

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

**MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday, September 4, 2019**

Present: 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 B. Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Dr. Jane Lizotte, Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships & Well-Being; Ms. Barb Malone, Executive Director of Human Resources; and Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools.

A complete audio/visual recording of this meeting is available on the Shrewsbury Public Schools website.

The meeting was convened by Ms. Fryc at 7:01 pm.

**Special Opening**

The Shrewsbury High School (SHS) A Cappella Choir, under the direction of Music Teacher Michael Lapomardo, performed “The Star Spangled Banner” and “Imagine.” The Choir is comprised of students:

**Soprano**

Deeptha Ganesh  
Fiona Ingersoll  
Nidhi Ramesh  
Leah Rider  
Hannah Walz (not at the meeting)

**Alto**

Victoria Ambrosino  
Amoy Lin  
Korinna Muller  
Anandita Punnamaraju  
Sheila Sawyer

**Tenor**

Preston Karp  
John Nichols  
Liam Reardon (not at the meeting)  
Daniel Stameris

**Bass**

Ajay Alamuri  
Shakthi Annamalai

Andrew Andersen  
Ethan Clarke  
Collin Lovelace  
Pranav Vadlamudi

### **I. Public Participation**

None.

### **II. Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports**

None.

### **III. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Sawyer noted Shrewsbury Public schools enjoyed a successful opening of the school year and thanked all parties including the Town's Public Facilities Division, bus drivers and staff at AA Transportation, secretaries in buildings and at Central Office, administrators for preparation, and faculty and staff. Dr. Sawyer congratulated Shrewsbury High School (SHS) for receiving National Banner recognition from Special Olympics for meeting/achieving national standards of excellence in the areas of inclusion, advocacy and respect. SHS is one of only sixteen schools in Massachusetts and 179 schools nationwide to achieve this status for the 2018-19 school year. He advised that Oak Middle School Design Lab received a \$3,911 STEM grant from the Toshiba America Foundation (TAF) which will support the Design Lab classroom in purchasing additional supplies. Mr. Jeremy Mularella, the Design Lab teacher, is also planning for Oak Middle School to become a certified e-NABLE Community School, which will allow them to use their 3D printers to print out custom parts for prosthetic devices for people in need. Dr. Sawyer also noted the following Superintendent's Award Recipients for 2019:

John Aloisi, History Teacher & Varsity Football Coach, SHS

Nicole Cormier, Grade 4 Teacher, Paton School

Donna Crowley, Paraprofessional ABA Technician, Parker Road Preschool

Caitlin Maddocks, Lead Childcare Provider, Extended School Care, Beal Early Childhood Center

D'Arcy McCarthy, Special Education Teacher & Community Service Learning Club Advisor, Oak Middle School

Beth McCollum, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

Lisa Phipps, Cafeteria Manager, SHS

Thomas M. Kennedy Award: Patricia Waterhouse, Director of Special Education, Middle Schools

Jayne M. Wilkin Award: Tiffany Ostrander, Principal, Coolidge School

Jayne M. Wilkin Award: Todd Bazydlo, Principal, SHS

### **IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:**

#### **A. Gift from Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union to Fund Coordinator of Development & Volunteer Activities Positions: Vote**

Dr. Lizotte appeared before the Committee with Mr. Jim Dupont, President & CEO, and

Ms. Lisa Raabe, Marketing Director, Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union (SFCU). She offered thanks for their existing support of Shrewsbury Public Schools, which includes funding for the Colonial Connections Project, and noted that SFCU would be providing an additional gift of \$40,000 to fund the Coordinator of Development & Volunteer Activities Positions for 2019-2020. Mr. Dupont and Ms. Raabe offered brief remarks and acknowledged the importance of the work done by the current Coordinators, Ms. Michelle Biscotti and Ms. Kathleen Keohane. The Committee and Dr. Sawyer expressed their appreciation to SFCU for their support.

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Mr. Wensky, the Committee voted unanimously to accept a gift of \$40,000 from Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union to fund the Coordinator of Development & Volunteer Activities Positions for the 2019-2020 school year.

#### **B. Shrewsbury Alumni Presentation to Staff: Report**

Dr. Lizotte reported on a presentation given at a professional development day for staff on August 30 by 14 current and former Shrewsbury students who shared their insights on how their education at SPS influenced them in positive ways, and how they felt the district might improve student experiences. Her report included photos from the presentation and feedback from educators. The Committee and Dr. Sawyer expressed appreciation for the uniqueness of the presentation, the diversity of perspectives represented, the importance of project-based learning to some students' experiences, and the relevance of the district's strategic goals and priorities to the information presented. Dr. Sawyer added that the presentation also informed ongoing work at SPS to better develop its alumni network.

#### **C. Memorandum of Agreement for Partnership with Mindfulness Director Initiative: Vote**

In their report, Dr. Lizotte and Mr. Todd Bazydlo, SHS Principal, provided an overview of an opportunity for SPS to partner with The Mindfulness Director Initiative (MDI) for 2019-2020 that would be funded entirely by MDI for the year. They presented information providing support for the partnership that included data on student stress from the Regional Youth Health Survey and the negative effects of chronic stress; noted research suggests that mindfulness mitigates stress; gave feedback from other schools engaged with MDI; provided examples of potential optional mindfulness experiences for students, their families, staff, and the community; and detailed next steps. Committee members noted that stress is a significant issue for students and the community and discussed the importance of trying to quantify it, establish a baseline level, and measure improvement; advised that this is an exciting opportunity that utilizes private funding initially, but added that its multi-year integration process could have a financial impact to the district in subsequent years; and advised that long-term decisions would need to be made regarding the best way to structure mindfulness at SPS. Dr. Sawyer endorsed moving forward with the partnership and requested the Committee's support.

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Mr. Wensky, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the enclosed Memorandum of Agreement to establish a partnership with the Mindfulness Director Initiative for the 2019-2020 school year.

#### **V. Curriculum**

None.

## **VI. Policy**

None.

## **VII. Finance & Operations**

### **A. School Facilities Summer Maintenance: Report**

Mr. Collins introduced Ms. Angela Snell, Director of Public Facilities, and Mr. Keith Baldinger, Public Buildings Division Manager, for the Town of Shrewsbury, who provided an overview of work done at various school buildings during the summer months. Their report included a department overview, social media information, and photos which highlighted a variety of projects at different schools in the district. The Committee asked clarifying questions about HVAC control access at schools, and with Dr. Sawyer, expressed their appreciation to the Public Facilities – Public Buildings Division for their work at SPS locations.

### **B. Personnel Hiring for the 2019-2020 School Year: Report**

Ms. Malone's report for 2019-2020 described the rigorous process for professional hires and provided detailed data on application/appointment ratios, professional level searches, and paraprofessional hiring. She expressed appreciation to Human Resources Assistants Katie Fox and Christine Mattero for their work, and to individuals who served on hiring search committees for the district. Committee members noted the high ratios of applicants to appointments and acknowledged the high quality of SPS staff. They asked clarifying questions about total new Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions for the year (11.3) and about positions that have more difficulty attracting and retaining staff. Dr. Sawyer added that Ms. Malone's title had been changed recently to *Executive* Director of Human Resources to better reflect the responsibilities of this demanding, executive-level role.

### **C. Fiscal Year 2020 Grants: Report & Vote to Accept**

In his annual report, Mr. Collins provided a chart showing federal and state grant allocations and the associated 1-year and 5-year differences, highlighted information on certain grants, noted that SPS would receive \$260,000 in competitive grant funds in FY20, and answered questions from the Committee on Title I and Title III grants.

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Mr. Wensky, the Committee voted unanimously to accept all FY20 grant funds noted in the enclosed chart and use such funds for their intended purpose.

## **VIII. Old Business**

None.

## **IX. New Business**

None.

## **X. Approval of Minutes**

Without objections from the Committee, the minutes from the School Committee Workshop held on August 20, 2019 were accepted as distributed.

## **XI. Executive Session**

Ms. Fryc requested a motion to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of collective bargaining with the Shrewsbury Education Association - Unit B, where deliberation in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body, and return to Open Session only for the purpose of adjourning for the evening. On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Mr. Wensky, on a roll call vote: Dr. Magee, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Ms. Heffernan, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes, the School Committee voted to adjourn to executive session at 9:00 pm.

## **XII. Adjournment**

On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Mr. Palitsch, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 9:28 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Palitsch, yes; Ms. Heffernan, yes; Dr. Magee, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

1. SFCU CDVA Gift Memo
2. Shrewsbury Alumni Report
3. Shrewsbury Alumni Slide Presentation
4. Mindfulness Memo
5. 8-20-19 Workshop Mindfulness Memo
6. Mindfulness MOA
7. Mindfulness Slide Presentation
8. Facilities Summer Maintenance Memo
9. Facilities Summer Maintenance Report
10. Facilities Summer Maintenance Slides
11. FY20 Personnel Hiring Report
12. FY20 Personnel Slide Presentation
13. FY20 Grants Report
14. Set(s) of Minutes as Referenced Above