

**School Committee
Meeting Book**

**April 15, 2020
7:00 pm**

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



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

AGENDA

April 15, 2020 7:00pm
Town Hall—Selectmen’s Meeting Room
100 Maple Avenue

THIS MEETING IS NOT OPEN TO PHYSICAL PARTICIPATION BY THE PUBLIC. TOWN HALL IS CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC. IF AN ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF REMOTE PARTICIPATION FOR THE PUBLIC BECOMES AVAILABLE WE WILL PUBLISH THAT INFORMATION SEPARATELY.

On March 12, 2020, Governor Baker issued an Executive Order modifying certain requirements of the Open Meeting Law, to enable public bodies to carry out their responsibilities while adhering to public health recommendations regarding social distancing.

The Executive Order relieves public bodies from the requirement in the Open Meeting Law that meetings be conducted in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public, provided that the public body makes provision to ensure public access to the deliberations of the public body through adequate, alternative means. “Adequate, alternative means” may include, without limitation, providing public access through telephone, internet, or satellite enabled audio or video conferencing or any other technology that enables the public to clearly follow the proceedings of the public body in real time. A municipal public body that for reasons of economic hardship and despite best efforts is unable to provide alternative means of public access in real time may instead post on its municipal website a full and complete transcript, recording, or other comprehensive record of the proceedings as soon as practicable afterwards.

In addition, all members of a public body may participate in a meeting remotely; the Open Meeting Law’s requirement that a quorum of the body and the chair be physically present at the meeting location is suspended.

All other provisions of the Open Meeting Law, such as the requirements regarding posting notice of meetings and creating and maintaining accurate meeting minutes, as well as the limited, enumerated purposes for holding an executive session, remain in effect.

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:	
	A. Update regarding the school district’s response to the COVID-19 school closure	7:10 – 7:30
V.	Curriculum	
	A. SPS Remote Learning: Report	7:30 – 8:00
VI.	Policy	
VII.	Finance & Operations	
	A. Update on Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Finance & Operations: Report	8:00 – 8:15
	B. Payroll Continuity for All Staff During School Closure Period: Vote	8:15 – 8:30



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

- VIII. Old Business
- IX. New Business
- X. Approval of Minutes 8:30 – 8:35
- XI. Executive Session 8:35 – 9:00
- A. For the purpose of negotiations with some or all of the following:
the Shrewsbury Education Association Unit A, Shrewsbury Education Association Unit B, the Shrewsbury Paraprofessional Association, the Shrewsbury Cafeteria Workers, and/or non-represented staff.
 - B. For the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes.
- XII. Adjournment 9:00

Next regular meeting: TBD



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

ITEM NO: I Public Participation

MEETING DATE: 4/15/20

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee hear thoughts and ideas from the public regarding the operations and the programs of the school system?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Copies of the policy and procedure for Public Participation are available to the public at each School Committee meeting.

ITEM NO: II. Chairperson's Report/Members' Reports

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee hear a report from the Chairperson of the School Committee and other members of the School Committee who may wish to comment on school affairs?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

This agenda item provides an opportunity for the Chairperson and members of the Shrewsbury School Committee to comment on school affairs that are of interest to the community.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

School Committee Members
Ms. Sandra Fryc, Chairperson
Mr. Jon Wensky, Vice Chairperson
Dr. B. Dale Magee, Secretary
Ms. Lynsey Heffernan, Committee Member
Mr. Jason Palitsch, Committee Member

ITEM NO: III. Superintendent's Report

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee hear a report from Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

This agenda item allows the Superintendent of the Shrewsbury Public Schools to comment informally on the programs and activities of the school system.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

ACTION RECOMMENDED FOR ITEMS I, II, & III:

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



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:** MEETING DATE: **4/15/20**
A. Update regarding the school district's response to the COVID-19 school closure

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The situation regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic continues to evolve. The district is currently closed until at least May 4, 2020 per mandate by Gov. Baker for all schools in the state. At the meeting, Dr. Sawyer and other district administrators will provide an update on how the school district's response to the pandemic has evolved during the past week.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

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

MEMBERS & STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools
Other district administrators as needed



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:

MEETING DATE: 4/15/20

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **V. Curriculum**
A. SPS Remote Learning: Report

MEETING DATE: **4/15/20**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the district is currently closed until at least May 4, 2020 per mandate by Gov. Baker for all schools in the state. Shrewsbury Public Schools have transitioned to a remote learning model and have created a plan to keep students connected to educators and classmates in ways that enhance their well-being and engage students in distance learning, and with a focus on providing supports to help all students learn at home. Ms. Clouter's report will illustrate the accomplishments to date and continued challenges related to remote learning during the pandemic.

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:

Ms. Amy B. Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment



SPS Remote Learning:

Responding to the Challenges of Learning at Home During the COVID-19 Pandemic

A Report for the School Committee

Amy B. Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

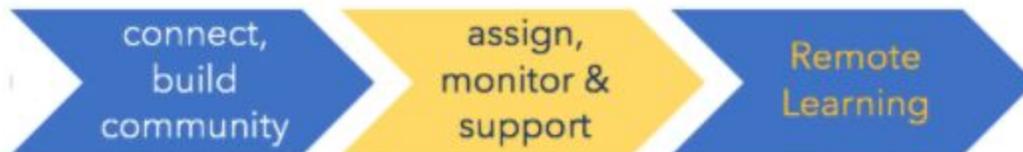
April 15, 2020

28 days, 20 major documents developed, hundreds of Zoom meetings and numerous communications...a lot has happened since we closed our doors on March 13th. I want to begin with a visual reminder of how we've responded to support students since Dr. Sawyer announced school closure.

3/17-3/27

Started 3/30

Launched 4/7



Our Goals

As stated previously, Shrewsbury's Remote Learning plan was created to **keep our students connected to educators and classmates in ways that enhance their well-being, and engage students in distance learning with a focus on providing supports to help ALL students learn at home, and to maintain and develop key academic and critical thinking skills as well as to help students learn important academic content.** It's important to acknowledge, however, that our plan has been further developed and strengthened over time with input from both educators and families. We are grateful for the feedback we've received; with each communication, we've learned more about the structures our students and families find most supportive. Sometimes the feedback has been contradictory, and for understandable reasons.

A closer look at the language in our goal statements reveals the challenges inherent in the undertaking. As we began organizing with educators, district leaders grappled with questions like:

- Which is more important - connecting or content?
- How do we strike the balance between directed learning and choice?
- How will we help ALL students to learn at home when we're disconnected?
- If we can't replicate school entirely, what's the goal?
- Should we review key skills or teach new material, or both?
- Which academic content is most important?

There are many possible answers to these questions, and plenty of room for debate. Our educators couldn't begin to develop a coherent curriculum plan without making decisions. Yet no one wanted to keep students and families waiting while we deliberated. For that reason, as soon as the first "snow day" was declared, our curriculum teams began collaborating on the document known as [Learning Opportunity Resources](#). This was a good investment, as choice is critical to student motivation. Moreover, we suspected given our experiences with homework that a variety of options would be well received by families. Finally, we knew that the resource list would serve us well in the future as a "go to" place for high quality practice and enrichment materials. As information about the pandemic was shared, our plans shifted.

The table below illustrates the timeline for our actions, in accordance with guidance from state and federal agencies and in concert with our colleagues in nearby districts:

Date	State & Federal Guidance	SPS Actions
Week of March 9th	On a conference call scheduled for March 13, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) advised districts that they should remain open unless advised by their local Department of Public Health to close. Further, the DESE stated that per the Centers for Disease Control guidelines that if advised to close, districts should close individual school(s) and not the entire district.	<p>On March 12, Dr. Sawyer decided to close school on March 13 due to further developments related to the coronavirus situation. On March 13, he decided to close our district schools for the following week out of an abundance of caution.</p> <p>Work began on resources for students and families opting into learning experiences at home. Because March 13 and March 16 were treated like "snow days" in order to add those days to the end of the school calendar in June, those were not work days for SPS educators. Administrators worked on those days.</p> <p>With the likelihood that a longer period of school closure was imminent, SPS began</p>

		discussions about how to support families during disruption of school.
Week of March 16th	<p>On Sunday, March 15, the Governor closed all public schools in Massachusetts through April 6.</p> <p>In accordance with guidance shared by the U.S Department of Education, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) informed public school districts via conference call that providing mandatory “virtual classes” would be a violation of civil rights and special education law with regard to equitable student access, and indicated all learning opportunities should be optional.</p>	<p>On March 16, SPS released Learning Opportunity Resources, communicating our initial “opt in” approach to learning experiences in accordance with DESE guidance while beginning outreach to families.</p> <p>On their own, educators across the district reached out to connect with students in a variety of ways and using different formats with a focus on health and well-being</p> <p>SPS began to organize food delivery for families in need</p>
	<p>On Saturday, March 21st The U.S. Department of Education released supplemental guidance stating that ensuring compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), † Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act , and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act should not prevent any school from offering educational programs through distance instruction.</p>	<p>SPS leadership team discussed implications for planning, including how we might support students and families with diverse needs during a period of school closure.</p>
Week of March 23rd	<p>On March 25th Governor extends school closure for all public schools in Massachusetts through May 4th</p>	<p>SPS shifted our approach to prepare for a new phase of remote learning, including planning for how we could support families of students with special needs.</p> <p>SPS took an inventory and developed protocols for providing iPads to students.</p>
	<p>On March 26th Commissioner Jeff Riley (DESE) released Remote Learning Recommendations to districts, signaling new expectations for assigned work and outreach..</p>	<p>On that same day (March 26th), the district issued goals and guiding principles for remote learning.</p> <p>Based on the updated DESE guidance, the next day (March 27th) SPS launched its next phase of remote learning to include assigned work, with a focus on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recommended times for learning

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> by level ● Assigning and collecting student work, and ● Providing students feedback
Week of March 30th	<p>In his Letter to Families about Remote Learning on March 30th, Commissioner Jeff Riley informed parents about shifts in remote learning, signaling new expectations for assignments and outreach alongside ongoing concerns about equity and access.</p> <p>On Friday, April 3rd Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education issued guidance on English Language learners.</p>	<p>SPS continues planning work to add additional dimensions to remote learning, including working through privacy and legal issues related to video conferencing.</p> <p>Teacher planning teams are established for collaboration and to provide consistency and redundancy.</p> <p>SPS Information Technology Department began distributing devices to families on Tuesday March 31st. Director Kathy Lange-Madden began distributing information to staff, and checking our plans against state guidance.</p>
Week of April 6th	<p>On April 6, the DESE released a document entitled <i>Supporting Students with Disabilities for All Educators and Providers</i> which stated that 'districts should ensure all online learning platforms meet confidentiality and student privacy, and electronic content accessibility standards.'</p>	<p>On April 6th SPS released a formal memo to staff and families regarding the district plan for remote learning, including "live" interactions with students, virtual "office hours" and the plan to begin teaching new skills and concepts. Live interactions began on April 8th for the middle level and April 9th for the elementary and high school levels.</p> <p>SPS sought and secured additional technology tools matched to our educational goals and privacy needs.</p> <p>On April 7th Dr. Sawyer surveyed staff and families regarding April vacation; on April 8, the School Committee voted to change April 21, 22, & 23 from vacation days to remote learning days.</p> <p>Teams of educators continued to collaborate on further improvements to remote learning; they refined plans and created additional instructional materials (including more district-created video content) to be provided the week of April 13th.</p>

The flow of information about the impact of the virus was fast-paced. In contrast, communications at the state level were slow to respond to emerging needs. It's worth noting, for example, that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education did not release formal guidance to districts on remote learning until March 26th. For that reason the vast majority of Massachusetts school districts, including all local Central Massachusetts districts, did exactly what Shrewsbury did for the first two weeks. When guidance changed, SPS was ready to act.

From Optional “Learning Opportunities” to Consistent Expectations

In the first ten days (the “optional” phase) we learned several things worth noting:

- Parents need help navigating which resources are the best match for their child’s needs
- Students are best supported when teachers match learning tasks to students’ specific needs wherever possible, and
- Children are most likely to persevere when they receive guidance and feedback.

When extended closure was recently confirmed, it was clear that students and families needed clear direction, streamlined communication, predictable schedules, robust assignments specific to grade level goals, and opportunities to connect.

I remain incredibly proud of the ways our educators rose to the challenge of meeting all of these needs- both as teachers and learners. It’s important that the community understand that, together with working adults everywhere, our staff is learning new skills as they come to terms with a “new normal”. For this reason, our educators are well-positioned to support families; their outreach is informed by their own experience, and inspired by a deep desire to maintain connections with our students and their families despite the distance.

What is Remote Learning?

Although we aspire to do all we can to maintain connections between home and school during this period of closure, it’s simply not possible to replicate the vibrant nature of a classroom at a distance. Remote learning is not merely online learning; we want our students to experience the richness of diverse learning experiences, including teacher-directed assignments, options to engage with content in multiple modalities, interdisciplinary projects, nature walks,, and integrated experiences with Art,

Conversations will not be cancelled.
Relationships will not be cancelled.
Love will not be cancelled.
Songs will not be cancelled.
Reading will not be cancelled.
Self-care will not be cancelled.
Hope will not be cancelled.
May we lean into the good stuff that remains.



Music, Media and Physical Education. Just as importantly, we seek to maintain connections with classroom communities and further opportunities for social emotional learning. Finally, choice and enrichment encourage our students to be self-directed. Accordingly, we have structured remote learning plans purposefully to include pencil and paper practice of academic skills, online learning opportunities, and interactive experiences that engage students and connect them to their teacher, other educators,, and their classmates for the purpose of reviewing material, applying new skills and learning new concepts aligned with grade level standards.



Our special educators and related service providers are collaborating daily with general education teachers, families and students to meet student needs and ensure access in this remote learning environment. The extended school closure has impacted our students with disabilities in many ways and their teachers are working through new challenges presented in the home environment, in addition to the curriculum based work special educators have always done.

In my upcoming presentation I look forward to giving the larger community a “behind the scenes” glimpse into what remote teaching and learning looks like on the school side. I will also share some specific examples of what “robust” looks like at each level.

Planning with Diverse Needs in Mind

In keeping with our [guiding principles](#), our planning has also taken into account how we can do this work in redundant ways given that many of our educators are or may end up in situations where they are unavailable to work due to illness, family illness, or otherwise caring for their own children and family members during this pandemic. One of the positive changes we’ve experienced as a result of the crisis is that our educators have organized in new ways.

ELA Content Team Members Mondays @ 12:45 ZOOM:	Math Content Team Members Mondays @ 1:30 ZOOM:	Science/ Social Studies Content Team Members Mondays @ 2:15 ZOOM:	All Grade 1 Thursdays @ 12:45 ZOOM:
Beal - Sarah Zakar	Beal - Emily Chaves	Beal - Lisa McKiernan	Beal: Sarah Zakar Emily Chaves Lisa McKiernan
Coolidge - Leah Terrasi Coolidge - Tiffani Grillo Coolidge - Joan O'Brien (SLP)	Coolidge - Cheryl Mongeon Coolidge - Brianna Hamel (SPED)	Coolidge - Linda McQuade	Coolidge: Leah Terrasi Tiffani Grillo Cheryl Mongeon Brianna Hamel (SPED) Linda McQuade Joan O'Brien (SLP)
Floral - Elizabeth Marciello Floral - Meaghan McCarthy	Floral - Tina McGrail Floral - Tara Plourde Floral - Ashley Walker (SPED)	Floral - Kara Frankian	Floral: Elizabeth Marciello Meaghan McCarthy Tina McGrail Tara Plourde Ashley Walker (SPED) Kara Frankian
Paton - Meghan White Paton - Jenna Violette Paton - Rebekah Landers (SPED)	Paton - Jenny White	Paton - Emily Walker	Paton: Meghan White Jenna Violette Rebekah Landers (SPED) Jenny White Emily Walker
Spring - Christina Baumann Spring - Elizabeth McRae	Spring - Noreen Camerato	Spring - Susan Brand	Spring: Christina Baumann Elizabeth McRae Noreen Camerato Susan Brand

Across grade spans at every level educators are collaborating in new configurations.

 **Jane O. Lizotte**
@SPS_Partners

Calling SHS Juniors! Are you seeking to explore college, career, and life after high school NOW? SHS alumni are collaborating virtually with interested juniors. You can't pass this up! Check your Schoology acct. for more information! @SPS_Partners #ShrewsburyLearns @SHSColonials

3:50 PM · Apr 8, 2020 · Twitter Web App

 **SHS_Unified**
@SHS_Unified

Jenny's been spending a lot of time baking while she's been home, something she loves to do. Can't wait to bake together when we get back to school!
[#chefJenny](#) [#ShrewsburyLearns](#) [#apartbutunited](#)



The snapshot of the first grade content team document pictured below depicts the complexities of planning for online learning in a remote environment:

Power Standards for reading are highlighted.		Websites	Discussion Prompts	Reading Response Choices	More Reading Passages	Phonics	Fluency	Writing	Fundations	Lexia
Literature	Informational	Scholastic Learn at Home	Emergent Readers	Fiction and NonFiction	Grade One Reading Passages with discussion questions	Alphabet Linking Chart	Poetry Book	Scrambled Sentences	Vowel Extension	Parent Information
RL 1.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	RI 1.1 and Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.	Epic	Early Readers	Levels F-U		Final Sound Game			Writing Paper	Lexia Close Reads Sets 1-6
RL 1.2 Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson	RI 1.2 Identify the main topic and key details of a text	ReadWorks	Transitional Readers	Various options for writing paper		Digraph Bingo			Level 1 Story Time	
RL 1.3 Describe characters, setting, and major events in a story, using key details.	RI 1.3 Describe the connection between 2 individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text	Newsels	Discussion Starters for Fiction and NonFiction			My Vowel Book			Level 2 Story Time	
RL1.7 Use illustrations and details to describe its characters, setting, or events.	RI 1.4 Students will be able to ask and answer questions about key details in a text to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases	RAZ kids							Gr K Fundations at Home Resources	
RL 1.6: Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text.		Lexia							Gr 1 Fundations at Home Resources	
Links to Instructional Videos		Audible								
How To Retell a Story For Kids		Reading A-Z								
		Storyline Online								
		Common Lit								
		Shrewsbury Public Library Tools								
		Look up resources by standard								

Most importantly the plans our educators have assembled demonstrate a shared commitment to our guiding principles and core values.

Please use the links below to access the Remote Learning Plans provided for students at the elementary level for the week of April 13th. These links with assignments and resources for the following week are emailed to families on the prior Friday afternoon.

- [PreK](#)
- [Kindergarten](#)
- [First Grade](#)
- [Second Grade](#)
- [Third Grade](#)
- [Fourth Grade](#)

Assignments at the middle and high school levels are provided through the Schoology learning management system. The following links are to planning documents in core content areas that provide insight into what is being assigned to students at these levels. More examples, including special subjects, will be provided through the presentation at the meeting.

Please note that these links may not be accessible to the public when this document is posted to our website as they are part of our internal system.

The following links will connect you to learning plans for Grades 5-8.

Grade 5

[Remote Learning Plan Grade 5 MA/SCI](#)

[Remote Learning Plan Grade 5 ELA](#)

[Remote Learning Plan Grade 5 SS](#)

Grade 6

[Remote Learning Plan Grade 6 MA/SCI](#)

[Remote Learning Plan Grade 6 ELA](#)

[Remote Learning Plan Grade 6 SS](#)

Grade 7

[Remote Learning Plan Grade 7 MA](#)

[Remote Learning Plan Grade 7 ELA](#)

[Remote Learning Plan Grade 7 SCI](#)

[Remote Learning Plan Grade 7 SS](#)

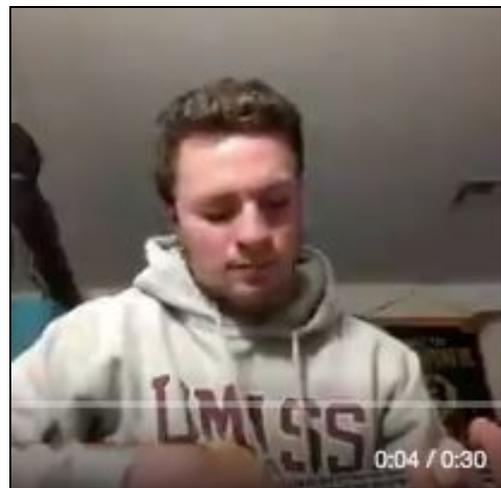
Grade 8

[Remote Learning Plan Grade 8 MA](#)

[Remote Learning Plan Grade 8 ELA](#)

[Remote Learning Plan Grade 8 SCI](#)

[Remote Learning Plan Grade 8 SS](#)



Finally, here are some examples of expectations for students at SHS:

- [English Department](#) “warehouse” of required assignments, including work in progress
- [Social Sciences Department](#) unit guide for U.S. History
- Mathematics Department [“Playlist”](#)
- Science Department plans: [Chemistry](#) & [Honors Physics](#)

Looking Ahead

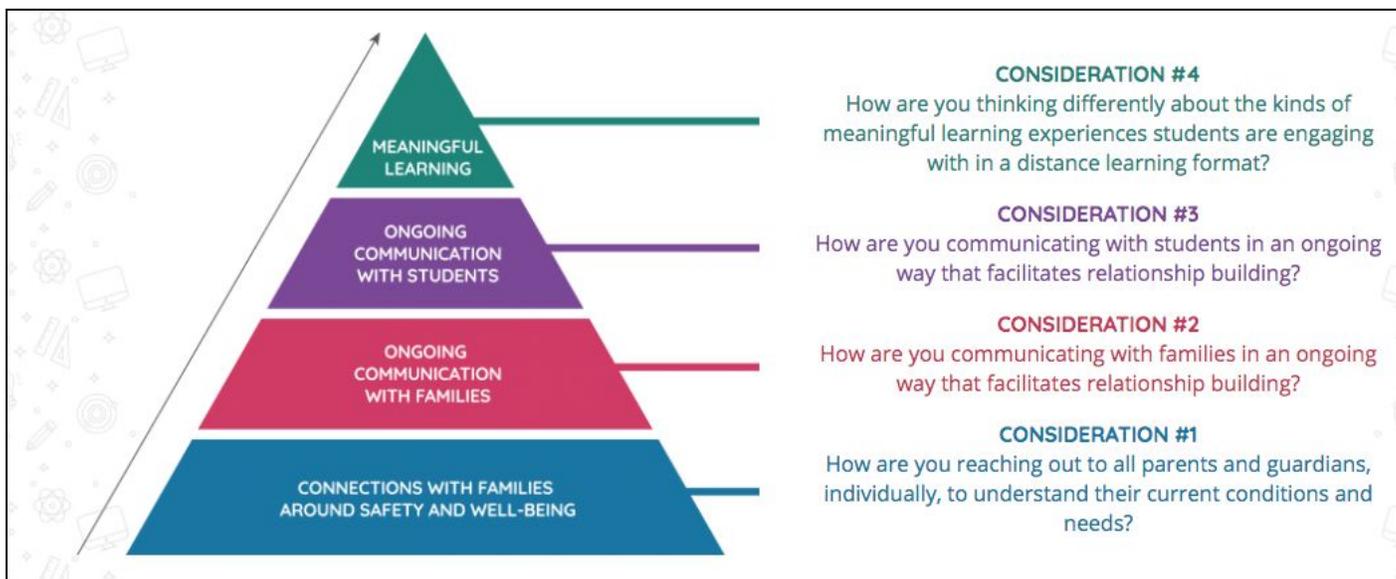
Is our plan perfect? Far from it. Just like students and families across the nation, we are learning and adapting to new constraints and possibilities. Inevitably, despite our hard work and ongoing efforts, significant challenges remain:

- As of Friday, 688 families at the Elementary level had not registered for a Google account. This makes it difficult to engage them with the online tools we have purchased.
- Brian L'Heureux and the Information Technology team continue to actively distribute iPads to families that meet district criteria.
- The lack of a common online learning platform at Preschool through Grade 4 and the lack of a 1:1 take-home digital device program for these levels creates barriers for accessing resources.
- Challenges for students in a remote learning environment include supporting those with the most complex needs. Mental and behavioral health have been impacted significantly by extended closure.
- Special Education federal and state advisories and guidance are continuing to evolve regarding procedural requirements creating challenges to meeting student needs and creating significant procedural burdens.
- In Shrewsbury only 3% of our students are considered English Language learners. However 36% of our families report that their first language is not English. Kathleen Lange-Madden, Director of English Language Education, and her team of ESL educators have leveraged every available resource to translate district documents and to support families that speak other languages than English at home as they grapple with the numerous communications necessitated by the pandemic.
- We have conflicting feedback from families, some of whom want more instructional interaction and curriculum content, and some of whom feel that what is being asked of their children and themselves is too much.
- The younger the students, the more challenging it is for parents and caretakers, as young children naturally require more direct assistance and have shorter attention spans.

Closing Thoughts

Deepak Chopra once said, “All great changes are preceded by chaos”. The pandemic has certainly wrought its fair share of both. Shrewsbury is a community capable of surmounting these barriers, and our teachers are leading by example. As a district we are collaborative by nature, committed to student outcomes by design, and eager to improve. It’s important to understand that remote learning cannot replicate “real school”, and we are keenly feeling that loss.

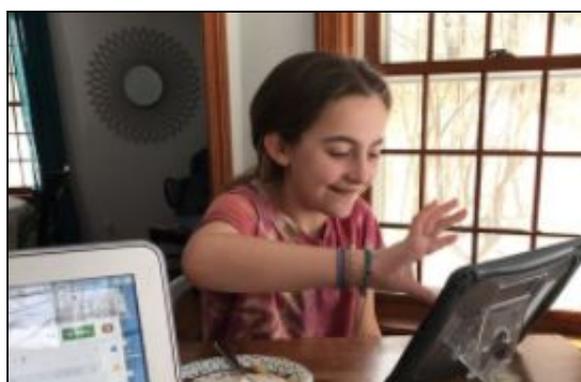
This infographic from the [Highlander Institute](#), an educational think tank, depicts the important components to be considered in a remote learning plan. Our efforts have been informed by “best practice” as well as the general knowledge base that governs teaching and learning principles.



No remote learning plan is perfect- precisely because it is remote. I want to reassure you that without the power to fill our classrooms, we are doing our very best to empower our students and their teachers to persevere at a time of tremendous change and challenge.

In partnership with families, I am confident that what we have built will improve the quality of teaching and learning--not just for now but for the long term.

I look forward to talking more about that in our next meeting. Thank you for the opportunity.





**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **VI. Policy**

MEETING DATE: **4/15/20**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS/STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: VII. Finance & Operations

MEETING DATE: 4/15/20

A. Update on Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Finance & Operations: Report

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The COVID-19 Pandemic is having a profound effect on all operational aspects of the district. At the meeting on April 1, Mr. Collins addressed the impact to the school district's finances and operations and recommended adjustments to current-year tuition payments. In his report tonight, Mr. Collins will provide an update to the Committee on the impact of the pandemic on finances and operations that addresses payroll continuity for all staff during the school closure period.

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:

Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations

COVID-19 Related Financial Matters

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent

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

Topics

- Bus contract amendment status
- Pay continuity information and recommendation

Bus Contract Amendment

- Negotiations are ongoing between AA Transportation and a group of area school districts to reach a contract amendment agreement to:
 - Provide a modified and adequate contract payment for each day school is closed ensuring AA's continued operational viability and "on call" status to resume full operations upon schools re-opening
- The contract amendment or a new contract will be brought to the School Committee for a vote once it is in its final form and received legal review

Hourly Staff Pay Continuity Framework

		Decision Options and Impacts			
Category/Dimension	Decision-making Criteria	Furlough	Layoff	Keep on Payroll	Notes
Financial	Cost %	50% of wages	50% of wages	100% of wages	
Financial	Cost \$\$\$	See separate data slides			
Financial	Who Pays	Town budget responsible for reimbursing state unemployment system	Town budget responsible for reimbursing state unemployment system	School budget/special revenue funds	
Financial	Negative FY21 Impact [Longer term]	Medium	Medium	High	
Financial	Negative macro-economic benefit, big-picture	Med/High	High	None	Intent of federal and state guidance is to keep staff on payroll and contributing to consumer economy
Mission Fulfillment	Employee Productivity/Work Level	None	None	Some-varies by group	Paraprofessionals, Clerical, Food Service, Extended School Care
Mission Fulfillment	Continuity of Educational/Operational Services when we re-open	Med	Low	High	

Hourly Staff Pay Continuity Framework

		Decision Options and Impacts			
Category/Dimension	Decision-making Criteria	Furlough	Layoff	Keep on Payroll	Notes
Valuing our Workforce	Employee Disruption	Med/High	Very High	None	Furlough or layoff causes loss of income, Must file for UI, must pay benefits via personal check, job continuity unclear, if laid off then could jeopardize EE membership in Town Retirement system if re-hired
Valuing our Workforce	Employee Loyalty	Med	Low	High	
Org. Management	Administrative Burden	High	Very High	None	Communication to impacted staff, termination in Personnel and Payroll systems, respond to state with data for each EE who claims UI, communication of re-activation for furlough, potential re-hire process for all layoffs, benefits administration cumbersome-already
Societal Viewpoint/Political	Taxpayer Sentiment	??	??	??	

Hourly Staff Pay Continuity Decision-making Schedule

School Cmtee Vote	Time Period	Pay Dates	Action
March 18	March 17-April 6	April 1 & April 15	Approved
April 1	April 7-17	April 29	Approved
April 15	April 20-May 1	May 13	TBD

If school closure is extended beyond May 1st, then we would need another vote on pay continuity no later than April 29th.

Paraprofessionals and Clerical Workers

- Payroll for these groups of employees is funded primarily via the town-appropriated budget.
- Because our overall annual FY20 town appropriation remains intact, funding for paraprofessionals and clerical workers is available.

Food Service Workers

- Payroll for this group of employees is funded exclusively via the Food Service Revolving Fund by receipts from sales of breakfasts, lunches, a la carte items, and government reimbursement from the United States Department of Agriculture “School Lunch” Program.
- There is sufficient funding in that account to fund payroll cost through the school closure period-now up to May 1st.

Extended School Care Workers

- Payroll for this group of employees is funded exclusively via the Extended School Care Revolving Fund by parent paid tuitions to that program.
- There is **not** sufficient funding in that account to fund payroll cost through the school closure period-now up to May 1st.
- A \$110,000 deficit will be created for continuing pay for this group up through May 1st and funding would need to come from the town-appropriated budget to cover this shortfall.

COVID-19 Estimated Budget Savings-Preliminary

	March -13-31	April	May	June	Totals	
CATEGORY	Est. "Savings"	Notes				
Day-to-Day Substitutes**	\$ 16,500	\$ 60,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 57,000	\$ 208,500	Based on payout dates
Spring Athletic Transpo		\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 45,000	Assumes loss/decrease of Spring Season
Spring Athletic Officials		\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 15,000	Assumes loss/decrease of Spring Season
General and Educational Supplies	\$ 4,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 28,000	
Totals	\$ 20,500	\$ 88,000	\$ 103,000	\$ 85,000	\$ 296,500	
Accumulated Totals		\$ 108,500	\$ 211,500	\$ 296,500		

**Decreased costs for day-to-day substitutes in March and April might be surpassed by additional costs for substitutes in May and June upon re-opening due to staff illness or quarantining. Thus, that category may not net out at year-end as any savings.

Extended School Care Workers

- Operating savings from March and April school closures could cover the deficit created by pay continuity through May 1st for ESC workers

Recommendation

- The district administration recommends that the School Committee vote to continue pay for all SPS employees through Friday, May 1.
- We will continue to evaluate our options and the overall budget situation and make another recommendation at your next meeting about pay continuity beyond May 1st
- A separate School Committee meeting prior to May 1st will need to be scheduled



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

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

MEETING DATE: **4/15/20**

B. Payroll Continuity for All Staff During School Closure Period: Vote

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

After initially mandating school closure through April 6, 2020, the state extended school closure until a current planned reopening on May 4, 2020 as part of its efforts to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The district has shifted to a work-from-home model in order to maintain operations and to provide remote learning for students as well as support for them and their families. On March 18 the School Committee voted to authorize that hourly-paid and salaried employees receive their typical pay for mandated closure days through April 6, and on April 1 voted to approve the continued compensation of all Shrewsbury Public Schools employees through at least April 17 of the mandated school closure. Per his earlier report, Mr. Collins has analyzed the district's resources, and based on that analysis, Dr. Sawyer is recommending that all employees' pay be continued through the next pay period, which ends on May 1.

A memorandum from Dr. Sawyer will follow under separate cover.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the Committee vote to approve the continued compensation of all Shrewsbury Public Schools employees through at least May 1 of the mandated school closure for the COVID-19 pandemic, including both salaried and hourly employees, at their contractual rates of pay based on their typical time worked per pay period.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **VIII. Old Business**

MEETING DATE: **4/15/20**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

MEMBERS/STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **IX. New Business**

MEETING DATE: **4/15/20**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

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

MEETING DATE: **4/15/20**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on April 8, 2020 are enclosed.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the Committee accept the minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on April 8, 2020.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Ms. Sandra Fryc, Chairperson

Dr. B. Dale Magee, Secretary

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, April 8, 2020

Present via virtual participation: Ms. Sandy Fryc, Chairperson; Mr. Jon Wensky, Vice Chairperson; Dr. B. Dale Magee, Secretary; Ms. Lynsey Heffernan; Mr. Jason Palitsch; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations (Executive Session); and Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools.

Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, this meeting was not open to physical participation by the public, but was broadcast live on SELCO Channels 29 & 329 and streamed live on the Shrewsbury Media Connection website. A complete audio/video recording of this meeting is available on the Shrewsbury Public Schools website.

The meeting was convened by Ms. Fryc at 7:00 pm. Ms Fryc advised that public participation was suspended due to the meeting not being open to physical participation, but noted viewers could email questions and comments to the School Committee.

I. Update regarding the school district's response to the COVID-19 school closure

Dr. Sawyer's update on the district's response to the COVID-19 pandemic included an overview of key facts and messages; advised how best to communicate with the district during school closure; provided a detailed update on remote learning; and illustrated where coronavirus (COVID-19) and remote learning-related information could be found on the district's website.

In response to questions from the Committee, Dr. Sawyer provided additional information on measuring the success of remote learning initiatives (first, find ways to connect with students/families; next, connect with the community to assess how things are going); recording of learning sessions ("live" sessions currently cannot be recorded; asynchronous sessions can be recorded); and outreach to English Language Learner (ELL) students and families.

II. School Calendar Revision re: April School Vacation: Vote

Dr. Sawyer summarized past changes to the school calendar approved by the Committee and based on guidance from the MA Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) relative to updated regulations for public school calendars in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Citing an uptick in questions from families and staff regarding whether to keep or change the planned upcoming April school vacation break, and given that families are homebound and a routine for remote learning established, he shared that the leadership team determined that it

would be helpful to develop online surveys to gauge the perspectives of families and staff alike on this issue. The surveys received a high level of response, with 2,304 families and 740 staff members providing feedback. After providing detailed survey data that indicated strong preferences by families and staff to convert some vacation days to remote learning days, and noting key elements of feedback from comments submitted, Dr. Sawyer recommended that the Committee vote to convert three days previously scheduled to be school vacation days (April 21-23) to remote learning days and end the school year on Tuesday, June 16.

Several Committee members expressed support for the recommendation, noting increased momentum relative to remote learning and acknowledging uncertainty around if/when students would be able to physically return to school. Ms. Heffernan noted she did not support the recommendation, citing concerns around the progress of remote learning at the elementary level and expressing a preference for more in-class learning in June (potentially) versus remote learning in April, which she felt would provide better value for students. In response to a request from Ms. Heffernan, Dr. Sawyer provided clarifying information around the inability to convert April vacation days to school days and keep the last day of school as June 19 relative to contractual and financial constraints.

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Mr. Wensky, the Committee voted 4-1 to adjust the 2019-2020 school year calendar so that Tuesday, April 21 through Thursday, April 23 are changed from school vacation days to remote learning days, thereby changing the last day of the school year to Tuesday, June 16. Roll call votes were as follows: Dr. Magee, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Heffernan, no; and Ms. Fryc, yes.

III. Approval of Minutes

Without objections from the Committee, the minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on April 1, 2020 were accepted as distributed.

IV. Executive Session

A. For the purpose of a student residency issue

B. For the purpose of negotiations with the Shrewsbury Education Association Unit A, Shrewsbury Education Association Unit B, the Shrewsbury Paraprofessional Association, the Shrewsbury Cafeteria workers, and non-represented staff

C. For the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes

Ms. Fryc requested a motion to adjourn to Executive Session for the purposes of a student residency issue; negotiations with the Shrewsbury Education Association Unit A, Shrewsbury Education Association Unit B, the Shrewsbury Paraprofessional Association, the Shrewsbury Cafeteria workers, and non-represented staff, where deliberation in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body; and reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes; and return to Open Session only for the purpose of adjourning for the evening.

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Mr. Wensky, on a roll call vote: Dr. Magee, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Heffernan, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes, the School Committee voted to adjourn to executive session at 7:49 pm.

V. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Mr. Wensky, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Palitsch: yes; Mr. Wensky: yes; Ms. Heffernan: yes; Dr. Magee: yes; and Ms. Fryc: yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

1. Update on COVID-19 Response Report Slides 04-08-20
2. School Calendar Revision - April Vacation Memo
3. April Vacation Staff Survey
4. April Vacation Family Survey
5. School Calendar Revision - April Vacation Slide Presentation
6. Set(s) of minutes as referenced above



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **XI. Executive Session**

MEETING DATE: **4/15/20**

- A. For the purpose of negotiations with some or all of the following:
the Shrewsbury Education Association Unit A, Shrewsbury Education
Association Unit B, the Shrewsbury Paraprofessional Association, the
Shrewsbury Cafeteria Workers, and/or non-represented staff.**
- B. For the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive
session minutes.**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Executive session is warranted for these purposes.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee enter into executive session for the purpose of negotiations with some or all of the following: the Shrewsbury Education Association Unit A, Shrewsbury Education Association Unit B, the Shrewsbury Paraprofessional Association, the Shrewsbury Cafeteria Workers, and/or non-represented staff, where deliberation in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body; and for the purposes of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes, and return to Open Session only for the purpose of adjourning for the evening.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Barbara A. Malone, Executive Director of Human Resources

ITEM NO: **XII. Adjournment**