



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Request

Annual Town Meeting: May 19, 2025

Presented by the School Committee*

Jon Wensky, Chairperson
Rachel Sharifipour, Vice Chairperson
Erin Boucher, Secretary
Sandra M. Fryc
Lynsey M. Heffernan

**As of April 25, 2025*

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.

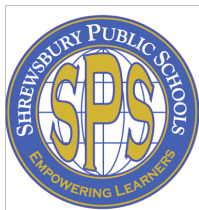
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Shrewsbury Public Schools

Joseph M. Sawyer, Ed.D.
Superintendent

To: Town meeting Members
From: Joseph M. Sawyer, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Re: School Committee's FY26 Budget recommendation

Dear Town Meeting Members,

The School Committee unanimously recommends a town-appropriated School Department Fiscal Year 2026 Budget of \$90,339,987 for your approval. This represents an increase of \$3,724,468 over the current fiscal year, or 4.30%.

As I've expressed to you in the past, the budget stability provided by the 2021 operational override has been invaluable. During this budget cycle, many communities across Massachusetts are making reductions to school personnel and programming and municipal services, where inflationary costs have outpaced those communities' revenue from local and state sources due to the mechanics of Proposition 2 ½ and the way that state funding is structured. In Shrewsbury, our financial resources will be sufficient to avoid cuts to our educational program due to the willingness of Shrewsbury voters to make a greater investment of their tax dollars through the 2021 override. For the fifth consecutive fiscal year we will not need to make reductions in educational staffing or programming, and we will be able make a few modest investments to address both mandated educational requirements and key strategic priorities. These new investments are illustrated in the following table:

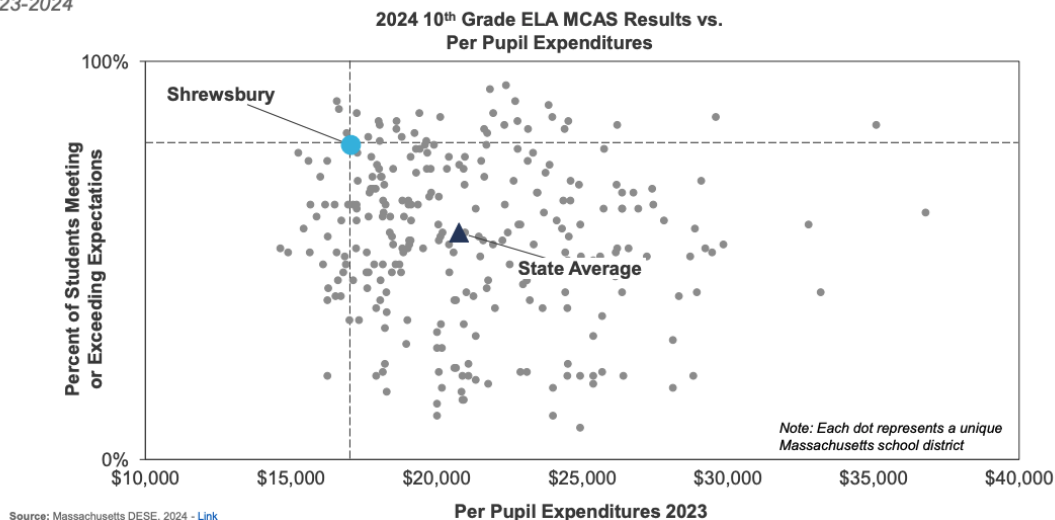
Personnel Investment	Cost	Notes
ELC Coordinator- 1.0 FTE	\$100,000	For mandated services at Sherwood Middle School to address increasing population of students with autism or similar disabilities in the ELC program (from 14 to 23 students)
Adjustment Counselor- 1.0 FTE	\$100,000	To address student social, emotional, and behavioral health needs at Coolidge School
English Language Education Teacher- 1.0 FTE	\$65,000	For mandated English language instruction services at Beal School to address increased need
RISE Job Coach Paraeducator- 1.0 FTE	\$42,500	For mandated services; RISE student population is increasing from 22 to 26 students in this mandated program for post-high school students ages 18-22
40 hours/week of Literacy Tutor support	\$57,000	Maintaining literacy tutor support that was previously funded through the federal "Covid" grant (ESSER-3) by shifting costs to the appropriated budget
Total 4.0 FTE plus continued tutor support	\$364,500	Total of recommended personnel investments in the appropriated budget

Our school district continues to be an extremely cost-effective organization. Over this past school year, the School Committee commissioned a third-party expert, District

Management Group (DMG), to conduct a fiscal study to assess the financial health of our district. DMG gave Shrewsbury high marks. As stated on the School Committee's website, residents of Shrewsbury can be confident that our schools are effectively managed, produce a high academic return on investment, and educational services are currently delivered at a cost per pupil which is well below average to comparable schools in Massachusetts. The chart below is one illustration of excellent student performance despite expenditures that are well below benchmarks.

Shrewsbury Public Schools has delivered strong academic outcomes roughly in the top 15% of school districts while spending in the bottom 15% of school districts in Massachusetts.

State of Massachusetts – Proficiency vs. Spending
2023-2024



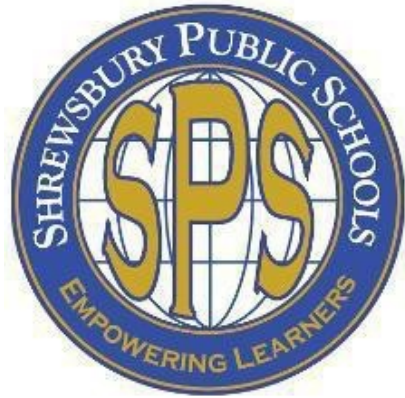
I encourage you to review DMG's findings and future cost projections, along with detailed information about the override model and our district's future capital planning by visiting the School Committee's long-term financial planning website found here:

<https://schools.shrewsburyma.gov/district/long-term-financial-planning-for-shrewsbury-public-schools>

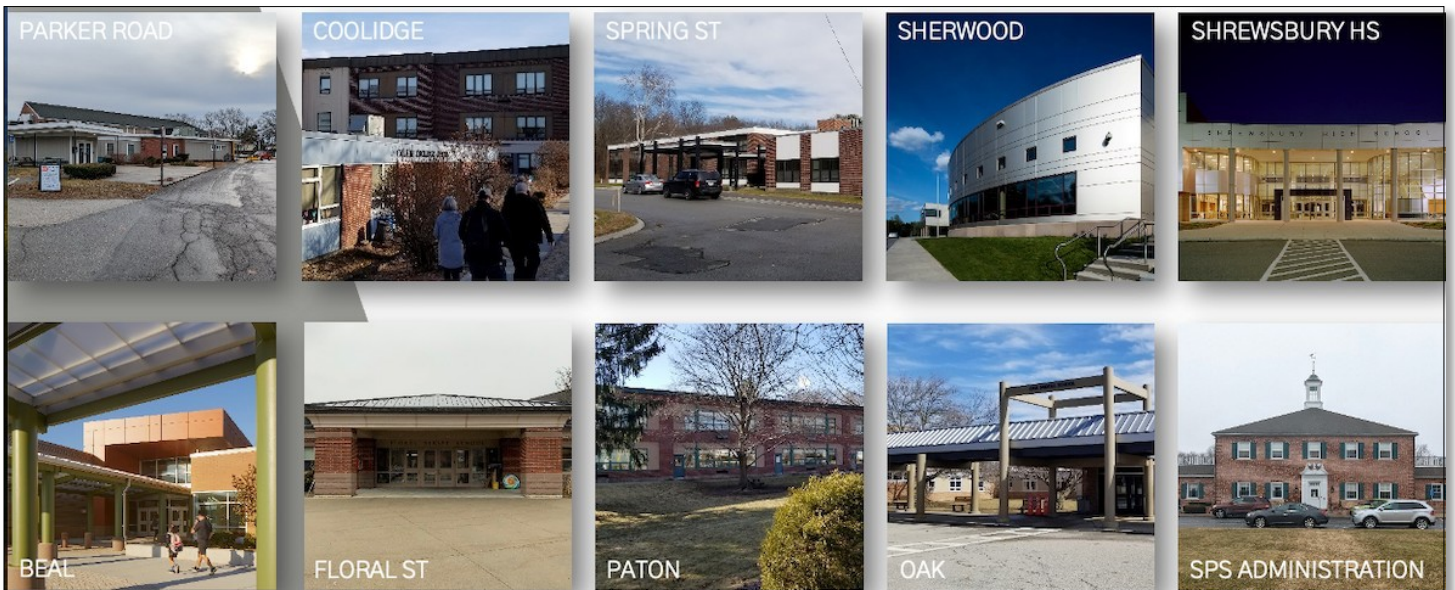
This budget booklet contains a variety of details regarding the School Department's town-appropriated budget request. Of note:

- 1) An increase of about \$200K for textbooks and instructional materials is a restoration to the School Department budget after being heavily offset last year through the use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant funds
- 2) The use of state Circuit Breaker funding offsets about two-thirds of our out-of-district special education tuition costs, and also provides an overall funding reserve of \$2.2M (about 2.5% of the budget allocation)
- 3) An estimated \$153K increase in vocational technical high school tuition, due to Shrewsbury students' new access to the program at Leicester High School
- 4) A shift of \$72K from transportation and athletic fees to the appropriated budget due to the School Committee's lowering of the transportation fee from \$320 to \$300 and the athletic fee from \$325 to \$300, to provide a measure of relief from fees that are among the highest in comparison to other districts.

For detailed reports from throughout the FY26 Budget development process, see <https://schools.shrewsburyma.gov/sc/fy-2026-budget>. The School Committee and I look forward to answering your questions at Town Meeting.



INTRODUCTORY SECTION



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT OVERVIEW

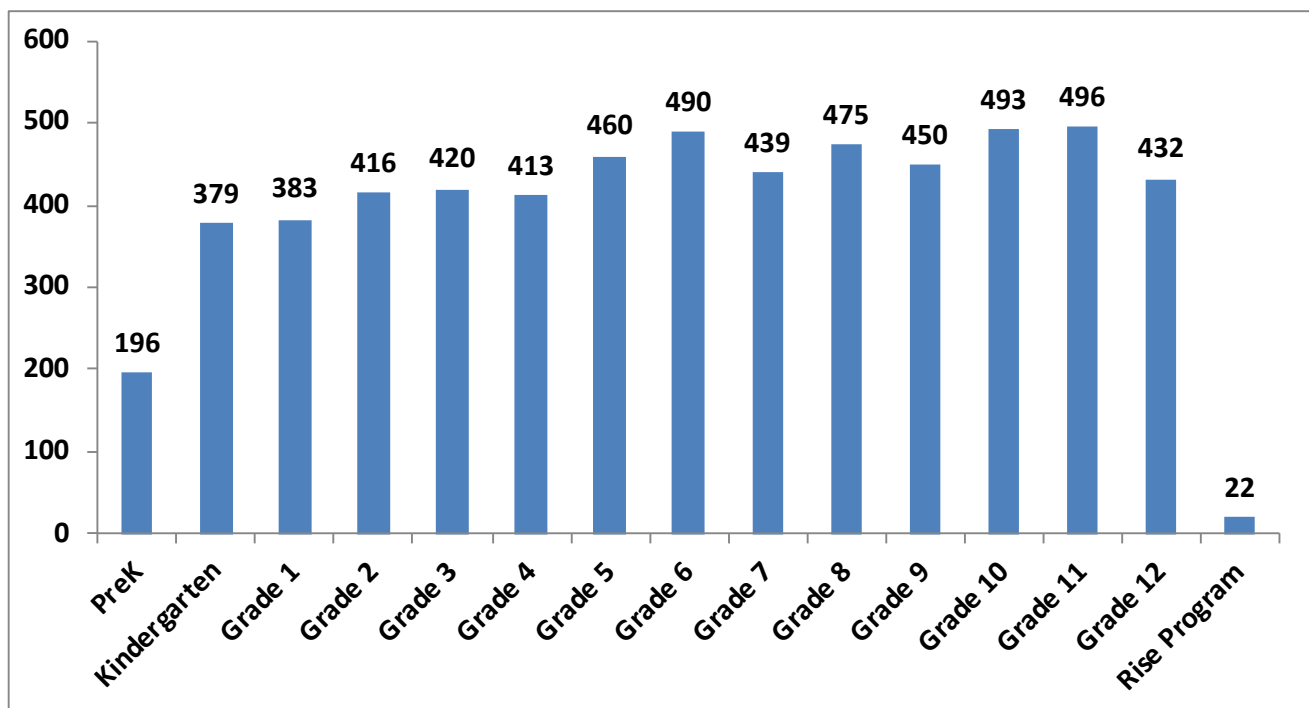
School Population

With its geographically advantageous location, the Town of Shrewsbury has grown significantly in the past decades. The federal U.S. Census records the Shrewsbury population growing from 24,146 in 1990 to 39,805 in 2022. The school population has grown significantly during that time period as well, reaching a high of 6,268 students in 2019. The chart below depicts the current allocation of students by school and itemizes all School Department facilities.

School/Office	Location	Grade Levels	Enrollment 10/1/2024
Central Office	100 Maple Ave. [Town Hall]	na	
Special Education Office	15 Parker Rd. [SELCO Bldg.]	na	
Parker Road Preschool	15 Parker Rd. [SELCO Bldg.]	PreK	196
Major Howard W. Beal School	214 Lake Street	K-4	624
Calvin Coolidge Elementary School	1 Florence Street	K-4	288
Floral Street Elementary School	57 Floral Street	K-4	525
Walter J. Paton Elementary School	58 Grafton Street	K-4	269
Spring Street Elementary School	123 Spring Street	K-4	305
Sherwood Middle School	30 Sherwood Avenue	5-6	950
Oak Middle School	45 Oak Street	7-8	914
Shrewsbury High School	75 Cypress Avenue	9-12	1,871
RISE Program	557 Main Street	Ages 18-22	22
			5,964

The distribution of the 5,964 students (from 10/1/24) across grade levels is shown in the chart below.

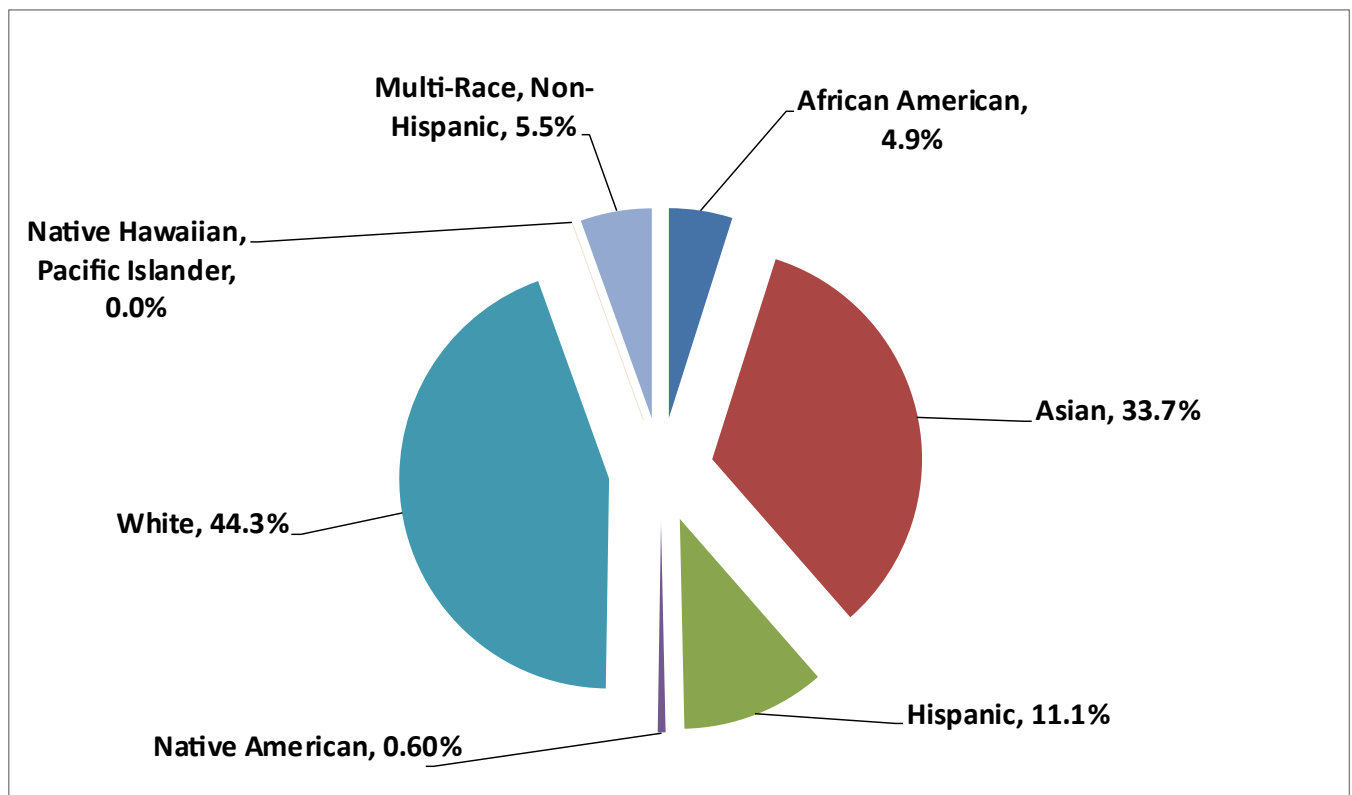
Grade Level Enrollment as of October 1, 2024



It is important to note that students with identified learning disabilities [special education students] become eligible for public school services at age three and remain eligible until age 22. Historically, approximately ten percent of graduating eighth grade students would opt for a private or vocational/ technical high school. However, that percentage has been on the decline as a new admissions policy for vocational technical high schools was adopted statewide that disadvantages our students because Shrewsbury is not a member of a regional technical high school. Vocational enrollment should increase beginning in the 2025-2026 with the new Chapter 74 vocational agreement with Leicester Public Schools. We anticipate 23 students from Shrewsbury attending the Leicester vocational program in 2025-2026.

Student Demographics

The growth in both town and school-age population has come with a significant increase in ethnic diversity. The chart below shows that White students now represent 44.3% of the student body and 55.6% are non- White. The largest ethnic minority group is Asian and the large majority of this population is of South Asian/Indian descent.



Source: Massachusetts Department of Education, District Profile 2023-2024.

During the 2022-2023 school year, Shrewsbury participated in a year-long Teacher Diversification Project sponsored by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. This Teacher Diversification team consists of representative staff members from all levels whose goal is to hire and retain new staff whose diversity represents our student population. The Team is currently implementing diverse hiring practices through professional development for district leadership members, updating the SPS hiring handbook, and expanding candidate searches to widen hiring candidate pools.

Some of the special population student groups reported and tracked by the district and federal and state governments are summarized below. The percentage columns compare Shrewsbury Public Schools with statewide percentages using the most recent data available. One can clearly see that we are above the statewide percent in students whose First Language is not English but below the percentages in all other categories including Students with Disabilities [aka special education students].

Category	% of Shrewsbury	% of State	Difference District v. State
First Language not English	39.6%	27.2%	12.4%
English Language Learner	6.2%	13.9%	-7.7%
Students with Disabilities	14.5%	20.6%	-6.1%
High Needs	34.0%	55.8%	-21.8%
Low Income	17.6%	42.1%	-24.5%

Source: Massachusetts Department of Education, District Profile 2024-2025

Definitions of categories:

<i>First Language not English</i>	A student whose first language is a language other than English and who is able to perform ordinary classroom work in English.
<i>English Language Learner</i>	A student who does not speak English or whose native language is not English, and who is not currently able to perform ordinary classroom work in English.
<i>Students with Disabilities</i>	A special education student with an Individual Education Plan [IEP]
<i>High Needs</i>	An unduplicated count of all students in the district belonging to at least one of the following individual subgroups: students with disabilities, English language learners (ELL) and former ELL students, or low-income students (eligible for free/reduced price school lunch).
<i>Economically Disadvantaged</i>	A student eligible for SNAP, TAFDC, MassHealth, or in foster care.

Governance and Management

Shrewsbury Public Schools is governed by a five-member school committee. Each member is elected by town-wide vote to serve a three-year term and members are on a staggered election schedule so that one or two members are up for election each year. The school committee elects its own chairperson, vice- chair, and secretary each year. Traditionally, members have rotated through these positions during their term to share leadership responsibilities.

The district's Central Office is located in Town Hall and performs many of the district leadership and management functions. Additional Central Office satellite locations are placed across the district including the Special Education Department located at 15 Parker Road, as well as other district leadership offices located within school buildings. District administrators and building principals all report to the superintendent and the organizational structure and reporting relationships are detailed in the enclosed organizational chart. The Shrewsbury School Committee members and term expirations are listed below. The school committee typically meets on a bi-weekly basis and the meetings are broadcast on local cable television.

School Committee

Member	Role	Term Expires
Jon Wensky	Chair	2027
Rachel Sharifipour	Vice-Chair	2026
Erin Boucher	Secretary	2025
Sandra M. Fryc	Member	2026
Lynsey M. Heffernan	Member	2025

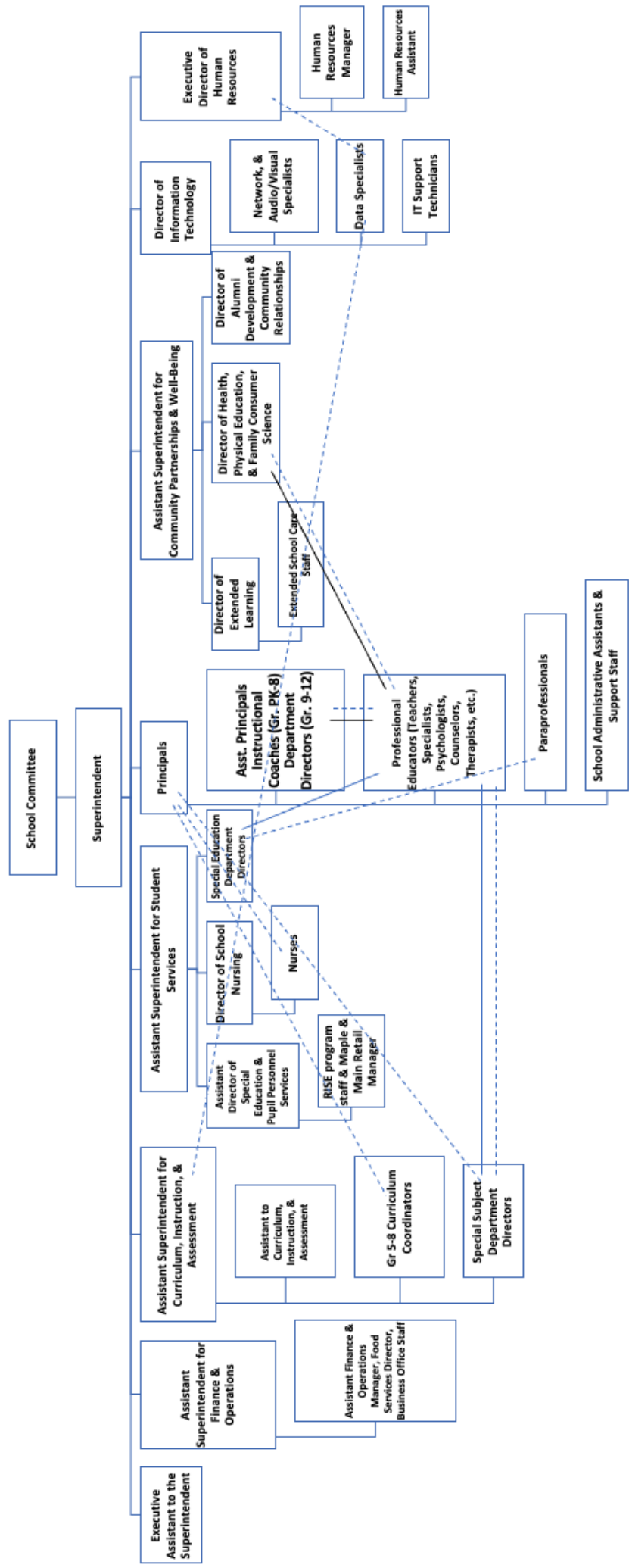
Administrative Team

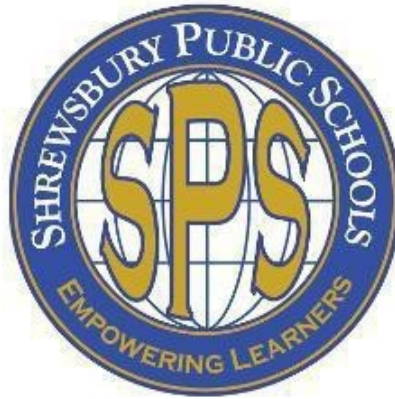
The administrative team also typically meets on a bi-weekly basis and rotates its meeting location across school buildings and Town Hall. When meeting in a school, the team takes time, as part of the agenda, to visit classrooms and then debrief on their observations. Fortunately, there is relatively low turnover amongst the group. The superintendent has worked as an administrator in the district since 1997 and served as superintendent since 2009.

Administrator	Role	District
Joseph Sawyer	Superintendent	District
Amy Clouter	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction	District
Christian Girardi	Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations	District
Meg Belsito	Assistant Superintendent for Student Services	District
Jane Lizotte	Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships & Well-Being	District
Barbara Malone	Executive Director of Human Resources	District
Kristen Gasper	Principal	Maj. Howard W. Beal School
Tiffany Ostrander	Principal	Coolidge Elementary School
Lisa McCubrey	Principal	Floral Street School
Scott Mulcahy	Principal	Paton Elementary School
Bryan Mabie	Principal	Spring Street School
Jonathan Kelly	Principal	Sherwood Middle School
Hallie Burak	Principal	Oak Middle School
Todd Bazydlo	Principal	Shrewsbury High School

Shrewsbury Public Schools Organizational Chart

2024-2025 School Year





ORGANIZATIONAL SECTION

Mission & Core Values	→	Who we are
Vision	→	Where we are going
Strategy & Goals	→	How to get there

DISTRICT MISSION, CORE VALUES, AND STRATEGIC PLAN

Each year, as we develop our annual operating budget, many difficult resource decisions and trade-offs are considered along the way. However, we always keep our mission statement, core values, and strategic goals at the forefront.

Mission Statement

Shrewsbury Public Schools, in partnership with the community, will provide students with the skills and knowledge for the 21st century, an appreciation of our democratic tradition, and the desire to continue to learn throughout life.

Core Values

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

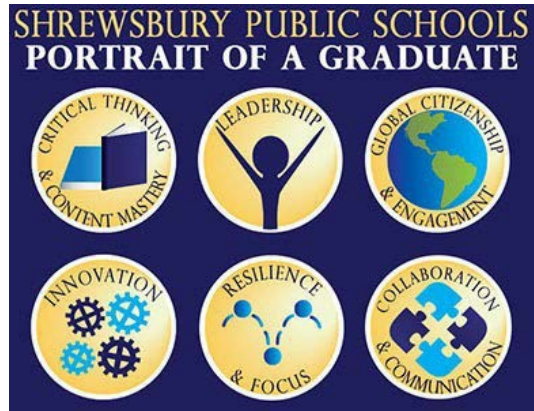
Collaboration and Communication: All members of the school community accept shared responsibility for the learning of all students. Teaching and learning take place in collaborative school cultures that are based on trust, respect, and mutual accountability. Collaboration and effective communication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

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

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

Vision

The ***Portrait of a Graduate Project*** spanned two school years and involved a wide array of stakeholders to include teachers, administration, school committee members, parents, and business partners. The Portrait of a Graduate defines what we believe is the most critical for our students to know and be able to do by the time they graduate from Shrewsbury High School.



GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP & ENGAGEMENT

Students:

- Listen with an open mind to understand others' situations and treat all with kindness and respect
- Learn from and engage collaboratively and reflectively with individuals representing diverse cultures, religions, and lifestyles in a spirit of mutual respect and open dialogue in personal, work, digital, and community conversations
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of society's impact on the natural world
- Access, analyze, and evaluate information in order to understand the local, national, and global implications of civic decisions
- Contribute to society in important ways by serving others

COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATION

Students:

- Demonstrate ability to work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams
- Assume shared responsibility for collaborative work, and value the individual contributions made by each team member
- Listen effectively to decipher meaning of knowledge, values, attitudes, and intentions
- Communicate for a range of purposes (e.g., to inform, instruct, motivate, and persuade)
- Articulate thoughts and ideas effectively through oral, written, and nonverbal communication skills, utilizing a variety of forms and media

RESILIENCE & FOCUS

Students:

- Persevere to accomplish difficult tasks and to overcome academic and personal barriers to meet goals
- Work effectively in a climate of ambiguity and changing priorities
- Employ strategies to maintain personal wellness, focus, and intention in their lives
- Incorporate feedback effectively and deal positively with praise, setbacks, and criticism
- Monitor and direct their own learning, adapting their approach as needed to successfully complete a task or solve a problem

INNOVATION

Students:

- Use a wide range of idea creation techniques and problem-solving techniques (such as brainstorming, divergent and convergent thinking, effective reasoning, and systems thinking)
- Elaborate, refine, analyze, and evaluate their own ideas in order to improve and maximize creative efforts
- Demonstrate originality and inventiveness in work and understand the real-world limits to adopting new ideas
- View failure as an opportunity to learn; understand that creativity and innovation is a long-term, cyclical process of small successes and frequent mistakes
- Act on creative ideas to make tangible and useful contributions
- Reflect critically on learning experiences, processes, and solutions

CRITICAL THINKING & CONTENT MASTERY

Students:

- Develop and draw from a baseline understanding of knowledge in an academic discipline
- Transfer knowledge to other situations
- Demonstrate curiosity and identify, define, and solve authentic problems and essential questions
- Reflect critically on learning experiences, processes, and solutions
- Make good decisions by clarifying values, analyzing information, considering alternatives and tradeoffs, and applying sound reasoning

LEADERSHIP

Students:

- Use interpersonal and problem-solving skills to influence and guide others toward a goal
- Demonstrate integrity, humility, and flexibility of response
- Recognize and support the leadership of others
- Act responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind

2023-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

On April 26, 2023, after a careful and comprehensive process spanning many months in partnership with Focused Schools, LLC to assist in identifying the district's strengths and ensuring robust input was received from all stakeholders, the Shrewsbury School Committee, upon recommendation from the superintendent, adopted a five-year strategic plan with three Commitments and related strategic priorities detailed below.

Input from students, parents, community members, and staff members regarding ongoing and new priorities was solicited in the fall of 2022 via a school council forum, a public forum, and online *ThoughtExchange* surveys. That feedback was used to inform the Five-Year Strategic Priorities & Goals. Additionally, various leadership teams within the district vetted early drafts and provided suggestions that were incorporated into a draft of the proposed strategic plan the Superintendent's recommendation presented on March 29, 2023. This draft was provided to all staff and community members via email and web links, with an invitation for final feedback. Finally, on April 26, 2023 the School Committee finalized and voted the plan detailed below which will guide our efforts and investment for the next five years.

Shrewsbury Public Schools: Strategic Plan 2023-2027



Shrewsbury Public Schools Strategic Plan 2023-2027

Commitments and Strategic Priorities

COMMITMENT TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Shrewsbury Public Schools provides all students access to exceptional educational experiences by leveraging staff development, high-quality materials and technology, data analysis, instructional strategies, and a comprehensive system of support to meet the needs of all learners. Through these efforts, all Shrewsbury Public Schools students will demonstrate academic growth and achievement.

Five-Year Strategic Priorities for Our Commitment to Educational Excellence

Educational Excellence Priority 1: Ensure High-Quality Teaching and Learning

Provide all students access to high-quality learning experiences in every classroom every day by developing and committing to districtwide expectations for high-quality teaching.

Educational Excellence Priority 2: Close Gaps

Reduce opportunity and achievement gaps to ensure all students are prepared for education and career advancement by growing all learners' literacy and "real life" skills.

Educational Excellence Priority 3: Advance Career and Technical Education

Strengthen all students' postsecondary preparedness by expanding access to career and technical education, evaluating course offerings, and exploring pathway opportunities.

Educational Excellence Priority 4: Develop a Districtwide Data Culture

Continue to systematize and fully implement a cycle of inquiry to inform decision-making to ensure all students have access to the support and resources needed to accelerate their growth towards goals and outcomes.

COMMITMENT TO OPTIMIZATION OF RESOURCES

Shrewsbury Public Schools maximizes student success by equitably allocating resources according to student need while maintaining a fiscally sound budget, building efficient and effective systems to align efforts, and strengthening partnerships with all stakeholders. This work guarantees that all students can access the programs and services offered throughout Shrewsbury Public Schools.

Five-Year Strategic Priorities for Our Commitment to the Optimization of Resources

Optimization Priority 1: Partner with the Community to Maintain a Strong Financial Foundation

Continue the financial stability that was established by the 2021 Operational Override.

Optimization Priority 2: Hire, Support, and Retain High-Quality, Diverse Staff

Diversify, support, and retain our high-performing team of educators and support staff.

Optimization Priority 3: Maximize Family and Community Partnerships

Grow family and community partnerships in efforts to strengthen and expand opportunities for all students.

Optimization Priority 4: Strategically and Equitably Allocate District Resources

Equitably distribute financial and other resources to maximize opportunities for all students.

Optimization Priority 5: Improve Facilities to Address Overcrowding and Infrastructure Needs

Address limitations of current physical spaces through expansion and/or renovation of facilities as needed.

COMMITMENT TO THE ENHANCED WELL-BEING OF ALL

Shrewsbury Public Schools prioritizes the social, emotional, behavioral, mental, and physical health of all students and staff by creating safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments. This is accomplished by intentionally providing learning opportunities where all Shrewsbury Public Schools students and staff feel valued, supported, and empowered.

Five-Year Strategic Priorities for Our Commitment to the Enhanced Well-Being of All

Well-Being Priority 1: Ensure a Safe and Inclusive Culture

Foster welcoming, safe, and inclusive learning communities where we honor and celebrate diversity, create connections and a sense of belonging for all, and support and engage all students, staff, and family members.

Well-Being Priority 2: Promote Student and Staff Wellness

Expand opportunities for students and staff to strengthen mental health and physical wellness in support of overall well-being.

Well-Being Priority 3: Strengthen Social and Emotional Learning Programming and Supports

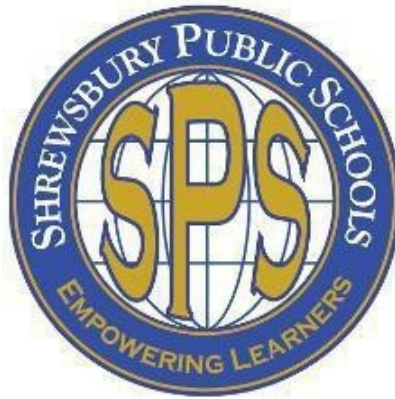
Proactively deliver social and emotional learning opportunities to all students and maintain sufficient systems and resources to respond to students' social-emotional needs.

Well-Being Priority 4: Enhance Behavioral Supports and Interventions

Implement a districtwide tiered system of support and interventions to address student behavioral needs.

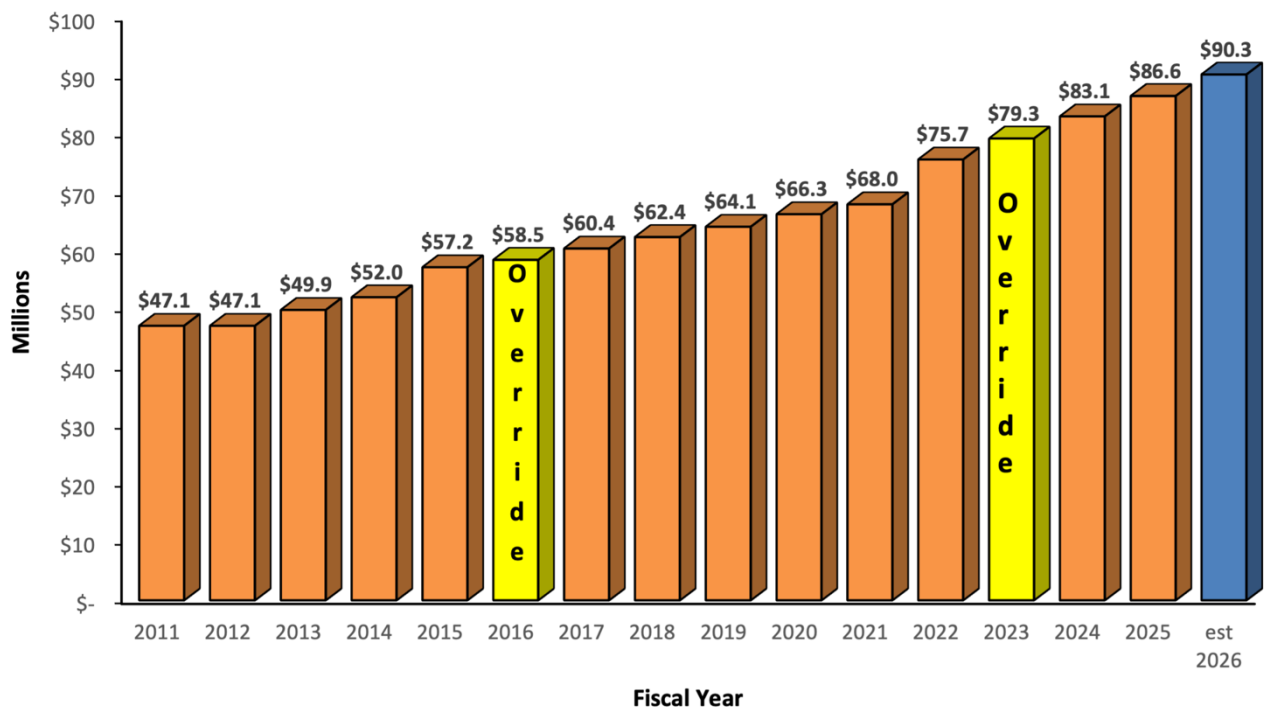
Well-Being Priority 5: Evaluate and Strengthen Safety and Security Systems and Protocols

Work with public safety partners and outside experts to assess and enhance the district's approach to crisis prevention and response.



FINANCIAL SECTION

Town Appropriated Budget History & Projection



Overview

This section of the budget document includes a variety of financial data presented in different ways to appeal to the myriad perspectives of its many readers. It includes graphs and charts to display historical comparisons and a visual representation of how funds are invested in education. It also includes the detailed budget plan separated by “responsibility center,” which is a group of accounts under the supervision of a building principal or department manager.

The funding of public education comes from many sources, including the town appropriated operating budget, Chapter 70 state education aid, Special Education Circuit Breaker Reimbursement, federal and state grants, fees, and private grants/donations. This section of the budget document will provide both summary and detailed information on all sources of revenue and expenditures. It also provides a brief synopsis of the school finance metrics codified by Massachusetts statute and regulations.

School Committee Priorities, Assumptions, and Guidance

Underpinning the finances of the FY26 financial plan are the agreed upon School Committee Policies and Guidelines voted in November 2024. These serve as a guidepost for both the development of this budget recommendation and our succeeding dialogue leading to a final budget.

Priorities

The initial FY25 School Department Budget proposal shall include resources to address each of the following priorities:

1. *Meet commitments as detailed in the March 16, 2021 Override Statement to the Residents of Shrewsbury and agreed upon between the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee*
This compact includes specific commitments towards budget planning transparency, engagement with the community, and limitations on annual budget increases.

In order to best project the School Department’s future financial needs, the district is engaging a consultant who will do an extensive review of historical costs as well as a comprehensive forecast that identifies strengths, risks, and needs. This process will inform the development of the FY26 School Department Budget as well as ongoing longer-term planning done in conjunction with the Select Board and the Town Manager.

2. *Resources for key district needs and priorities included in the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan*
 - a. To review enrollment and determine personnel necessary for class sizes that reflect School Committee guidelines.
 - b. To further advance the literacy initiative in grades PreK-6 by providing necessary curriculum materials and professional development.
 - c. To provide support for students who are not meeting educational benchmarks, students who are learning English, and students who have complex social, emotional, and behavioral needs.
 - d. To allocate required resources to deliver mandated educational services for our English learner population that is

growing in size and complexity.

- e. To determine funding for tuition and transportation required to partner with another school district to provide Chapter 74 vocational/technical education programming.
- f. To further develop in-district career and technical education programs at the high school and create partnerships with area businesses for similar types of student experiential learning opportunities, after utilizing available grants and/or philanthropic funding.
- g. To consider how areas of the budget that are currently subsidized through fees (such as transportation, athletics, etc.) might be adjusted in order *to potentially reduce the impact on families*.

Assumptions and Guidance

It is assumed that the initial FY26 School Department Budget proposal will:

1. Work within the fiscal guidelines of the override agreement between the School Committee and Select Board.
2. Provide adequate resources to meet all legal mandates required of the school district.
3. Reflect the terms of collective bargaining agreements and other contractual obligations and consider the impact of agreements that will be under negotiation for the coming fiscal year.
4. Provide sufficient resources to maintain a) the existing educational program and b) staffing levels necessary to meet mandates and priorities.
5. Utilize the best available information to project changes in costs (such as out-of-district tuitions) and revenues (such as state funding through the Chapter 70 and Circuit Breaker programs, grants, etc.).
6. Estimate level funding for all expected federal and state grants and present options regarding potential continuation of programs or services that were previously funded by Covid-related grants that have expired.
7. Review fee and tuition levels for all programs and make recommendations that consider the School Department's increased costs to operate, while also taking into account the associated financial challenges for families, in the context of how fee and tuition levels compare to those in other districts.
8. Examine ways to reduce or shift costs in order to achieve district priorities without requiring additional funding allocations wherever possible.
9. Given space constraints at the secondary schools, the administration should assume no new School Choice seats will be voted by the School Committee for approval.

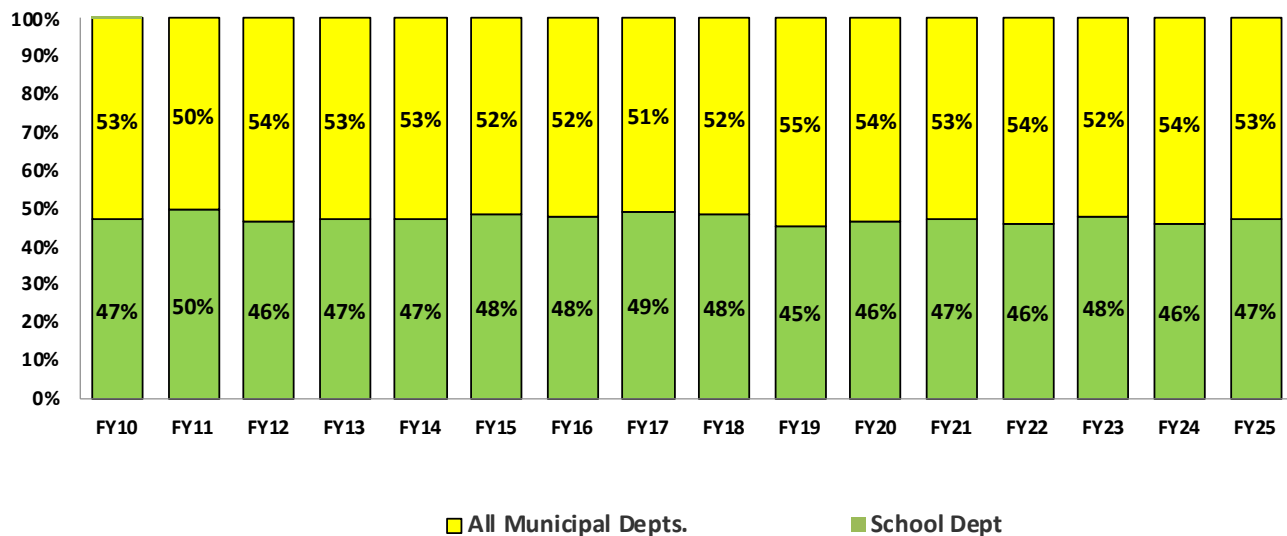
Fiscal Summary - All Funds

	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25 Budget	FY26 Budget est. at 4.30% increase	Change from FY25 to FY26
Town Appropriated Budget	\$ 75,722,168	\$ 79,318,971	\$ 83,086,622	\$ 86,615,519	\$ 90,339,986	\$ 3,724,467
	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25 Budget	FY26 Budget est.	Change from FY25 to FY26
Special Revenue Funds						
Federal Grants	\$ 2,817,272	\$ 1,967,463	\$ 2,505,854	\$ 2,161,860	\$ 2,147,652	\$ (14,208)
State Grants	\$ 200,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 209,460	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ -
Circuit Breaker	\$ 2,604,420	\$ 3,405,843	\$ 3,520,578	\$ 3,833,464	\$ 4,396,973	\$ 563,509
Private Grants & Gifts*	\$ 318,458	\$ 281,541	\$ 272,061	\$ 285,000	\$ 275,000	\$ (10,000)
School Choice & Other Day Tuition	\$ 597,246	\$ 539,632	\$ 618,830	\$ 510,000	\$ 505,000	\$ (5,000)
Athletics	\$ 373,025	\$ 413,180	\$ 447,173	\$ 385,000	\$ 425,000	\$ 40,000
School Lunch	\$ 2,208,959	\$ 3,039,430	\$ 4,224,942	\$ 3,300,000	\$ 4,225,000	\$ 925,000
Other Local Rec. [ESC, Bus & Facility Rent etc..]	\$ 2,385,154	\$ 2,265,000	\$ 2,398,084	\$ 2,180,000	\$ 2,105,000	\$ (75,000)
Total	\$ 11,504,534	\$ 12,212,089	\$ 14,196,982	\$ 12,755,324	\$ 14,179,625	\$ 1,424,301
	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25 Budget	FY26 Budget	Change from FY25 to FY26
Town Expenditures in Addition to Appropriated Budget	\$ 26,081,530	\$ 26,994,384	\$ 26,474,235	TBD	TBD	TBD
Beal School Construction	\$ 4,069,741	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Oak Middles School Window Replacement	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 738,580	TBD	TBD	
Grand Total All Funds	\$ 117,377,973	\$ 118,525,444	\$ 124,496,419	TBD	TBD	TBD

As previously, noted, public schools are fueled by a number of revenue sources. Most of the revenues are restricted in their use and, as a result, are separately accounted for in our financial system. The chart above provides an “all-in” overview of actual and budgeted expenditures in various categories that align with the reporting requirements of the MA DESE End of Year Report.

Town Meeting Appropriated School Budget as a Percent of Total Town Budget

While the school enrollment has grown, our overall town has grown as well. The School Department Budget is the single largest budget in the town. However, the ratio of the School versus Town budget has been steady and in small range of fluctuation, either up or down, over the last fifteen-year period as shown in the chart below.



For detailed information on prior year budgets, click [here](#).

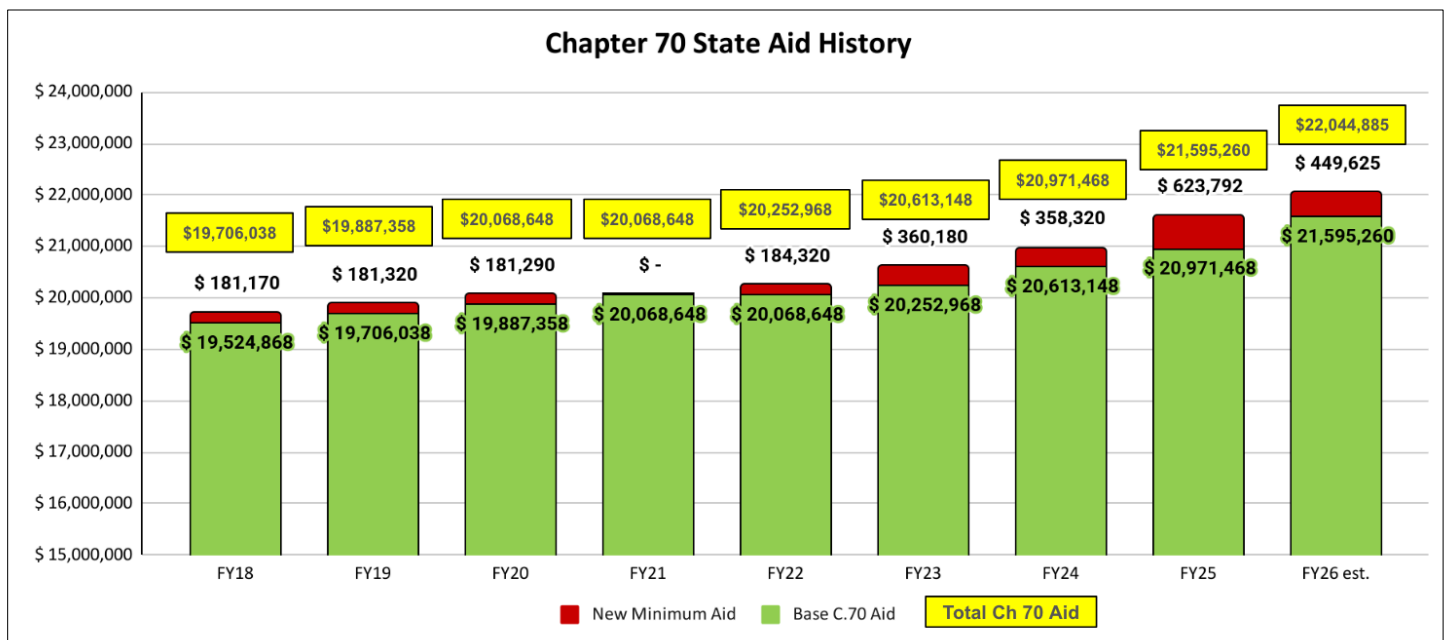
School Finance in Massachusetts and State Aid

Since the landmark 1993 Education Reform Act, the financing of public education in Massachusetts has been subject to a complex formula requiring a mandatory minimum level of spending (Foundation Budget) that is funded by both local and state funding (Chapter 70 state education aid).

Spending by the majority of school districts has significantly exceeded the Foundation Budget, with the notable exception being many cities who have struggled to reach this threshold. In November 2019, the Massachusetts legislature passed new school finance legislation called the Student Opportunity Act, which is slated to provide \$1.5 billion new dollars over the subsequent seven fiscal years. Many communities, including Shrewsbury, will not see any change in funding from what we have been receiving in recent years. In FY25, Shrewsbury is projected to receive \$21,595,260 in Chapter 70 State Aid based upon the Student Opportunity Act provision of \$104 per student.

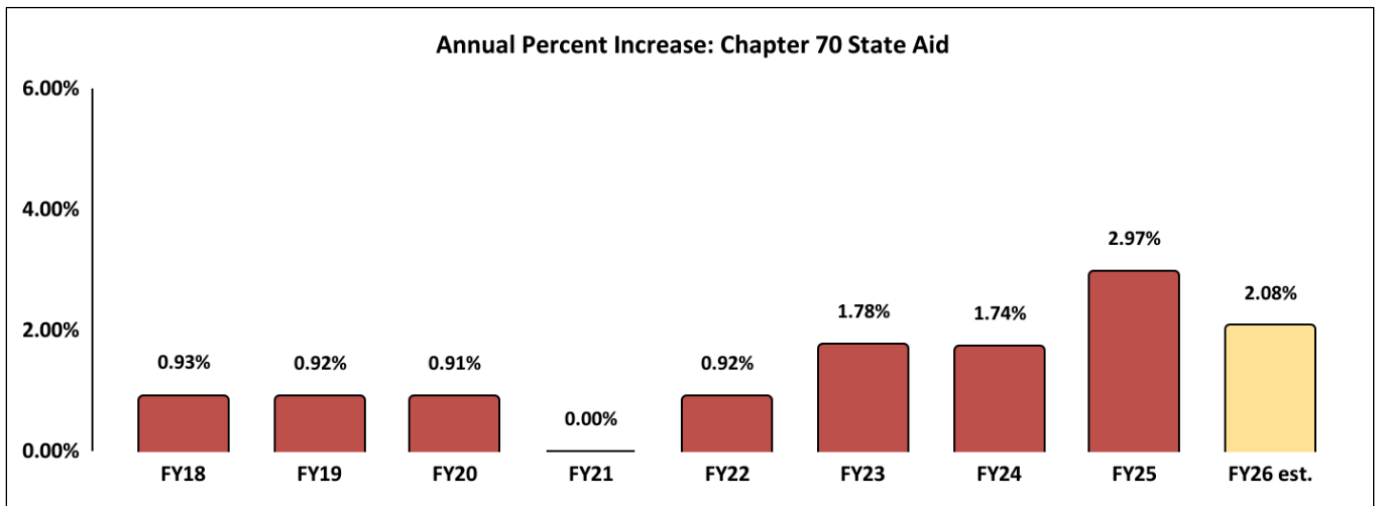
The graph below offers a close-up view of Chapter 70 state aid over the last eight years. Finally, it should be noted that all Chapter 70 Aid is considered a “General Fund” receipt and, when distributed by the State of Massachusetts, it goes directly into the town’s general fund.

Chapter 70 State Aid: Annual Increase since fiscal year 2018



The amount of Chapter 70 state aid Shrewsbury will receive for FY26 is projected to be \$22,044,885 based upon the \$75 per student in the Governor’s budget. This would be an increase of \$449,625 from the FY25 base aid, or 12% of the total School Department budget increase.

However, the final amount will be unknown until the state budget process is concluded and the recent House Ways and Means FY26 Budget recommendation is \$150 per student. If Shrewsbury received \$150 per student, the new increase in Chapter 70 State Aid would be \$899,250, or 24% of the total School Department budget increase.

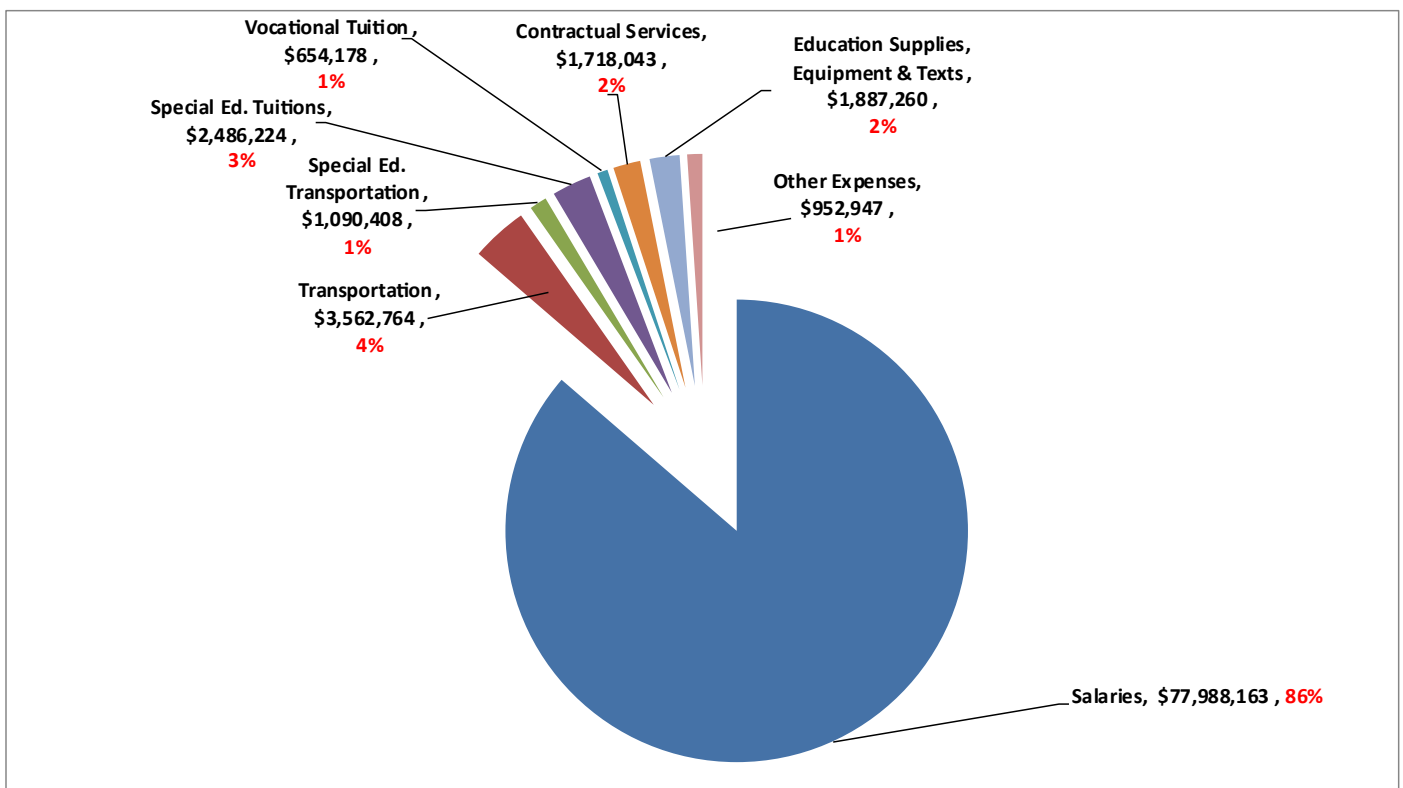


For more information on Massachusetts public school finance and the Chapter 70 Program click [here](#).

The Operating Budget-Town Appropriation

As noted earlier, the initial operating budget recommendation totals \$90,339,987. The operating budget submitted for approval at the Annual Town Meeting must receive the approval of the School Committee and a recommendation by the Town Finance Committee. Of course, the School Committee will continue its long tradition of working with the Finance Committee and Select Board to reach consensus on a final recommendation for an overall budget. Similarly, the superintendent will coordinate efforts and information with the town manager to this same end.

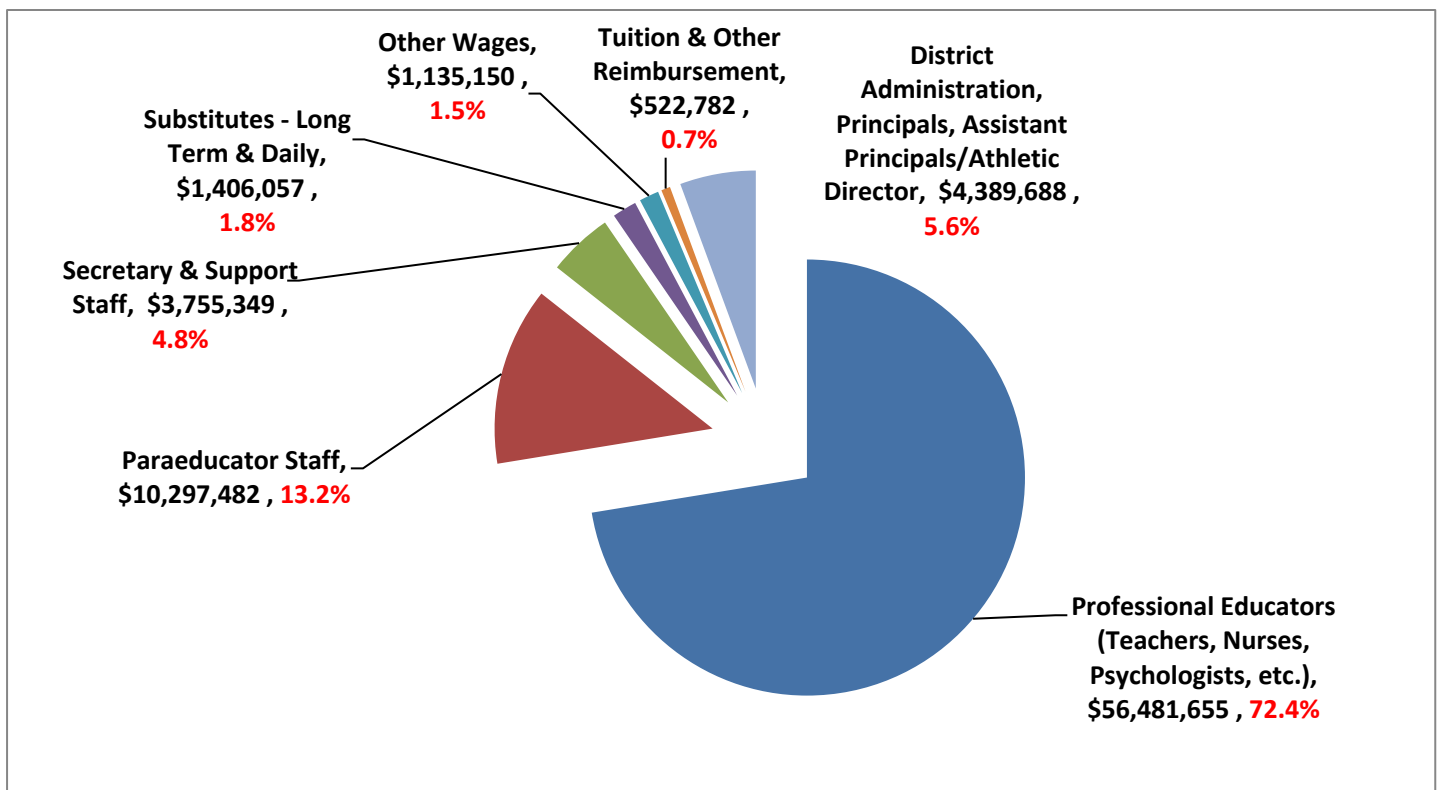
The following pie chart shows the allocation of the \$90.3M FY26 budget recommendation by major category of expense.



Public school systems are staff-intensive organizations with 86% of the total budget allocated towards staff salaries and wages. Two important factors to consider relative to this budget are that all employee insurance costs are budgeted and managed by the Town Treasurer's Office. In addition, with respect to pension costs, teachers and administrators are required to pay a portion of their salary [7-11% depending on year entering service] to the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System, so there are no contributions from the town budget. Other school employees may be pension-eligible based on hours worked per year and, if so, also pay a portion of their salary [9-10% depending on earnings] to the Town of Shrewsbury Retirement System. The employer [town] contribution to the Town of Shrewsbury Retirement System is budgeted each year contingent upon the funding schedule in the valuation report and the recommendation from the Retirement Board, and is subject to available resources.

A further breakdown of the \$77.9M Salaries Category by major employee group category can be viewed in the following pie chart.

FY26 Personnel Costs Budget



Town Appropriated Operating Budget

The following page provides a summary by major categories of expense for ease of understanding.

FY26 Budget Summary

School Committee Recap Sheet	Description	FY23 Actual	FY24 Actual	FY25 Approved	FY26 Proposed	FY25 v. FY26 Change	% Change FY25 to FY26
A1	Administrative Central Office, Principals & Unit B	\$4,364,182	\$4,137,682	\$4,239,473	\$4,389,688	\$150,215	3.54%
A2	Unit A (Teachers & Nurses)	\$48,665,856	\$50,634,771	\$53,547,477	\$56,481,655	\$2,934,178	5.48%
A3	Aides/ABA/Paraprofessionals	\$7,983,001	\$8,143,153	\$9,898,057	\$10,297,482	\$399,425	4.04%
A4	Non-Represented Personnel (Secretaries, IT, etc.)	\$3,078,678	\$3,226,613	\$3,620,464	\$3,755,349	\$134,885	3.73%
A5	Substitutes - Daily, Long Term & Sub Nurses	\$1,243,243	\$1,298,093	\$1,364,833	\$1,406,057	\$41,224	3.02%
A6	Other Wages	\$1,165,083	\$1,394,981	\$1,078,588	\$1,135,150	\$56,562	5.24%
A7	Employee Benefits	\$389,316	\$459,287	\$491,650	\$522,782	\$31,132	6.33%
B1	Regular Education & Voke Transportation	\$2,852,640	\$3,282,620	\$3,440,669	\$3,562,764	\$122,095	3.55%
B2	Special Education Transportation	\$1,171,422	\$1,216,612	\$1,258,537	\$1,090,408	-\$168,129	-13.36%
C1	Net Special Education Tuitions	\$2,856,934	\$3,154,394	\$2,825,902	\$2,486,224	-\$339,678	-12.02%
C2	Vocational Tuitions	\$1,088,040	\$926,243	\$500,886	\$654,178	\$153,292	30.60%
D1	Administrative Contracted Services	\$808,235	\$1,097,457	\$759,015	\$787,478	\$28,463	3.75%
D2	Educational Contracted Services	\$551,589	\$873,631	\$801,474	\$740,342	-\$61,132	-7.63%
D3	Textbooks/Curriculum Materials	\$333,660	\$422,002	\$240,146	\$439,937	\$199,791	83.20%
D4	Professional Development	\$285,406	\$209,330	\$183,348	\$190,224	\$6,876	3.75%
D5	Educational Supplies & Materials	\$533,844	\$583,286	\$679,762	\$685,253	\$5,491	0.81%
D6	Other Miscellaneous (i.e. Off. Supp., Ref. Mat.)	\$1,232,057	\$1,144,505	\$913,828	\$872,947	-\$40,881	-4.47%
D7	Equipment	\$637,366	\$801,459	\$721,410	\$762,070	\$40,660	5.64%
D8	Utilities - Telephone Exp.	\$78,417	\$80,503	\$50,000	\$80,000	\$30,000	60.00%
	Total Budget:	\$79,318,969	\$83,086,622	\$86,615,519	\$90,339,987	\$3,724,468	4.30%
			Total Recommended FY26 Budget	\$90,339,987		\$3,724,468	4.30%

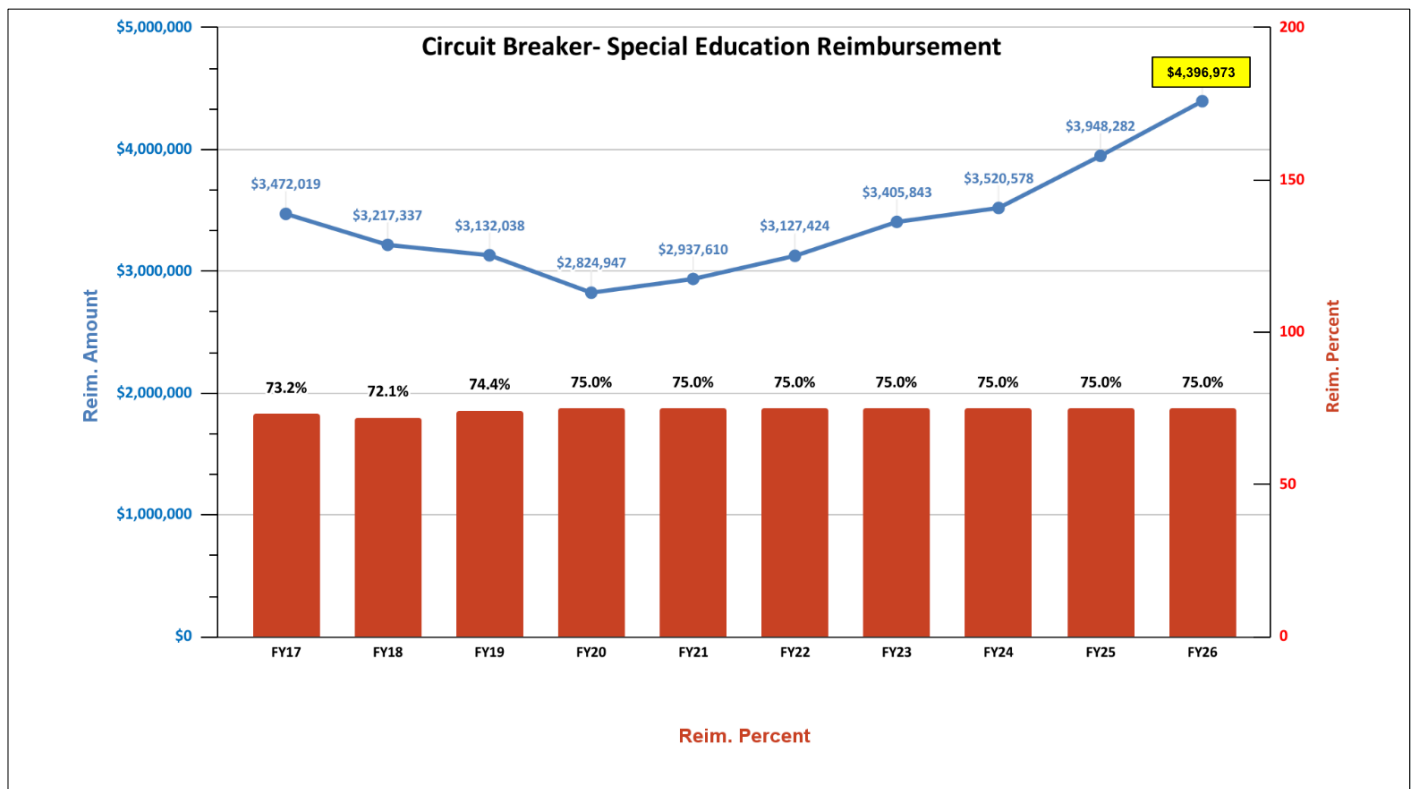
Special Education Circuit Breaker Reimbursement

The state special education reimbursement program, known as the Circuit Breaker program, was started in FY04 to provide additional state funding to districts for high-cost special education students. The threshold for eligibility is tied to four times the state average foundation budget per pupil as calculated under the chapter 70 program, with the state paying “up to 75 percent of the costs above that threshold, subject to appropriation.” For example, in FY24 let's say the state average foundation budget per pupil is \$14,263. If a special education student costs a district \$95,000, the district's eligible reimbursement for that student would be $(\$95,000 - (4 * \$14,263)) * .75 = \$28,461$.

For children placed in a school district outside their home town by the Department of Transitional Assistance or the Department of Children and Families, and for children who have no parents or guardians in the commonwealth, the reimbursement is 100 percent above the threshold rather than 75 percent.

Circuit Breaker reimbursements are for the district's prior year's expenses. Each summer, districts submit claim forms to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education [MA DESE] listing the types and amounts of special education instructional services provided to each student during the previous fiscal year. Administrative and overhead costs are not reimbursable. Standard rates for each type of service are established annually by MA DESE based on statewide surveys and are used to calculate the reimbursable cost for each student; this simplifies the claim process and minimizes the documentation that needs to be submitted. For students attending private 766 schools, the eligible cost for reimbursement is based on the approved tuition rate set by the state's Operational Services Division.

Payments are made to districts on a quarterly basis. Because the program is subject to appropriation, the first quarter's payments are usually calculated using an interim reimbursement rate of less than 75 percent. After all the claim forms have been received and reviewed, and the state verifies that there are sufficient appropriations to pay all claims, the reimbursements are re-calculated and a final reimbursement rate is calculated. The following graph depicts a ten-year history of both the Circuit Breaker Program dollar reimbursement and the reimbursement rate.



Circuit Breaker claims are audited by MA DESE and adjustments are made to future payments in the event of disallowed costs. The single largest reason for costs being disallowed is that the services have not been clearly documented on the student's IEP. Only services that are required by the IEP are eligible for reimbursement.

Circuit Breaker reimbursements are deposited into a district's special education reimbursement account. These funds may be expended by the school committee in the year received or in the following fiscal year for any special education-related purposes, without further appropriation. As with all special revenues, the district must make a projection on the upcoming fiscal year's estimated amount. For FY26, we have estimated \$4.4 million in Circuit Breaker reimbursement which is used to offset or lower our appropriations budget for out-of-district tuition costs.

Circuit Breaker is a vital funding source of the budget. The expenses are high and may change significantly from year to year. In addition, Circuit Breaker reimbursements are one year in arrears of expenses and the state historically not always met its 75% commitment.

For more information on the Special Education Circuit Breaker Program, click [here](#).

Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Summary Use of Circuit Breaker Funding

The state [Circuit Breaker program](#) is a key source of funding for public school districts. The Circuit Breaker program reimburses districts for a certain amount of eligible special education costs incurred in the prior year. The eligible costs are those that are above a level set in a formula, and when fully funded by the legislature 75% of those eligible costs are reimbursed the following year. These funds must be used in the year received or the following year, and districts may carry forward a maximum of that year's reimbursement to the following year.

Because these funds may be carried forward, our school district uses the Circuit Breaker fund reserve as an overall protective reserve of funds for the entire district's budget. For fiscal year 2026, the School Committee has targeted to end the year with 50.88% of the allowable amount to carry forward to the next fiscal year, a total of \$2,237,099. This represents 2.5% of the appropriated School Department budget in FY26.

In this same vein, the district has been able to take positive budget variances in the appropriated School Department budget and apply them to the next fiscal year using Circuit Breaker as the mechanism. This is accomplished by using those funds from categories where the district is below budget to pay for that current year's special education tuition expenses instead of planned Circuit Breaker funds, allowing more Circuit Breaker funds to be carried forward to the next fiscal year to offset that year's appropriated budget. As noted above, a total carry over is limited to the amount of Circuit Breaker funding received in the previous fiscal year.

Updated Out-of-District Special Education Cost Projection and Use of Circuit Breaker State Funding:

1. Total Out-of-District Tuition Cost Projection for FY26	\$7,554,646
2. Estimate for Circuit Breaker Reserve at End of FY25	\$2,700,759
3. Estimate/Actual Additional Carry Forward from Overall FY25 Positive Budget Variance	\$262,789
4. Estimate for Circuit Breaker Funds To Be Received in FY26 (Reimbursement for FY25 Costs)	\$4,396,973
5. Total Estimated Circuit Breaker Funds Available in FY26 (Lines 2 + 3 + 4)	\$7,360,521
6. Estimate for Planned Use of Circuit Breaker Funds in FY26 for Out-of-District Tuitions (Circuit Breaker Offset)	(\$5,123,422)
7. Budgeted Use of Town Appropriated Funds in FY26 to Pay Special Education Tuitions	(\$2,431,224)
8. Total Funds Budgeted to Pay Out-of-District Tuition (Line 6 Circuit Breaker Offset + Line 7 Town Appropriated Funds)	(\$7,554,646)
9. Estimate for Circuit Breaker Reserve Balance at End of FY26 (Line 5 less Line 6)	\$2,237,099

Federal and State Grants

Like all Massachusetts school districts, Shrewsbury receives a number of federal and state entitlement grants. These are typically allocated towards a targeted group of students to support their educational programs and fulfill mandated services. The following pages the charts display a five-year history of grant funding, demonstrating the ebbs and flows of certain grant-funded programs.

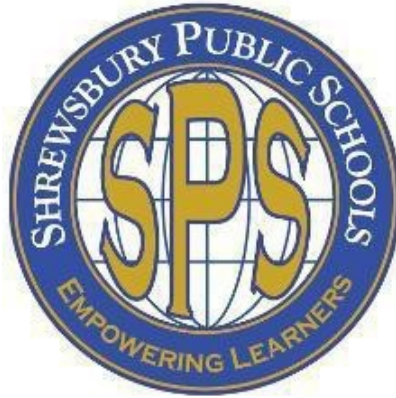
Grant	Entitlement [E] or Competitive [C]	Fund Code	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	1 Year Difference	5 Year Difference	Federal [F] or State [S]
COVID Relief School Opening Program Grant	E	102	\$1,390,050	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-\$1,390,050	F
School Admin EBT REIM Grant	E	103	\$0	\$5,526	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	S
Supplemental Funding for Pooled Testing Grant	E	108	\$73,433	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-\$73,433	F
CARES ACT (ESSER) Emergency Relief Fund Grant	E	113	\$162,060	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-\$162,060	F
CARES ACT (ESSER II) Emergency Relief Fund Grant	E	115	\$557,280	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-\$557,280	F
CARES ACT (ESSER III) Emergency Relief Fund Grant	E	119	\$0	\$1,229,980	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	F
COVID Relief/Prevention Grant	E	127	\$218,950	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-\$218,950	S
Teacher Quality Grant (Title IIA)	E	140	\$79,201	\$81,964	\$79,830	\$84,896	\$83,720	(\$1,176)	\$4,519	F
High Quality Instructional Materials Purchase Grant	C	165	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$250,000	\$0	(\$250,000)	\$0	F
English Language Acquisition (Title III)	E	180	\$29,983	\$27,298	\$28,292	\$38,097	\$49,399	\$11,302	\$19,416	F
Proficiency-Based Outcomes in Languages Other than English	C	189	\$0	\$0	\$9,460	\$0	\$11,600	\$11,600	\$11,600	S
Special Support Earmark Grant (COVID)	E	192	\$25,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-\$25,000	S
Special Support Earmark III	Earmark	197	\$0	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	S
Genocide Education Grant	C	215A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$19,320	\$19,320	\$19,320	S
Special Education Entitlement Grant- IDEA	E	240	\$1,633,419	\$1,634,681	\$1,674,809	\$1,792,238	\$1,765,688	(\$26,550)	\$132,269	F
ARP - IDEA	E	252	\$0	\$390,954	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	F
Significant Disproportionality in Special Education Improvement Grant	E	258	\$5,645	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-\$5,645	F
Early Childhood-Special Education	E	262	\$35,236	\$35,617	\$38,041	\$39,303	\$39,523	\$220	\$4,287	F
ARP - IDEA- Early Childhood	E	264	\$0	\$36,429	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	F
Special Education Program Improvement Grant	E	274	\$32,597	\$0	\$0	\$38,702	\$20,000	(\$18,702)	-\$12,597	F
Early Childhood-Special Education Entitlement	E	298	\$4,359	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-\$4,359	F
ARP - Homeless Children & Youth II	E	302	\$0	\$6,372	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	F
Education for Disadvantaged Children (Title I) *	E	305	\$172,933	\$184,552	\$186,584	\$195,945	\$210,117	\$14,172	\$37,184	F
Student Support & Acad Enrichment	E	309	\$14,349	\$11,764	\$13,205	\$13,673	\$14,208	\$535	-\$141	F
ARP - Homeless ER Support**	E	344	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$51,000	\$0	(\$51,000)	\$0	F
Multilingual Newcomer and Homeless Support Grant	C	348	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	S

Grant	Entitlement [E] or Competitive [C]	Fund Code	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	1 Year Difference	5 Year Difference	Federal [F] or State [S]
Innovation Career Pathways Planning Grant	C	419	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$74,900	\$74,900	\$74,900	S
DESE Chronic Absenteeism State Set Aside Grant	E	425	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,000	\$0	(\$10,000)	\$0	S
Innovation Career Pathways Grant	C	436	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$25,000	\$0	(\$25,000)	\$0	S
High School Voter Registration Grant	C	575	\$3,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-\$3,000	S
MyCAP Development & Implementation Grant	E	598	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,492	\$0	(\$7,492)	\$0	S
Supporting Students Social Emotional Learning, Behavioral & Mental Health, and Wellness	C	613/311	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$22,855	\$0	(\$22,855)	\$0	S
Safer Schools & Communities Initiative	C	629	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-\$50,000	S
Instructional Leadership Institute Participant Stipends Grant	Targeted	654	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,000	\$0	(\$3,000)	\$0	F
Comprehensive School Health Services & Workforce Investment Program	Targeted	929	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	S
Mask Reim C.22 of Acts 2022	E	930	\$0	\$0	\$7,139	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	S
Expanded Homeless Shelter funding Program ***	E	997	\$0	\$0	\$102,648	\$571,860	\$532,212	(\$39,648)	\$532,212	S
Totals			\$4,587,495	\$3,895,137	\$2,340,008	\$3,244,061	\$2,945,687	-\$298,374	-\$1,641,808	
								-10%	-36%	

* Fluctuations in annual Title 1 funding [State Code 305] are due to changes in Shrewsbury's "students in poverty level" that go over or under the 5% threshold. When we are at 5% or greater, we receive an additional allocation of funding. When we fall below 5%, we do not receive the additional funding.

** DESE provides \$1,000 per student housed in an emergency shelter for initial district costs

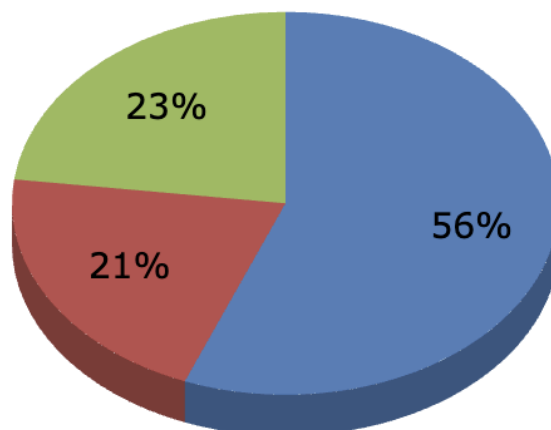
*** Quarterly reporting enrollment is required to DESE - funding received is \$104 per student per day



INFORMATIONAL SECTION

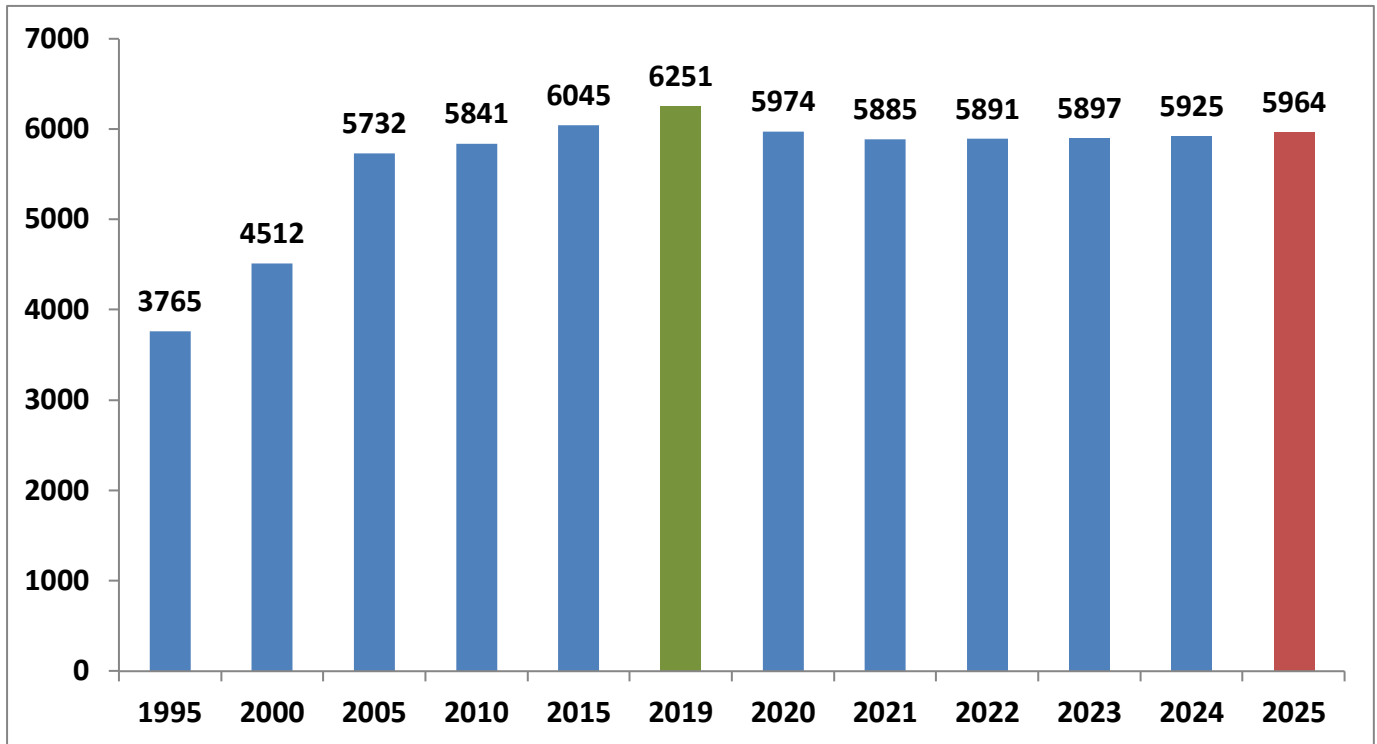
Class of 2024 Future Plans Students with Free/Reduced Lunch

● 4 Year Colleges ● 2 Year Colleges ● Employment, Other



ENROLLMENT AND CLASS SIZE

As previously noted, school district enrollment has grown significantly over the past three decades. Preschool through grade 12 enrollment rose by 66% from 1995 to a high in 2019, an increase of 2,503 students. Overall enrollment in Shrewsbury has leveled post-COVID with 5,964 students as of October 1, 2024.

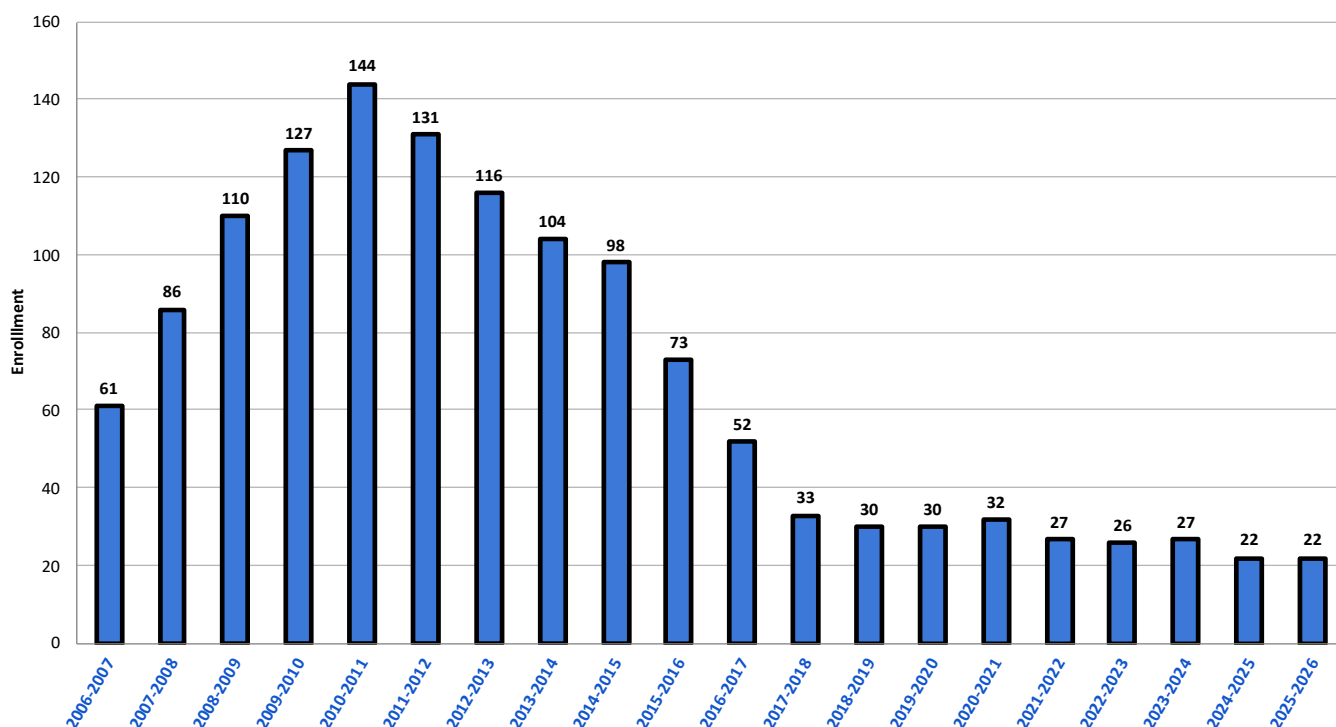


The district and community responded to this growth with new school buildings, the addition of modular classrooms, leasing space, and the renovation of existing facilities. During this time period, public policy has evolved with respect to public education and parents now have more options in selecting a public education for their child.

Charter School Enrollment

The number of charter schools has also leveled along with participation in the School Choice Program. The following chart shows the historical enrollment of Shrewsbury school-age children attending charter schools. Most charter school students from Shrewsbury enrolled either at the Advanced Math and Science Academy in Marlboro or Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School in Worcester.

Charter School Enrollment History



Interestingly, charter school enrollments have been decreasing since the 2014-2015 school year. This is advantageous from a financial perspective, as the tuition charge per student is roughly the district's average cost per pupil. The district has been making a concerted effort to retain students, as their continued enrollment in the district comes with little marginal cost and avoids the average cost per pupil charge.

For more information on the Charter School Program, enrollment, and finances, click [here](#).

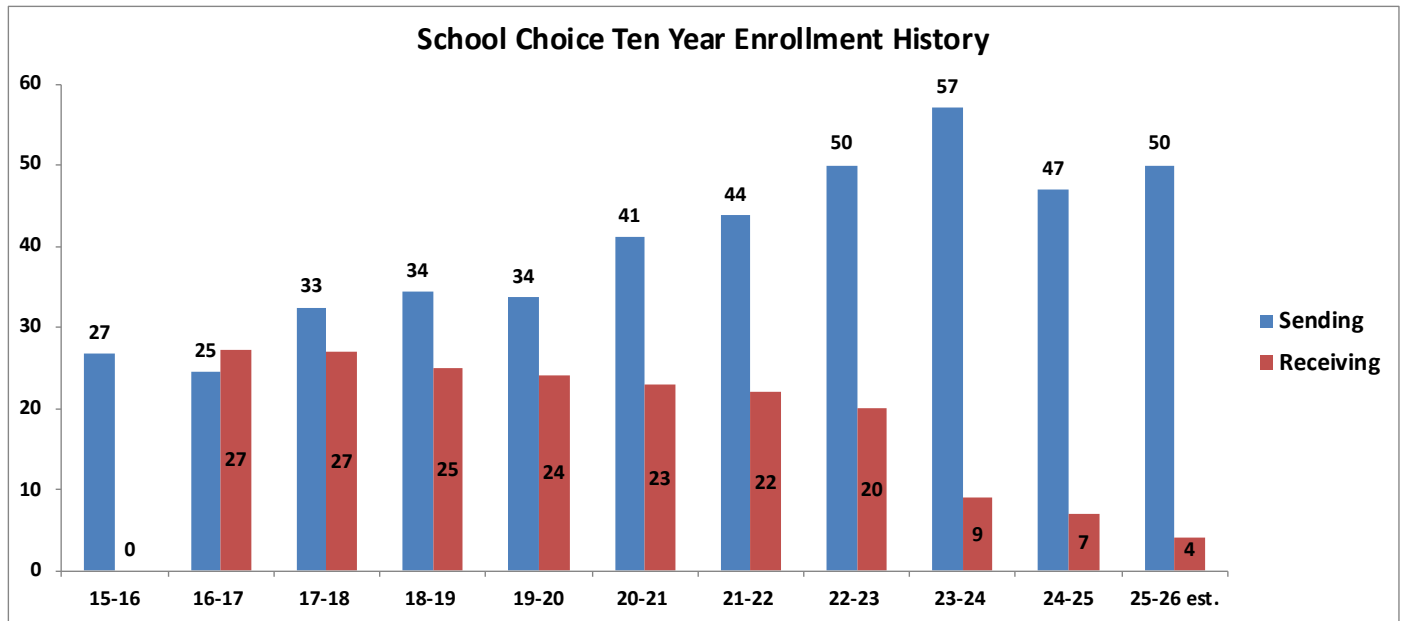
School Choice Enrollment

School Choice is another option for both parents and the school district. The following chart depicts both the students who have opted to attend another public school that accepts school choice enrollments [blue bar], and also the students that our school district opted to enroll beginning in the 2010-2011 school year. It is important to note that, in the 2010-2011 school year, the school committee voted to open up to 20 seats for grade 9 students. Once those students enroll via a lottery process, they are entitled to remain in the district until graduation. Of the cohort of 19 students who enrolled for grade 9, 13 remained through graduation. [One student was retained to repeat grade 12 during the 2014-2015 school year.]

The decision to allow students from other communities to enroll in the district is reviewed annually. Per state regulation, all districts must allow school choice students to enroll in their district, unless they vote annually to not allow School Choice enrollment. Alternatively, the district can decide to enroll a specific number of students by grade level. Again, once a student is enrolled, they are entitled to remain until graduation.

The FY17 budget process was an opportunity for the school committee to reconsider this topic. As part of the overall FY17 plan, and in an effort to create a new recurring revenue, the School Committee voted to accept up to 30 School Choice students in the 2016-2017 school year in the following grade levels: Grade 2=9 students, Grade 4=6 students, Grade 5=5 students, Grade 6=10 students. As of this writing, the district has 7 student School Choice students enrolled, as seen in the chart below.

For each student we enroll, the district will receive \$5,000 in tuition that goes into the School Choice Revolving Fund and is available for use by the school committee to offset teacher salary costs. As part of the FY26 financial plan, the district has budgeted for \$20,000 in revenue, expecting the 4 students will persist into the next school year.



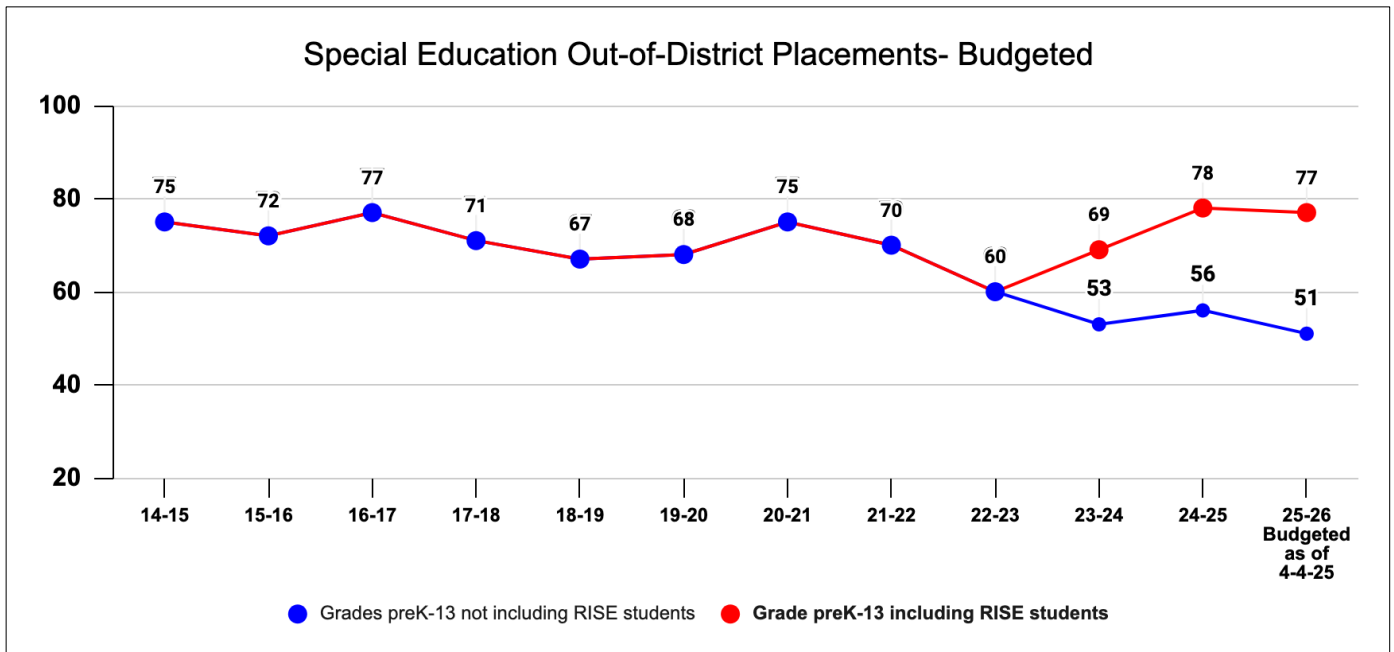
For more information on the School Choice Program, enrollment, and finances, click [here](#).

Special Education Out of District Enrollment

Due to the complex educational, behavioral, and/or medical needs of some children, they cannot be educated in the district. As a result of their Individualized Education Plan, these students are enrolled in out-of-district special education schools. The following chart depicts these budgeted enrollments.

Predicting which students will be out-placed and the associated budget resources needed is often a difficult process and has wide variations from the budget.

Special Education Out of District Placements – Budgeted

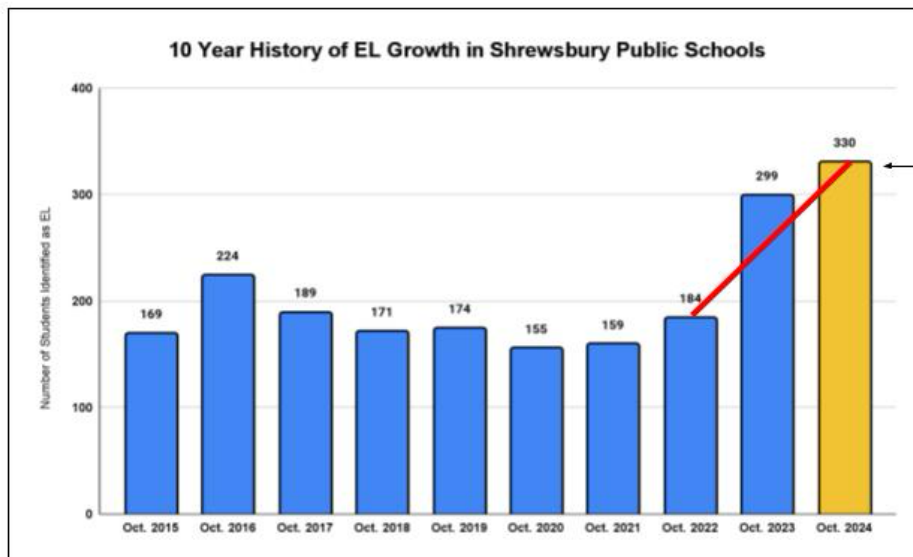


English Learner Enrollment

The district continues to see significant growth in our English Learner enrollment. Since October 2022, the K-12 English Learner (EL) population has increased by 79% with 330 EL students as of October 2024. While many new students from the emergency homeless shelter require EL services, they represent only about 5% of the 146 student increase. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education requires specific programming for EL students based on their level of English language proficiency. The following chart shows the 10-year history of EL growth in Shrewsbury Public Schools.



K-12 EL Population District-Wide



79% increase in EL population since Oct. 2022

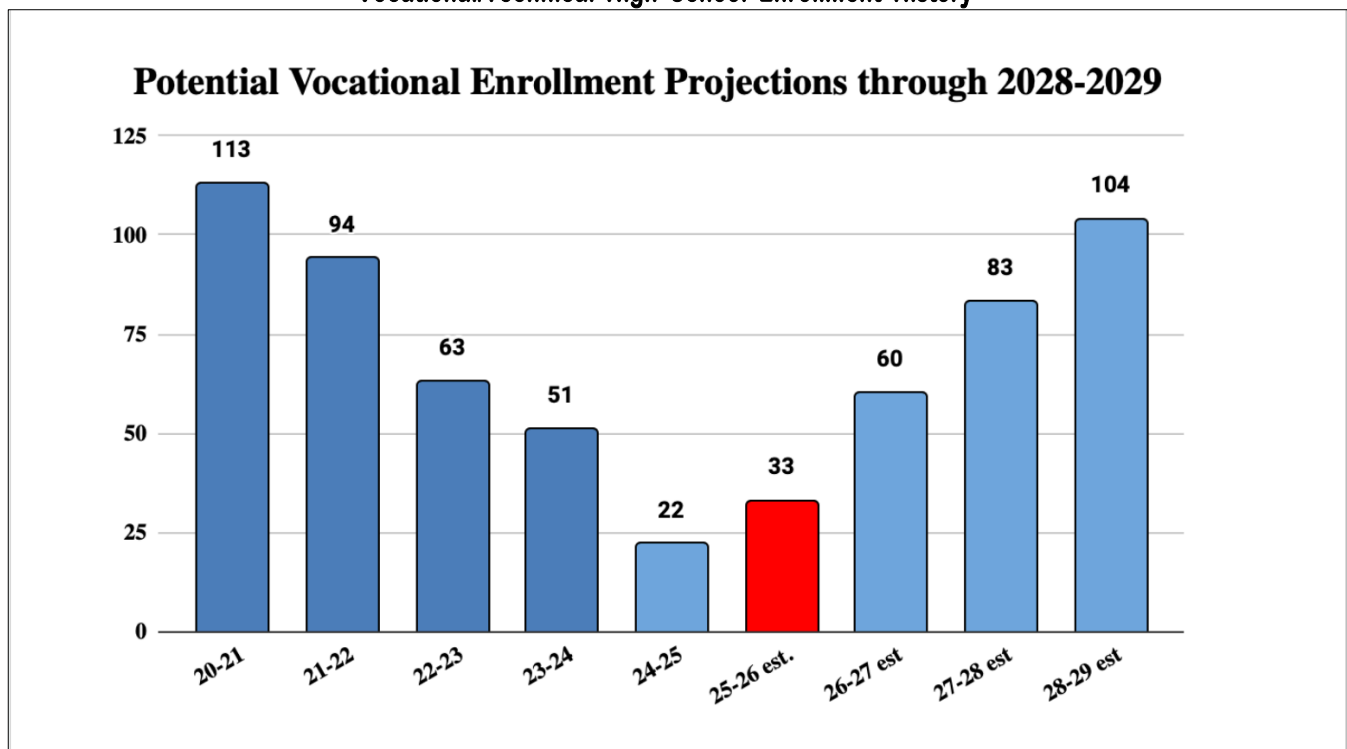
There is an increase of 185 EL students since October 2022. The Emergency Homeless EL population represents 5% of the increase (Oct. 2022-present)

Vocational/Technical High School Enrollment

Under state law, students have a right to apply to attend a vocational technical high school program that provides “Chapter 74” curriculum experiences that are most intensive than what a comprehensive high school provides. In recent years, Shrewsbury students have lost access to Assabet Valley Technical High School due to a state policy change. Beginning in FY26, up to 25 Shrewsbury students can now enroll in the vocational program at Leicester High School. For FY26, the Leicester vocational tuition per student is budgeted at \$15,060. For FY26, the Assabet vocational tuition per student is budgeted at \$18,707. In addition, one student is attending Norfolk Agricultural High School. The district is required to provide transportation to and from Shrewsbury to vocational schools. The following chart shows the recent enrollment by grade and projected enrollment for the 2025-2026 school year [FY26].

	School Year											
	Actuals										Current	Budget
	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
Grade 9	35	37	18	28	33	25	35	12	8	1	2	22
Grade 10	37	25	31	20	26	33	22	35	12	2	3	3
Grade 11	25	35	24	28	18	26	31	22	35	15	2	5
Grade 12	37	24	35	22	25	18	25	31	22	30	15	3
Total	134	121	108	98	102	102	113	100	77	48	22	33

Vocational/Technical High School Enrollment History



Per state law and for budgetary reasons, current eighth grade students must apply no later than April 1, 2024 to be considered by the Shrewsbury Superintendent of Schools for approval for vocational enrollment in the 2025-2026 school year. Additionally, students must meet all application and admissions requirements of the vocational/ technical high school to which they apply.

Enrollment Projections

The district conducts an annual review of enrollment projections for two main purposes. First, the enrollment projections provide data for class size planning for the upcoming school and fiscal year. Secondly, the projections are reviewed for capital space planning purposes.

Each year the district receives a projection from the Town Manager's Office and a second independent projection from the New England School Development Council [NESDEC]. Also, the district conducted an in-depth 10-year population and enrollment forecast through McKibben Demographic Research in March of 2022. Each of these are enclosed to show both enrollment history and projection by grade level. A comparison of these projections, along with a School Department Projection is summarized in the chart below. Please note these figures exclude the Preschool grade.

Projection formula for FY26					
Grade	TM	NESDEC	McKibben		Projection
K	292	274	342		343
1	452	410	358		410
2	430	409	372		431
3	419	426	382		426
4	416	437	407		437
5	409	428	380		428
6	468	469	469		469
7	472	483	472		483
8	444	431	488		444
9	462	467	512		467
10	445	455	481		455
11	486	477	477		486
12	497	491	482		497
					5776

Class Size Projections: 2025-2026

After the district receives the projections, the administration makes school-based class size enrollment projections. These projections are then measured against the school committee for class size by grade level. At this point in the budget process, the FY26 plan includes sufficient classroom teachers to keep within all class size guidelines. The April 2025 school-based projection can be seen in the following charts.

Grade Level	Proj. 2025-26	Beal			Coolidge			Floral Street			Paton			Spring St.		
		Students	Clrms/Sections	Avg.	Students	Clrms/Sections	Avg.	Students	Clrms/Sections	Avg.	Students	Clrms/Sections	Avg.	Students	Clrms/Sections	Avg.
Kindergarten	379	130	7	19	52	3	17	84	5	17	56	3	19	57	3	19
Grade 1	419	137	7	20	61	3	20	100	5	20	57	3	19	64	3	21
Grade 2	424	139	7	20	64	3	21	108	6	18	48	3	16	65	3	22
Grade 3	433	134	6	22	64	3	21	112	5	22	59	3	20	64	3	21
Grade 4	438	129	6	22	65	3	22	122	6	20	61	3	20	61	3	20
		<i>School Avg./Class</i> 20.3			<i>School Avg./Class</i> 20.4			<i>School Avg./Class</i> 19.5			<i>School Avg./Class</i> 18.7			<i>School Avg./Class</i> 20.7		
Totals	2093	669	33		306	15		526	27		281	15		311	15	

Note: averages above in green are below School Committee guidelines and averages in black are within guidelines

		Sherwood Middle				Oak Middle				High School				Preschool Programs					
Grade Level	Proj. 2025-26																		
		Students	Sections	Avg.		Students	Sections	Avg.		Students	Sections	Avg.		Program	Students	Clsrms/Sections	Avg.		
Grade 5	435	435	20	22										15 Parker Road	138	12 half day sessions across 6 classrooms	12		
Grade 6	469	469	20	23															
Grade 7	483					483	20	24						Little Colonials (SHS)	24	2 half day sessions across 1 classroom	12		
Grade 8	444					444	20	22											
Grade 9	467									467	NA	NA		Beal Preschool	30	2 full day sessions across 2 classrooms	15		
Grade 10	455									455	NA	NA							
Grade 11	486									486	NA	NA							
Grade 12	497									497	NA	NA		Total Preschool	192	16 sections	12		
		School Avg./Class		23		School Avg./Class		23		School Avg./Class		NA							
Totals	3736	904	40			927	40			1905	NA	NA							

School Committee class size guidelines:

Grade K is 17-19

Grades 1-2 is 20-22

Grades 3-8 is 22-24

Projected class sizes used are based upon the Town Manager's Projection and the NESDEC Projection. When projections are not equal; the higher-class size amount is used for planning purposes.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND OUTCOMES

The following pages highlight just a few of the student performance measurements using standardized tests. It should be evident that Shrewsbury's year-to-year performance and comparison to peer school districts is very strong. District educators and our students are imbued with the value and objective of continuous improvement.

Shrewsbury students continue to perform well in comparison to state averages and we continue to focus on ways to continue to improve, especially for students performing below expected standards.

There are a multitude of standardized test results that we receive each year and results are reported to individual families for their children. Further, a complete report is provided to the School Committee each year and can be found on the district's website along with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website under "District Profiles." Shown on the next two pages is just one sample of results.

MCAS 2024 District Results

Trends in English Language Arts

As shown below, it's clear that the disruption caused by the pandemic continues to impact achievement scores in English Language Arts, especially for students in key transition years.

Shrewsbury's scores have been consistently higher than state averages, and that trend held true for 2024. Finally, it's important to remember that aggregate scores for most grade spans in Shrewsbury were comparable with other districts that have similar demographics.

Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations

Grade and Subject	Gr. 3	Gr. 4	Gr. 5	Gr. 6	Gr. 7	Gr. 8	Gr. 10
Shrewsbury % E / M 2019	81%	76%	71%	73%	62%	72%	79%
State Results 2019	56%	52%	52%	53%	48%	52%	61%
Shrewsbury % E / M 2022	64%	60%	59%	61%	58%	66%	78%
State Results 2022	44%	38%	41%	41%	41%	42%	58%
Shrewsbury % E / M 2023	64%	58%	61%	64%	51%	62%	77%
State Results 2023	44%	39%	44%	42%	41%	44%	58%
Shrewsbury % E / M 2024	60%	51%	50%	62%	49%	61%	79%
State Results 2024	42%	36%	38%	40%	36%	43%	57%

Trends in Mathematics

In Shrewsbury and comparison districts, signs of recovery are best seen in this subject area. For most grade spans, achievement scores in Math for 2024 were similar to the previous year's results, with scores for students in Grade 10 continuing to remain consistently higher than the state average.

Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations

Grade and Subject	Gr 3	Gr 4	Gr 5	Gr 6	Gr 7	Gr 8	Gr. 10
Shrewsbury % E / M 2019	75%	79%	73%	69%	63%	68%	80%
State Results 2019	49%	50%	48%	52%	48%	46%	59%
Shrewsbury % E / M 2022	68%	70%	50%	70%	56%	65%	74%
State Results 2022	41%	42%	36%	42%	38%	36%	49%
Shrewsbury % E / M 2023	67%	73%	61%	67%	59%	64%	75%
State Results 2023	41%	45%	41%	41%	39%	37%	50%
Shrewsbury % E / M 2024	69%	71%	53%	67%	59%	66%	77%
State Results 2024	45%	46%	40%	40%	38%	39%	48%

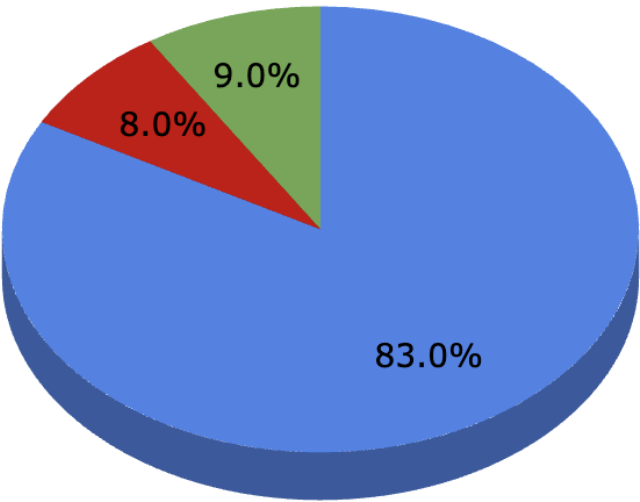
For more information on state testing results, click [here](#).

How are High School Students and Graduates Doing?

Over the following pages, we highlight student performance in a number of ways and, as you will see our students are doing very well. A full 95% of our graduates from the Class of 2024 went on to further their formal education at four or two-year institutions. For the past five years, over 83% of our graduates have opted to pursue a bachelor’s degree by attending a four-year college or university.

Class of 2024 Future Plans

- 4-Year Colleges
- 2-Year Colleges
- Military, Undecided, Employment



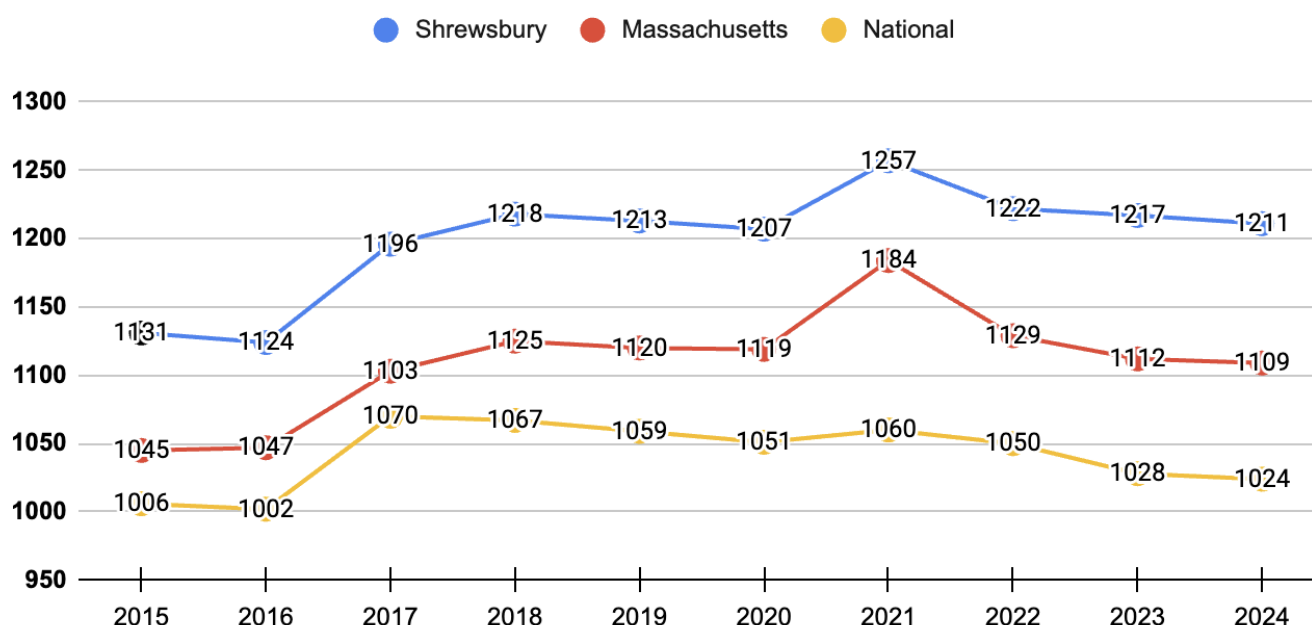
Future Plans by Gender			
	Male	Female	Total
4-Year Colleges	160	185	345
2-Year Colleges	18	17	35
Career Education	8	2	10
Employment	11	6	17
Military	6	1	7
Other Plans	3	2	5
Totals	206	213	419

Scholastic Aptitude Test [SAT] Results

College Board Testing Administration and Score Reporting Changes

- Beginning in 2021, the SAT no longer offered optional exams including the SAT Essay and SAT Subject tests.
- Recent surveys of the college admissions indicate approximately 80% of colleges and universities are “test-optional” and nearly 100 are “test-blind”.
- The 2024 SAT program results shows that 1.97 million students in the high school class of 2024 took the SAT at least once, up from 1.9 million in the class of 2023.

SAT: Evidenced Based Reading & Writing and Math Combined Score (1600 Score)

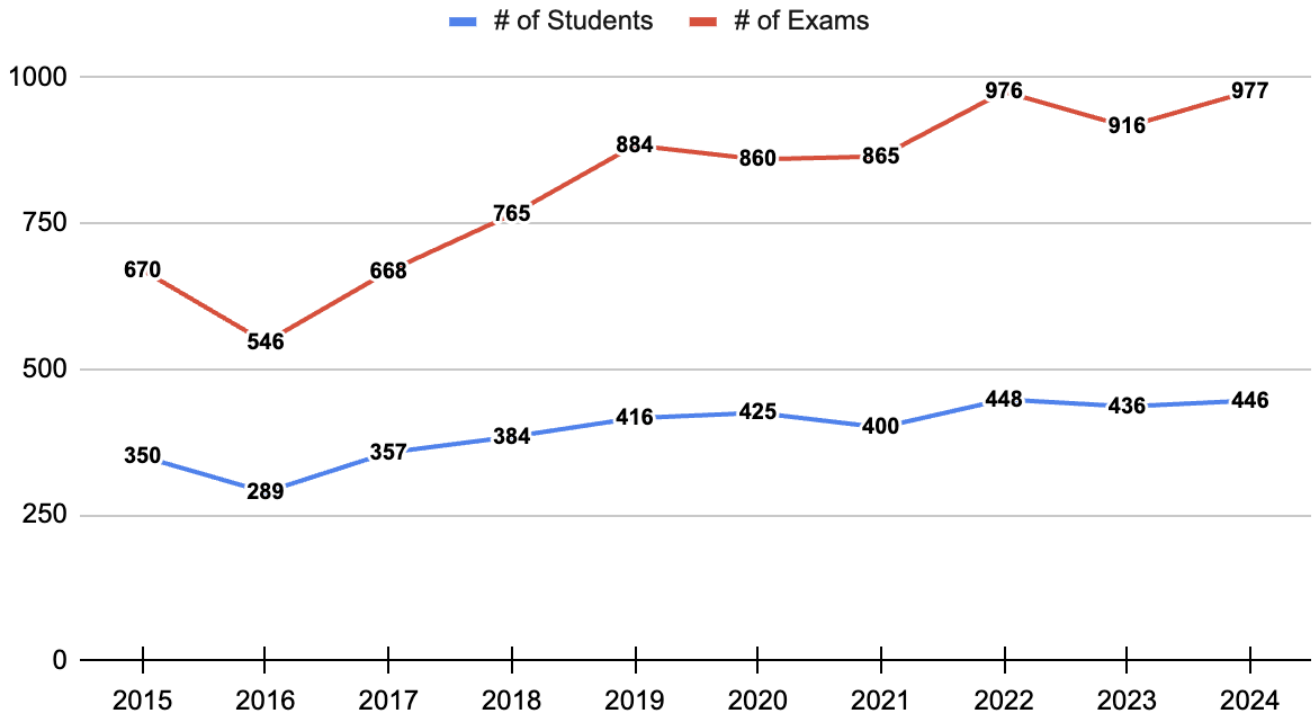


Advanced Placement Participation and Performance Results

The Advanced Placement (AP) Program consists of a series of college-level courses and exams for secondary school students. Satisfactory completion of an AP Exam makes it possible for a student to earn college credit or advanced standing in college prior to arrival on the college campus. AP Exams are rigorous, multiple-component tests that are administered each May.

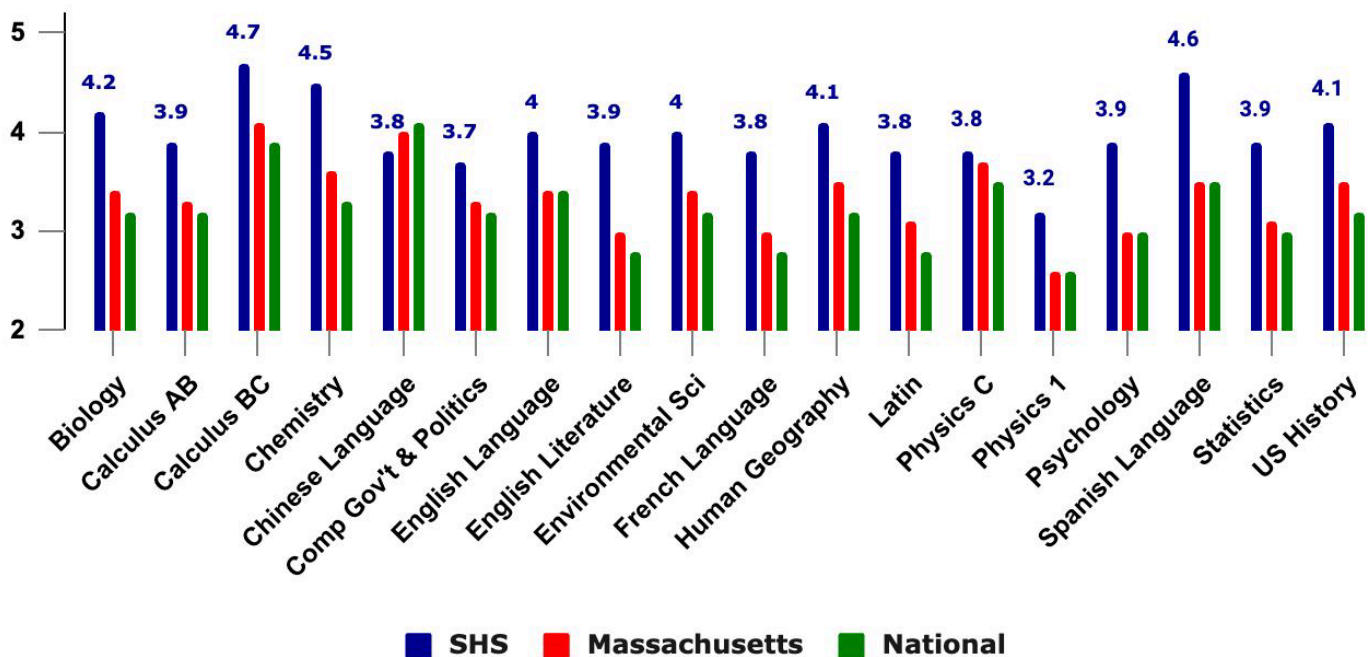
Of the 419 students in the Class of 2024, 240 students (57% of the class) took at least one AP Exam, out of 446 total SHS students who took an exam. Overall, 977 exams were administered to participating SHS students in 2024.

Advanced Placement Participation Rates

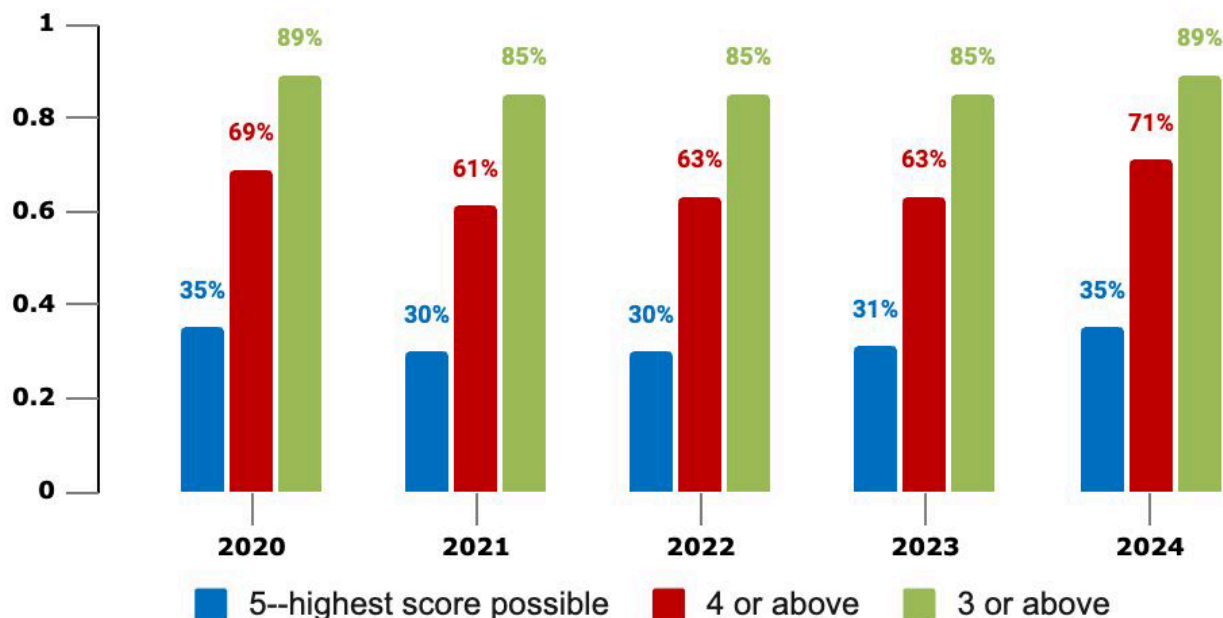


The following two charts also capture a comprehensive overview of our student performance by subject matter from 2015-2024 and over a ten-year period in the aggregate.

AP Average Scores: Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, & National



Overall AP Exam Scores Shrewsbury High School



College and University Enrollments: Class of 2024

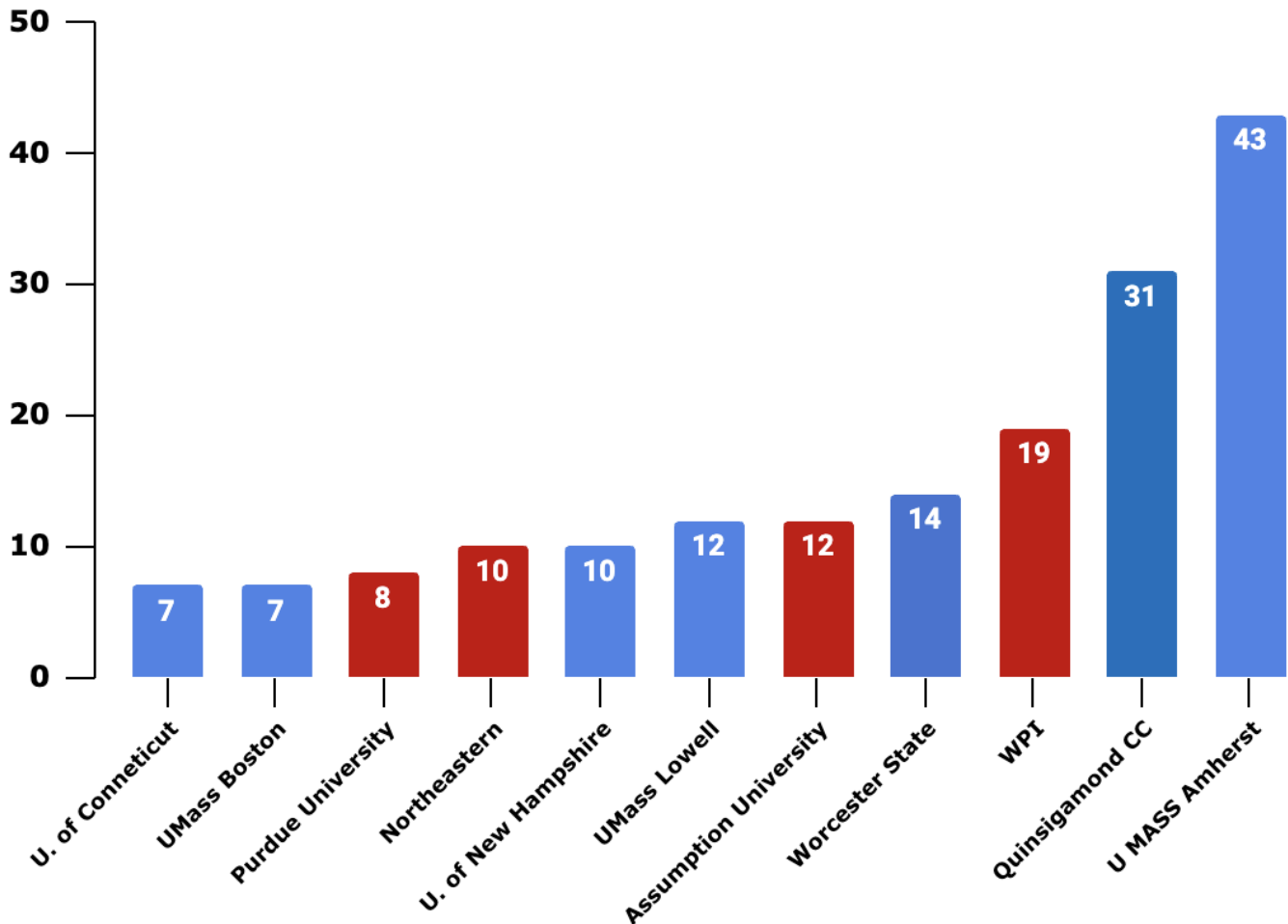
Top 4 Most Popular Schools Enrolled—Private

1. Worcester Polytechnic Institute —19
2. Assumption University —12
3. Northeastern University —10
4. Purdue University — 8

Top 6 Most Popular Schools Enrolled—Public

1. University of Massachusetts, Amherst —43
2. Quinsigamond Community College —31
3. Worcester State University —14
4. University of Massachusetts, Lowell —12
5. University of New Hampshire —10
6. University of Connecticut —7
7. University of Massachusetts, Boston —7

Top Private and Public Enrollments

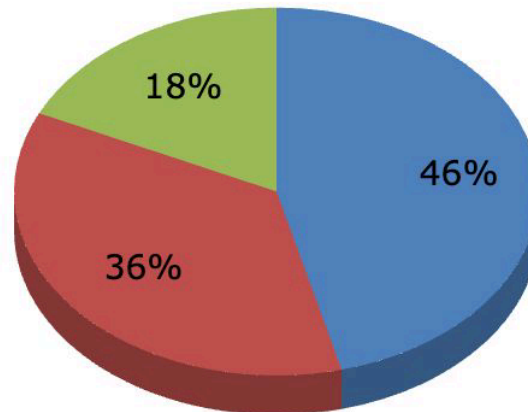


Students with Special Education Services

- Thirty-five students (8%) in the Class of 2024 received special education services. Twenty-eight students of the thirty-five receiving special education services (8%) in the Class of 2024 received a diploma. Meanwhile, 7 students deferred their diplomas to a later date or received a certificate of attendance.
- The 28 students who received a diploma:
 - o 46% attended 4-year colleges (13)
 - o 36% attended 2-year colleges & technical schools (10)
 - o 18% entered the employment field, military, or took a gap year (5)

Class of 2024 Future Plans Students with Special Education Services

● 4 Year Colleges ● 2 Year Colleges ● Employment, Other



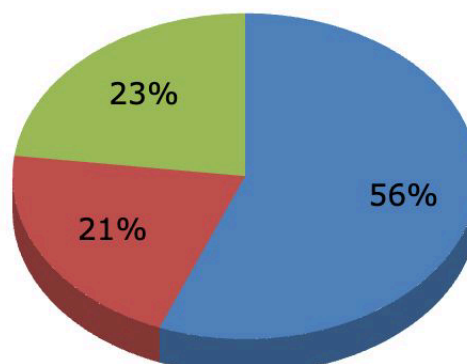
Class of 2024 Students with Free/Reduced Lunch Status

- Sixty-seven students (14%) in the Class of 2024 received free or reduced lunch. Of these sixty-seven students: (this does not include students who received a certificate of attainment)
 - 56% attended 4-year colleges
 - 21% attended 2-year colleges & technical schools
 - 23% entered the employment field, military, or took a GAP year

*This data was compiled by the Food Service Director

Class of 2024 Future Plans Students with Free/Reduced Lunch

● 4 Year Colleges ● 2 Year Colleges ● Employment, Other



Summary Comments

The information, charts, and graphs included in this section focus primarily on high school students and, especially, graduating seniors. Clearly, the success of any graduate is a function of their PreK-12 education. To that end, all Shrewsbury educators across the district are responsible for contributing to the aforementioned success story of student performance on standardized testing and college admissions.

It is equally important to note that our students enjoy success outside the classroom in a wide variety of co- curricular programs, from athletics to music and performing arts, speech and debate, and a variety of clubs, community service, or work experiences. These programs are a vital part of student growth and success. As a district, we need to maintain these programs as much as we do our core academic programs. We will continue to do this with a combination of funding from our operating budget and student fees.

FINANCIAL INDICATORS

This section of our budget document includes a variety of municipal and school financial indicators. Individually and collectively, the indicators point to cost-efficient operations and a comparatively low to moderate tax responsibility to the residents.

Average Single-Family Tax Bill: FY15-FY24

The average single-family dwelling tax bill is an often-used benchmark to measure and compare the affordability and value proposition of a community. While some may question certain school or municipal costs or characterize them as too high, the average tax bill is an “equalizer” at the end of the discussion. Shrewsbury has long been recognized as a community with a comparatively low tax burden and this has been a driver for continued residential growth.

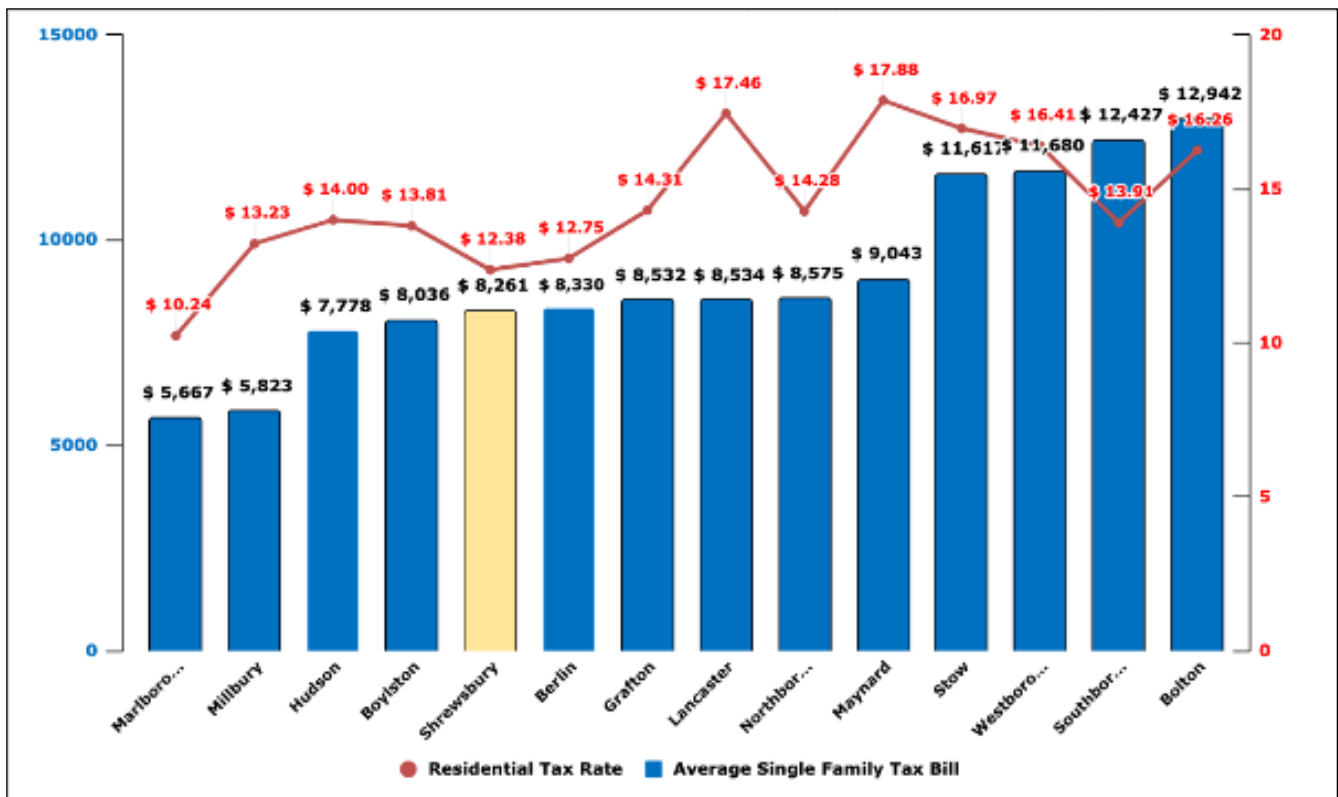
The following chart depicts a ten-year history of single-family assessed values, tax rates, and tax

Fiscal Year	Single Family Assessed Values	Single Family Parcels	Single Family Average Value	Residential Tax Rate	Average Single Family Tax Bill	State Rank - High to Low*	# of Towns Included
2015	\$ 3,518,931,500	9,235	\$ 381,043	\$ 13.20	\$ 5,030	123	338
2016	\$ 3,691,375,869	9,267	\$ 398,336	\$ 13.00	\$ 5,178	128	338
2017	\$ 3,821,907,838	9,298	\$ 411,046	\$ 12.83	\$ 5,274	133	338
2018	\$ 4,094,807,258	9,323	\$ 439,216	\$ 12.66	\$ 5,560	131	338
2019	\$ 4,238,824,160	9,350	\$ 453,350	\$ 12.57	\$ 5,699	134	338
2020	\$ 4,481,636,842	9,364	\$ 478,603	\$ 12.47	\$ 5,968	125	338
2021	\$ 4,518,016,942	9,377	\$ 481,819	\$ 13.19	\$ 6,355	112	338
2022	\$ 4,912,463,542	9,389	\$ 523,215	\$ 14.11	\$ 7,383	94	338
2023	\$ 5,588,987,085	9,405	\$ 594,257	\$ 13.12	\$ 7,797	89	338
2024	\$ 6,286,112,436	9,420	\$ 667,316	\$ 12.38	\$ 8,261	90	338

* Massachusetts Department of Revenue

FY24 Property Tax Rate and Average Single Family Home Tax Bill

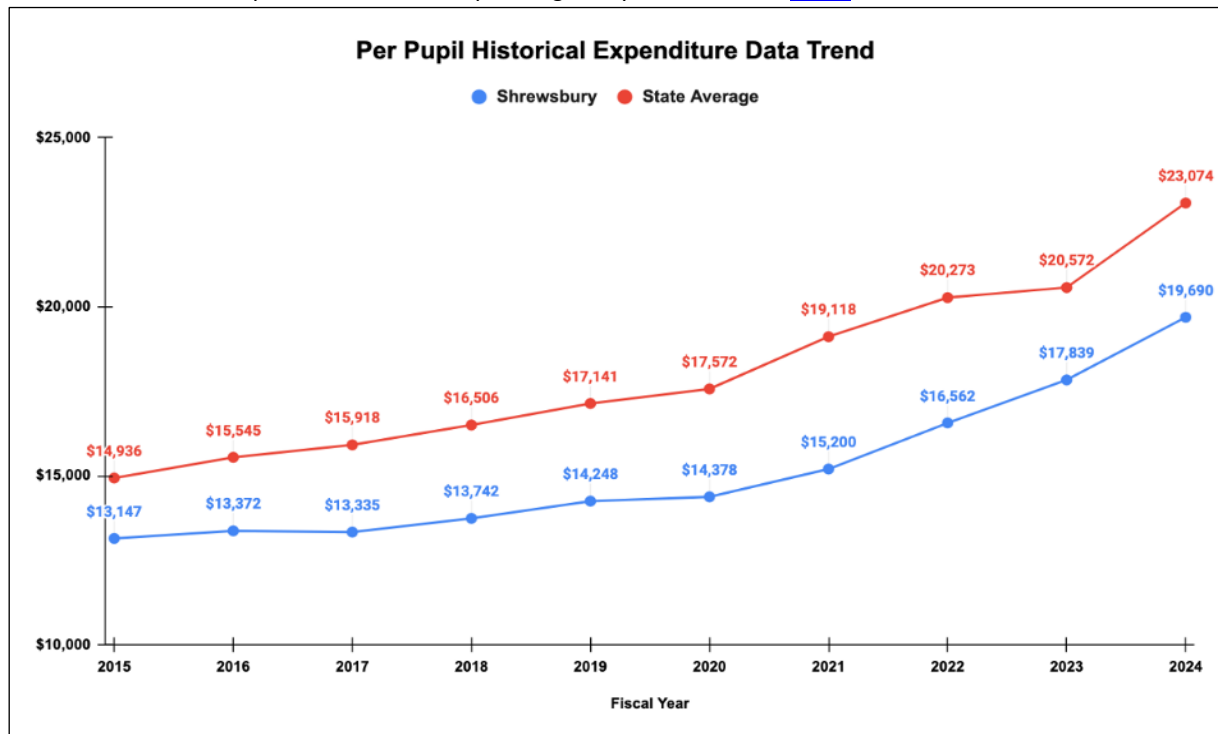
The next chart displays both the FY24 average single-family tax bill and the residential tax rate per \$1,000 of value. Listed in the chart are all the communities that belong to Assabet Valley Collaborative. Amongst this group, Shrewsbury ranks in the bottom half of the comparison group in average tax bill and has the second lowest residential tax rate at \$12.38.



*Massachusetts Department of Revenue FY24 data.

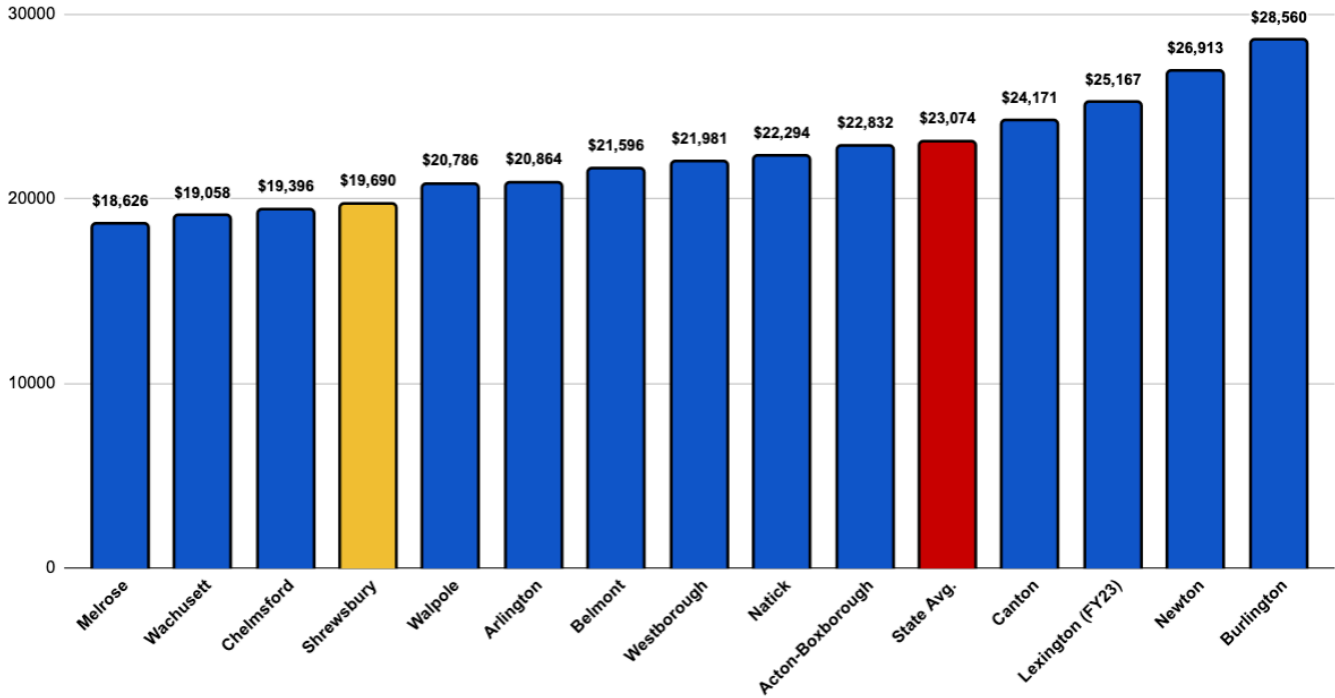
Average Cost Per Pupil

The average cost per pupil is also an often-used comparative statistic to measure relative spending across school districts. The following charts use this statistic in a variety of ways to compare Shrewsbury over time and amongst different peer groups. In all three comparisons, Shrewsbury's average cost per pupil consistently ranks below the statewide average and near the bottom when comparing amongst communities of similar size or members of the Assabet Valley Collaborative. For more information on public school state spending comparisons, click [here](#).



*Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

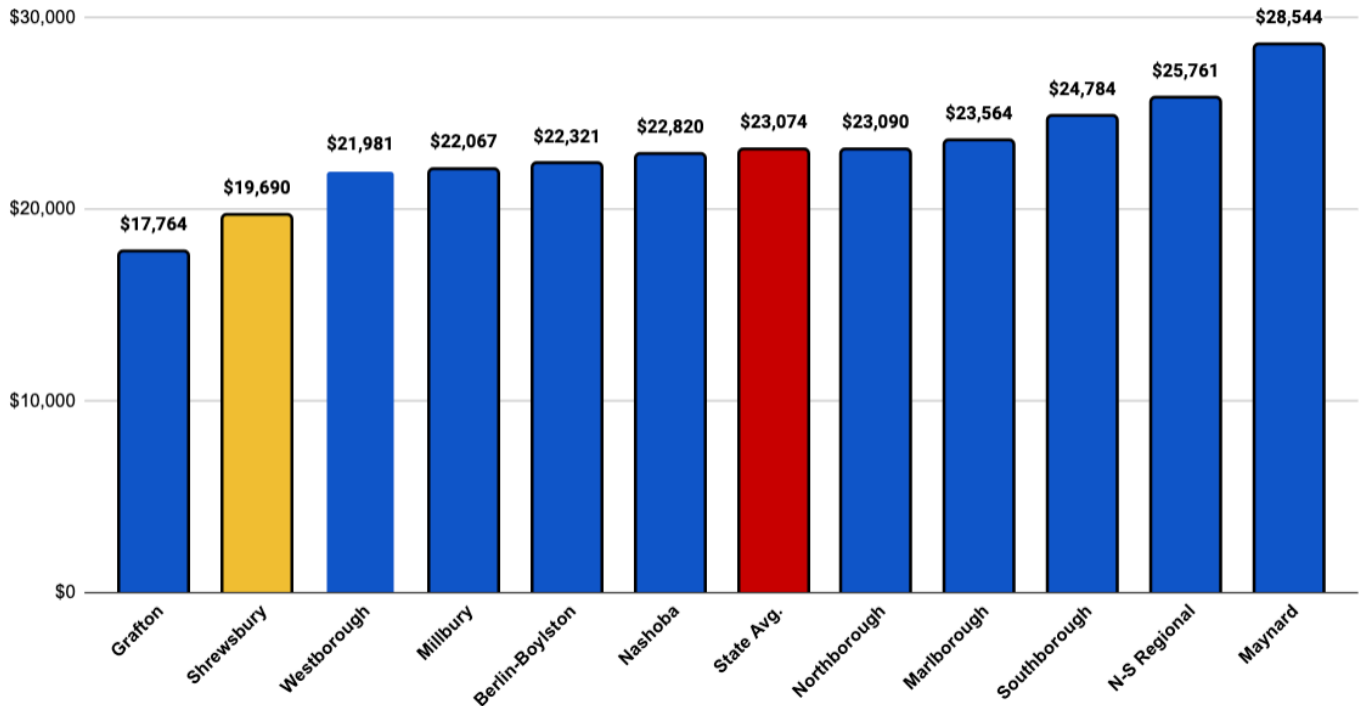
Per Pupil Expenditure- Shrewsbury vs. DART Districts



Per Pupil Expenditure- Shrewsbury DART Districts (FY24 per pupil expenditure data updated April 2025)

The following chart provides a comparison of the total per pupil expenditure with our local Assabet Valley Collaborative School Districts per Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Per Pupil Expenditure- Assabet Valley Collaborative Districts



Per Pupil Expenditure- Assabet Valley Collaborative Districts (FY24 per pupil expenditure data updated April 2025)

Teacher Salaries

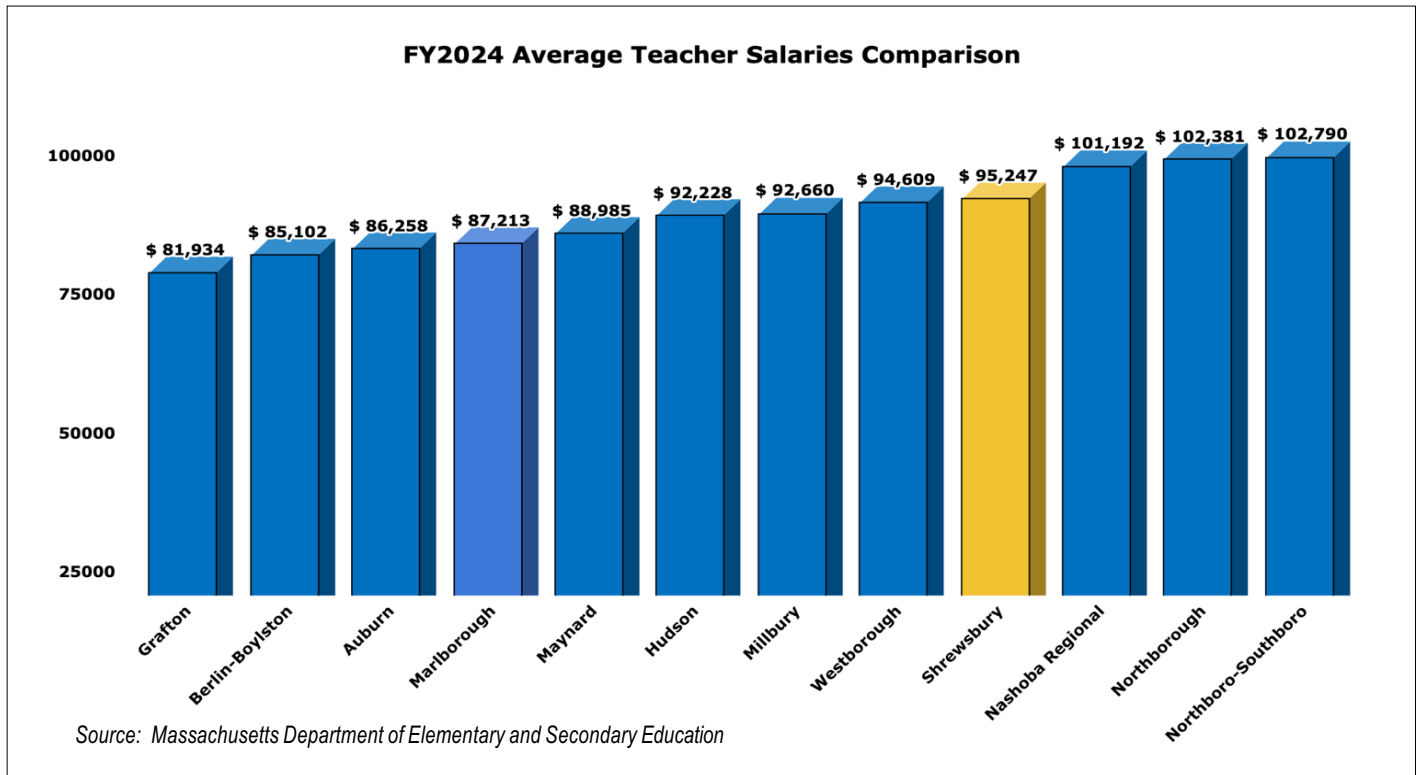
It is the philosophy of the School Committee to provide a fair and regionally competitive salary and benefits package to attract and retain high-quality educators. At the same time, the School Committee is cognizant of the fiscal limitations and pressures that exist in our community. The chart below shows the FY25 salary grid for members of the Shrewsbury Education Association.

The current collective bargaining agreement covers fiscal years 2023-2025. It is important to note that the School Committee and the Shrewsbury Educators Association (Bargaining Unit A) have a tentative collective bargaining agreement covering fiscal years 2026-2028.

	FY25 [+2.25%]						
Step	B	B-15	M	M-15	M-30	M-45	M-60
1	\$ 54,995	\$ 57,559	\$ 60,991	\$ 63,265	\$ 65,748	\$ 68,573	\$ 70,502
2	\$ 56,855	\$ 59,234	\$ 63,058	\$ 65,334	\$ 67,813	\$ 70,090	\$ 72,567
3	\$ 58,716	\$ 61,198	\$ 64,301	\$ 67,195	\$ 69,675	\$ 72,156	\$ 74,222
4	\$ 60,578	\$ 63,058	\$ 66,367	\$ 69,054	\$ 71,537	\$ 73,809	\$ 75,878
5	\$ 62,439	\$ 64,917	\$ 68,227	\$ 70,710	\$ 73,189	\$ 75,671	\$ 77,738
6	\$ 65,126	\$ 67,813	\$ 71,122	\$ 73,602	\$ 76,083	\$ 78,360	\$ 80,631
7	\$ 69,881	\$ 71,947	\$ 75,463	\$ 77,407	\$ 80,426	\$ 82,907	\$ 84,974
8	\$ 72,567	\$ 74,844	\$ 77,945	\$ 81,047	\$ 83,527	\$ 85,593	\$ 87,868
9	\$ 75,257	\$ 77,530	\$ 81,252	\$ 83,734	\$ 86,215	\$ 88,490	\$ 90,556
10	\$ 80,220	\$ 82,287	\$ 86,627	\$ 88,695	\$ 90,970	\$ 92,625	\$ 95,105
11	\$ 85,452	\$ 87,725	\$ 91,447	\$ 93,723	\$ 96,410	\$ 98,684	\$ 101,373
12	\$ 89,604	\$ 92,137	\$ 95,282	\$ 98,462	\$ 102,048	\$ 103,315	\$ 105,844
13	\$ 94,694	\$ 97,226	\$ 100,371	\$ 103,553	\$ 107,138	\$ 108,403	\$ 110,934

Year of service, educational credential, and the district salary schedule all impact the average teacher salary statistic.

As shown in the FY2024 Average Teacher Salary graph below, the average (or mean) teacher salary was \$95,247. The median teacher salary is \$98,163.



NOTES

