

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

**MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday, December 1, 2021**

Present: Ms. Sandy Fryc, Vice Chairperson; Ms. Lynsey Heffernan, Secretary; Dr. B. Dale Magee; Mr. Jason Palitsch; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; Ms. Amy B. Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Ms. Barb Malone, Executive Director of Human Resources; and Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools.  
Not present: Mr. Jon Wensky, Chairperson.

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

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

**I. Public Participation**

None.

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

None.

**III. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Sawyer reported that Shrewsbury High School (SHS) hosted a personal item supply drive and held their Town Meeting (via webinar format) in advance of the Thanksgiving break. Dr. Sawyer also reported that the need for snow plow drivers in the Town of Shrewsbury could potentially have an impact on the opening of schools when the weather is inclement.

**IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:**

**A. District Response to the Pandemic: Report**

Dr. Sawyer provided current state, local, and district-specific data on COVID-19 cases; reported cases by age, school, and grade; noted breakthrough cases; and provided updates on the Test and Stay and Routine COVID Safety Testing programs in the district. He also reported that a second vaccine clinic for students, families, and staff was currently underway at Oak Middle School.

**B. Accept Gift: Vote**

Mr. Collins reported that a community member, who wished to remain anonymous, reached out with an offer to donate funding for new cafeteria tables with attached seating at Floral Street School, which have priced out at just over \$48,000. Floral Street School Principal Lisa McCubrey added that she had attended meetings with the vendor regarding the budget and the type of tables/chairs needed.

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Dr. Magee, the Committee voted unanimously to accept a donation in the range of \$45,000 to \$55,000 to purchase new cafeteria tables with attached seats for the Floral Street School Cafeteria.

### **C. Athletics: Annual Report**

In the report, Athletic Director Jay Costa presented Athletics Program highlights for the 2020-2021 school year (noting reduced athletic opportunities resulted from COVID-19 restrictions set by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association and public health officials); provided information on the Booster Organizations that support the program; detailed financials for the year; and noted areas of need in the program for future consideration.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Costa and Shrewsbury High School Principal Todd Bazydlo provided additional information on cost estimates for future needs; student and staff vaccination statuses; athletics fees; and athletics fees as they relate to payment hardship (including how many students are unable to pay, and protocols for identifying and assisting students in need).

## **V. Curriculum**

### **A. SHS Testing: Annual Report**

Mr. Bazydlo and Director of School Counseling Angie Flynn gave the report. They noted College Board Test administration and score reporting changes for 2021; presented information on SAT score scales, mean scores, and scores by gender for SHS students; detailed test participation rates (10 year history); and presented PSAT National Merit Scholarship statistics. Noting students in grades 11 and 12 are eligible to take Advanced Placement (AP) courses at SHS, they described AP exam participation rates (10 year history), compared SHS exam scores to Massachusetts and national scores; noted overall SHS exam scores; and presented AP Scholar data. Ms. Flynn described the SHS School Profile (information about SHS that is used by college admissions offices) and recently- made adjustments to it, and Mr. Bazydlo detailed strategies to maintain and improve standardized test scores at SHS going forward.

Committee members asked questions about appropriate AP caseloads for students and the potential for college admissions officers to present information to the Committee again in the future, and made a request to have the SAT score information presented at the meeting broken down by race/ethnicity, free/reduced lunch eligibility, English Language Learner, etc. for those students who opted to self-report that information.

### **B. State MCAS Testing: Annual Report**

Ms. Clouter began the report by describing the rationale for MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) testing, providing a recent timeline of MCAS administration and test changes, and defining/differentiating “achievement” and “growth” relative to MCAS. Ms. Clouter presented detailed 2021 test information by subject area (Science and Technology/Engineering, English Language Arts, and Mathematics) that included data on high needs subgroups, and presented comparisons with relevant districts. She described planned next steps that were informed by the test results, and suggested viewing the scores in the context of student data from other sources, including the Star common assessment tool. In response to questions from the Committee, additional information was provided on alignment of SPS curriculum with MCAS standards (they are aligned), if/how other student data from classrooms lines up with MCAS results, and using the test data collected to inform Professional Development and provide support for teachers

## **VI. Policy**

None.

## **VII. Finance & Operations**

### **A. Enrollment Projections: Report**

In his report, Mr. Collins described the two enrollment projection methods utilized (one from the Town Manager and one from the New England School Development Council) and compared them for one- and five-year outlooks, by grade span, and by grade, for Kindergarten through grade 12. Mr. Collins detailed preschool enrollment patterns (7 year history), compared data on one-year and five-year projected enrollments with actual 2021-2022 enrollment, and summarized projections for enrollment, space, and staffing for the 2022-2023 school year.

In response to questions from the Committee Mr. Collins advised that the data presented was for in-district enrolled students and did not include students who are homeschooled, are in out-of-district placements, or attend Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School. Mr. Collins noted that the number of homeschooled students increased during the heat of the pandemic (2019-2020) from approximately 20 to 40, and that 29 students in the district were currently being homeschooled.

### **VIII. Old Business**

None.

### **IX. New Business**

None.

### **X. Approval of Minutes**

Without objections from the Committee, the minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on November 17, 2021, were accepted as distributed.

### **XI. Executive Session**

Ms. Fryc requested a motion to adjourn to Executive Session:

A. For the purpose of addressing G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) “[t]o comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements” (“Purpose 7”), Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §§ 22(f), (g) – for the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes;

B. For the purpose of addressing G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(3) “to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect of the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares” (“Purpose 3”)

- the Shrewsbury Education Association Units A and/or B, the Shrewsbury Paraprofessional Association, and/or the Cafeteria Workers Association; and

C. For the purpose of addressing G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(2) “to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel” (“Purpose 2”), 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 Dr. Magee, on a roll call vote: Ms. Heffernan, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Dr. Magee, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes, the School Committee voted to adjourn to executive session at 9:27 pm.

### **XII. Adjournment**

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Dr. Magee, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 9:47 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Palitsch, yes; Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Heffernan,

yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

1. Pandemic Response Slide Presentation
2. Donation Memo
3. Athletics Report 2020-2021
4. Athletics Report 2020-2021 Slide Presentation
5. SHS Testing Report
6. SHS Testing Slide Presentation
7. State MCAS Testing Report
8. State MCAS Testing Slide Presentation
9. Enrollment Projections Report
10. NESDEC Enrollment Projections Report
11. Town Manager's Enrollment Projections Spreadsheet
12. Enrollment Projections Slide Presentation
13. Set(s) of minutes as referenced above