

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

**MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday, November 9, 2022**

Present: Ms. Lynsey Heffernan, Chairperson; Mr. Jason Palitsch, Vice Chairperson; Mr. Jon Wensky, Secretary; Ms. Erin Boucher; Ms. Sandra Fryc; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; 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. Heffernan at 7:00 pm.

**I. Public Participation**

None.

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

Noting Shrewsbury Public Schools' progression towards becoming a Unified district, Ms. Heffernan reported her student had participated in the Unified Program Kickoff held earlier in the day at Walter J. Paton School for grades 3 and 4 Unified Program leaders.

**III. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Sawyer congratulated the cast and crew of the recently held Shrewsbury High School (SHS) Fall play *Gossamer* on a successful production; commended the SHS Visual Arts Department on the quality of student artwork currently being exhibited in multiple venues including the Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union and Shrewsbury Town Hall; invited interested businesses to participate in a Job Fair to be held November 17 at SHS; noted the SHS Robotics Team would host a Holiday Market and Craft Fair on November 19; and invited the community to attend a public forum on Wednesday, November 16 to provide feedback for the district's next strategic plan.

**IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:**

**A. Post-High School Pathways for Students: Panel Discussion**

Ms. Heffernan briefly adjourned the meeting at 7:08 pm to address a technical issue. The meeting resumed at 7:09 pm.

Dr. Lizotte introduced the panelists, who each had an opportunity to present information on their organization and the types of opportunities it offers high school students and graduates for education, internships, and/or work experience. The panel comprised Ann Baker, Dean, UFP Business School (who attended remotely); Jack Burke, Director of High School Recruiting, Porter and Chester Institute; Maria Melfa, President and CEO, The Training Associates; Jeffrey Turgeon, Executive Director, MassHire Central Massachusetts; and Eric Doody, Production and Quality Control Manager, Component Sources International. Ms. Baker and Mr. Turgeon provided slide presentations about their organizations to the Committee. After the presentations, panelists provided additional information to the Committee in

response to questions on topics including the importance of soft skills for students, and on any admission requirements, prerequisites, and associated costs for their programs. The Committee and Dr. Sawyer acknowledged the importance of providing high school students with access to information on non-college options and noted how these opportunities can help realize Shrewsbury Public Schools' *Portrait of a Graduate* - the district's vision for students, and inform its current strategic planning process.

### **B. Sleep Health Advisory Committee Task Group on Research: Report**

Dr. Sawyer acknowledged members of the Research Task Group: Laura Braun-Lush, School Psychologist, Spring Street School; Michael Cerio, Parent; Kristen Ditch, Parent; Jennifer Giampapa, Parent; Hrithik Gopinath, SHS Student, Class of 2024; Cynthia Murphy, Parent; Dr. Toral Parikh, Parent; and Dr. Rishi Vohora, Parent; and then Mr. Cerio and Ms. Braun-Lush gave the report. Their presentation included: information on the biology of sleep; information on sleep hygiene (healthy sleep habits and sleep best practices); detailed data around the impact of delayed start times and student sleep (students get more sleep) and safety (Motor Vehicle Crash Rates and sports injuries); data on insufficient sleep time/poor sleep and impacts to mental health, physical health, and academic performance; screening data from the Regional Youth Health Survey (RYHS) for Oak Middle School and Shrewsbury High School students relative to sleep habits and mental health trends; a summary of the task group's conclusions; and their recommendations for moving forward.

Additional information was provided in response to questions on topics including what/how to monitor going forward (replicate screenings already in place), and the potential impact of later start times to the evening chronotype (students do not stay up much later in response and do get more overall sleep).

Committee members noted the importance of careful messaging, working with parents, and looking at other districts that have implemented later start times (Dr. Parikh advised that some neighboring districts have implemented later start times and are pleased so far). Dr. Sawyer provided a timeline for work on Sleep Health going forward in the district.

### **C. Student Enrollment & Class Sizes: Annual Report**

Dr. Sawyer and Mr. Collins presented district-wide enrollment information that included: key data points; historical enrollment data (overall, kindergarten, grade 1, kindergarten-to-grade-1 increase, grade 1 by school, % Full Day Kindergarten, preschool, by school, Special Education/out-of-district placement, and vocational technical school); and current enrollment by grade level. After sharing the School Committee's class size guidelines, they presented historical data on class sizes by school/grade for grades Kindergarten through grade 8. Mr. Todd Bazydlo, Principal, and Ms. Nga Huynh, Assistant Principal for Student Services at Shrewsbury High School (SHS) presented enrollment and class size data for SHS. Their report included historical data on overall enrollment, for average class size by department and academic classes, and for counselor caseloads. They presented information on co-taught sections (English, math, science) and illustrated building capacity at SHS (95% for academic hallways) by hallways (English, math, science, engineering, social science, world language, computer labs).

Ms. Fryc and Ms. Heffernan acknowledged building capacity/space and counselor caseloads at SHS as areas of concern, and for potential future investment. Dr. Sawyer added that high building capacity at SHS does negatively impact the availability of electives for students.

### **V. Curriculum**

None.

### **VI. Policy**

None.

## **VII. Finance & Operations**

None.

## **VIII. Old Business**

None.

## **IX. New Business**

### **A. Assabet Valley Collaborative: Update**

Dr. Sawyer began the update by summarizing a variety of benefits to the district from membership in the Assabet Valley Collaborative (AVC); advised that the written report included highlights and challenges for FY22 and FY23 at AVC; and advised that AVC remains on solid financial footing, has stabilized their leadership, and is moving forward in a positive direction. There were no questions from the Committee.

## **X. Approval of Minutes**

Without objections from the Committee, the minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on October 26, 2022, were accepted as distributed.

## **XI. Executive Session**

Ms. Heffernan requested a motion to adjourn to Executive Session and return to Open Session only for the purpose of adjourning for the evening:

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”), for the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes; and

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, where deliberation in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body. On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Boucher, on a roll call vote: Ms. Fryc, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Ms. Boucher, yes; and Ms. Heffernan, yes; the School Committee voted to adjourn to Executive Session at 9:12 pm.

## **XII. Adjournment**

On a motion by Ms. Fryc, seconded by Ms. Boucher, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 9:29 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Palitsch, yes; Ms. Boucher, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; and Ms. Heffernan, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

UFP Business School Slide Presentation

MassHire Central MA Slide Presentation  
Sleep Health Research Task Group Report  
Sleep Health Research Task Group Slide Presentation  
PreK-12 Enrollment & PreK-8 Class Size Report  
PreK-12 Enrollment & PreK-8 Class Size Slide Presentation  
SHS Class Size Report  
SHS Class Size Slide Presentation  
Assabet Valley Collaborative Update Report  
Set(s) of minutes as referenced above