

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, May 10, 2023

Present: Ms. Sandra Fryc, Chairperson; Ms. Erin Boucher, Vice Chairperson; Ms. Lynsey Heffernan; Ms. Rachel Sharifipour; Dr. Jane Lizotte, Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships & Well-Being; Ms. Barb Malone, Executive Director of Human Resources; Ms. Amy Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment; and Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools.

Not present: Mr. Jon Wensky, Secretary

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

The meeting was convened by Dr. Sawyer at 7:00 pm in advance of the election of officers. He congratulated Ms. Fryc on her re-election to the School Committee, and Ms. Sharifipour on her election to the School Committee.

I. Election of Officers

Dr. Sawyer requested and accepted nominations for the Chairperson of the School Committee. Ms. Heffernan nominated Ms. Fryc for Chairperson, and Ms. Boucher seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to appoint Ms. Fryc Chairperson of the Committee. As the elected Chairperson of the School Committee, Ms. Fryc nominated Ms. Boucher for the position of Vice Chairperson and Ms. Heffernan seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to appoint Ms. Boucher Vice Chairperson. Ms. Boucher nominated Mr. Wensky for the position of Secretary, and Ms. Sharifipour seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to appoint Mr. Wensky Secretary.

II. Public Participation

None.

III. Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports

Ms. Boucher congratulated Shrewsbury High School (SHS), Oak Middle School (OMS), and United Sound students and staff on outstanding recent spring concert performances. Ms. Fryc reported attending the MOVE (Mobile On-Site Vocational Education) luncheon on May 5 and expressed appreciation to all contributors.

IV. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Sawyer congratulated: the SHS Esports Rocket League Team on finishing second at the MA State Championships and for qualifying to participate in the National Championships, and the SHS League of Legends Team for winning the MA State Championship; the SHS Class of 2023 for being recognized by the local United Way with their *Youth Volunteer of the Year* service award; SHS Science & Engineering Teacher Jennifer Cuddy for receiving an *American Association of Immunologists High School Teachers Program in Immunology Award*; SHS Performing Arts, Music & Choral Teacher Michael Lapomardo on being considered for the national *GRAMMY Music Educator Award* (he is currently a quarterfinalist); and

Little Colonials Preschool Teacher Sarah Monica on being a semifinalist for the *2024 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year*.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments:

A. SHS Student Advisory Committee: Report

Student Advisory Committee (SAC) members Laura Lee, Nicole Shen, and Siri Ural gave the report and advised that members Shalini Biju (Chair) and Aanya Gupta were unable to attend due to scheduling conflicts. Their report included updates on student life (Advanced Placement courses, student elections, etc.), co-curricular activities (sports, DECA Business Club, Health Occupation Students of America, etc.), and events (Spirit Week, senior events, etc.) at SHS. Senior students Laura Lee and Nicole Shen shared their future plans, and then all students were invited up to be recognized by the Committee and Dr. Sawyer and presented with certificates.

B. World Language Student Trip to Martinique: Vote

After noting the proposed trip to Martinique would be the second for SHS students and staff (the first was in 2019) Principal Mr. Todd Bazydlo and French Teacher Ms. Heather Leger provided trip details; discussed aspects of the prior student visit relative to culture, Service Learning, language immersion and authentic interactions; noted how the experience helps educate students; highlighted possible excursions; and shared a cost estimate. In response to questions from the Committee, additional information was provided on the potential for other world language student trips (staff willingness and global security are determining factors) and financial assistance for students in need (donations, fundraising profit-sharing with student volunteers, scholarships). All Committee members and Dr. Sawyer expressed support for the trip.

On a motion by Ms. Boucher, seconded by Ms. Heffernan, the Committee voted unanimously to approve travel by Shrewsbury High School French students to Martinique in April 2024.

VI. Curriculum

A. Career Technical Education & Career Exploration: Report

Grade 12 students Adam Harris and Luiza Saldanha began the report by sharing their personal experiences with Career Technical Education opportunities provided through SHS (Mr. Harris with the MA Fire Academy and Ms. Saldanha with Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union). Dr. Lizotte, Mr. Bazydlo, and Director of School Counseling Ms. Angie Flynn presented information on: advancing Career Technical Education opportunities relative to the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan; enrollment in the six Student (career) Pathways offered to rising Grade 9 and 10 students (initially those who applied to Assabet Valley Technical Regional High School and then to all students); potential programs and partnerships; increasing access to *Project Lead the Way*; and increased student demand for business courses (acknowledging challenges relative to space, equipment, personnel, transportation, and student engagement). Director of Alumni Development & Community Relationships Ms. Kathleen Keohane described various opportunities for student career exploration; detailed types of support received from local businesses and alumni; and noted financial support provided by the Colonial Fund and its donors.

Additional information was provided in response to questions from the Committee on limited student participation in the six Student Pathways (some parents noted they were looking for more vocational opportunities); uses for potential MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) grant funding (student programming similar to that provided by entities like Blackstone Valley Hub for Workforce Development); the role of community colleges (Quinsigamond Community College Fabrication Studio, dual enrollment programs); and additional relevant staffing (the proposed budget

would potentially allow for this). Committee members expressed support for the SHS Student Pathways, outreach to alumni, and exploration of opportunities like the Blackstone Valley Hub (while noting additional staff might be needed to support student access to such opportunities).

VII. Policy

None.

VIII. Finance & Operations

None.

IX. Old Business

None.

X. New Business

A. Assabet Valley Collaborative: Update

Noting he is the representative from Shrewsbury Public Schools on the Assabet Valley Collaborative (AVC) Board of Directors, Dr. Sawyer reported the Board recently voted to set Fiscal Year 2024 tuition rates and that most reflected a 4% increase. He felt the rationale for the increases was reasonable in the current environment, noted Shrewsbury receives a discount as a member community, and added that the rates were factored into the FY24 School Department Budget being presented at Town Meeting.

XI. Approval of Minutes

Without objections from the Committee, the minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on April 26, 2023, were accepted as distributed.

XII. Executive Session

None.

XIII. Adjournment

On a motion by Ms. Boucher, seconded by Ms. Heffernan, the Committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Ms. Sharifipour, yes; Ms. Boucher, yes; Ms. Heffernan, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

Student Advisory Committee Agenda

Martinique Student Trip Documentation

Martinique Student Trip Slide Presentation

Career Technical Education, Career Exploration, and Community Partnerships Report

Career Technical Education, Career Exploration, and Community Partnerships Slide Presentation

Assabet Valley Collaborative FY24 Tuitions & Fees

Set(s) of minutes as referenced above