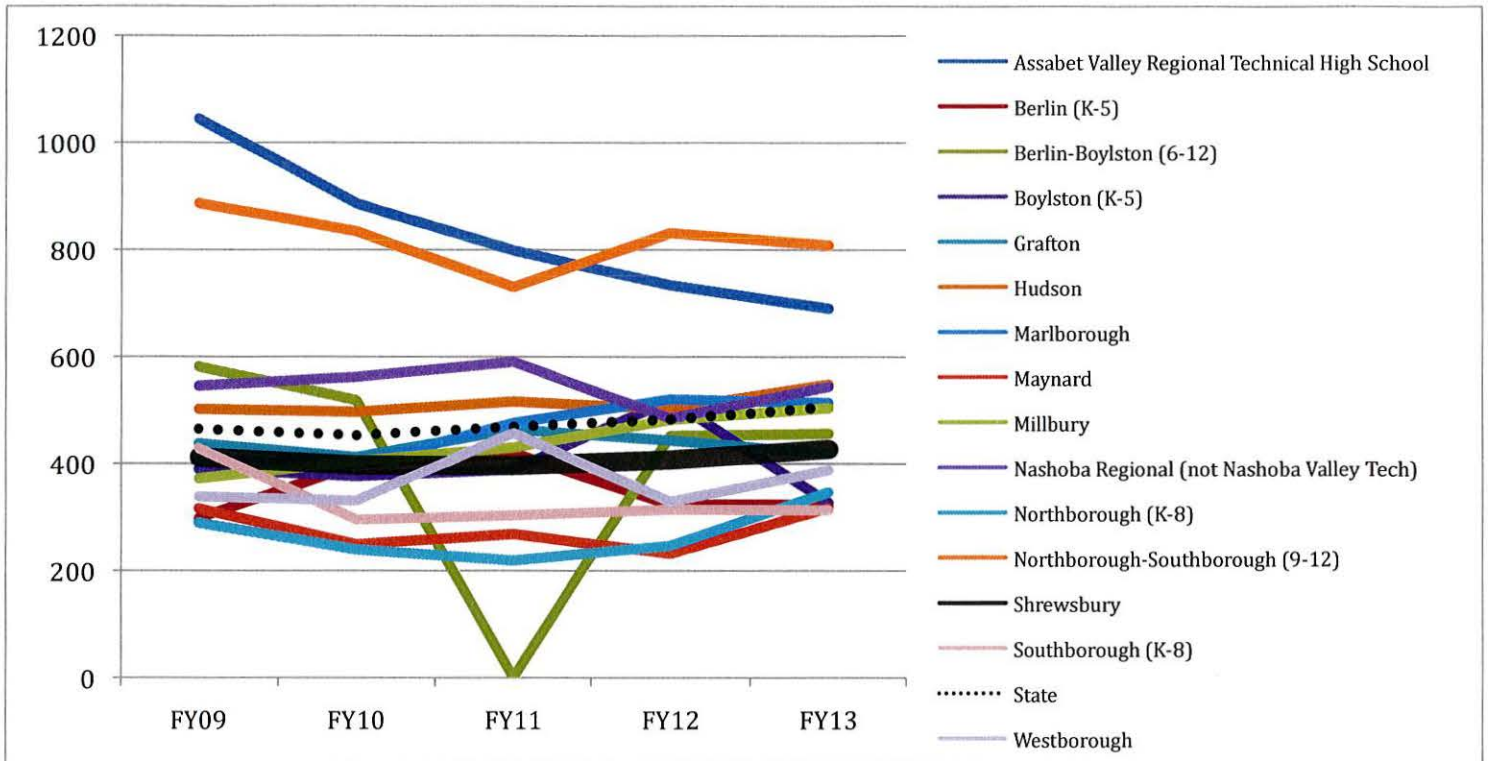
Average Teacher Salary (continued)

Additional Similar Districts

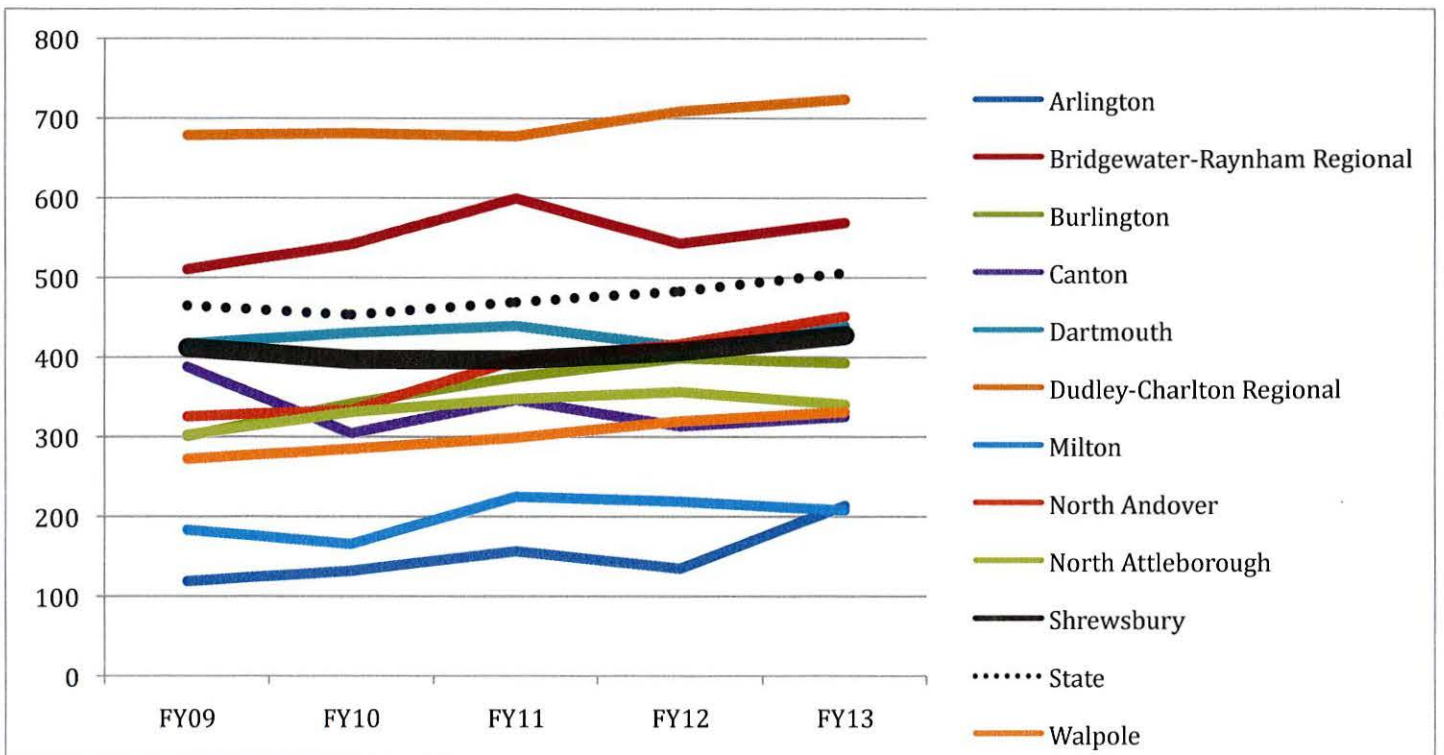


In-District Transportation

Assabet Valley Collaborative

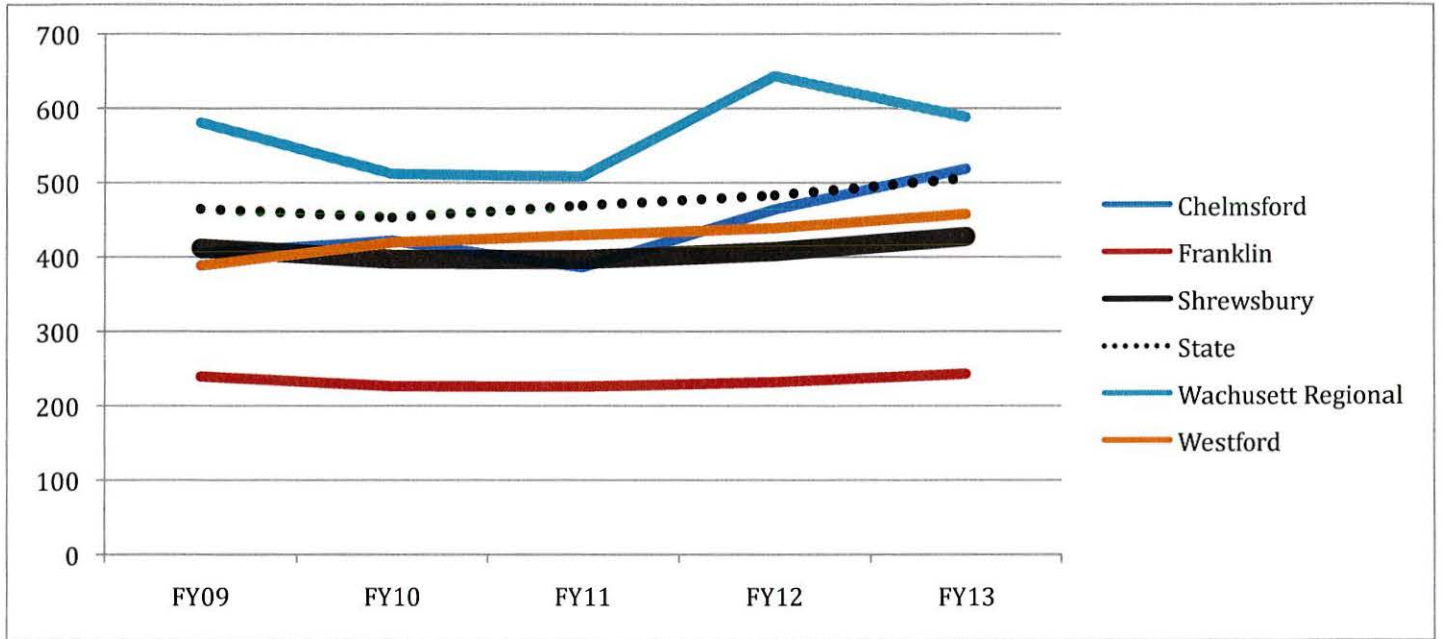


Current DART Districts



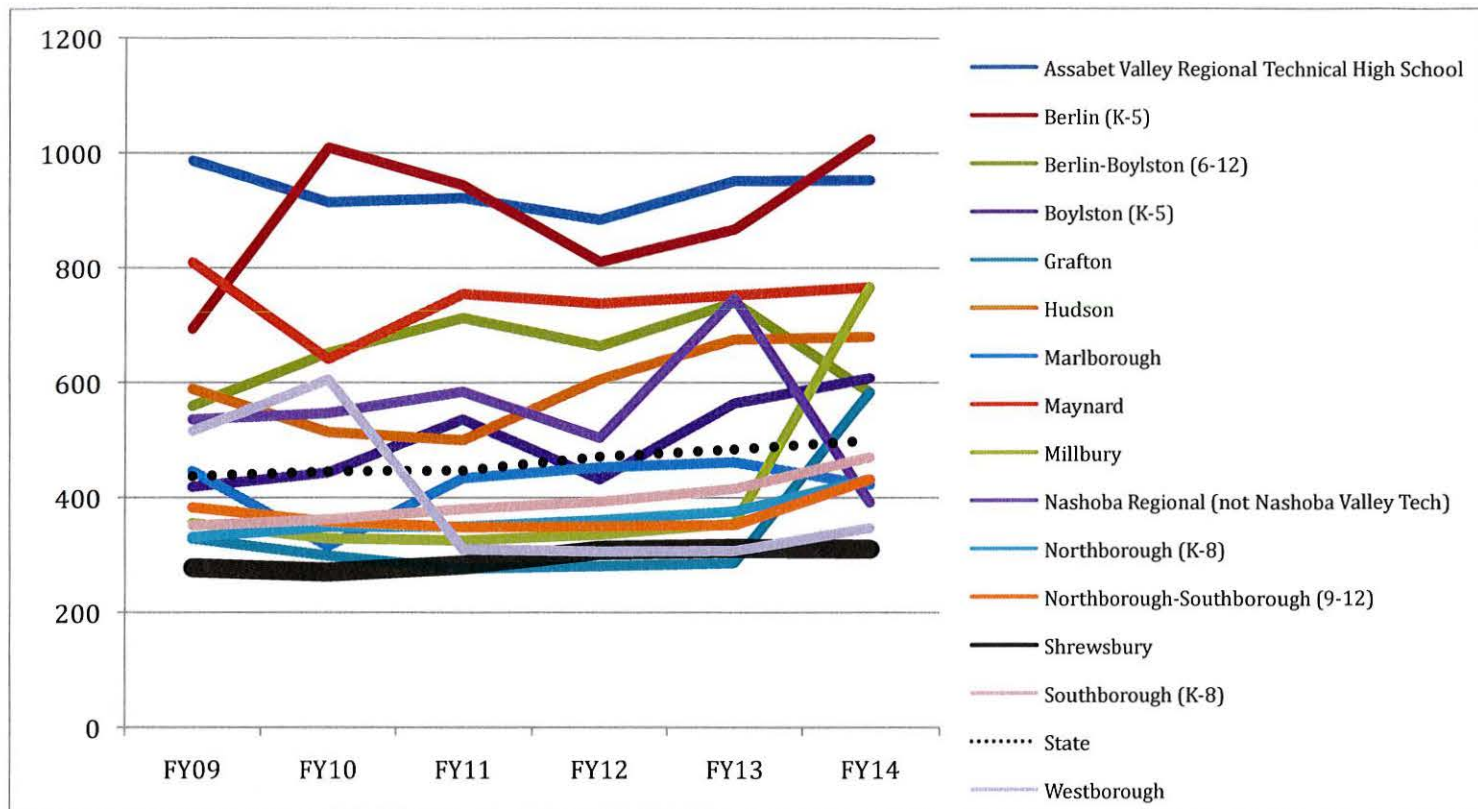
In-District Transportation (continued)

Additional Similar Districts

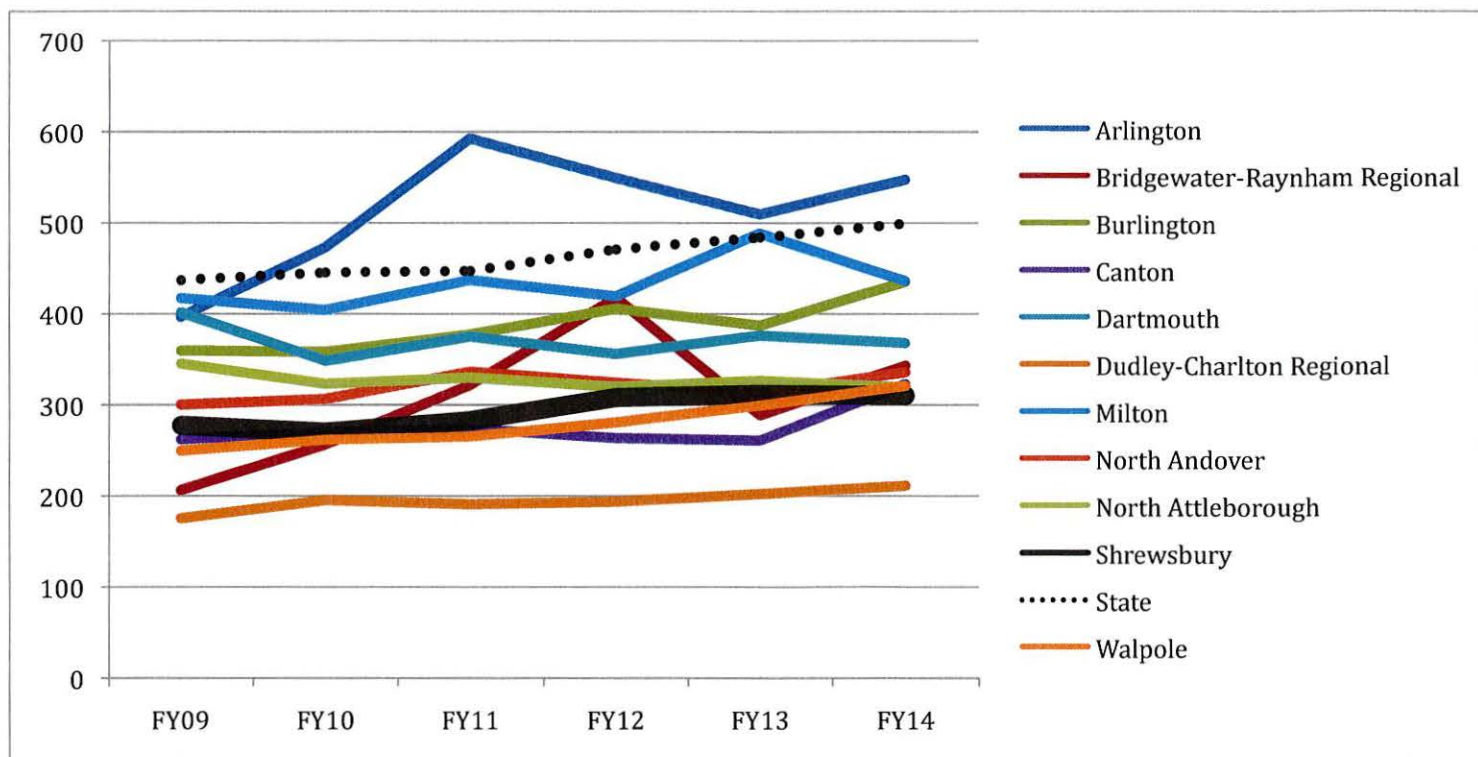


Administration

Assabet Valley Collaborative

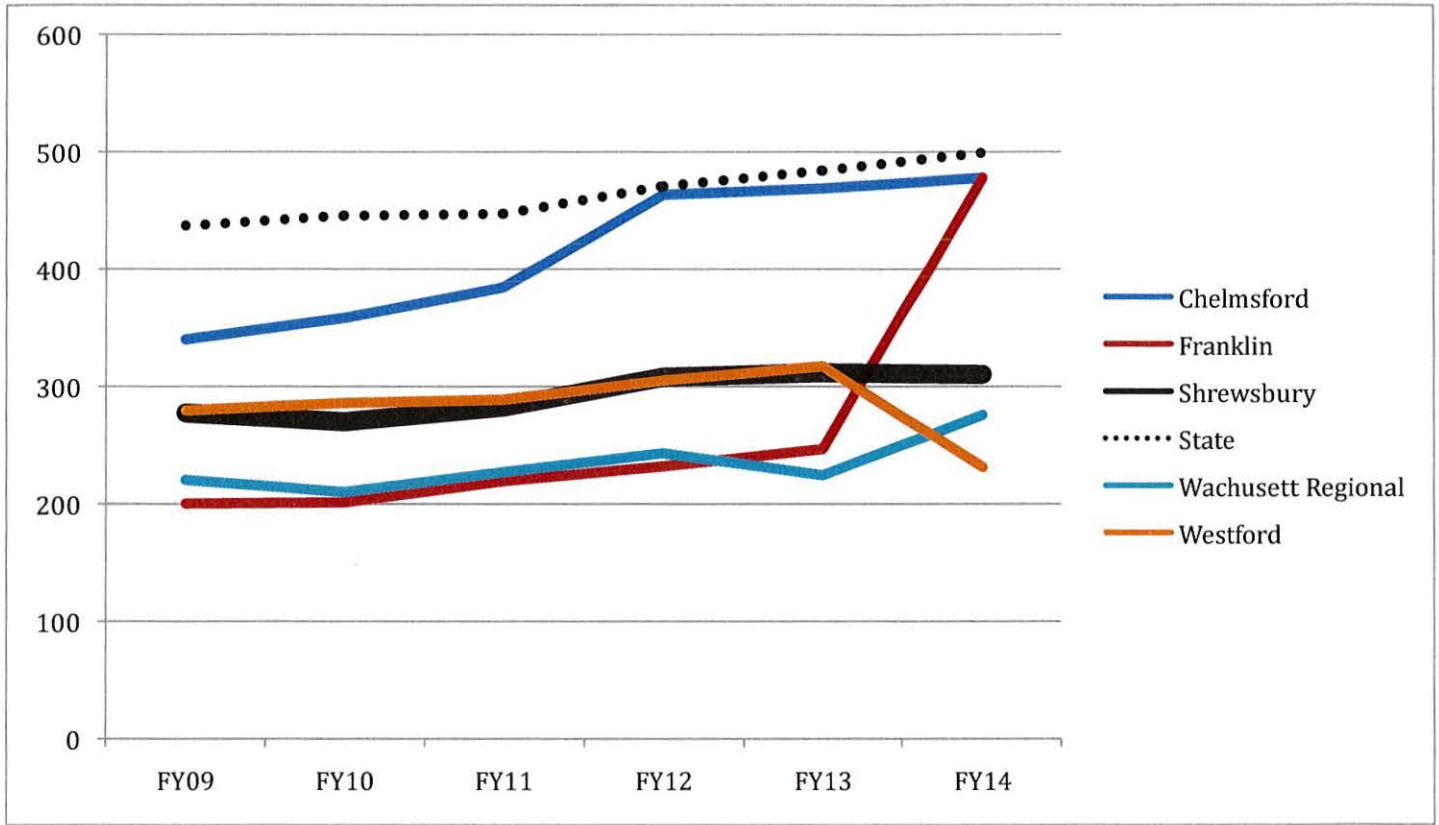


Current DART Districts



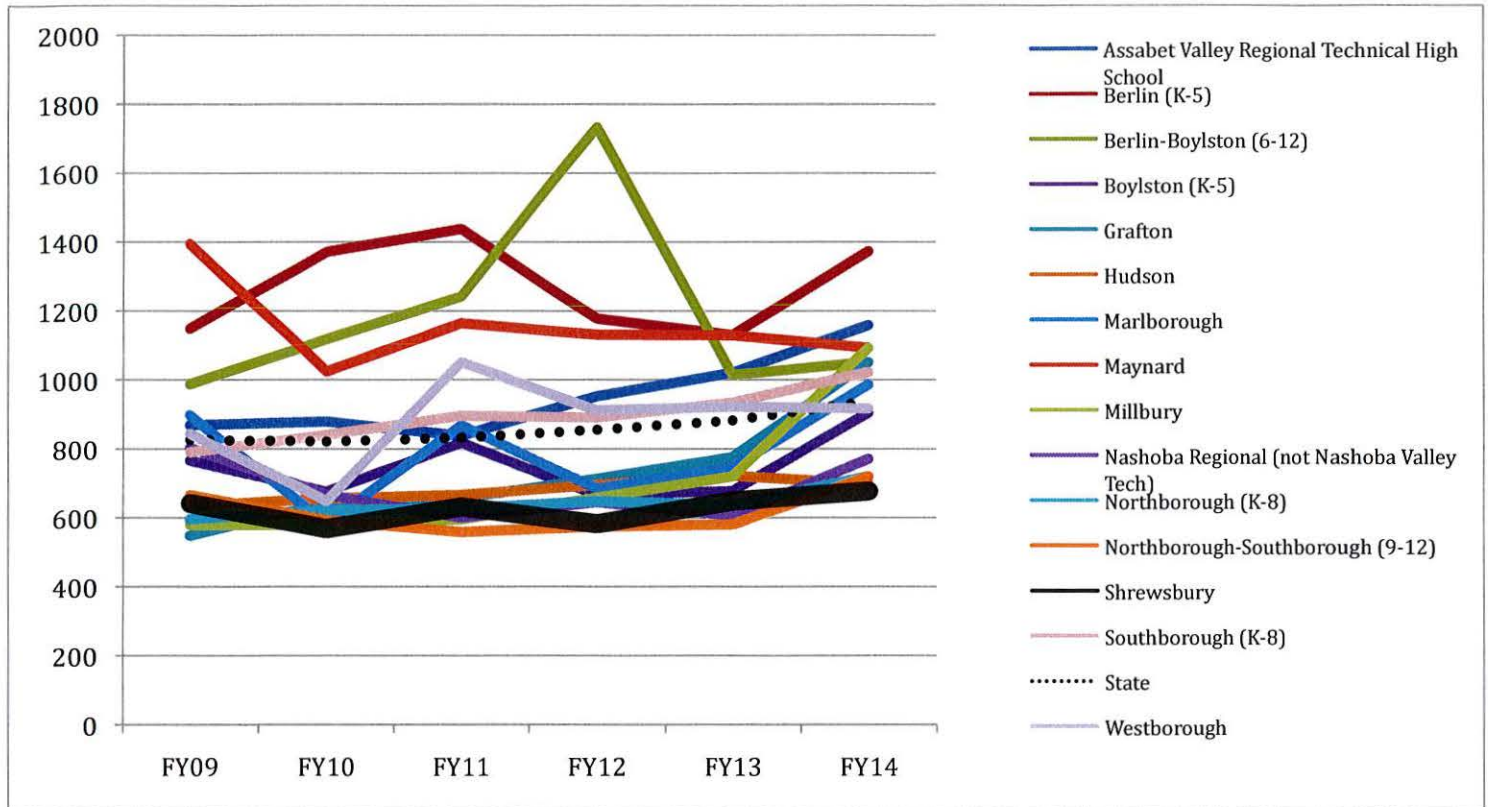
Administration (continued)

Additional Similar Districts

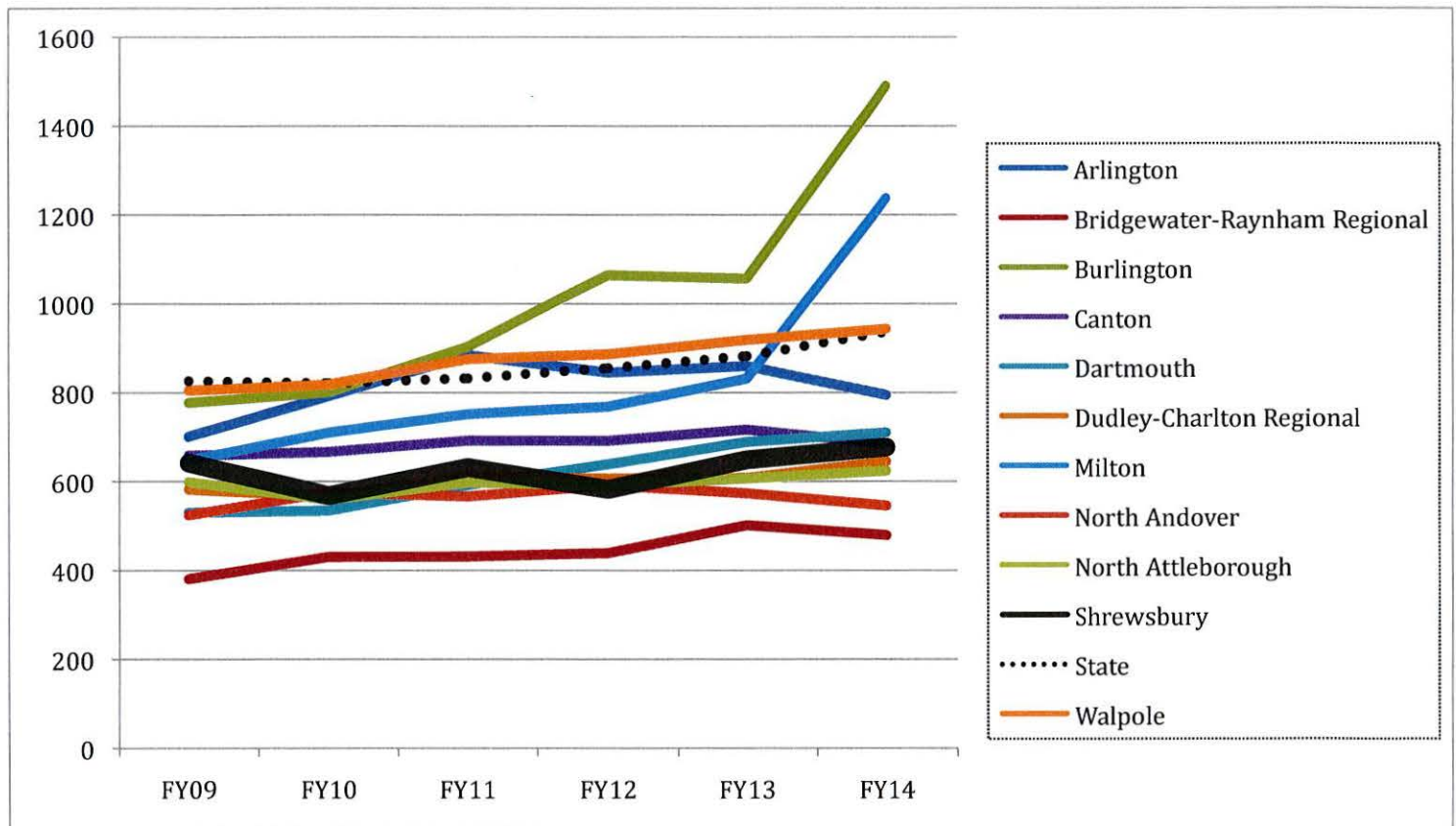


Instructional Leadership

Assabet Valley Collaborative

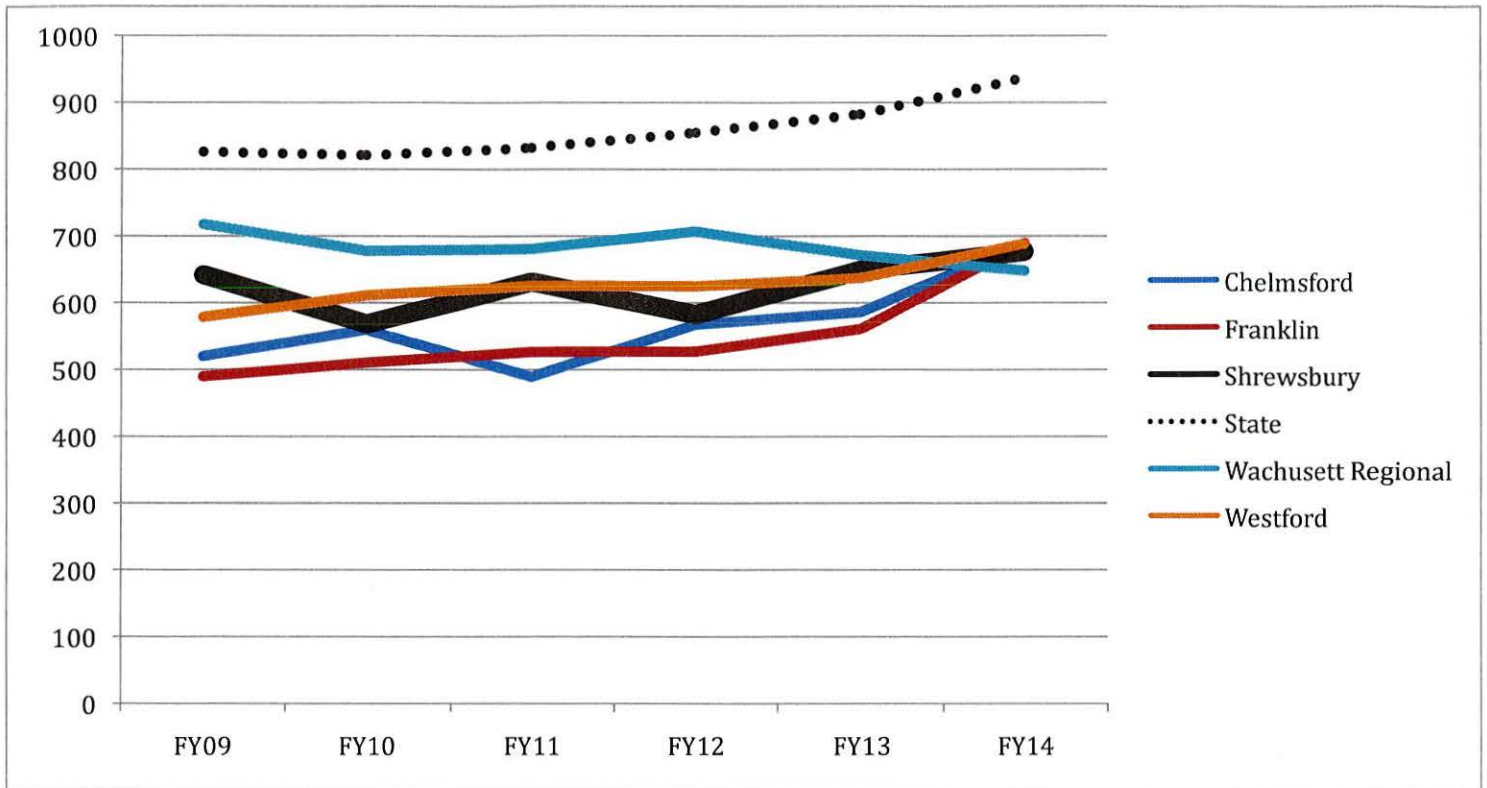


Current DART Districts



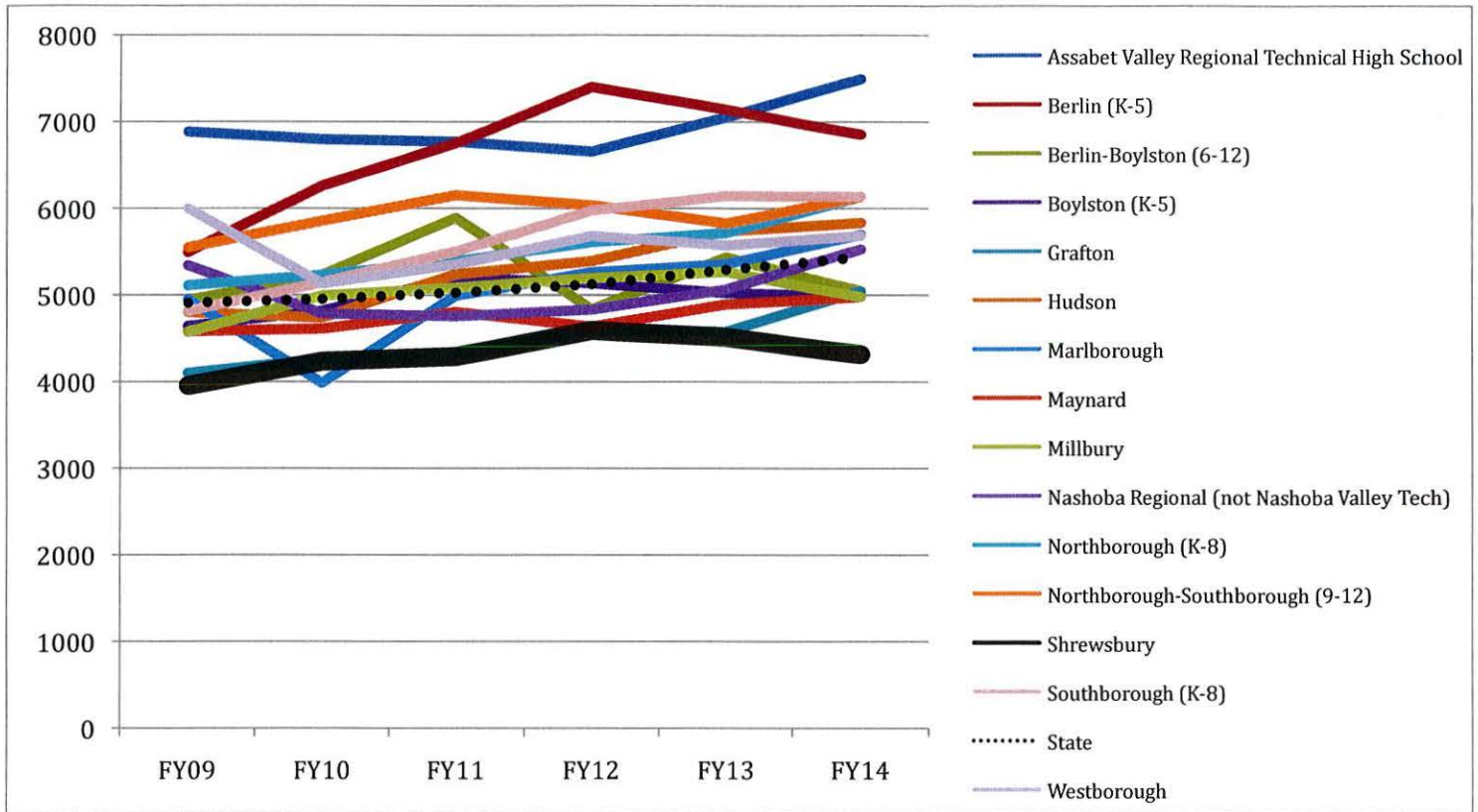
Instructional Leadership (continued)

Additional Similar Districts

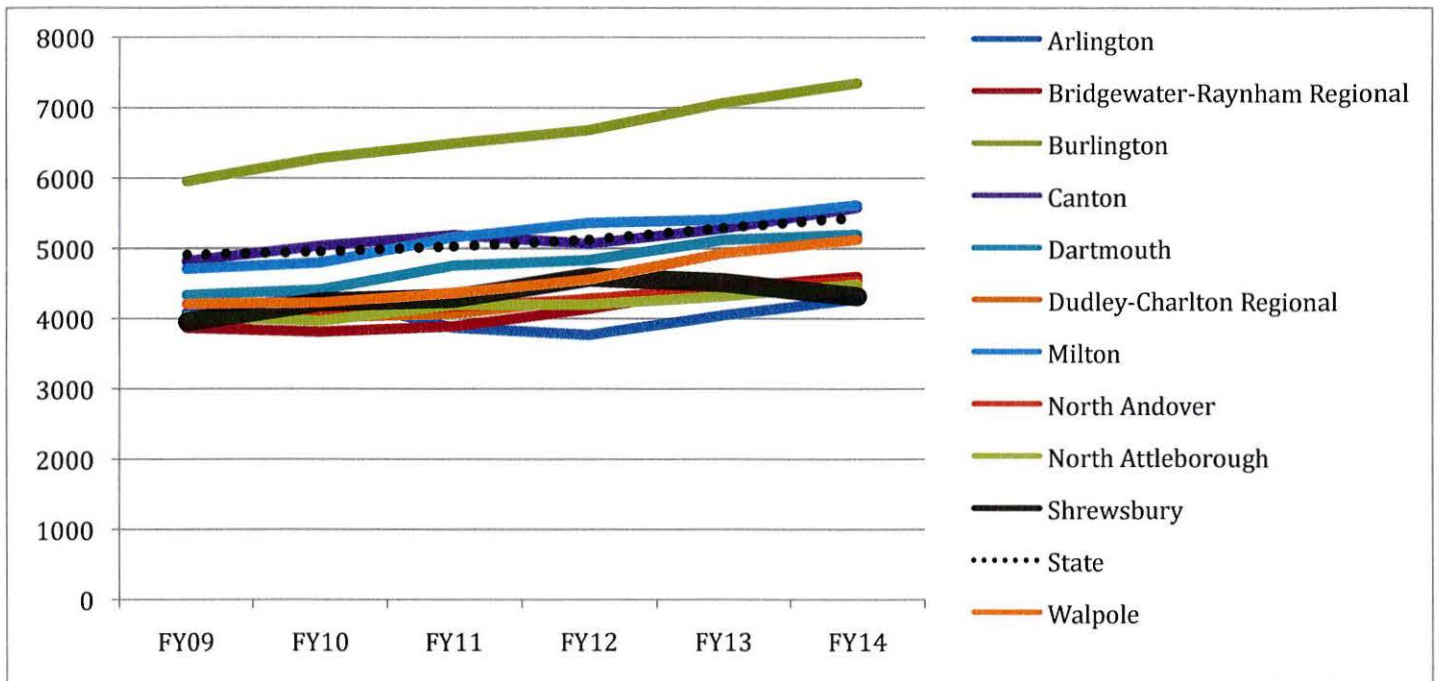


Classroom and Specialist Teachers

Assabet Valley Collaborative

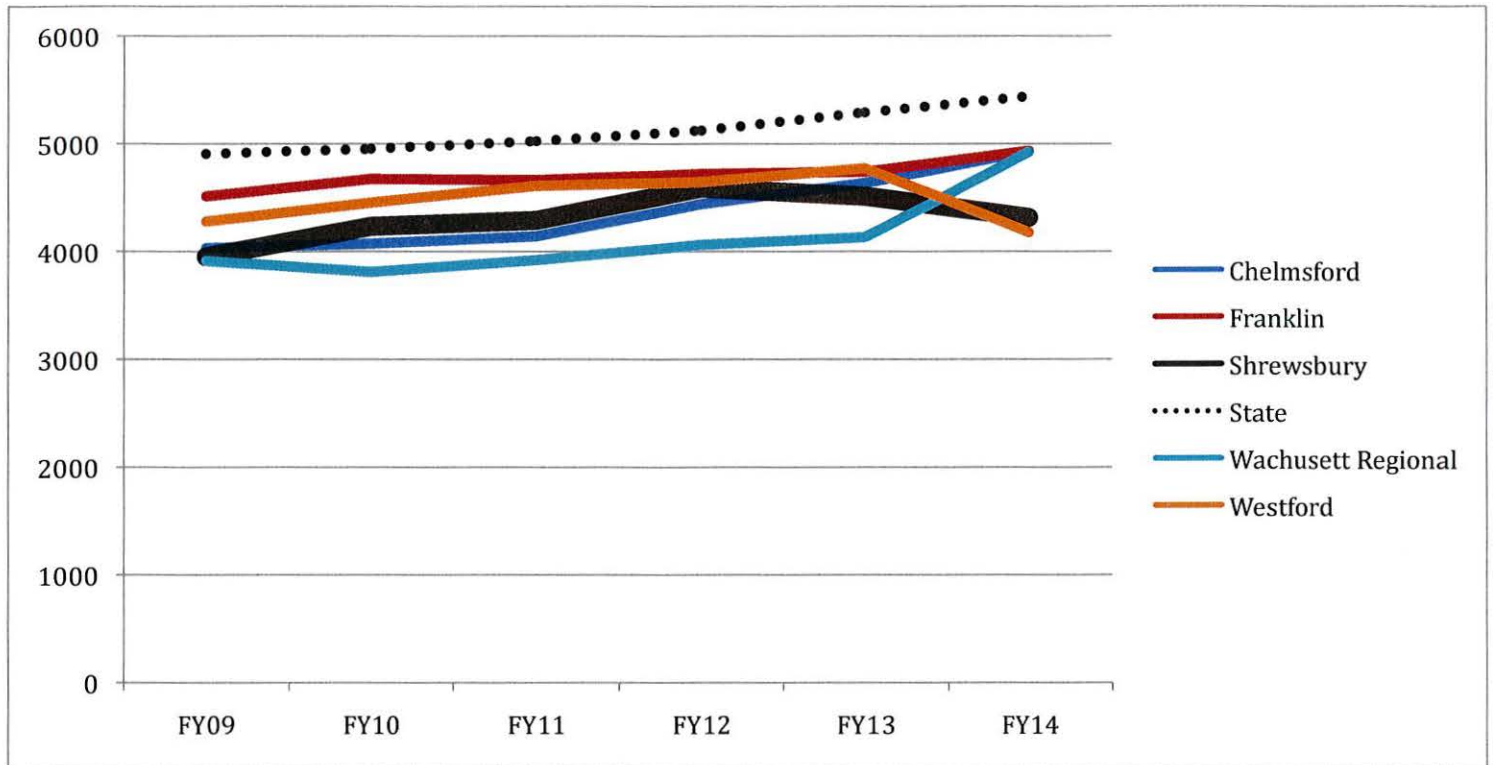


Current DART Districts



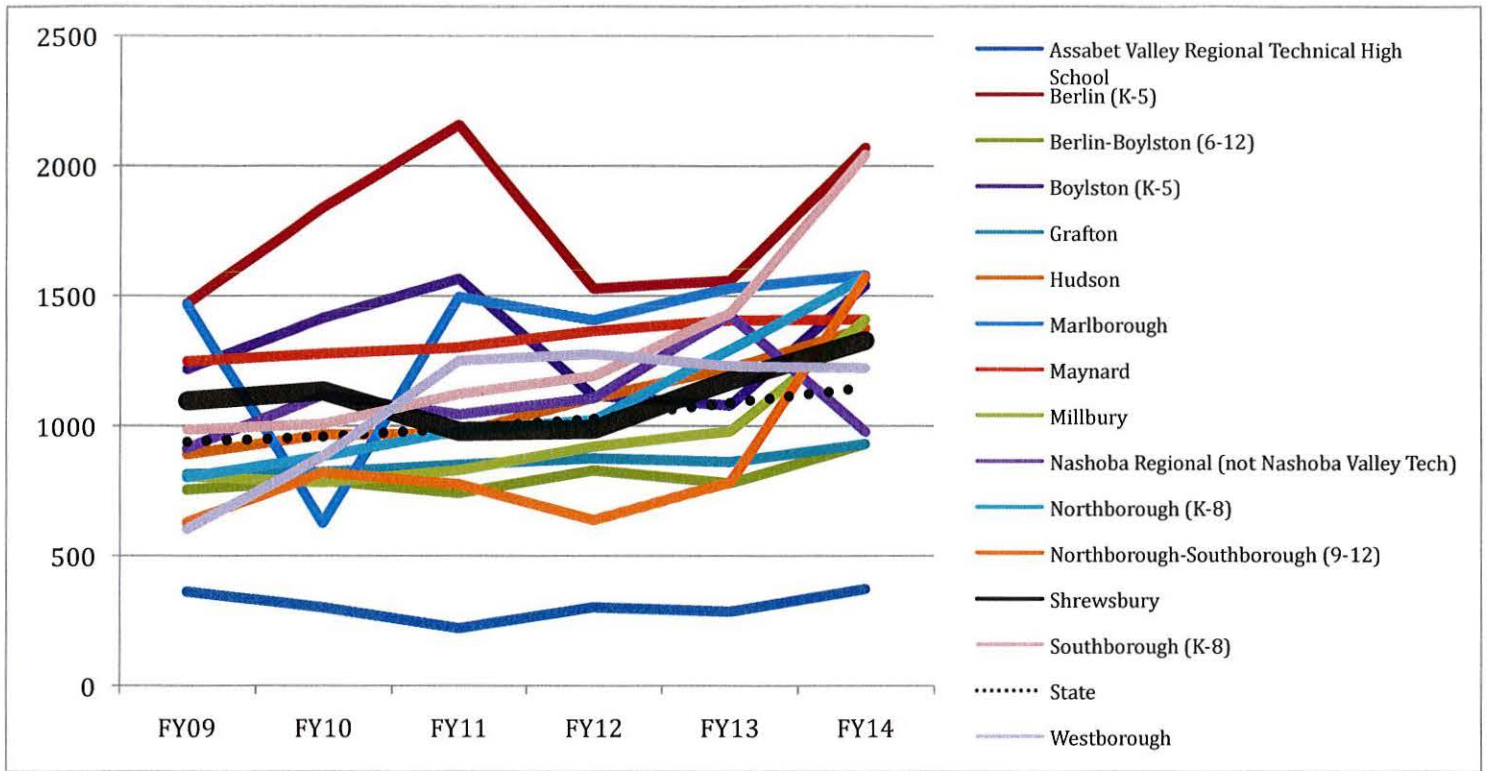
Classroom and Specialist Teachers (continued)

Additional Similar Districts

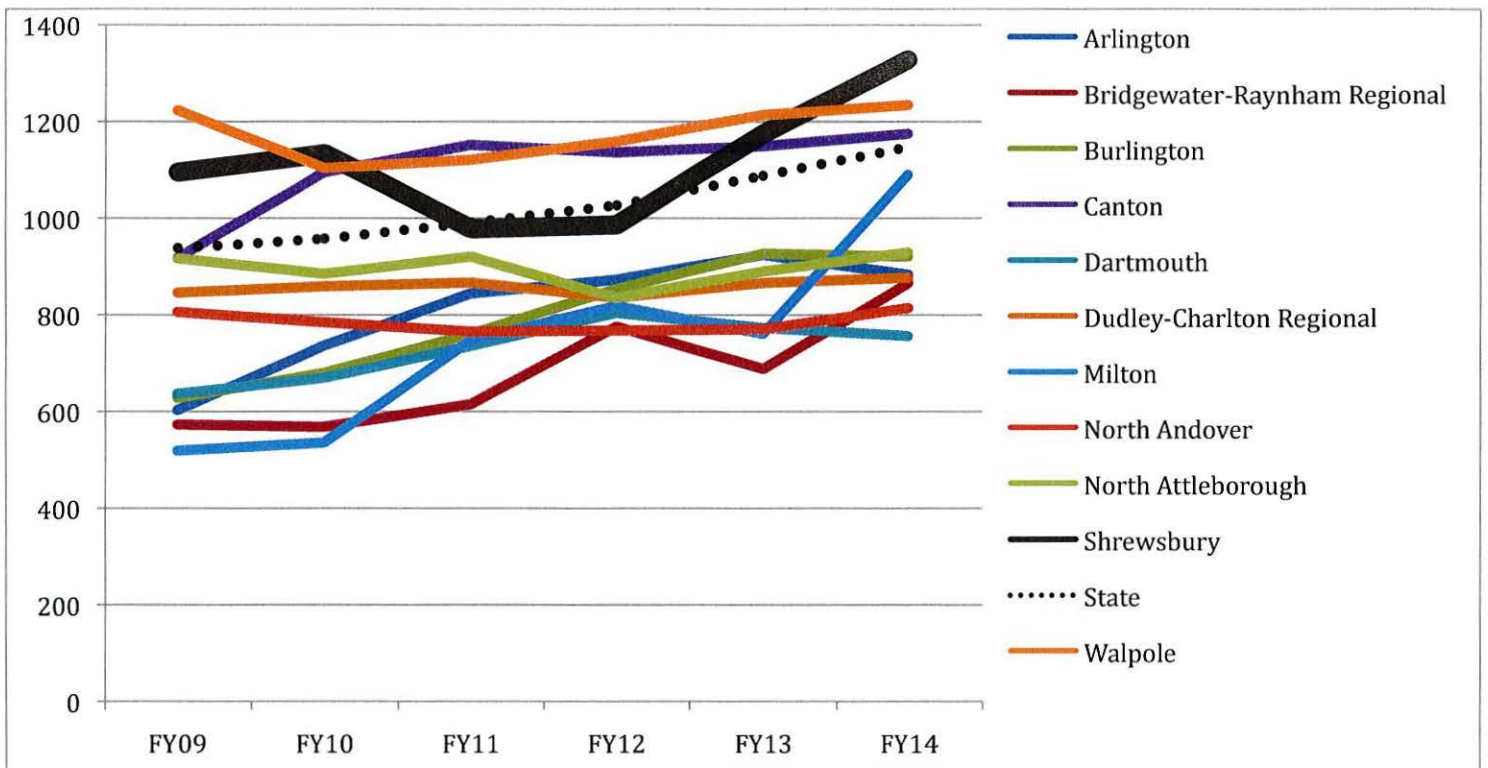


Other Teaching Services

Assabet Valley Collaborative

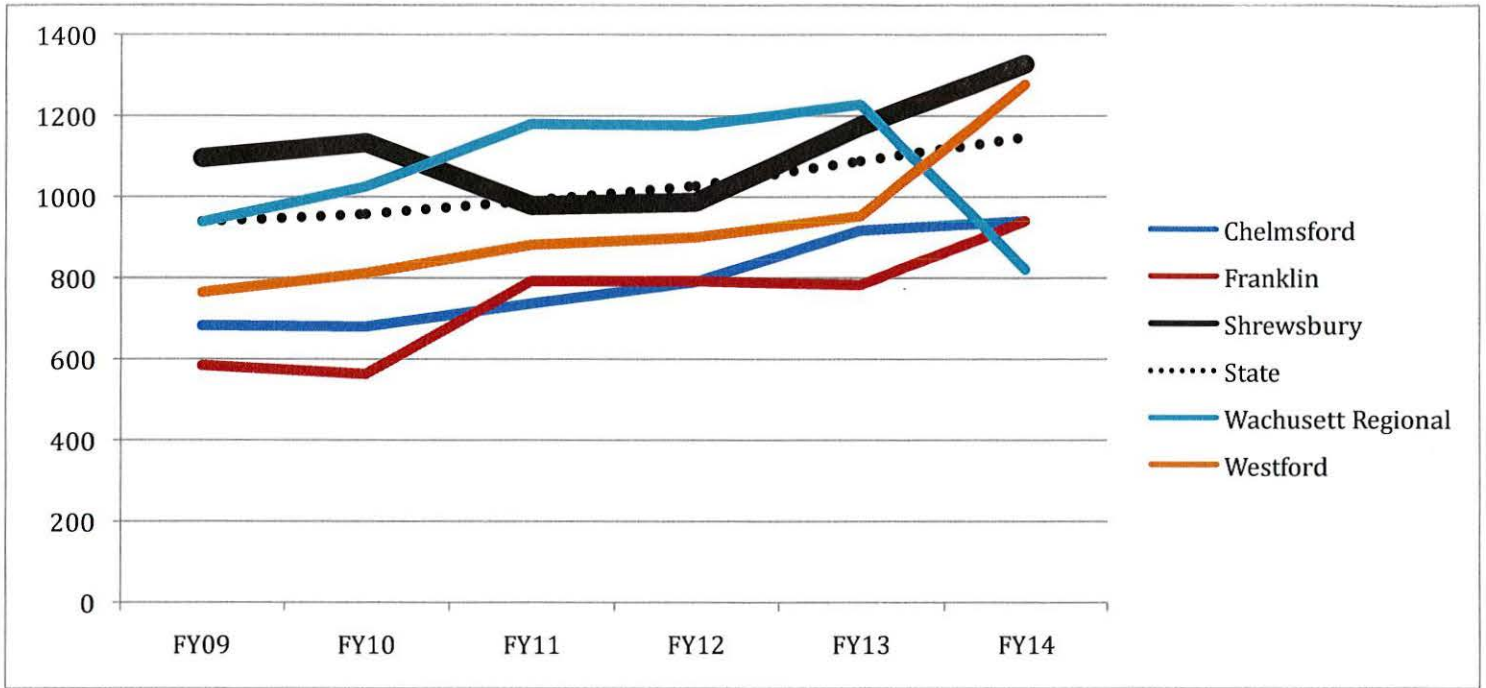


Current DART Districts



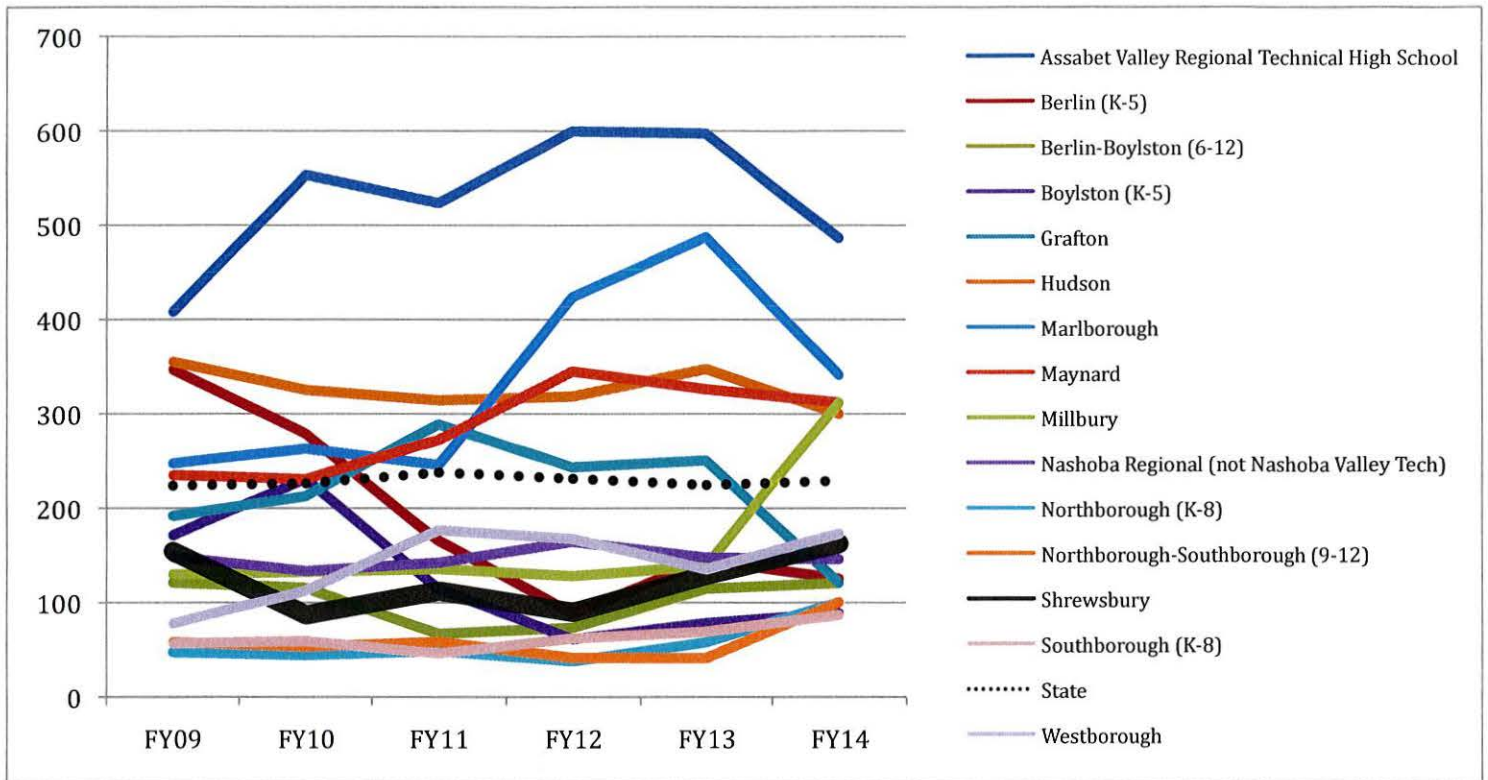
Other Teaching Services (continued)

Additional Similar Districts

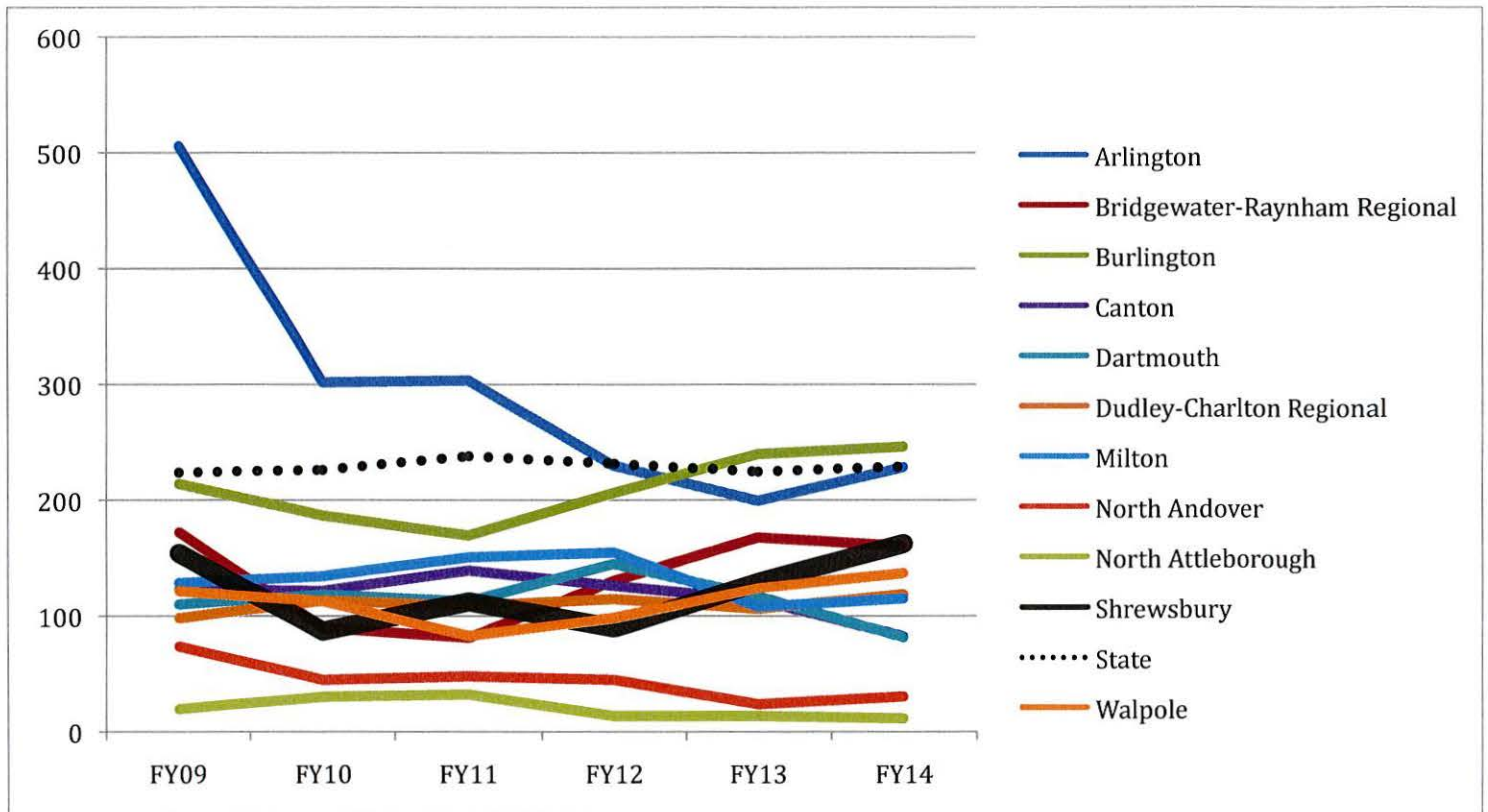


Professional Development

Assabet Valley Collaborative

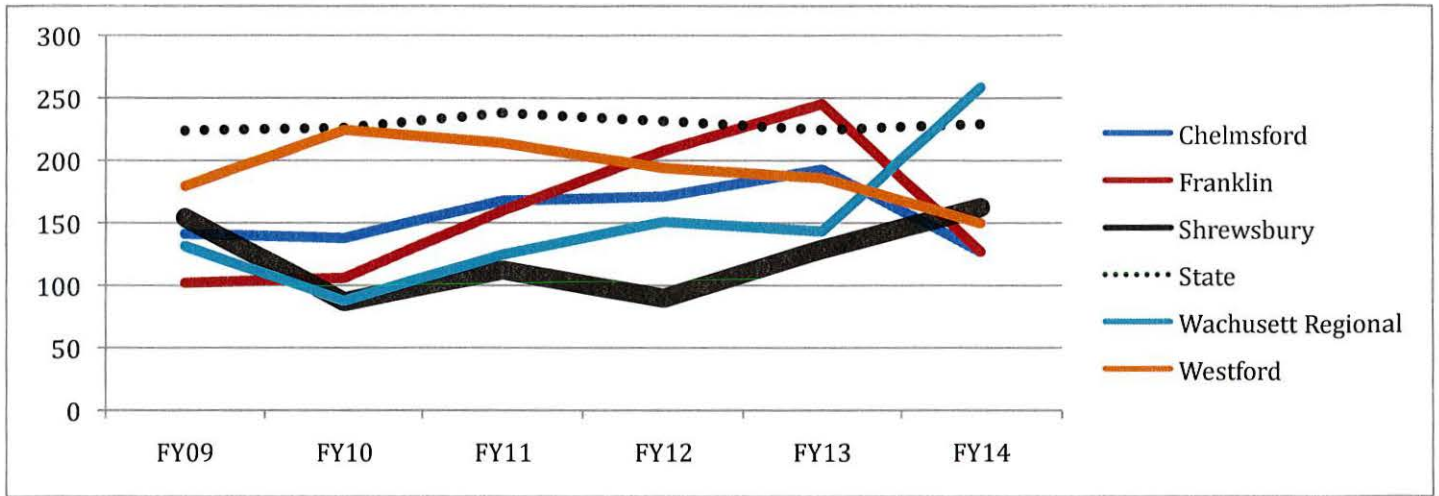


Current DART Districts



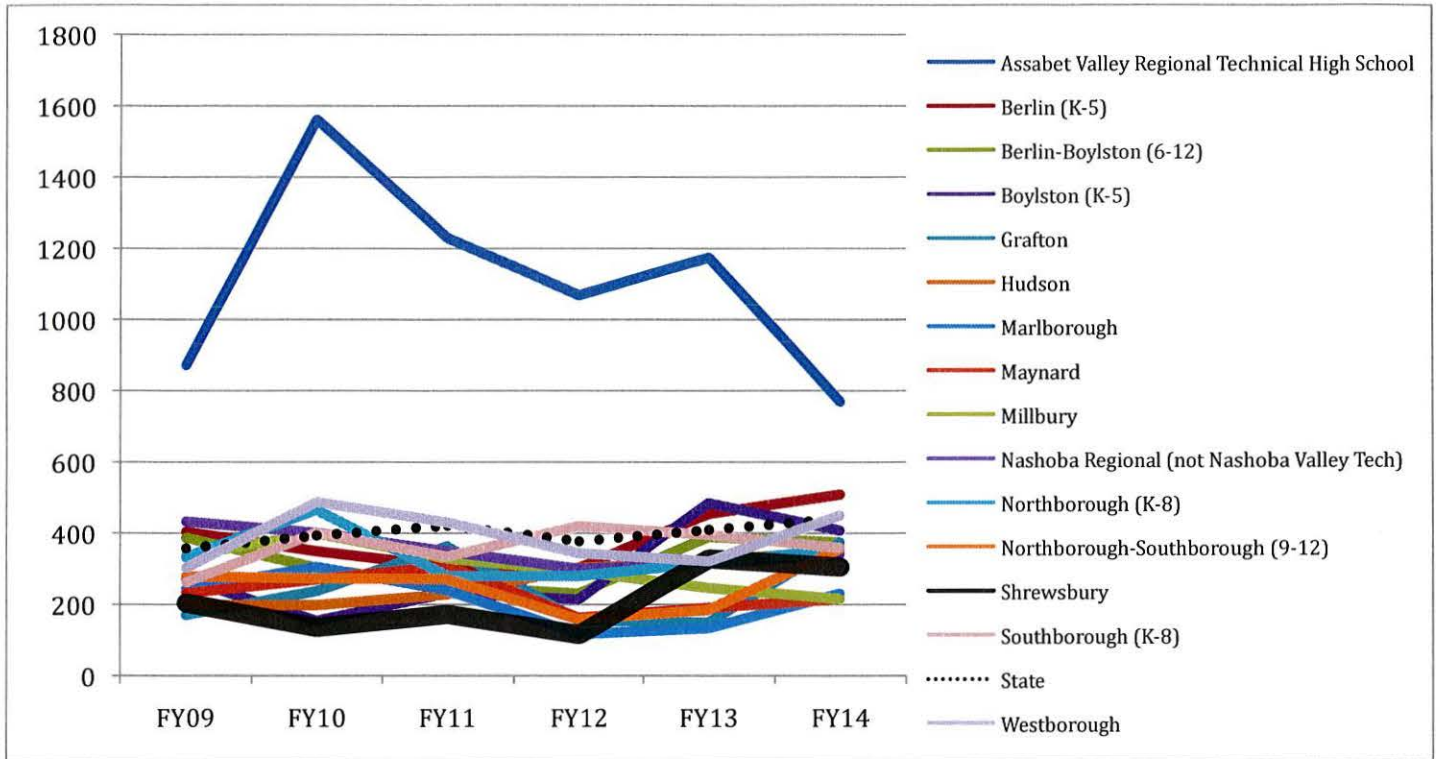
Professional Development (continued)

Additional Similar Districts

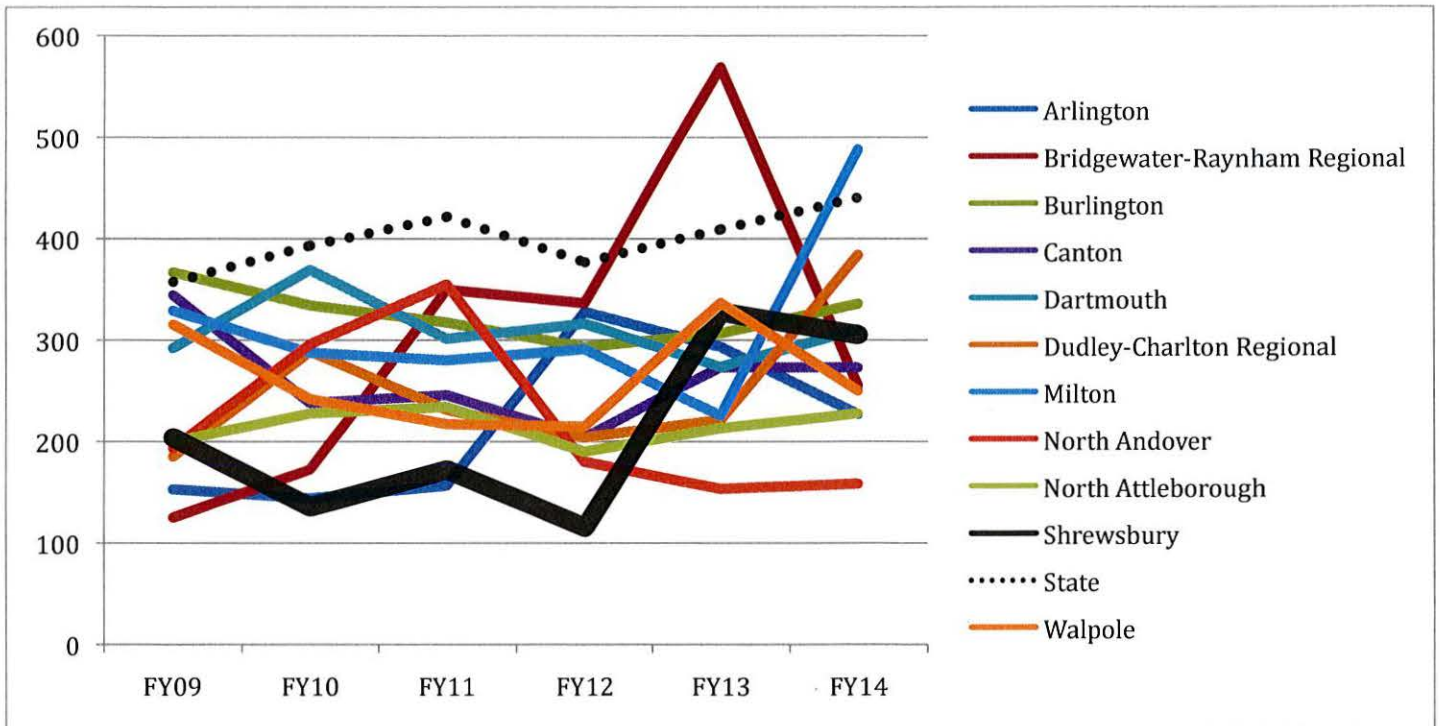


Instructional Materials

Assabet Valley Collaborative

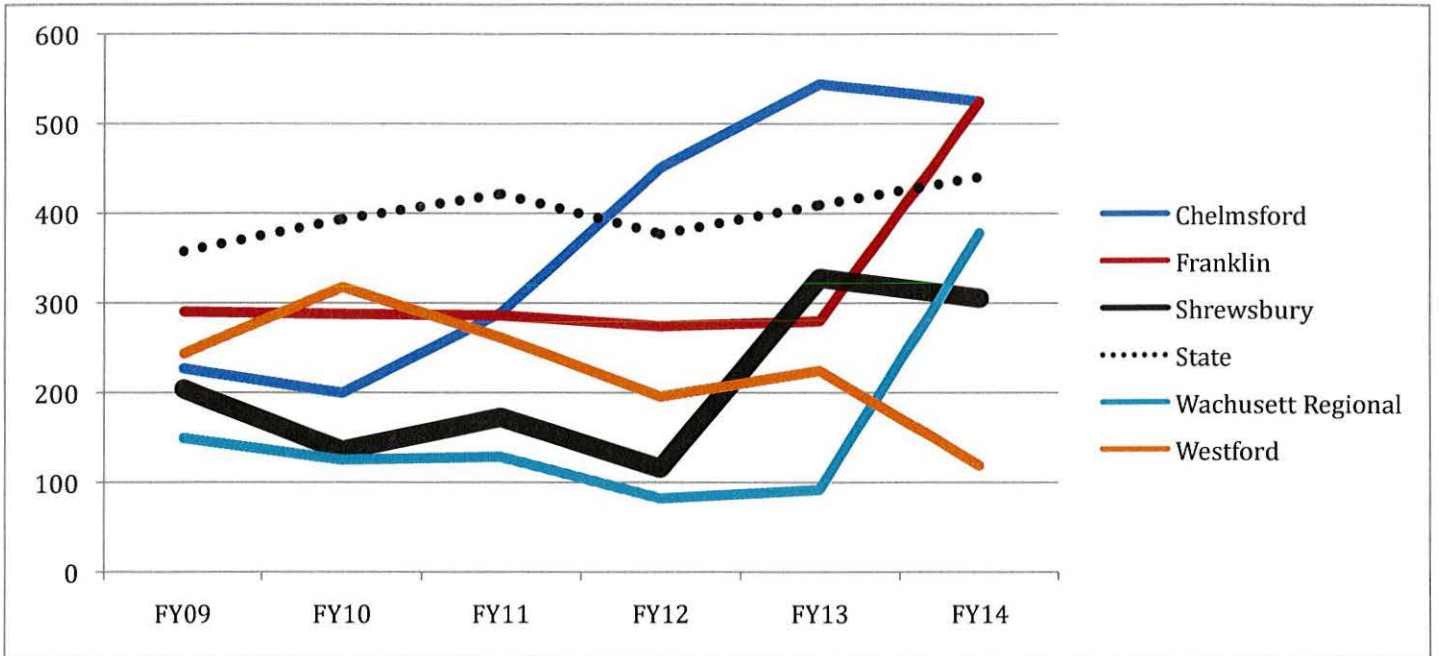


Current DART Districts



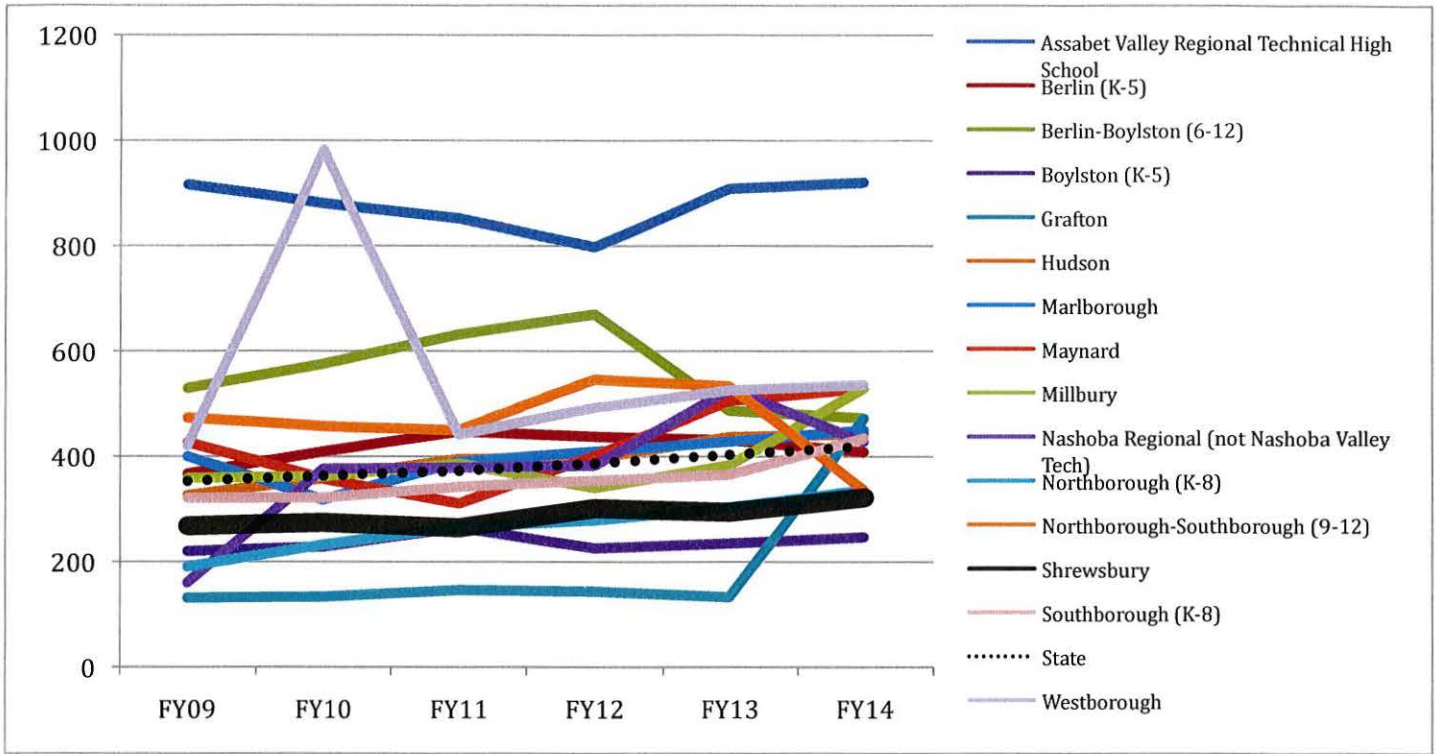
Instructional Materials (continued)

Additional Similar Districts

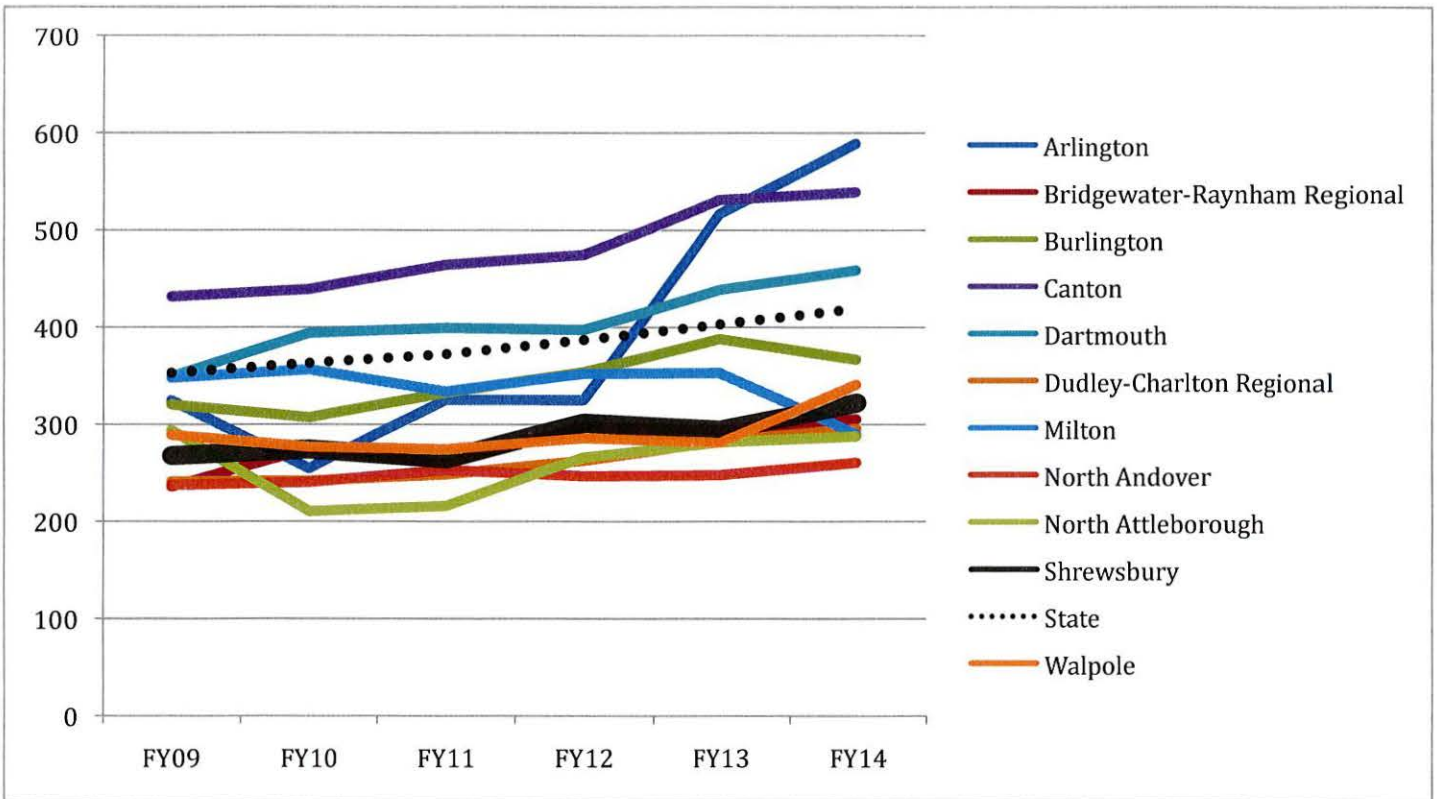


Guidance

Assabet Valley Collaborative

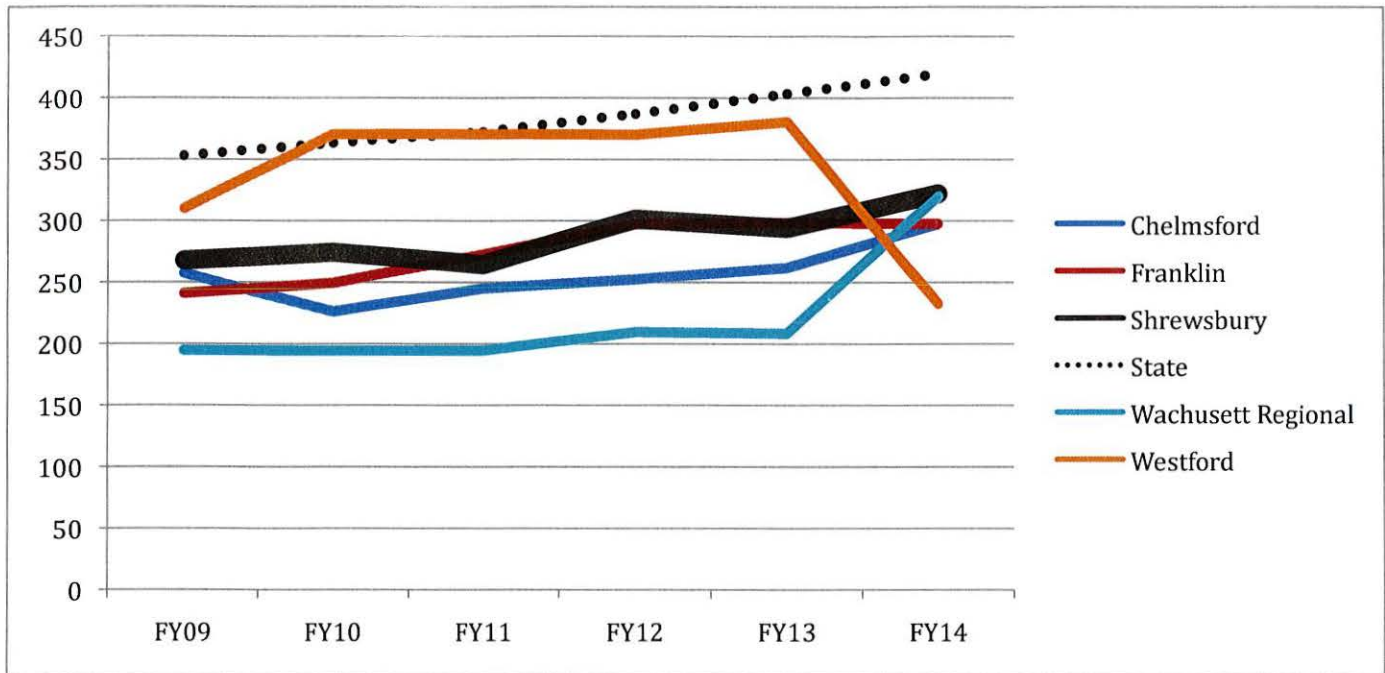


Current DART Districts



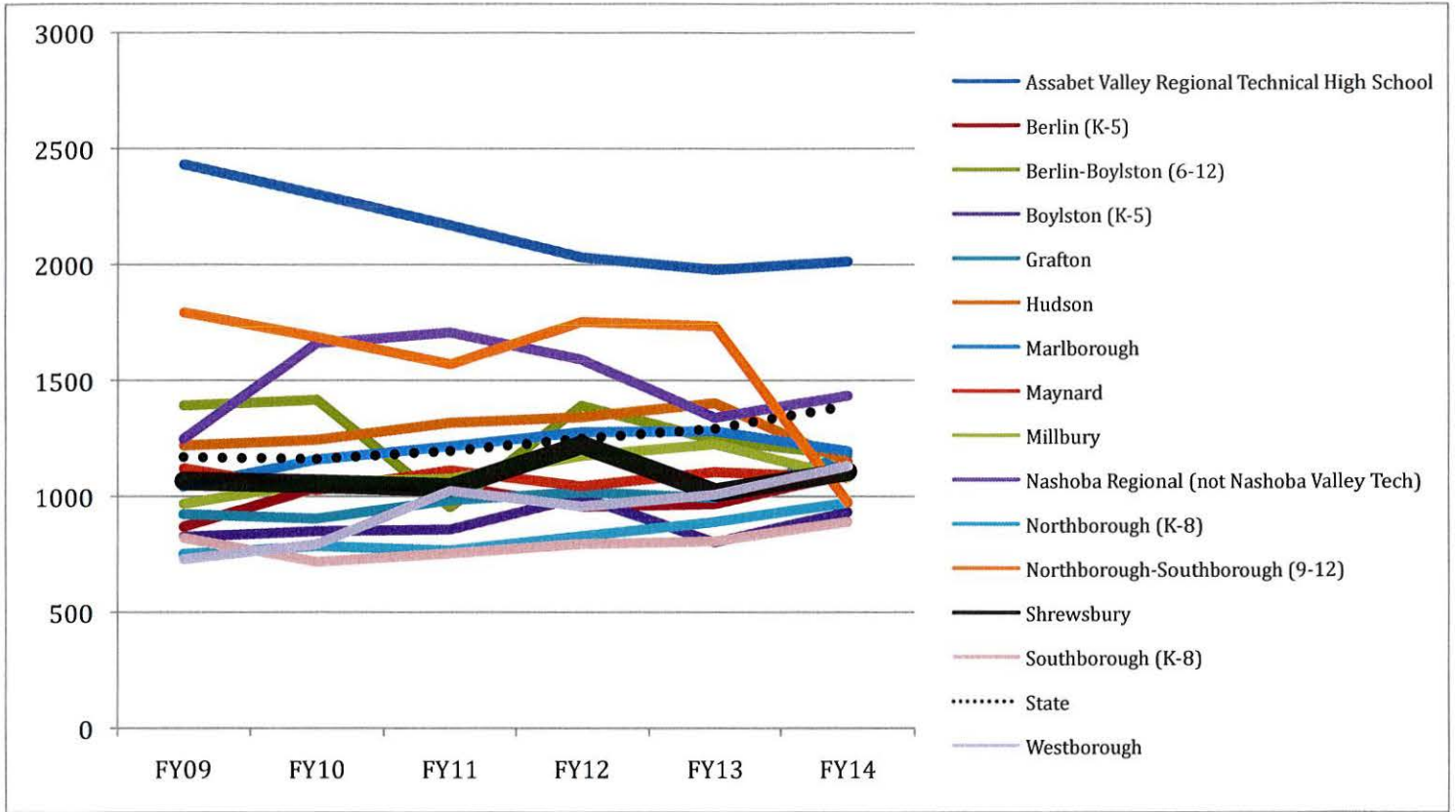
Guidance (continued)

Additional Similar Districts

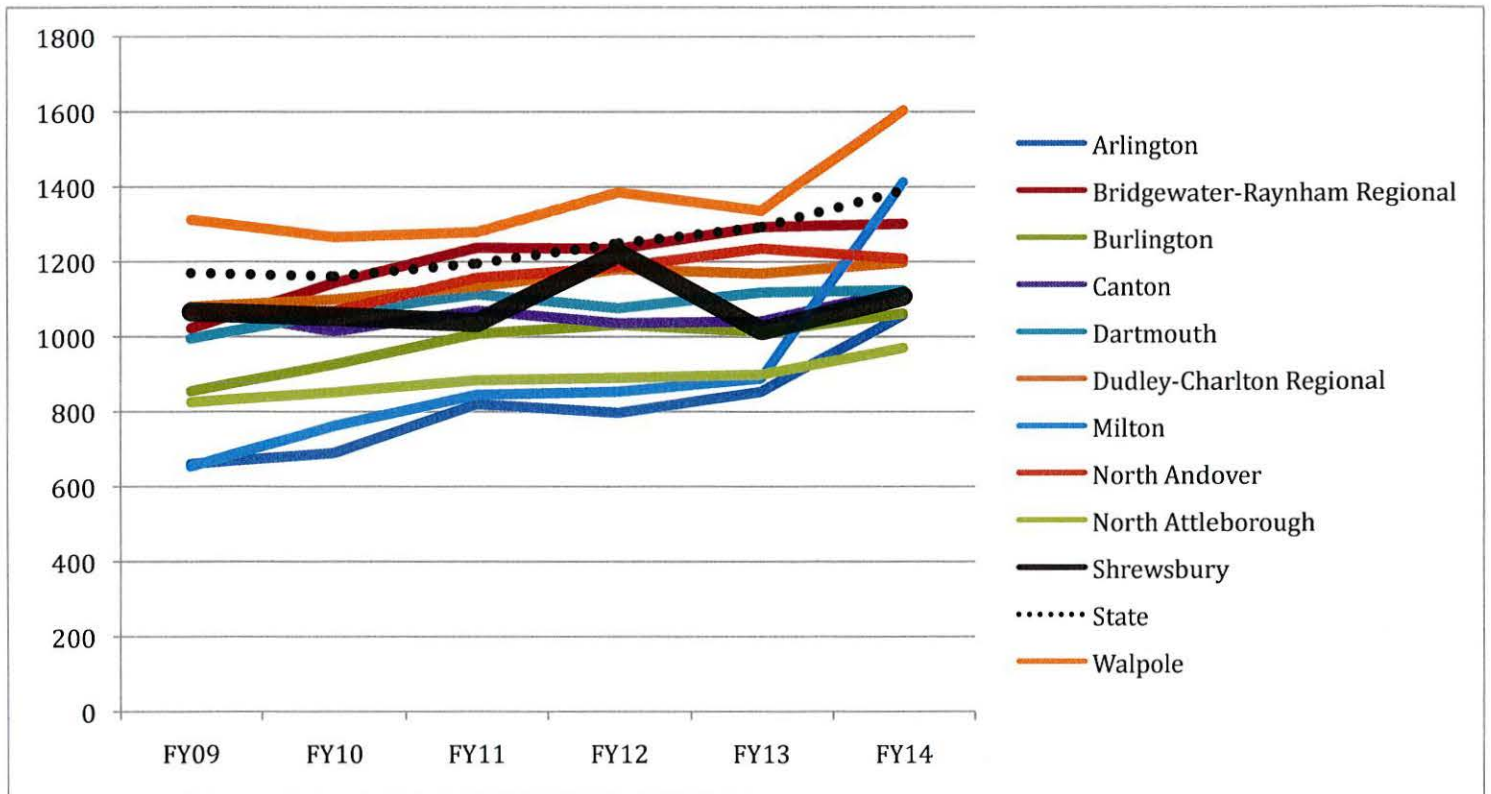


Pupil Services

Assabet Valley Collaborative

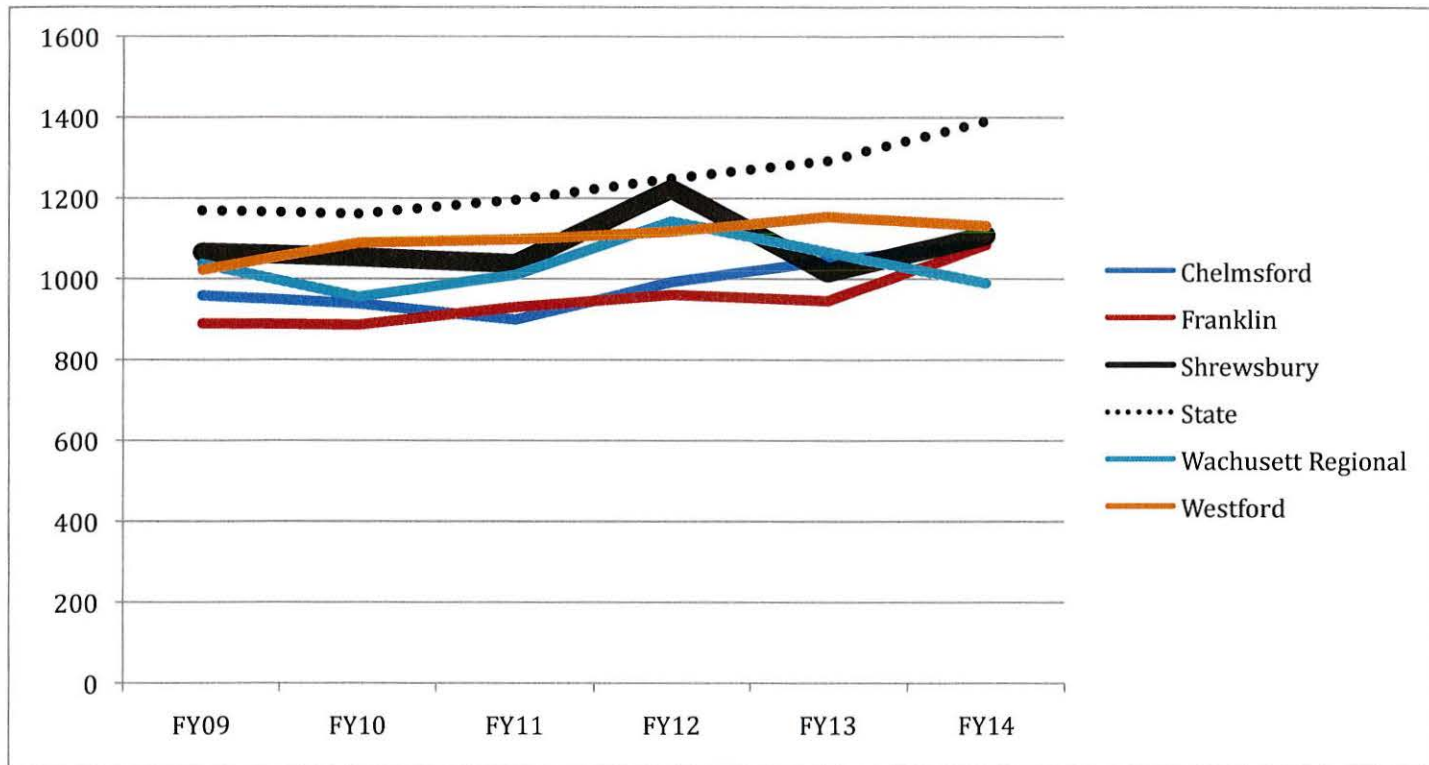


Current DART Districts



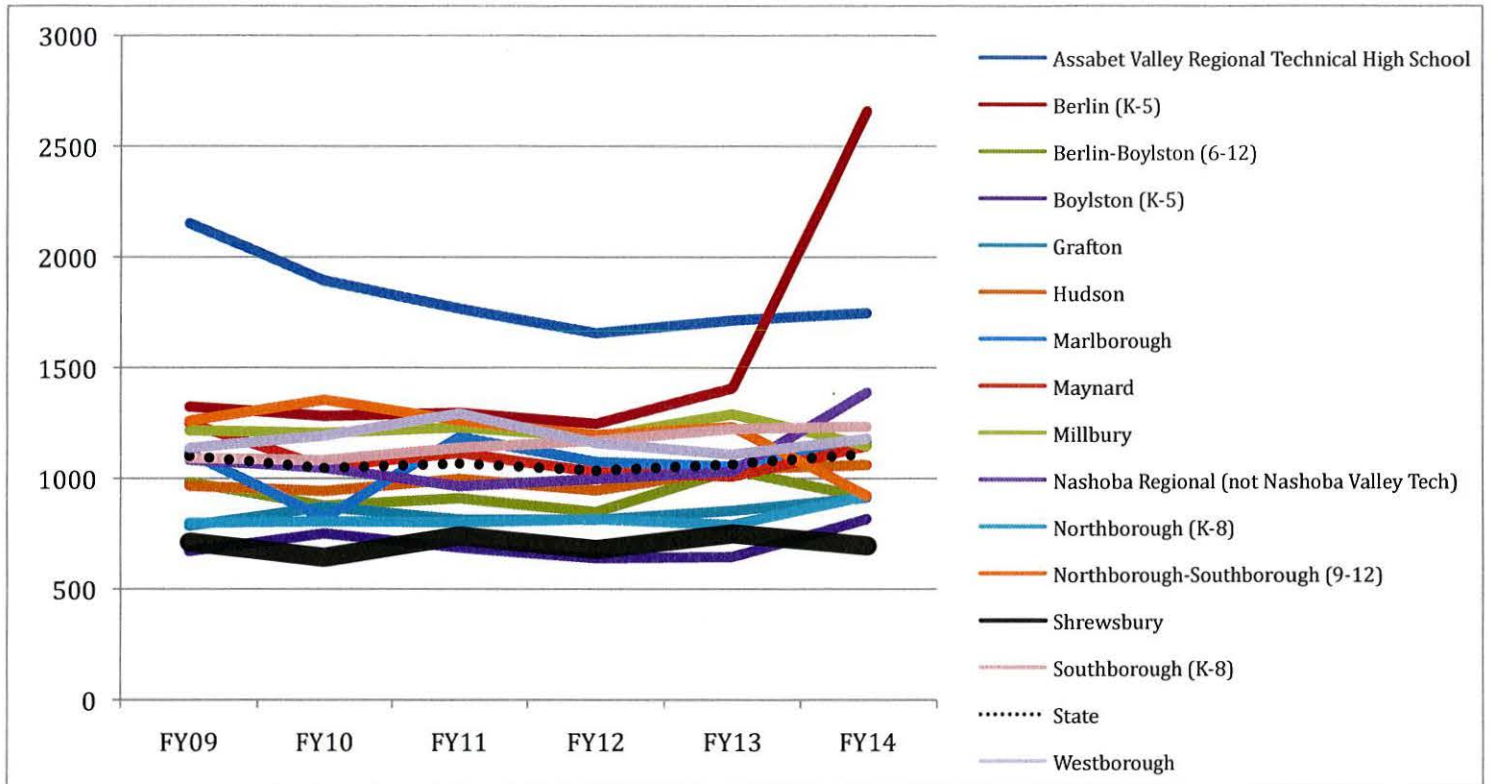
Pupil Services (continued)

Additional Similar Districts

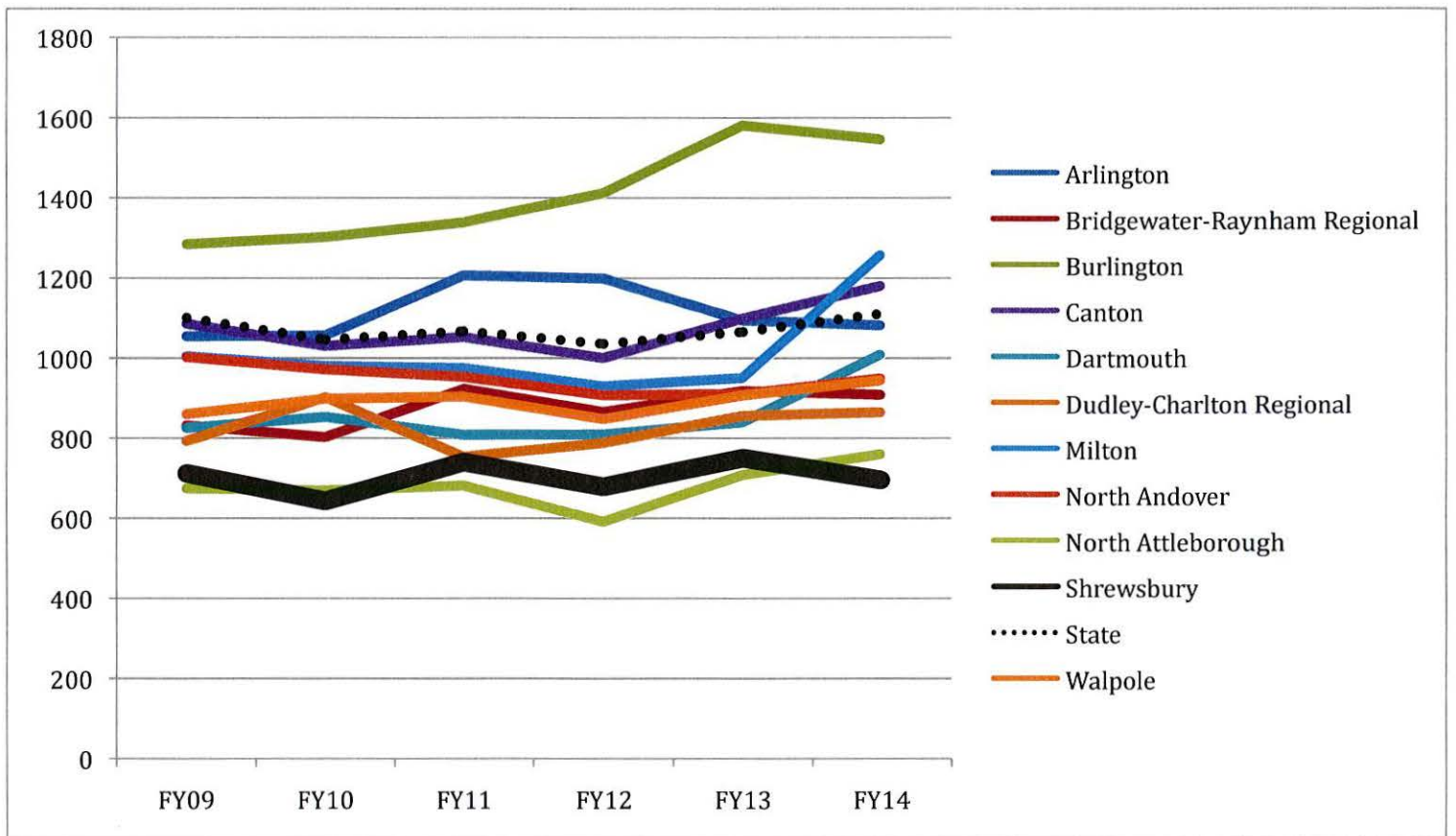


Operations

Assabet Valley Collaborative

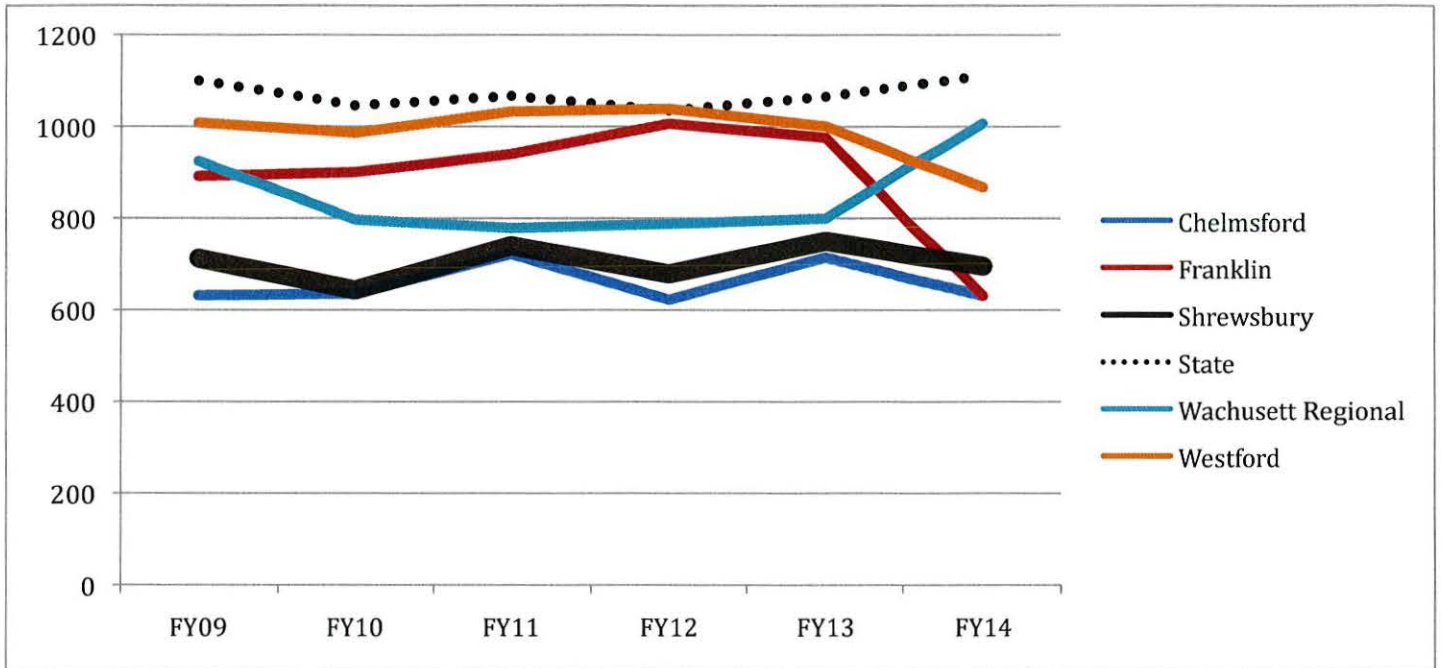


Current DART Districts



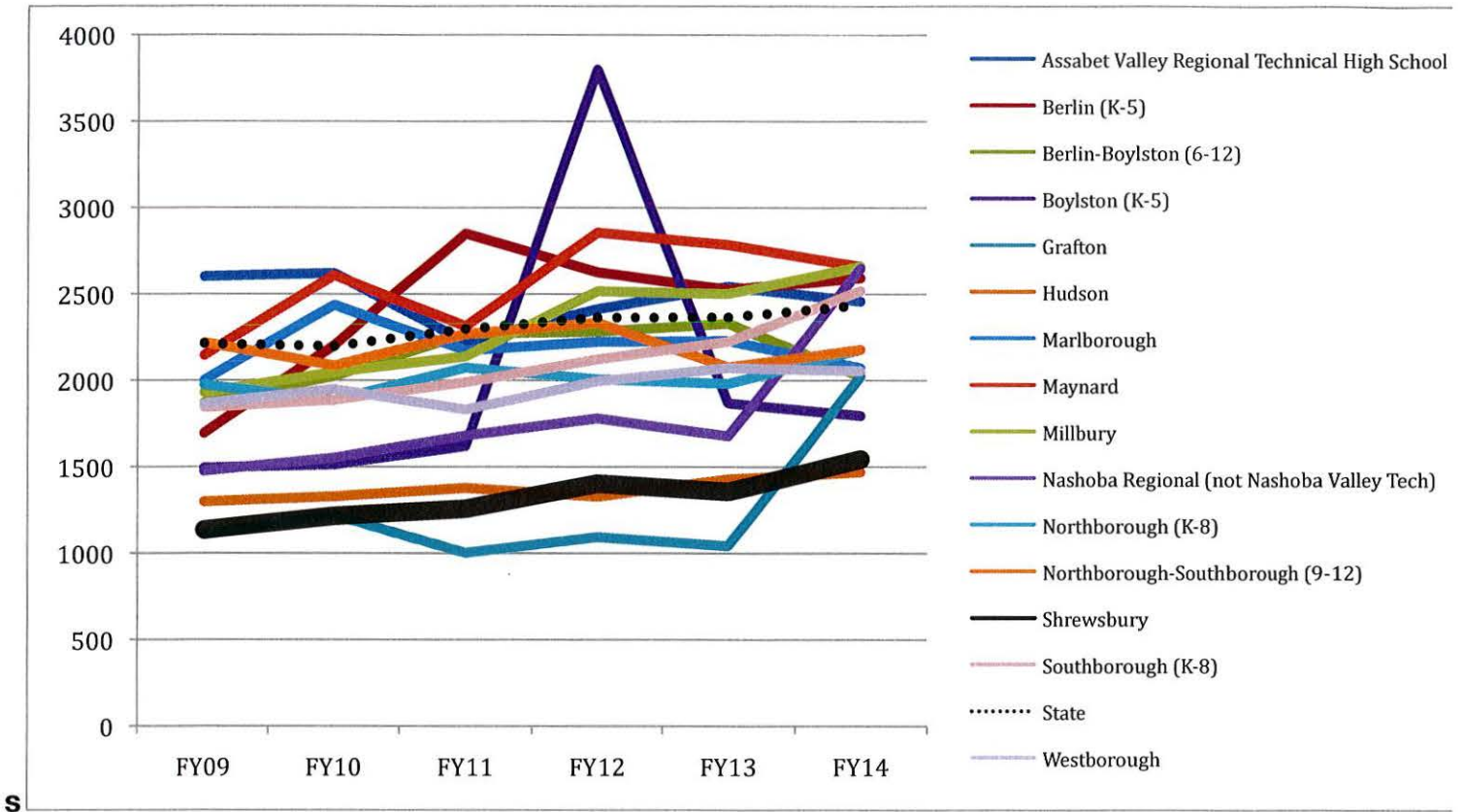
Operations (continued)

Additional Similar District

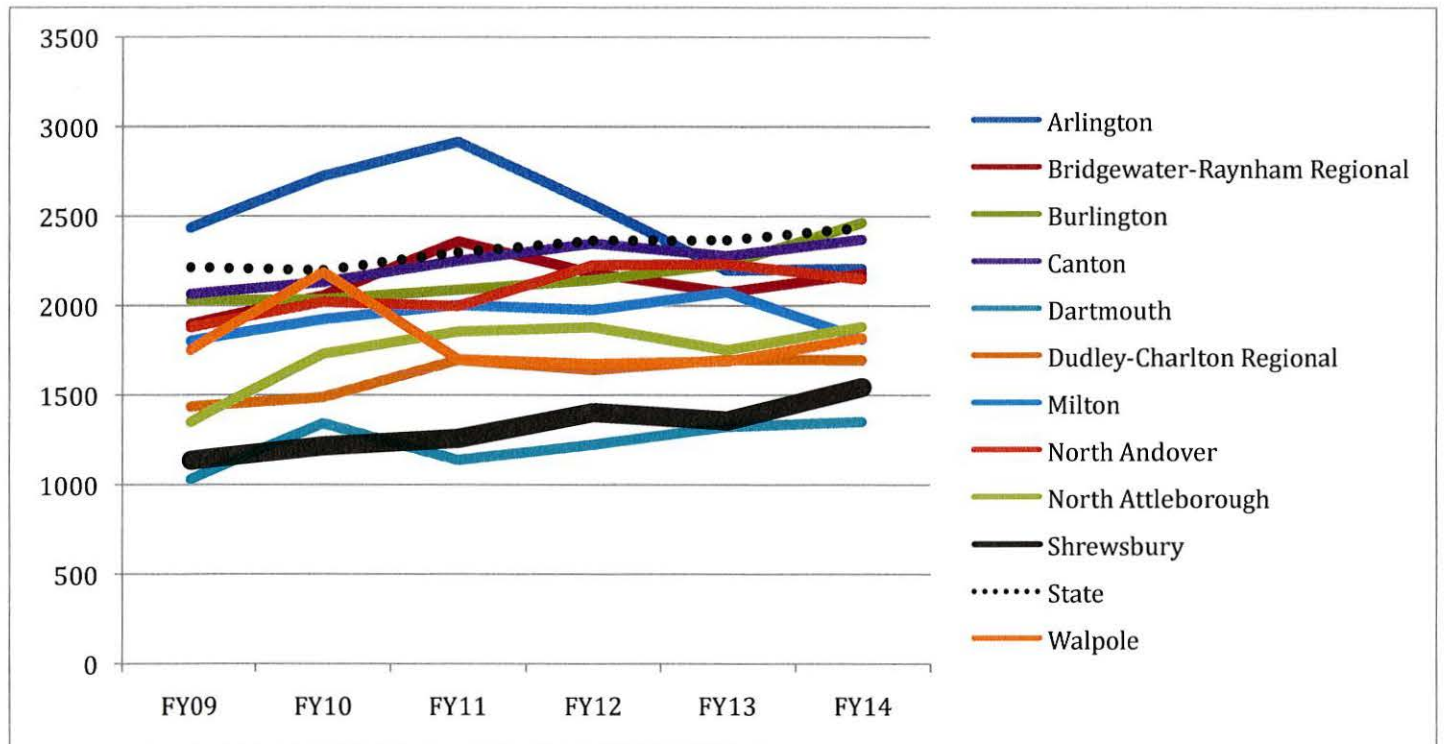


Insurance, Retirement, Other

Assabet Valley Collaborative

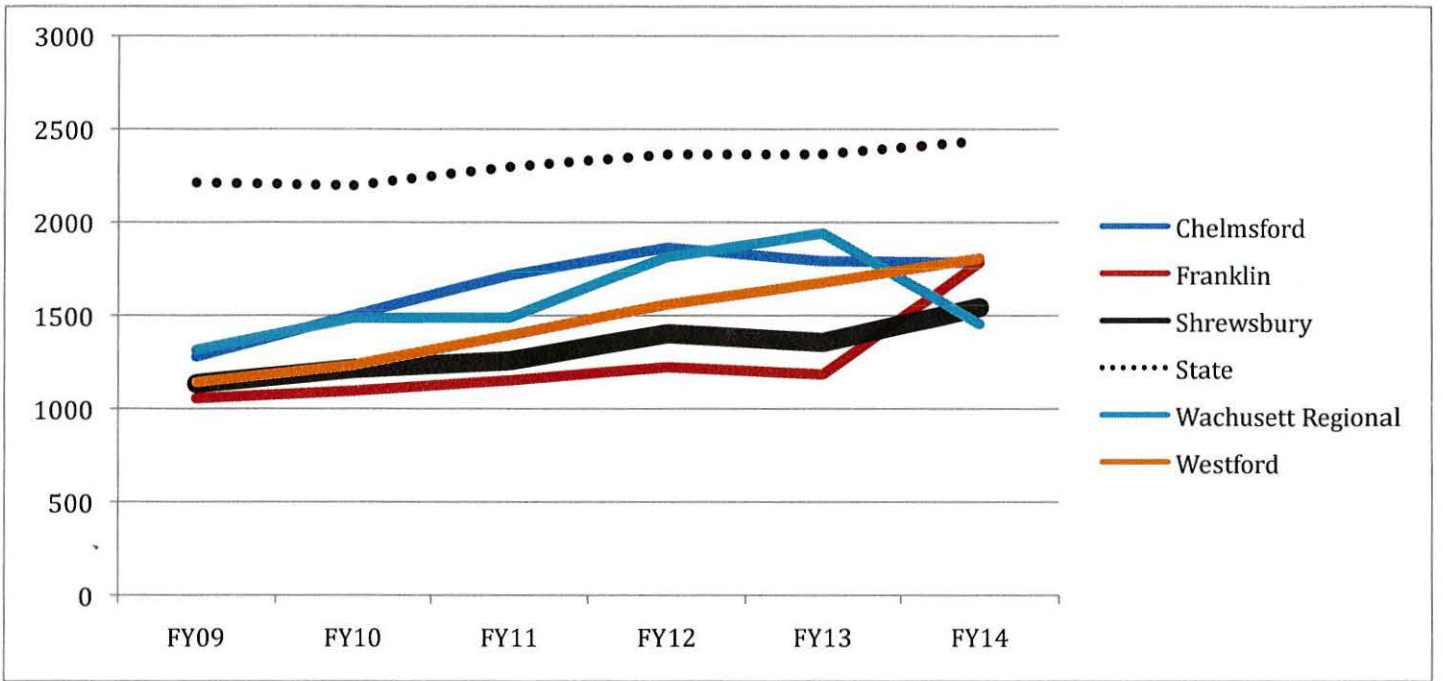


Current DART Districts



Insurance, Retirement, Other (continued)

Additional Similar Districts





SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Committee



ITEM NO: VII. Budget

MEETING DATE: 3/4/15

B. Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Recommendation: Public Hearing

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee hear feedback from the public regarding the Fiscal Year 2016 Budget?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Per state law, the School Committee must hold at least one public hearing on the proposed School Department budget. At this hearing, the public is encouraged to provide feedback regarding the Fiscal Year 2016 Budget that was proposed at the School Committee's meeting of January 21, 2015.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee hear feedback from the public regarding the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Committee



ITEM NO: **VIII. Old Business**

MEETING DATE: **3/4/15**

A. 2015-2016 School Calendar: Report & Vote

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee vote to approve the proposed calendar for the 2015-2016 school year?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. School Committee Policy #221 indicates that the Committee is responsible for determining the school calendar each year by April 30.
2. At the February 4th meeting the School Committee discussed the proposed school calendar, which includes two full professional development days and five early release days.
3. The draft calendar (enclosed) has been available for public comment since February 5.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee vote to approve the calendar for the 2015-2016 school year.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent



Shrewsbury Public Schools

Joseph M. Sawyer, Ed.D.
Superintendent

February 27, 2015

To: School Committee
Re: Recommendation for 2015-2016 School Calendar

The proposed 2015-2016 school district calendar was presented at the February 4, 2015 meeting, and is enclosed for your reference.

Since the draft calendar was presented, there has been a great deal of discussion in the media about school calendars due to the significant number of snow days that districts have experienced due to the extraordinary weather this winter season. Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, Mitchell Chester, has been loath to waive the 180 day requirement for public school districts, and he has advocated that districts adopt calendars start prior to Labor Day and consolidate the traditional February and April vacations. Because Shrewsbury already begins the week prior to Labor Day, and because our district has fewer “no school” days for professional development and/or religious holidays than many other districts, we currently are scheduled to have a last day of June 17 despite having lost four days to snow cancellations.

There is longstanding contract language with the Shrewsbury Education Association that the work year for teachers may not commence sooner than the Monday prior to Labor Day, and the School Committee has consistently scheduled opening day for staff on that Monday and the first day for students on the following day. As I have previously communicated, in 2007 a Calendar Committee consisting of School Committee members, parents, and educators surveyed the community and examined many issues related to the school calendar (see 2007 report enclosed). This committee made various recommendations that resulted in the current approach to developing Shrewsbury’s calendar, including staying with the current February and April vacation structure rather than consolidating these into a single March vacation. The Calendar Committee noted that such a change would only represent a net gain of three days, as there are eight days of vacation during the February and April breaks with the other two days being Presidents Day and Patriots Day, compared with a five day break in March. While a small majority of those surveyed indicated that they would prefer a single March break, the committee felt that the challenges presented by being the only district in the area moving to such a calendar outweighed the impact of moving the end of the year three days earlier. The challenges they cited including childcare problems for staff members who reside in other communities with a different school vacation schedule (which would also affect Shrewsbury parents who work in other school districts).

I believe there are additional issues that bear consideration relative to the potential consolidation of the February and April vacations into one. These include:

- The question of whether the continuity of a number of consecutive weeks in school without vacations makes a difference academically.ⁱ
- The question of whether a winter break actually helps reduce absenteeism due to illness by breaking the cycle of transmission.ⁱⁱ

- The question of whether more frequent vacations actually may increase productivity.ⁱⁱⁱ
- The chance that more snow days could be lost during what would be the February break, as would have likely been the case this year.
- Without a change across the entire state or in the surrounding region, many outside opportunities for students and families that are purposefully scheduled to take place during the February and April vacations would, in a district that does not take those vacations, put families in a position where they would not partake or could cause families to choose to take their children out of school in order to participate.
- According to a recent informal survey done by a superintendent, there are multiple past instances of Massachusetts districts that changed to a single spring vacation and then returned to the traditional schedule for various reasons, including being out of sync with other district's schedules for co-curricular activities, a perceived increase in absenteeism due to illness, and the disruption to staff members who resided in other communities.

There are also potential benefits to consolidating the vacations. These include:

- The aforementioned gain of three days in June.
- Families who have relatives in other parts of the country would have a better chance of having the same spring break (although which week in March can vary from place to place). This may also apply to families with a child in the district and a child who attends a private school with a single March break.
- The potential of a positive effect of having more instructional days prior to high stakes assessments such as state testing, Advanced Placement testing, etc.

Based on the issues outlined above, I do not believe there is a compelling rationale to change from the current vacation calendar. If the School Committee wishes to consider making such a change in the future, I strongly recommend that this be studied over a long enough period of time to allow for ample consideration before a potential implementation. Therefore, I do not recommend any changes in the vacations for 2015-2016, and I recommend that the School Committee adopt the draft calendar that was presented on February 4.

ⁱ See: <http://researchnews.osu.edu/archive/yearnd.htm> and <http://nepc.colorado.edu/files/Chapter04-Glass-Final.pdf> – the latter states “180 days is 180 days is 180 days” when it comes to student outcomes regardless of how the school year is arranged.

ⁱⁱ See: http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/20/7/13-0967_article, http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/19/6/12-0916_article and http://www.cambridgepublichealth.org/publications/2009-10_School_Surveillance_Report_final.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ See: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/local/wp/2014/08/01/would-we-be-happier-if-we-all-vacationed-at-once-yes-research-says/> and http://www.academia.edu/2969197/De_Bloom_J._2012_.How_do_vacations_affect_workers_health_and_well-being_Vacation_after-effects_and_the_role_of_vacation_activities_and_experiences.s_Hertogenbosch_BoxPress)

Shrewsbury Public Schools 2015-2016 School Year Calendar

Draft 2-4-15

AUG/SEP 20 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
24	25	26	27	28
31	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

OCTOBER 20 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

NOVEMBER 16 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

DECEMBER 17 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

JANUARY 19 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

August/September

8/27 & 28 New Teachers' Orientation

8/31 Opening Program for Teachers/No School

9/1 Students Return/Full Day

9/4 Professional Development/No School

9/7 Labor Day/No School

October

10/9 Professional Development/No School

10/12 Columbus Day/No School

November

11/3 Parent Conferences/No School

11/11 Veterans Day/No School

11/25 - 27 Thanksgiving Vacation

December

12/8 Professional Development/Early Release

12/24 - 1/1 December Vacation

January

1/18 M.L. King Day/No School

February

2/2 Professional Development/Early Release

2/15 Presidents Day/No School

2/16 - 2/19 Winter Vacation

March

3/1 Professional Development/Early Release

April

4/5 Professional Development/Early Release

4/18 Patriots Day/No School

4/19 - 22 Spring Vacation

May

5/3 Professional Development/Early Release

5/27 Last Day for Seniors

5/30 Memorial Day/No School

June

6/2 Graduation Day

6/14 Last Day for Kindergarten & Preschool

6/16 Last Day/Half Day for Students

February 16 Days				
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29				

MARCH 23 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

APRIL 16 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

MAY 21 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

JUNE 12 Days				
M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

0 snow days = 6/16 last day
 1 snow day = 6/17 last day
 2 snow days = 6/20 last day
 3 snow days = 6/21 last day
 4 snow days = 6/22 last day
 5 snow days = 6/23 last day

🍏 Parent Conference Day: 11/3/15

**Shrewsbury Public Schools
Shrewsbury, Massachusetts 01545**

Anthony J. Bent
Superintendent

December 24, 2007

The Shrewsbury Public Schools Calendar Committee

I. Background

The calendar committee was formed to review the school calendar for the Shrewsbury Public Schools in light of concerns raised relative to interruptions in several school weeks (particularly the fall) and the tendency of the district to end the school year late each June. The following "no-school" days contributed to the concerns of parents and staff: four professional development days for teachers, two parent conference days, two Jewish religious observances, one Christian religious observance, and vacation weeks in February and April. (It should be noted that one professional day has been placed at the opening of the school year before students begin, one conference day has been eliminated, and one professional development day has been scheduled for the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.)

The committee, composed of 22 staff and parents, met five times from March to September of 2005. The committee divided its work among three subcommittees: research, surveys, and communications. The research subcommittee investigated the patterns in school calendars from fourteen area school systems, the survey subcommittee launched a web-based survey of parents and staff that yielded 2,101 responses, and the communications subcommittee wrote updates of activity and coordinated the publication of an article in the local press.

II. Survey Questions, Responses, Comment

The survey questions in italics are followed by response data and comment:

- *How important is it that the school year ends as early as possible?* 67% of the respondents indicated that an early June completion was important. This was not a surprise to the committee in that the question provided a context for the survey.
- *How interested are you in keeping Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur religious observances as no-school days?* 12% of the respondents indicated the desire to retain Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur as no-school days. The subcommittee on research found that roughly half of the communities surveyed closed during these days. Systems that did not close included: Auburn, Chelmsford, Grafton, Holden, Hudson, Marlborough, Millbury, Worcester. Those that did close included: Ashland, Franklin, Natick, Northboro, Wellesley, and Westboro.

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.

- *How interested are you in keeping Good Friday religious observances as no school days?* Despite the tradition of having no school in Shrewsbury on Good Friday, only 30% of the respondents suggested that this religious day should be a no-school day. The calendar committee found this response the most significant among the survey questions.
- *How important is it that the district continue to provide a parent-teacher conference day?* 55% of the respondents indicated support of the parent conference day.
- *Would you be in favor of a single March vacation versus separate vacations in February and April?* 56% of the respondents supported substituting a March vacation for the February and April vacation that are currently in the calendar. The research subcommittee, however, did not find another community among the 14 that had a March break. Additionally, the full committee felt that the days saved did not justify the disruption. (A total of 8 days would be saved by eliminating the February and April vacations since a holiday occurs in each of the two weeks. Adding 5 days back for a March vacation leaves a net savings of 3 days.) Finally, the Shrewsbury Education Association pointed out that such a change would compromise the schedules of all the teachers living in other communities whose children would have different vacation periods from their parents.
- *Would you be in favor of extended weekends (4-5 days) throughout the school year instead of full week vacations?* 26% of respondents supported this suggestion.

III. Recommendations

- The district has already taken steps to improve the school calendar. As indicated above, one professional development day has been scheduled before the beginning of the school year, another professional development day has been moved to the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, and the number of parent conference days has been reduced from two to one.
- The calendar committee does not recommend changing the major school vacations, even though a small majority of survey respondents favor the idea. The number of days actually saved, contractual issues associated with the Shrewsbury Teachers Association, and the very large disruption that the change would bring about, all point to retaining the winter and spring vacations.
- At the same time, the calendar committee does recommend that the school calendar be adjusted to eliminate Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Good Friday as no-school days. The consensus among the participants and the committee members is such that this change is a very strong recommendation to the Shrewsbury School Committee. It is the hope of the calendar committee that the change can be implemented in the 2006-2007 school year.



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Committee



ITEM NO: IX. **New Business**

MEETING DATE: 3/4/15

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Committee



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

MEETING DATE: **3/4/15**

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting on January 21, 2015 and February 4, 2015?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. The minutes are enclosed.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee vote to approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting on January 21, 2015 and February 4, 2015.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. B. Dale Magee, Chairperson
Ms. Erin Canzano, Secretary

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, January 21, 2015

Present: Dr. B. Dale Magee, Chairperson; Mr. Jason Palitsch, Vice Chairperson; Ms. Erin Canzano, Secretary; Ms. Sandra Fryc, Mr. John Samia, Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent, Shrewsbury Public Schools; Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent, Shrewsbury Public Schools; Ms. Cecelia Wirzbicki, Director of Business Services, Shrewsbury Public Schools; Ms. Barbara Malone, Director of Human Resources, Shrewsbury Public Schools; Ms. Melissa Maguire, Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services, Shrewsbury Public Schools

The meeting was convened at 7:00 PM by Dr. B. Dale Magee

I. Public Participation

None

II. Chairperson's Report and Members' Reports

None

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Sawyer recognized and congratulated the staff members who will be receiving the John P. Collins Awards for excellence at the upcoming Shrewsbury Educational Foundation (SEF) Awards Dinner. He thanked the SEF for the great work and for acknowledging the educators and staff members.

Dr. Sawyer congratulated the Shrewsbury Speech and Debate team members and coach on outstanding recent performances and accomplishments.

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Special Education: Student Presentation

Ms. Maguire and students James Canzano, SHS Class of 2017 and Dominic Hawes, SHS Class of 2017 addressed the School Committee. The students shared their experiences and perspectives relative to their participation in the district's special education program. Students said that without the special education resources and great teachers they would not be able to accomplish their academic and life goals. Ms. Maguire read some comments that were made by Shrewsbury teachers about the students' hard work, dedication and confidence. Students discussed the important impact teachers have had on their success. School Committee members and Dr. Sawyer commended the students on their hard work and perseverance.

V. Curriculum

A. SHS Program of Studies: Vote to Approve

Dr. Magee requested a motion to vote to approve the proposed changes to the Shrewsbury High School Program of Studies. On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Fryc, the School Committee

members voted unanimously to approve the proposed changes to the Shrewsbury High School Program of Studies.

VI. Policy

None

VII. Budget

A. Special Education: Budget & Finance Report

Ms. Maguire presented the annual report on the district's Special Education Department budget and finances. She provided the School Committee members with information related to the cost of Special education programming and state funding. Ms. Maguire discussed information and shared graphs illustrating the in-district versus out-of-district costs for educating special education students. She said the district saves about \$3 million dollars a year by supporting and educating special education students within the Shrewsbury district. Ms. Maguire said that there is always volatility within the Shrewsbury Special Education program, such as students who move into the district during the year with special education needs. She discussed the Fiscal 2016 requests for the Shrewsbury Special Education program including additional personnel. School Committee members asked Ms. Maguire about her greatest concerns and she said one of her biggest concerns is the need for resources for students with mental health issues. Committee members expressed the desire to help communicate with legislators and advocate for special education resources. Ms. Maguire said she has been involved with communicating with legislators and can provide Committee members with some contacts to initiate communications. Mr. Palitsch asked Ms. Maguire if she could speak about the need for a nurse position as outlined in the FY 2016 budget requests. Ms. Maguire and Dr. Sawyer shared information about the current absence of a director level position for the nurses department and the complex medical needs of some students. Mr. Samia suggested that it may be beneficial for the special education program, along with other Shrewsbury district program areas, to have program reviews conducted by an external source. He said this may help to continue foster innovation and enhance programs. Committee members expressed that they believe Ms. Maguire and the rest of the Special Education Department members are doing a very good job educating students and providing services. Ms. Maguire acknowledged and thanked her fellow department members for the great work. Dr. Sawyer commended Ms. Maguire and her team. He said he wanted to emphasize that Shrewsbury is saving about \$2.9 million each year by expanding programs within our district. Dr. Sawyer said in addition to tuition costs, there would be at least \$200,000 in transportation costs required for educating special education students outside the Shrewsbury district. He said the transportation costs would not be reimbursed by the state. Dr. Sawyer said a vast number of students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) are going to college or pursuing desired training after leaving the Shrewsbury district.

B. State Commission on Chapter 70 Funding: Discussion

Dr. Sawyer presented information and the Committee members engaged in a discussion related to the state's Chapter 70 funding program. He shared that the Massachusetts Legislature has established a "Foundation Budget Review Commission" to review the state's Chapter 70 program. Dr. Sawyer said this commission has been holding public hearings, and will hold one in Central Massachusetts on February 24, 2015. Dr. Sawyer provided an overview of the Commission's charge, as well as information from his work as part of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendent's School Finance Task Force. Dr. Sawyer said the revision of the Chapter 70 formula will hopefully take place in 2016. He said

he is seeking questions and comments from the School Committee in preparation for the testimony he will provide at the upcoming public meeting. Dr. Sawyer said the revised formula will continue to look at wealth factors in communities related to income levels and property values. He said his hope is for a revised formula to stimulate an infusion of funding for all districts and that this would help Shrewsbury.

C. Fiscal Year 2016 School Department Budget: Superintendent's Recommendation

Dr. Sawyer and Ms. Wirzbicki provided the SC with information regarding a recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2016. Dr. Sawyer shared the good news story that the district is in a different situation than in the past. He shared information about the Shrewsbury district mission, values and strategic priorities. Ms. Wirzbicki and Dr. Sawyer shared details regarding the Fiscal Year 2016 budget priorities. Ms. Wirzbicki said that \$1,623,350 is the total needed to sustain programs and personnel. Dr. Sawyer discussed the need for additional positions in areas including nursing services, special education, elementary aide support, and secretarial support. He said the recommended additions include 8.7 full-time positions with only five of these positions being eligible for benefits. Dr. Sawyer and Ms. Wirzbicki shared information for the total recommended increase of \$1,933,519 (sustain personnel: \$1,675,476; sustain operations: \$52,126; recommended additions: \$310,169). Committee members shared that they are positive about the Fiscal Year 2016 School Department Budget recommendations and believe this is a responsible proposal.

VIII. Old Business

None

IX. New Business

None

X. Approval of Minutes

Dr. Magee requested a motion to approve the minutes of the School Committee meetings for December 17, 2014 and January 7, 2015. On a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Mr. Palitsch, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the School Committee meetings for December 17, 2014 and January 7, 2015.

XI. Executive Session

None

XII. Adjournment

Dr. Magee requested a motion to adjourn the School Committee meeting for January 21, 2015. On a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Mr. Palitsch, the School Committee members voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted
Christine Taylor, Clerk

Documents referenced:

- 1) Annual Special Education Budget Report: January 2015
- 2) Massachusetts Foundation Budget Review Commission: Public Hearing Notice

- 3) Fiscal Year 2016 School Department Budget Superintendent's Recommendation: Report
- 5) School Committee Meeting Minutes for December 17, 2014
- 6) School Committee Meeting Minutes for January 7, 2015

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2015

Present: Dr. B. Dale Magee, Chairperson; Mr. Jason Palitsch, Vice Chairperson; Ms. Erin Canzano, Secretary; Ms. Sandra Fryc, Mr. John Samia, Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent, Shrewsbury Public Schools; Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent, Shrewsbury Public Schools; Ms. Cecelia Wirzbicki, Director of Business Services, Shrewsbury Public Schools; Ms. Barbara Malone, Director of Human Resources, Shrewsbury Public Schools

The meeting was convened at 7:02 PM by Dr. B. Dale Magee

I. Public Participation

None

II. Chairperson's Report and Members' Reports

None

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Sawyer congratulated and thanked the SHS students that participated in the High School Quiz Show on WGBH. He congratulated the SHS debate team for winning sweepstakes at last debate and the individual members who have qualified for national competitions. Dr. Sawyer thanked all the Town building and grounds personnel responsible for clearing snow during the challenging weather conditions.

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. SHS Student Advisory Committee: Report

SHS Student Advisory Committee Members presented their third report of the 2014-2015 school year. SAC members shared updates with the School Committee members about SHS electronics initiatives, midterm exams, sports and student activities. Students discussed the preparations for the transition to one-to-one devices next year including an innovation team, internship and technology advisory group. SAC members said some students have expressed concerns that the midterms account for 20% of class grades, while midterm exams count for 10% of class grades at other high schools. In addition, the SAC members shared that some students are concerned about the DDMs format because they do not receive comments as feedback. The SAC members said that overall students seem to be adjusting to the new DDM formats. The students said the weather has caused challenges for SHS students and teachers who are working to keep up with classwork and preparations for exams. SAC members shared that some SHS social events have needed to be rescheduled due to weather conditions. The students said that Mr. Costa, SHS Athletic Director, has made a change that allows students to attend all the home athletic activities without paying admission.

V. Curriculum

A. PARCC Assessment Update: Report

Ms. Banios presented an update regarding student and administration preparations for the PARCC Assessment. She discussed the development and alignment of curriculum and the infrastructure trial. Ms. Banios shared information about how students are preparing for the PARCC Assessment and that work is beginning with parent communications. She showed School Committee members some examples of the tools students can use on the PARCC website to become familiar with the assessments and practice some components of the test.

VI. Policy

None

VII. Budget

A. Fiscal Year 2015 Update Report

Ms. Wirzbicki shared a report on the 2015 year-to-date budget status. She said there is currently a positive savings of \$181, 581. Ms. Wirzbicki said the large positive variance is the result of some of the long-term substitute situations having fewer expenses than had been projected in the budget. She shared with the School Committee members that Ms. Maguire is monitoring the Special Education area which could impact the current fiscal year budget. Ms. Wirzbicki said that she and Ms. Maguire meet regularly to discuss potential budget changes. Dr. Sawyer reminded the School Committee members that the volatility in the special education area is great.

VIII. Old Business

None

IX. New Business

A. School Calendar for 2015-2016: Draft

Dr. Sawyer discussed a draft of the proposed school calendar for 2015-2016. He said the calendar is very similar to other academic years. Dr. Sawyer discussed the professional development days that are built into the calendar, including a professional develop day scheduled on October 13th. He said the draft of the calendar will be on the website and publicized through the appropriate channels.

B. Evaluation of the Superintendent: Midyear Review

Dr. Sawyer shared highlights about the areas he has been focusing on during the school year and referred to the memo and information that was shared with the School Committee members. He said he is very pleased to have the opportunity to work with a strong team of people. Dr. Sawyer shared that some of the areas he will focus on include policy and setting the next set of district goals. School Committee members shared very positive feedback with Dr. Sawyer on his performance. School Committee members said they have heard positive feedback about Dr. Sawyer's recent blog post and his use of technology has been very effective. Mr. Samia stated that he believes Dr. Sawyer has been delivering on his promise of sustainability for the Shrewsbury district. In addition, Mr. Samia said that Dr. Sawyer has been doing what he said he would do in FY 2015 and he is doing a very good job.

X. Approval of Minutes

None

XI. Executive Session

None

XII. Adjournment

Dr. Magee requested a motion to adjourn the School Committee meeting for February 4, 2015. On a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the School Committee members voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Christine Taylor, Clerk

Documents referenced:

- 1) Student Advisory Committee (SAC): Report
- 2) PARRC Testing: Report and Update
- 3) Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Update: Report
- 5) School Year 2015-2016: Draft
- 6) Superintendent's Evaluation Mid-year Performance Review: Memo



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
School Committee



ITEM NO: **XI. Executive Session**

MEETING DATE: **3/4/15**

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

- A. Potential discussion of collective bargaining negotiations with cafeteria workers association and/or paraprofessionals association; potential discussion of compensation guidelines for administrator contract negotiations and/or contract negotiations with non-union personnel

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

ITEM NO: **XII. Adjournment**

