

REPORT OF SOUTH SHORE REGIONAL VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Growth and Success...Demands and Expectations...Providing the Resources

Perhaps more so that at any time in its near 45 year history, South Shore Regional School District finds itself at a multi-faceted crossroads. Providing quality career and technical education opportunities continues to be the hallmark of the school's mission, one that has been supported generously by the communities that make up the eight-town district. It is however, a rapidly changing economic and job-related marketplace, one still filled with challenges and potential, yet ever-growing in its demands and expectations. Whether a graduate immediately enters the workforce or continues his or her education right after high school, one factor remains constant, the changes to be encountered. Updating skills regularly is now a mandate for all, continuing one's education as a life-long pursuit, a primary job requirement, in nearly every field. One of our major tasks is to keep the skills being taught as current as possible.

South Shore continues to flourish, 2006-2007 witnessing a second consecutive school year with maximum enrollment on campus. What continues to increase is the incredibly high and growing percentage of the school's population exclusively from within the District. In just five years, South Shore's "in-district" enrollment has risen by more than 20% (over one hundred students). While a tremendously positive indication of the District's popularity and performance, these are worrisome signs as well. Chapter 70 State Aid has grown substantially, allowing for an amazing overall reduction, over those same five years, in the total assessments paid by the town members.

South Shore has consciously attempted to keep assessments low, along with low overall budget increases from year to year. But in meeting the industry accountability, equipment and facility expectations faced by all schools and uniquely by vocational schools, resources are thinning.

Your regional career and technical education school is the oldest of its kind in the Commonwealth. There are twenty-six such schools statewide. While we are proud of the facility and improvements made, the near future will target some needed major capital projects, including an entirely new roof system. We, along with many of the local school districts will be working with the State's School Building Authority in hopes of obtaining financial support to match that of the towns.

South Shore's recent history is filled with highlights. Both academic and technical performances by Vo-Tech students continue to shine. MCAS results are among the best by vocational students across the state. It is anticipated that the Class of 2007 will once again attain nearly 100% success in reaching the mandatory competency determination levels. Overall scores are rising and more students are achieving at the proficient and advanced criteria thresholds. Competitions and employers continue to applaud our students' technical achievements, with national recognition this past year in Automotive and Precision Machining. More and more programs are aspiring to the state and federal goals of third party credentialing, namely certifications, approvals and licenses upon graduation.

Athletics and other student activities at South Shore strive to grow as well. The 2005-2006 sports seasons saw a record number of Viking teams qualify for post-season play. For 2006-2007, a first time ever JV program in girls' basketball and a pilot wrestling effort spearhead by students and an energetic parent are new to the competition landscape. Robotics is being added to an ever-expanding electronics and engineering curriculum, and has already produced an active extra-curricular club that is bracing for its first competitions.

Previously mentioned was the need to stay current with today's equipment and technology. South Shore has done its best to keep up, but expenses in this effort are extraordinary, particularly compared to a typical high school. Recent improvements in equipment have been realized in Auto Body, Graphic Arts, Drafting, Culinary Arts, Cosmetology, Welding and Automotive, as well as our science labs and wireless computer set-ups. Hopefully, much more is still to come.

It would be wrong not to mention the important contributions being made by South Shore's Parents' Association, the Vocational Advisory Committees, School Council and the Continuing Education Program, which in addition to providing a wide range of career and self-improvement opportunities, helps support the total school program.

Currently 107 students of the total enrollment of 592 are from Abington. June 2006 celebrated the graduation of the following students from the town — Michael Aimola, Brendan Barillot, Christopher Brown, Nicholas Farish, Brenden Fisher, Brian Fisher, Christopher Fisher, James Hain, Derek Herrmann, Jennifer Holman, Matthew Kearney, Mark Langley, Brian McCormack, Sean McIver, David Newell, Julie Noonan, Sean Rockwood, and Thomas Ruble.

As each year passes, South Shore Vocational Technical High School continues to grow and expand the options available to both the young people who attend, and the communities served. We want to thank the towns for their ongoing support, and hope that we too have responded favorably to your needs. Only when we work together have we shown the ability to overcome obstacles and to provide the best possible career and technical learning environment for our customers, the students from your town and of all the district communities.

Respectfully submitted,

Lenwood E. Thompson
Abington Representative
South Shore Regional
School District Committee