



**Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials
Donald D. Johnson Operational & Cost Efficiency Award**

Application Due: April 1st

*Please send application to MASBO, 87 Elm Street, Suite 1, Hopkinton, MA 01748
or e-mail mdriscoll@masbo.org*

Program Description: The Donald J. Johnson Operational and Cost Efficiency Award recognizes school districts for cost efficient approaches to enhancing operations that commonly tax the burdens of school systems, and that can be replicated by districts throughout the Commonwealth.

Sponsor: MASBO is grateful for its partnership with the leadership team at VOYA Financial who, through their generosity, have made this extremely prestigious award possible.

Selection Process: Any individual or group who can effectively document and support the accomplishments of the district being nominated is invited to submit a nomination. The MASBO Board of Directors Award Subcommittee determines the award selection.

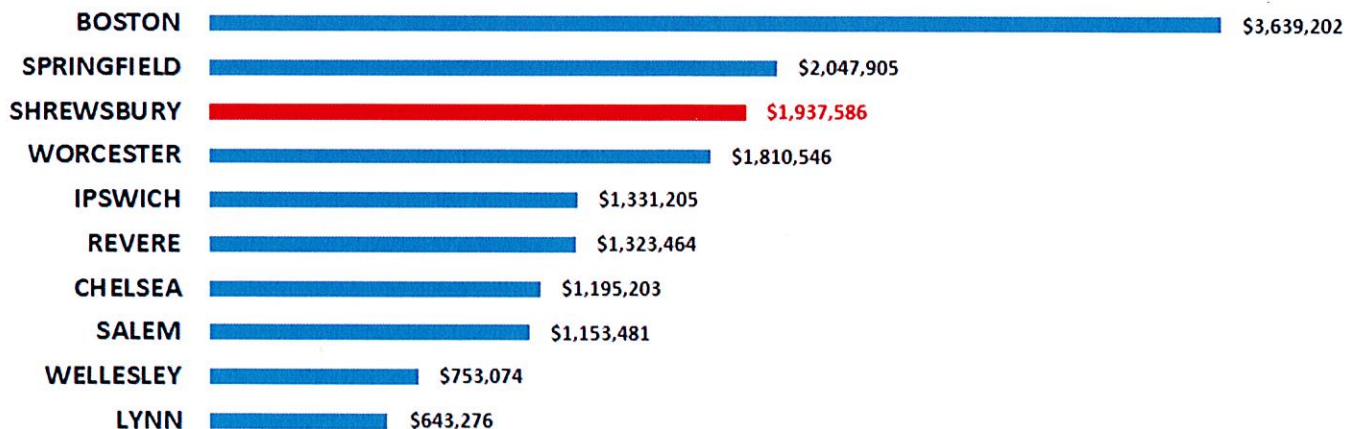
Award: The recipient receives a plaque to commemorate the award. The district receives a \$2,500 student scholarship award. The School Business Administrator will have his/her ASBO International Annual Meeting registration paid. The award is presented at the Annual Institute in May, with a follow-up ceremony at a district School Committee meeting, if desired.

Please describe the program, activity, or initiative in a few sentences:

Under the direction and leadership of Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, the Superintendent of Shrewsbury Public Schools, the district has become a statewide leader and model for engaging the community to generate revenue and in-kind goods and services for innovative programs, capital projects, and economically distressed families. All of these programs can be adapted and adopted for other school districts to implement and hopefully realize similar positive results. A brief synopsis of each of the major programs he has initiated or supported is provided below.

For general context, it's worthwhile noting that in FY18, Shrewsbury Public Schools **ranked#3 across the entire Commonwealth**, generating over \$1.9M in private gifts and grants, far outperforming districts of similar size.

FY18 Private Grant/Gift Revenue Generation

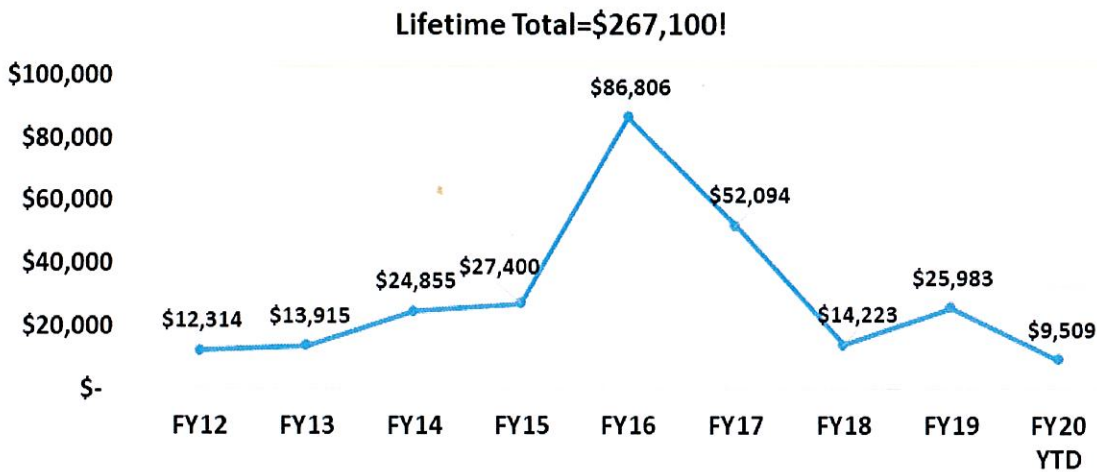


Described briefly below are the major means by which we reached the aforementioned accomplishment. We believe that many of these methods serve as models for other school districts to model.

The Colonial Fund Raises Over \$267K Since Inception



Dr. Sawyer led and orchestrated the implementation of the Colonial Fund to support innovative educational programs and services. Since its inception in 2012 the Colonial Fund has **raised over \$267,000** for innovative educational programs in our district. It operates as the District's annual fund and offers an ongoing giving opportunity with an online donation option for ease of donors. Dr. Sawyer leads the investment decision-making process and promotes the Colonial Fund through his ongoing parent and community communications.



For example, some of the major investments have been:

- National expert Cathy Vatterott: Rethinking Homework: Best Practices That Support Diverse Needs. She did an on-site workshop for administrators and had an evening speaking engagement for our parent community
- \$15,000 for 3-D printers and maker space equipment for a middle school STEM Design Program
- \$35,000 for high-definition cameras to modernize our high school Educational TV Studio

While anybody can contribute to the fund at anytime via an online link, our two part-time development staff leverage the goodwill on Giving Tuesday to solicit most of our annual donations.

Turf4Shrewsbury Campaign Raises \$1.82M Dollars

With a severely degraded athletic field and no hope of town funding, the district undertook a \$1.8M capital campaign in December 2016 to privately raise the necessary funds to install a synthetic turf field. Dr. Sawyer was successful early on in the campaign in securing a \$750,000 sponsorship from the Central One Federal Union which gave the campaign a very large boost and a strong signal of viability. Other major donors and sponsors came forward thereafter with the hard work of the fundraising committee led by a committed resident couple, James and Paula Buonomo. Not only were business sponsorships secured but a brick campaign was also highly successful in raising funds and creating a viewing patio for spectators to watch the games from. By the Spring 2018, over \$1.8M was raised and we were able to then procure the project. Work was completed by late October 2018 and we now have a safe, all-weather, synthetic turf field that allows many more student athletes access to this great venue.



Erase Student School Lunch and Fee Debt



The issue of student school lunch debt has gained national attention over the past several years. Our colleagues in other Massachusetts school districts have had similar difficulties in collecting debt. As a district, Shrewsbury public Schools, also assesses many fees for optional extra-curricular programs and services including bus fees, Athletic fees, student activity fees, and music lesson fees. In addition, we operate fee-based preschool and full day kindergarten programs along with fee-based Extended School Care [before and after school] Services.

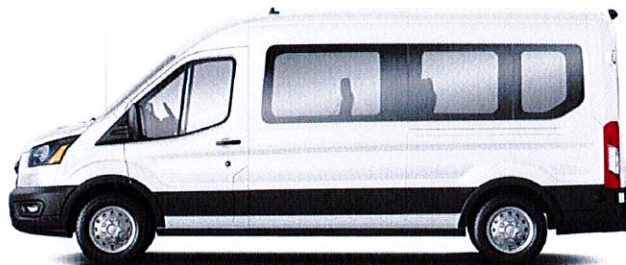
Collecting all of this debt with negatively impacting students or being portrayed as insensitive has become a challenge for all of us.

Around the 2019 Holiday Season we had a couple of community members offer to make a donation to relieve students of school lunch debt. So, we have created the “Erase Student School Lunch and Fee Debt” fund and a convenient online donation link on our website for donors. Just in the three months since launching this site and communicating to our residents via the Superintendent’s Community Bulletin **we have received over 100 donations totaling close to \$6,000!** All of these funds will go towards paying off the oldest debt of families who were on payment plans. It has been a low-effort, high-yield program to date. Not only has it relieved families of debt but it has also decreased our level of effort in collecting old debt.

Colonial Connections Program Seeded with \$400K Grant



With a newly minted Five Year Strategic Plan in hand, Dr. Sawyer approached the Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union to become the founding sponsor of a bold new initiative called Colonial Connections. Dr. Sawyer wrote a proposal and the Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union agreed to **a \$400,000 sponsorship grant over five years** [FY20-FY24] to launch the program. Program funds have supported a new Asst. Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-being in the district, the purchase of a 10-passenger van, and other program-related expenses. The Colonial Connections Program will create and enhance student engagement experiences between students and area businesses.



New Colonial Connections Program Van

Crowdfunding: A Model for Controlled Success

DONORS CHOOSE

With the growth and success of online crowdfunding and interest from our faculty and staff, the District conducted in-depth research of the industry products, a legal review, and a pilot program all leading up to a carefully crafted district school committee policy on the topic. Recently, the District was invited to participate in a M.A.S.S. webinar with DonorsChoose on this topic and to share our findings and results. The school committee policy, Policy 914, can be viewed on our website [here](#). It was vetted by our district legal counsel before being voted into place.

To date, the Districted has **garnered over \$18,000 in goods** via the *DonorsChoose* crowdfunding platform as a result of this effort.

(Check All Applicable)

The practice was designed to achieve:

- Cost Containment Other:
- Revenue Generation
- Cost Avoidance
- Cost Reduction

Intended Timeframe:

- Short-Term (Next Fiscal Year)
- Mid-Term (2-5 Fiscal Years)
- Long-Term (Greater than 5 Years)

Ease of Implementation:

- Easy Other:
- Moderate
- Difficult

Describe the Overarching Approach:

- Inter-District (within our own school district)
- Intra-District (within our own school district, but across all schools in the district)
- Internal Collaboration between Town/City and the School District
- External Collaboration between two or more School Districts
- Inter-Agency Collaboration between School and other Organizations (describe below):

Other:

Area(s) of Intended/Potential/Actual Impact:

- School Processes (programs, instruction, assessment, etc.)
- Perceptions (of students, parents, staff, citizens, committees)
- Student Learning (MCAS, other tests, GPA, etc.)
- Operations
- Facilities
- Human Resources (negotiations, salaries, benefits, etc.)
- Professional Development

Other:

Award Nominee Information:

School/District:

Shrewsbury Public Schools

Contact Person:

Patrick C. Collins

Phone:

508-841-8405

E-Mail:

pccollins@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us

Submitted By:

Name:

Patrick C. Collins

Title:

Asst. Superintendent for Finance and Operations

School/District:

Shrewsbury Public Schools

Phone:

508-841-8405

The MASBO Board of Directors greatly appreciates your nomination.