

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

**MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday, December 4, 2019**

Present: Ms. Sandy Fryc, Chairperson; Dr. B. Dale Magee, Secretary; Ms. Lynsey Heffernan; Mr. Jason Palitsch; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; Ms. Barb Malone, Executive Director of Human Resources (by phone for Executive Session); and Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools.

Not present: Mr. Jon Wensky, Vice Chairperson

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

The meeting was convened at 7:04 pm by Ms. Fryc.

**I. Public Participation**

None.

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

Ms. Fryc reported that she, Mr. Wensky, and Mr. Palitsch, judged successful spelling bees in November at Sherwood Middle School (SMS) and Oak Middle School (OMS), and congratulated winners Saketh Madhusudhan (SMS) and William Chen (OMS).

**III. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Sawyer congratulated SHS Cheerleaders on winning the 2019 Fall Cheerleading Central Regional Championship, and thanked the Town of Shrewsbury Department of Public Works for their work clearing school campuses and streets during the recent long-duration storm that closed schools for two days.

**IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:**

**A. Athletics: Annual Report**

Mr. Jason Costa, Director of Athletics, and SHS student-athletes Colleen McNamara, Lauren Lemay and John West (all class of 2020) gave the report. They presented program highlights, SHS and OMS participation statistics, student-athlete successes, Championship Team information, and financials; acknowledged support groups; noted the positive impact of the new turf field on the athletics program; and (the students) gave their perspectives on a number of leadership opportunities available to them. In response to questions from the Committee and Dr. Sawyer, the students described their personal experiences and the culture of acceptance for all players at SHS relative to athletics, noted student involvement in the hiring process for coaches, and described their future plans.

## **B. Enrollment Projections: Report**

Mr. Collins began his report by describing the two projection methodologies historically utilized (from the Town Manager - TM - and the New England School Development Council - NESDEC) and displaying detailed cohort survival method information. For the FY21 kindergarten - grade 12 enrollment projection comparison, Mr. Collins noted that a third internal projection was being utilized by SPS that incorporated higher current actual enrollments in kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 9, for a total of 6011 students, which was thought would prove more accurate and was higher than the other projections. He went on to provide detailed information for actual and projected enrollments by grade span (TM and NESDEC); FY21 initial projections for elementary and secondary schools; preschool enrollment patterns; projected and actual enrollments for FY20; Massachusetts School Building Authority's (MSBA) ten year enrollment projection for kindergarten - grade 4; and finished with a summary of highlights.

Committee members asked clarifying questions on the internal projection utilized, and on registration data for students moving into the district or transferring from private schools. Mr. Palitsch noted the cohort survival method was useful for year to year projections, but suggested exercising caution around long-term projections as they have historically predicted a dip in enrollment that so far has not been realized.

## **C. District Communications: Report on Survey & Recommendations**

In his report, Dr. Sawyer noted excellent participation in the survey across groups (parents, staff, community members, and Town Meeting members); illustrated parent and staff participation across levels; and described the rating system employed in the survey. He provided detailed summary information and analysis for overall ratings (since ratings were consistent when data was filtered by group) for the ten top-rated forms of communication; the nine middle-rated forms of communication; and the seven lower-rated forms of communication. Dr. Sawyer presented data on ratings relative to the effectiveness of communications related to the work of the School Committee, communications from the Superintendent, and communications from the School District; summarized comments added by respondents by themes; and described next steps.

Committee members noted the information provided by the survey lends itself to actionable items and provides insight into what consumers find valuable; gives direction to how SPS leadership can best balance time relative to communications; cautioned that some middle-rated forms of communication provide important information to the broader community; and suggested that a section of frequently asked questions be added to the SPS website to answer queries like those currently being posted on social media platforms.

## **V. Curriculum**

None.

## **VI. Policy**

None.

## **VII. Finance & Operations**

None.

## **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 13, 2019, and the Workshop held on November 18, 2019, were accepted as distributed.

## **XI. Executive Session**

**A. For the purpose of collective bargaining with the Shrewsbury Education Association – Unit B**

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

**C. For the purpose of acting on a student residency issue**

Ms. Fryc requested a motion to adjourn to Executive Session for the purposes 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; reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes; and acting on a student residency issue, 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; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Ms. Heffernan, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes; the School Committee voted to adjourn to executive session at 8:34 pm.

## **XII. Adjournment**

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Heffernan, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Palitsch: yes; Ms. Heffernan: yes; Dr. Magee: yes; and Ms. Fryc: yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

SHS Athletics Report

SHS Athletics Slide Presentation

Enrollment Projections Report

Enrollment Projections Slide Presentation

NESDEC Enrollment Projection

Town Manager's Enrollment Projection

Projected Enrollment by School Spreadsheet

District Communications Survey Report/Slide Presentation

District Communications Survey Results

Set(s) of minutes as referenced above