

**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
100 MAPLE AVENUE
SHREWSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS
MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
August 20, 2019
Class of 2002 Conference Room
Shrewsbury High School
64 Holden St.
Shrewsbury, Massachusetts**

Start: 6:32PM

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

Discussion regarding Gifts/Grants:

- 1) Department recently granted \$70,000 for a security & monitoring system for the High School from the state after successful application. Details regarding the system were discussed as well as future plans to upgrade other systems.

Motion by Palitsch: that the Committee accepts the \$70,000 Safer Schools Competitive Grant and use such funds for their intended purpose of improving safety and security communications at Shrewsbury High School.

Second: Wensky

Vote: Unanimous acceptance

- 2) A \$20,000 gift was made to the Shrewsbury High School Robotics Team 467 by Allegro MicroSystems in honor of longtime volunteer Rich Cooper.

Motion by Palitsch: that the Committee accepts the donation of \$20,000 to the Shrewsbury High School Robotics team for the stated purpose.

Second: Wensky

Vote: Unanimous acceptance

Discussion regarding potential grant funding for a Mindfulness Director. Funding would be from the Mindfulness Director Initiative, based at the Middlesex School in Concord, Massachusetts. MDI's mission is to support schools of all types – public and private, urban and rural, well-funded and under-resourced – in bringing mindfulness to children, teens, and school communities throughout the United States. This partnership would be their first with a public school, after two successful initiatives with private schools in Massachusetts and

Texas. Members of the Committee had several questions regarding:

- Future costs,
- Details of implementation,
- Whether this would be a separate initiative or be mainstreamed into current curriculum,
- Whether it would be mandatory,
- How this would impact educator workload and how they would view it
- How success would be measured.

A request was made to have a conference call with a representative of one of the two school systems in which this was implemented to gauge impact, and get an impression regarding how implementation looks.

A request was made that the Committee be given the 10 page proposal as well as any modifications that have been discussed.

Will add to the next agenda. No votes were taken.

Discussion regarding revising Town Meeting School Budget Report and School Department Report in the Town Report. Both of these represent communications from the School Committee to the Town and members voiced interest in revisiting the content and format. An overall framework of content was presented to the administration that had the support of the School Committee (attached). The goals of brevity, clarity and taking advantage of an electronic format were expressed. We also discussed aligning content with the ClearGov online profiles that the Town has subscribed to.

Next steps include providing commentary on the current reports.

Related to this, Dr. Sawyer informed the Committee about discussions occurring within Town government about resource allocation after the pension fund is adequately funded. Opportunities for more School Department funding may occur.

Discussion regarding planning the 2020 school year agendas. Committee members voiced interest in

- Hearing more about areas in which results are less than optimal and discussion regarding ways in which the system can improve and, perhaps, less time in showcasing successes.
- What is the status of the need of our students for remedial learning once enrolling in college?
- Can we learn more about our English Language Learners population and how they compare to other districts?
- Discussions regarding assessing and improving equity within the district.
- We need to move forward with the issue of later start times for the older students.
- What, if any, are our offerings for our high school students attending college courses for credit?
- Can we involve students more in the School Committee?

Discussion regarding: redistricting. A proposed timeline was presented by Mr. Collins. Questions regarding the use of consultants for GIS planning and demographics were discussed. Options of assigning this task to the Administration or forming a committee were discussed. The SC favored involvement of members of the SC with the potential for holding hearings at

meetings. Discussion regarding aligning this with the Start Time initiative occurred. It was expressed that both involved remodeling bus schedules and doing the two projects together may be more efficient and less disruptive to families and schools. The start time discussion has gone beyond questioning the evidence and has arrived at how best to implement it. Other districts have flip-flopped lower and higher grade schedules with the help of consultants dealing with bus schedules, etc.

Minutes from June 12, June 25, August 15, 2019: Motion to approve: Wensky. Second: Palitsch. Vote: Palitsch: yes, Heffernan: yes, Magee: yes, Wensky: yes, Fryc: yes.

Motion to adjourn: Wensky Second: Palitsch. Vote: Palitsch: yes, Heffernan: yes, Magee: yes, Wensky: yes, Fryc: yes.

Meeting adjourned: 8:23PM

Referenced Materials:

Allegro Systems Donation Memo
Mindfulness Partnership Memo
Mindfulness Director Initiative MOA Draft
Redistricting Process Memo
Redistricting Timeline Draft
Safer Schools Grant Memo
Safer Schools Award Letter
School Committee Calendar Draft
Proposed framework for Budget Communications
Set(s) of Minutes as Referenced Above