

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, February 24, 2016

Mr. John Samia, Chairperson; Ms. Sandy Fryc, Vice Chairperson; Ms. Erin Canzano, Secretary; Dr. B. Dale Magee, and Mr. Jon Wensky; Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of the Shrewsbury Public Schools; Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent; Ms. Barbara Malone, Director of Human Resources; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations

The meeting was convened at 7:00 pm by Mr. Samia.

I. Public Participation

None

II. Chairperson's Report and Members' Reports

None

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Sawyer announced that the SHS Quiz Team would be competing against Chelmsford High School on the WGBH Quiz Show on Channel 2 on February 27 at 6PM. He invited the public to tune in and wished them luck. He also mentioned the SHS Speech and Debate team have had several recent successes. He noted they once again placed first in a competition at Milton Academy and they would be hosting their annual Mardi Gras tournament at SHS on February 27. He next announced the annual spring musical, "Urinetown", would be presented on March 3, 4 & 5 and tickets were on sale through the high school website, and that the annual competition play, "Getting Out" would also be presented to the public at Oak on February 25, 2016, before going to the state competition. Then, Dr. Sawyer recognized the following athletic accomplishments: SHS student, Class of 2016, Erin Kean, who took the silver medal for the breast stroke, where she also holds the SHS record; and the ski team, boys and girls hockey teams, gymnastics, cheerleading, indoor track, and boys basketball teams would be heading to various district and state play offs. He wished them all good luck. Finally, he congratulated the students who participated in the Black History Month presentation, which he indicated was a compelling set of performances.

V. Curriculum

None

VI. Policy

None

VII. Finance and Operations

A. FY17 Curriculum-Technology Budget: Report

Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Mr. Brian L'Heureux, Director of Information Technology and Ms. Shawna Powers, Director of Instructional Technology and Media Services presented a fiscal year 2017 curriculum and technology budget report that highlighted

how curriculum and technology are increasingly integrated. They discussed student motivation, the types of digital instructional tools utilized and how innovative student work is achieving the goals of the 1:1 initiative. They provided numerous examples of student work that illustrated the increased amount of collaboration and problem-solving that is happening in classrooms. In regards to communicating information to families, Ms. Banios demonstrated how Ms. Carol Virzi, 5th grade ELA/Social Studies teacher and Teacher Leadership intern has created a digital version of the parent handbook that is more easily approachable. Then Ms. Banios provided an example of efficiency in instruction by using an example instituted by Ms. Jean Marie Johnson, Director of high school Mathematics, whose department is piloting an instructional tool called “Aleks” to collect information that enables targeted, personalized learning for individual students. Ms. Banios reviewed the number of ways technology has impacted finances including decreased printing and copying costs, no cost digital materials, reduced clerical tasks, and redeployment of curriculum apps, etc. Next, they provided examples of ways the district can utilize technology to increase efficiency in communication, instruction and finances.

Ms. Banios, Ms. Powers and Mr. L’Heureux addressed the desire to expand the technology program to include grades 1-4 without impacting the town budget. They indicated that the 4th grade pilot program which was funded entirely by parents and community donations from outside events such as the Garden Party, has been testing the option of having one iPad for every two students in order to create a smoother transition into the 1:1 environment at the 5th grade level. Ms. Powers highlighted the ways in which technology is enhancing learning for the 4th grade students in the pilot program. He provided information on the various options explored before explaining the recommendation for the best available option.

Ms. Banios noted that the important aspects of the curriculum and instruction budget are: 1. texts and instructional equipment are shifting to software, 2. the possibility of shifting mentor stipends to Title IIA grant, and 3. details for the curriculum development and professional development line item budgets are under development.

Next, Mr. L’Heureux provided a long range overview of the appropriated budget. He noted there are four main drivers behind the increase in the technology budget for FY17 with the largest being the purchase of iPads for the incoming grades 5-9 students to stay on track with the plan to maintain the four-year replacement cycle. The other three are the purchase of cases, maintenance for Wi-Fi access points, and networked storage array maintenance.

Committee members asked where the district stands in preparing our students for future success with our technology instruction curriculum; how the district is planning for sustaining the program, and whether the district is assessing other means of technology other than the iPad. Committee members commented on the effectiveness of the program so far and thanked the presenters for their efforts and excellent report.

B. Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Recommendation: Public Hearing

Mr. Samia provided a brief background of the budget development process, the legal requirements for obtaining public feedback regarding the proposed recommendation and the protocol expected. One community member asked where the public can find detailed information about the proposed budget and the existing budget gap, and another resident commented about concerns in addressing the challenges that exist regarding the needs of the School Department as well as all municipal departments.

C. Fee Adjustment Recommendation: Discussion

Prior to Mr. Collins discussing recommendations regarding fee adjustments to address the budget deficit, he highlighted the introduction of the online payment option for bus fees and the cost to implement including absorbing the transaction fee cost, and the expected positive results from introducing this convenience. The recommendations included fee increases for busing transportation from \$250 to \$275 and also the elimination of the family cap, an increase in full-day kindergarten tuition from \$3,700 to \$4,000 and an increase of 8% for tuitions for all the various preschool programs as well as the introduction of a 4.5 full-day program.

Mr. Collins offered comparisons from other school districts and estimates of the fiscal impact of these various fee adjustments to help illustrate how the recommendations were determined.

Committee members noted their overall satisfaction in offering the new online payment option and asked a few questions about instituting a higher fee if families don't use the online option in an attempt to encourage usage, as well as how families are billed. Additional clarifying questions included if there would be any changes to the late payment fee for transportation, and if there were any space issues or staff requirements with offering another preschool option.

Mr. Samia questioned the impact of the family cap removal and how it would affect other areas such as athletic fees. Committee members discussed this element of the recommendation. Dr. Sawyer noted that this report would be posted online for families to review and comment in advance of the School Committee vote at the next meeting.

D. Rate Change for Long Term Substitute Teachers: Vote

Ms. Malone discussed the current practice of hiring and paying substitutes. She explained that the proposed payment structure would allow flexibility in the payment the district would be able to offer thereby allow for savings to the district. She explained that this structure would allow administration to negotiate long-term substitute teacher daily rates on an individual basis, based on the market conditions, but not lower than \$75 per day rather than paying a fixed rate.

On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Dr. Magee, the School Committee voted unanimously to allow the administration to negotiate long-term substitute teacher daily rates of pay on an individual basis, based on market conditions, but not lower than the \$75 per day.

VIII. Old Business

None

IX. New Business

None

X. Approval of Minutes: Vote

On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Dr. Magee, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting on January 20, 2016.

XI. Executive Session

Mr. Samia requested a motion to adjourn to executive session for the purpose of negotiations with the Shrewsbury Education Association, Unit A, potential discussion of collective bargaining negotiations with cafeteria workers association and/or paraprofessionals association; potential discussion of compensation guidelines for administrator contract negotiations and/or contract negotiations with non-union personnel where deliberation in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body, and/or b) for the purpose of reviewing and/or releasing executive session minutes from a prior meeting. On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Dr. Magee, on a roll call vote: Dr. Magee, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; Mr. Samia, yes; the School Committee voted to adjourn to executive session at 8:35PM.

XII. Information Enclosures

None

XIII. Adjournment

On a motion by Dr. Magee, seconded by Ms. Fryc, the meeting was adjourned at 9:19 PM. On a roll call vote: Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; Mr. Samia, yes.

Respectfully submitted

Kimberlee Cantin, Clerk

Documents referenced:

1. FY17 Curriculum-Technology Budget Report
2. Fee Adjustment Memo
3. Rate Change for Long Term Substitute Teachers Memo