



# Shrewsbury Public Schools

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Mary Beth Banios  
Assistant Superintendent

To: School Committee  
From: Mary Beth Banios  
Re: Profile of a Graduate Project  
Date: May 3, 2017

## Background

In the fall of 2017 the district will begin the process of developing the next set of Five Year Strategic Priorities. In support of this work, a team of 23 educators and community members met to create Shrewsbury's *Portrait of a Graduate*. Simply stated, a *Portrait of a Graduate* defines what we believe is most critical for our students to know and be able to do by the time they graduate from Shrewsbury High School.

This project complements the ongoing community discussions started last year with the screening of the *Most Likely to Succeed* documentary and the establishment of a district-wide Innovation in Learning Study Group. The dialogue is focused on how Shrewsbury Public Schools can best prepare students for a rapidly changing, interconnected digital world and exploring how other learning institutions are meeting this challenge.

## Process

This past December, an invitation was sent out to Shrewsbury educators and the community looking for individuals who would be interested in serving on the *Profile of a Graduate* working group. We received approximately 60 applications and narrowed the working group down to 23 members, attempting to achieve a balance of educators and community members who represent a variety of industries and backgrounds.

The working group met for 3 full day and one ½ day session on the following dates:

- January 13, 2017
- February 10, 2017
- March 17, 2017
- April 14, 2017 (1/2 day)

Over the course of the four days, the group engaged in a series of activities designed to deepen the thinking and spark debate within the group. At each of the meetings, the group also worked to continually revise the vision for a Shrewsbury graduate. Please see below for an overview of several of the activities that were part of the process.

- Through the generous support of the Colonial Fund, each member of the group received a copy of *Linchpin* by Seth Godin and *Thank you for Being Late: An Optimist's Guide to Thriving in the Age of Accelerations* by Thomas L. Friedman. The ideas presented in these books were processed and discussed.
- The group reviewed *Profiles of a Graduate* created by other districts, one example came from the [Fairfax County Public Schools](#).
- A variety of guest speakers presented and interacted with the working group including:
  - Members of the 2015-16 Innovation in Learning Study Group
  - A panel of current high school students and recent graduates
  - A consultant from Primary Source (an organization dedicated to advancing global education in schools) and our middle level and SHS director for the Social Sciences
  - Dr. Robert Martello, the Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Programs at Olin College, spoke to the group about issues connect with content and deeper learning practices. See his bio [here](#).
  - Brenda Fingold, The Community and Corporate Program Developer and Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MSBR) Teacher for the UMass Center for Mindfulness, spoke to the group around the value of mindfulness in maintaining balance and intension in a volatile environment. See her bio [here](#).
- A variety of articles, videos and other resources were explored and processed by the group, a few examples are shared below.
  - [Most Likely to Succeed Learning Sparks](#)
  - [Where Good Ideas Come From by Steven Johnson](#)
  - [Future Innovators with Tony Wagner](#)

### **Outcome and Next Steps**

The group reached consensus on a draft of Shrewsbury's *Profile of a Graduate*; the draft is included in this report. There was broad agreement that in order to encourage conversation and ensure community-wide investment, a vetting of the Profile should occur during the fall of 2017. Once the text has been put out for comment and any feedback received has been considered, a final *Profile of a Graduate* will be put forth to the Committee for a vote.