

QUESTIONS FOR SHAWSHEEN FROM THE BELMONT WORKING GROUP

(1) Academic, Social-Emotional, and Student Life Factors

The material on the ShawsheenTech.org site does a nice job of explaining the school's curriculum and admission policy. Regarding the academic program at Shawsheen:

(1a) Is there any additional information about the Shawsheen curriculum that you would like us to review?

We note that about 24% of Shawsheen students have IEPs, and that in recent years, about 50% of the Belmont students attending Minuteman had IEPs.

(1b) What are the key Special Education components at Shawsheen? How similar (and different) are they to Special Education services available at local in-district schools like Belmont High School?

In addition to the academic program, our Working Group is interested in the social-emotional learning and student life factors. We recognize that Shawsheen offers an alternative high school experience for Belmont students, and in particular to the highly competitive Belmont High School experience.

(1c) Can you help us understand both the differences and the similarities, from a student and a family perspective, between the Shawsheen High School experience and a typical home-town high school experience? In particular, what kind(s) of students are more likely to benefit from the Shawsheen experience?

Shawsheen Tech is about twice as far from Belmont as Minuteman, and its member communities have less frequent interaction and engagement with Belmont as its neighboring communities of Lexington, Arlington, and Watertown.

(1d) What is your assessment of the extent to which this geographical gap would impact the overall experience of students and families from Belmont who would attend Shawsheen? Do you have any suggestions about how to mitigate any challenges?

(2) Space and Enrollment Factors

In recent years, the incoming class of Belmont students at Minuteman has ranged between 4 and 10 students. We understand that Shawsheen has consistently been fully enrolled, often with a waiting list.

(2a) Assuming that Belmont applicants scored competitively with respect to Shawsheen's admission criteria, what assurances, if any, can Shawsheen offer Belmont that its students could expect to enroll at Shawsheen?

(3) Financial Considerations

In 2016 the Belmont Warrant Committee reviewed financial data for FY14 available through the DESE web site for 13 regional vocational technical schools, including Minuteman. We include this review here, and note the five observations made.

(3a) Do you have any comments on this data, or have other information about Shawsheen's operating costs?

The Working Group's starting assumption is that Belmont students would enroll at Shawsheen as non-member students, and the tuition would be set by the DESE commissioner. (For reference, the posted FY18 non-member tuition charge for Shawsheen is \$16,728.)

(3b) What other charges, such as Special Education charges, should Belmont anticipate if it were to send students to Shawsheen as non-member students?

(4) Long Term Strategic and Sustainability Factors

If Belmont were to rely on Shawsheen as a preferred vocational school, the Working Group imagines that the Belmont School Committee would be interested in strengthening its partnership with Shawsheen.

(4a) Are there current examples of collaborations around professional development or course development between Shawsheen and its member districts that have relevance for Belmont?

New developments in education technologies will create new opportunities for collaboration.

(4b) Is there any consideration of developing on-line courses? If so, what would that entail? Are there other initiatives for new uses of technology in the works?

Career and Technical Education has received considerable attention at the state and federal government levels, as well as within industry.

(4c) What is Shawsheen's current and intended future profile and participation in public-private partnership efforts to improve CTE?