

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, April 22, 2020

Present via virtual participation: Ms. Sandy Fryc, Chairperson; Mr. Jon Wensky, Vice Chairperson; Dr. B. Dale Magee, Secretary; Ms. Lynsey Heffernan; Mr. Jason Palitsch; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; Ms. Amy Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; Ms. Meg Belsito, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services; Dr. Jane Lizotte, Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-Being; Ms. Barb Malone, Executive Director of Human Resources; and Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools.

Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, this meeting was not open to physical participation by the public, but was broadcast live on SELCO Channels 29 & 329 and streamed live on the Shrewsbury Media Connection website. A complete audio/video recording of this meeting is available on the Shrewsbury Public Schools website.

The meeting was convened at 7:00 by Ms. Fryc, who advised that public participation was suspended due to the meeting being virtual, but noted viewers could email questions and comments to the School Committee.

I. Update regarding the school district's response to the COVID-19 school closure

Dr. Sawyer began the report by providing an update on the district's response to the COVID-19 pandemic with an overview of key facts and messages, and described planning going forward for remote learning, previously planned activities/events, and summer programming in light of Governor Baker's recent order that all Massachusetts public & private PreK-Grade 12 schools remain closed for the rest of the current school year. Director of Nursing Noelle Freeman provided an update from the Department of School Nursing; Director of Information Technology Brian L'Heureux shared information on technology relative to devices, access, platforms by grade level, and support; Ms. Clouter addressed remote learning, and professional development for educators; Ms. Belsito provided an update from the Department of Student Services that included information on guidance received from the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE); Dr. Lizotte described the Shrewsbury High School (SHS) Student and Alumni Mentoring Program and provided details on an upcoming virtual 5K being planned for the community; and Mr. Collins addressed the impact of the pandemic and school closure to the current fiscal year (FY20), and the next fiscal year (FY21).

Committee members noted the importance of honoring and recognizing the senior class at SHS, and acknowledged the need for enhanced transparency and public input while navigating the complex issues

currently facing the district. In response to clarifying questions, Ms. Clouter and Mr. L'Heureux provided additional information on ways to assess student learning (now and in the fall), and to track student access to/use of technology.

II. Continuity of funding of Assabet Valley Collaborative services during school closure: Vote

Dr. Sawyer noted DESE Commissioner Jeffrey Riley is advising that districts continue to pay contracted service vendors so those providers are able to recommence operations when school resumes. Dr. Sawyer described the work of the Assabet Valley Collaborative (AVC); advised that Shrewsbury Public Schools (SPS) is a charter district member and he is the SPS representative on AVC's Board of Directors; and noted the importance of member districts continuing to provide funding for the services AVC provides (now remotely) to students, and to enable its transportation contractor to remain viable.

On a motion by Dr. Magee, seconded by Mr. Palitsch, the Committee voted unanimously to authorize the district administration to take necessary actions to continue the funding of special education and consultation services contracted with the Assabet Valley Collaborative, with the understanding that those services are being modified as necessary during the school closure period, within the approved Fiscal Year 2020 budget. Roll call votes were as follows: Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Heffernan, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes.

III. Approval of Minutes

Without objections from the Committee, the minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on April 15, 2020 were accepted as distributed.

IV. Executive Session

A. For the purpose of negotiations with some or all of the following: the Shrewsbury Education Association Unit A, Shrewsbury Education Association Unit B, the Shrewsbury Paraprofessional Association, the Shrewsbury Cafeteria Workers, and/or non-represented staff.

B. For the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes.

Ms. Fryc requested a motion to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of negotiations with some or all of the following: the Shrewsbury Education Association Unit A, Shrewsbury Education Association Unit B, the Shrewsbury Paraprofessional Association, the Shrewsbury Cafeteria Workers, and/or non-represented staff, where deliberation in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body; and for the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes, and return to Open Session only for the purpose of adjourning for the evening. On a motion by Dr. Magee, seconded by Mr. Palitsch, on a roll call vote: Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Heffernan, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes, the School Committee voted to adjourn to executive session at 8:23 pm.

V. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Ms. Heffernan, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Palitsch: yes; Mr. Wensky: yes; Ms. Heffernan: yes; Dr. Magee: yes; Ms. Fryc: yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

1. Update on COVID-19 Response Report Slides 04-22-20
2. AVC Continuity of Funding Memo
3. Set(s) of minutes as referenced above