



**School Committee
Meeting Book**

**December 14, 2022
7:00 pm**

**Town Hall -100 Maple Avenue
Selectmen's Meeting Room**



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

AGENDA

**December 14, 2022 7:00pm
Town Hall—Selectmen's Meeting Room
100 Maple Avenue**

Items

Suggested time allotments

I.	Public Participation	
II.	Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports	
III.	Superintendent's Report	
IV.	Time Scheduled Appointments:	
	A. Gifts to the Colonial Fund: Vote	7:05 – 7:15
	B. Strategic Planning for 2023-2027: Report from Consultant	7:15 – 7:45
	C. Sleep Health Advisory Committee: Report on Options for School Start Time Changes	7:45 – 8:25
V.	Curriculum	
VI.	Policy	
VII.	Finance & Operations	
	A. Out-of-District Special Education School Tuition Increase: Potential Vote on Communication	8:25 –8:35
VIII.	Old Business	
IX.	New Business	
X.	Approval of Minutes	8:35 – 8:40
XI.	Executive Session	8:40 –8:50
	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	
XII.	Adjournment	8:50

Next regular meeting: January 4, 2023



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

ITEM NO: I Public Participation

MEETING DATE: 12/14/22

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee hear thoughts and ideas from the public regarding the operations and the programs of the school system?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Copies of the policy and procedure for Public Participation are available to the public at each School Committee meeting.

ITEM NO: II. Chairperson's Report/Members' Reports

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee hear a report from the Chairperson of the School Committee and other members of the School Committee who may wish to comment on school affairs?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

This agenda item provides an opportunity for the Chairperson and members of the Shrewsbury School Committee to comment on school affairs that are of interest to the community.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

School Committee Members
Ms. Lynsey Heffernan, Chairperson
Mr. Jason Palitsch, Vice Chairperson
Mr. Jon Wensky, Secretary
Ms. Erin Boucher, Committee Member
Ms Sandra Fryc, Committee Member

ITEM NO: III. Superintendent's Report

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OR QUESTION:

Will the School Committee hear a report from Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

This agenda item allows the Superintendent of the Shrewsbury Public Schools to comment informally on the programs and activities of the school system.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

ACTION RECOMMENDED FOR ITEMS I, II, & III:

That the School Committee accept the report and take such action as it deems in the best interest of the school system.



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

ITEM NO: **IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:**
A. Gifts to the Colonial Fund: Vote

MEETING DATE: **12/14/22**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Career Pathways programming at Shrewsbury High School (SHS) focuses on career exploration and on-the-job training through internships, job shadowing, summer employment and potentially long-term employment. SHS hopes to make this new, multifaceted approach to career exploration and future goals planning available to all interested high school students during their junior and senior years. The Colonial Fund's recent *Giving Tuesday* fundraising initiative focused on generating funding for *Career Pathways* programming. Per School Committee Policy 911, gifts of \$5,000 or more must be formally accepted by the School Committee.

At the meeting Dr. Sawyer will acknowledge Dr. B. Dale Magee and Mrs. Melanie Magee for a gift to the Colonial Fund in the amount of \$5,000 from The Magee Fund. Dr. Sawyer will also acknowledge a donation of \$10,000 to the Colonial Fund from a donor who wishes to remain anonymous. Both donations were made in support of *Career Pathways* programming for Shrewsbury High School students through the Colonial Fund.

ACTIONS RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee vote to accept a \$5,000 donation from The Magee Fund, and a \$10,000 donation from an anonymous donor to the Colonial Fund to support *Career Pathways* programming for Shrewsbury High School students.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Patrick C. Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations
Dr. Jane O. Lizotte, Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships & Well-Being



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

ITEM NO: IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:

MEETING DATE: 12/14/22

B. Strategic Planning for 2023-2027: Report from Consultant

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Shrewsbury Public Schools continues its work to create an updated strategic plan for the next five years as the current plan comes to a conclusion. The district has partnered with the consulting firm Focused Schools to assist in identifying strengths and needs and to ensure receipt of robust input from all stakeholders. At the meeting, a representative from Focused Schools will provide an update of strategic planning work to date and what the process will be in the coming months.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee hear the report and take such action as it deems in the best interest of the school system.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

Ashley Santiago, School and District Improvement Manager, Focused Schools



Memo

TO: School Committee - Shrewsbury Public Schools
FROM: Kerry Purcell, Managing Director
DATE: December 9, 2022
RE: December 14, 2022 School Committee Presentation by Focused Schools

Focused Schools is pleased to be invited to the 12/14/2022 School Committee for Shrewsbury Public Schools. Our presentation will focus on three areas:

- 1. Our work to date:** Our team has been in the “information gathering” stage of the strategic planning process. Through data analysis, 1:1 interviews, a community forum, and two work sessions, our team has been able to elicit feedback on the strengths, opportunities, and priorities for the future.
- 2. Our immediate next steps:** Phase two of this process will allow us to further engage in gathering input from multiple stakeholder groups. Through forums, surveys, and other means, we will begin to gather patterns and trends that will lead to the development of Strategic Planning 2.0. Also, during this time, we will move from data analysis to recommending actions for consideration.
- 3. Final phase:** During the final phase of this process, our team will facilitate opportunities for Shrewsbury Public Schools to develop a set of priorities, supporting action steps, a process for measuring impact, and communication tools.

We guarantee that we will facilitate a process that leads to a strategic plan that serves as a guide and clearly articulates a strong “system of support” in service of every student every day - no exceptions.



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: IV. Time Scheduled Appointments: MEETING DATE: **12/14/22**
**C. Sleep Health Advisory Committee: Report on Options for School
Start Time Changes**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Representatives from the Sleep Health Advisory Committee will present a report at the meeting that summarizes the overall work of the Committee and its Task Groups and presents two options for potential school schedule changes for the 2023-2024 school year that would result in later start times in order to provide the opportunity for more sleep for students.

Feedback from students, parents and caretakers, and staff will be sought through a survey being sent out on December 15, as well as through a public forum at the January 4 School Committee meeting.

The report is enclosed.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the School Committee hear the report and take such action as it deems in the best interest of the school system.

STAFF & ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Sara Russell, Parent, Member of the Sleep Health Advisory Committee
Dr. Toral Parikh, Parent, Member of the Sleep Health Advisory Committee
Mr. Jonathan Kelly, Principal of Sherwood Middle School, Member of the Sleep Health Advisory Committee
Ms. Sanjula Jakati, SHS Student, Class of 2025, Member of the Sleep Health Advisory Committee
Ms. Guinevere Molina, Teacher at Maj. HW Beal School, Member of the Sleep Health Advisory Committee



Shrewsbury Public Schools Sleep Health Advisory Committee

Report of School Start Time Options

December 9, 2022

I. Introduction

Over the past 30 years, the topic of sleep health has received much attention by sleep researchers. Study after study has returned data that clearly shows the importance of sleep as an essential pillar of human health, and from this finding has emerged the recommendation for later school start times, especially at the high school level. The consensus recommendation driven by expert physicians on the American Academy for Sleep Medicine, the National Sleep Foundation, and the American Academy for Pediatrics supports 8 to 10 hours of sleep each night for youth in the 13 to 18-year age range (Wise ML, et al. *J Clin Sleep Med* 2017). Yet data from multiple, large observational studies indicate that less than half of teenagers currently capture the requisite sleep time (Widome R, et al. *JAMA Pediatrics* 2020).

Evidence strongly implicates early school start times as a key modifiable contributor to insufficient sleep during adolescence. A growing body of evidence has shown that delaying school start times is an effective countermeasure to chronic sleep deprivation and has a wide range of potential benefits to students with respect to physical and mental health, safety, and academic achievement.

In response to such compelling evidence that adequate sleep for teenagers supports their physical, mental, and emotional development and performance, many school districts across the United States have examined and adopted later start times. In fact, many towns right here in Massachusetts, including Shrewsbury's neighboring towns of Northborough and Westborough, have successfully worked toward this goal.

II. Sleep Health Advisory Committee and Task Groups

The Sleep Health Advisory Committee was initially formed a few years ago to work on ways to improve student sleep health, which has been a goal in the Shrewsbury Public School (SPS) district's 2018-2022 strategic priorities and goals under the category of "enhanced well-being of all." Work on this endeavor was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and a new Sleep Health Advisory Committee was organized in September 2022 to address the stated five-year goal under this strategic priority, which is to investigate, recommend, and plan for potential changes to school start times to better align with adolescent health needs for adequate sleep.

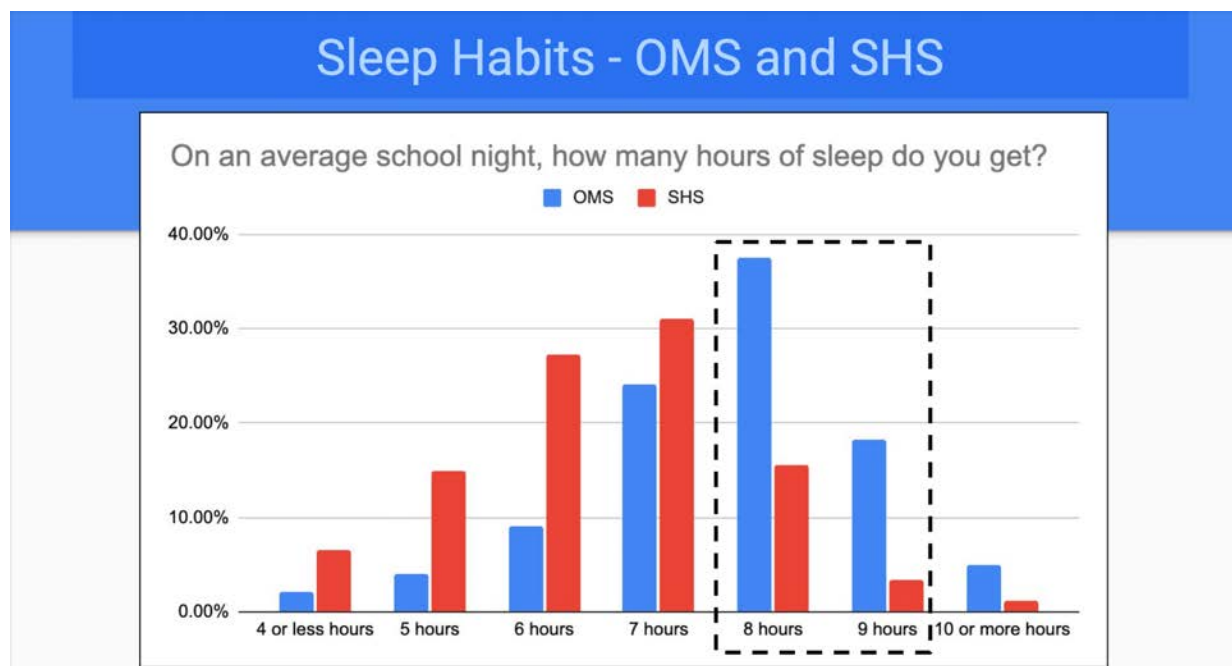
This Advisory Committee was subdivided into five task groups: Research Task Group, Feedback Task Group, Child Care Task Group, Practices in Other Districts Task Group, and Logistics Task Group. The Advisory Committee has convened six times between September and December 2022, to study the latest research on sleep health for children and adolescents, work toward task group-specific goals, share task group findings with the larger committee, and to consider potential options for adjusting school start times for the 2023-2024 school year.

III. Task Group Considerations for Developing New Start Time Options

In completing their work, the members of each task group have done extensive research, considered many variables, and developed in-depth reports which were presented to the School Committee on November 9, 2022 and November 30, 2022. The work of each task group has provided integral information that has been used to develop what this committee regards as viable options for adjustments to school start times and scheduling operations.

Research Task Group: This task group studied research from reputable, science-based sources regarding the sleep health of children and adolescents. Conclusions from their work indicated that extant data from the peer reviewed literature on school start times show clear signals that sleep debt coupled with the shift to evening chronotype (biological tendency for late bedtimes and later wake times) adversely impact high school students' mental well-being (higher incidence of depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation), physical disease (e.g. risk of obesity, diabetes), and neurodevelopmental conditions (exacerbates existing conditions including ADHD, ASD). Trends in the data also suggest negative impact / increased risk in other areas, including academic performance, general safety (e.g. automotive accidents), and long-term health sequelae that negatively affect quality of life over time. This is of the utmost relevance to

Shrewsbury students and families as the results of a health and wellness survey administered in December 2021 to students at Oak Middle School and Shrewsbury High School illustrated the following sleep data:



Taken with permission from the 5/4/2022 School Committee Slides

With the current high school start time of 7:35am, only **20% of high school students report getting the recommended 8 to 10 hours of sleep per night**, approximately 30% report getting 7 hours of sleep per night, and **50% report getting 6 or fewer hours of sleep per night**. The number of students reporting 8 to 10 hours of sleep per night increases to 58% and the number of students reporting 6 or fewer hours of sleep decreases to approximately 17% at Oak Middle School, which has a start time of 8:00am.

“Won’t high school students just stay up later if their school start time is later, resulting in the same amount of sleep?” This is a logical question that was asked by this Advisory Committee in its initial meeting, and was echoed by some participants of the ThoughtExchange survey completed by community stakeholders last month. The short answer is, not significantly. Research has found that students don’t stay up much later as a result of later school start times. For example, a study conducted by Meltzer et al. (2021) found that in the diverse Cherry Creek School District of about 55,000 students near Denver Colorado, a 70 minute delay in high school start time (8:20am) resulted in an average wake time that was 45 minutes later, and an average bedtime that was 14 minutes later, for a total of 3.8 hours of additional sleep per week. Results were similar

at the middle school age level. Research shows that student bedtimes are not significantly or proportionately delayed with later start times, yet weekday wake times are significantly later. The experiences of districts who have made a change to later start times has been that students reported feeling more rested than they had prior to the change. For further details related to this and other studies, as well as complete findings of the Research Task Group, you can read their full report [here](#) and view their slide presentation [here](#).

Feedback Task Group: To gain insight from SPS stakeholders this task group sought feedback from students, families, and staff via the administration of a ThoughtExchange survey during the month of November 2022. The information shared from all 3,947 stakeholders who participated in the survey includes 3,126 individual thoughts, perspectives, and questions, and 67,161 ratings, as those relate to students' sleep health and the potential benefits and challenges of changing school start and end times.

The highest rated thoughts for the parent and caretaker group support later school start times, while the highest rated thoughts for staff expressed concerns about child care. The highest rated thoughts for students included the need for additional sleep in order to focus better, while feeling more energized, motivated, and ready to learn. Complete details and the full report can be accessed [here](#) and to view the task group's slide presentation, click [here](#). All survey comments and ratings from each stakeholder group can be viewed at the following links: 1) [student feedback](#), 2) [parents/caretakers feedback](#), 3) [staff feedback](#), and 4) [all groups' combined feedback](#).

Additional surveys will be sent on December 15, 2022 so that students, families, and staff can provide feedback on each of the two potential change options.

Child Care Task Group: The Child Care Task Group provided a general study of the child care landscape in Shrewsbury and nearby towns, and examined potential child care issues for SPS families, staff, and the district itself should changes be made to school start times. Their full report is available [here](#) and their slide presentation, [here](#).

Notable findings from this group's research included decreased enrollment in the Extended School Care (ESC) program offered at the elementary schools and at Sherwood Middle School, when compared with enrollment trends prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. Openings for care are available for all morning programs at all schools and all afternoon programs at all schools, except for Beal Elementary School.

Additional findings indicated that many local child care providers have hours of operation that frequently begin prior to 8:00 am and end 5:00 pm or later, generally require same-day to 30-day notice for changes made to a child's care schedule (e.g.:

change in pick-up/drop-off time, adding/subtracting days, etc.), and are most likely to have openings for new enrollment when contacted well in advance of the need for care. Specific effects on any individual SPS family or staff member are expected to vary based on several factors, including: grade span of student or staff, number of caregivers and/or children in a given family, access to and availability of alternative family caregivers including older siblings, flexibility of caregiver work schedules, family finances, and family preferences and priorities.

Further child care considerations will be discussed later in this report, relative to the school start time options considered and presented.

Practices in Other Districts Task Group: This task group investigated the practices in other school districts regarding sleep health and school start times, both in Massachusetts and elsewhere. After reaching out to many school districts, the task group received responses from 29 school districts that had considered adopting later high school start times. Survey responses from administrators and educators in these districts were reviewed and analyzed for common themes. Their full report is available [here](#) and their slide presentation, [here](#).

- **Districts that Adopted Later High School Start Times** (Westborough, Northborough/Southborough, Marlborough, Newton, Ashland, and Barrington, R.I.): What emerged from districts that shifted high school start times later was that the change was viewed favorably and that they had “no regrets” as students appeared to be more awake and alert, less stressed, better rested, and were more engaged in their learning, which was a change that fit with the district’s focus on social and emotional learning. Additionally, the frequency of tardy arrivals decreased at the high school level. There were some stakeholder complaints with respect to the late end time for high school, especially in relation to how the later end time impacted student work schedules and opportunities, as well as a shift in the athletics schedule. Also noted was an increase in athlete early dismissals, a reduction in participation in after-school activities, increased transportation cost and logistical challenges, an increase in discipline issues because of more students riding the bus, and less bus availability for extracurricular activities.
- **Districts that Considered Adopting Later High School Start Times but Did Not** (Grafton, Franklin, and Hamden, CT): For districts that considered shifting high school start times later, but did not ultimately do so, the three common themes for not adopting the change were busing costs and logistics, financial impact on families, and impact on athletics and extracurricular activities.

- Districts that Adopted Later High School Start Times but then Reverted Back** (Newport R.I., and Norwalk CT): In these districts, a later high school start time was adopted, but then after a period of implementation, reverted back to their original start times due to negative impacts to parent work schedules, sports, students' jobs, student and faculty/staff transportation efficiency due to traffic flow, as well as lack of initial support from students for such change, and faculty dissatisfaction with the new schedule. Additionally, in Newport, R.I., communication of the change in start times was noted to be problematic as the district reported a sizable Spanish-speaking population, and most communication concerning the start time change was via email, to which many parents in the district did not have access.

Logistics Task Group: The logistics task group gathered and analyzed data regarding school schedules, bus transportation, co-curricular activities, and financial impact. You can view their slide presentation [here](#). Some of the information discussed is illuminated the chart below:

Current Timetable and Specifics

Tier	School(s)	Start/End Times	Length of School Day	Time Between Tiers (Morning/Afternoon)
Tier 1	High School	7:35 am-2:00 pm	6hr 25 min	Morning bus pick-up begins at 6:19am
Tier 2	Middle Schools	8:00am-2:35pm	6hr 35 min	(25 min/35 min)
Tier 3	Elementary Schools	9:00am-3:15pm	6hr 15 min	(60 min/40 min)

- Student School Schedules:** Each grade span (elementary schools, middle schools, high school) has a slightly different length of student school day: 6 hours 15 minutes for elementary schools, 6 hours 25 minutes for high school, and 6 hours 35 minutes for middle schools. The start times refer to the time in the morning when the instructional day begins, with students generally allowed to arrive on campus up to 30 minutes in advance of that time. The end times refer to when the instructional day ends and dismissal begins, with the process generally taking 15 to 20 minutes.

- **Required Time on Campus for Educators:** The largest group of district staff members is the professional educator group, consisting of teachers, counselors, psychologists, nurses, and other professional-level educator roles. In order to meet the demands of their jobs (including planning, grading, communicating, etc.), these educators work many hours outside of the time they are required to be on campus. The requirement for the hours they must be present at school is governed by the collective bargaining agreement (i.e., contract), which requires high school and middle school educators to arrive on campus at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the student day and for elementary educators to arrive at least 30 minutes prior. At the end of the day, high school educators are required to remain at least 30 minutes after student dismissal, and elementary educators at least 15 minutes. Middle school educators are currently required to remain 20 minutes after student dismissal because of the 10-minute longer student day at that level; if the student day is reduced at the middle level, the contract specifies that they will then be required to remain for 30 minutes. District staff who work on an hourly basis in the district have various assigned work days, and administrators have no specific start/end times in their contracts given their job expectations.
- **Transportation:** There are 4,128 registered bus riders across the various schools in the SPS district. To maximize use and minimize cost, SPS contracts with AA Transportation to operate a three-tiered busing system comprised of 48 buses that complete a total of 247 bus routes per day. We estimate that each additional bus would cost \$87,000 annually to add to the system.
- **There is insufficient time between the busing tiers to allow the buses to complete their routes**, especially between high school and middle school routes. This results in the need to pick up high school students as early as 6:19am, more than one hour before the school start time of 7:35 am and drop them off at the high school earlier than necessary, to achieve timely pick-up and drop-off of middle school students for their 8:00 am start time. Consequently, some students are arriving at the high school a few minutes **before** 7:00am.
- **Athletics and Co-Curricular Activities:** “Co-curricular” refers to activities, programs, and learning experiences that complement what students are learning in school. A survey conducted by the SPS athletic director indicated that athletic departments in nearby districts with later high school times (Westborough, Concord-Carlisle, Algonquin, Lincoln-Sudbury, Newton South, Wayland, Weston) reported a correlation between shifting their start time later and the possibility and likelihood of encountering more conflicts and obstacles to success. As start

time progresses later, it is predicted that the number and significance of conflicts increase.

IV. Options For School Start Times

The Sleep Health Advisory Committee has come to a consensus that two new options that would move start times later are viable and deserve strong consideration. A third option is also available, and that is to make no change, and keep the start times as they are currently. This Advisory Committee is **not** recommending any particular option at this time, but is rather bringing forward highly feasible possibilities and presenting their forecasted benefits and challenges.

Because of the many variables described thus far, the guiding principles this committee sought to follow while forming goal-specific and viable start time options were:

- 1) Provide a longer, biologically necessary and well-timed sleep opportunity for high school students.
- 2) Maintain or increase the length of sleep opportunities afforded to students at the middle and elementary school levels.
- 3) Maintain the general pattern of three busing tiers, without additional buses, to avoid major cost increases.
- 4) Equalize time between all busing tiers to provide at least 40 minutes between tiers for buses to complete their routes on time, and eliminate the need for excessively early bus pick-up of high school students.
- 5) Standardize the length of the school day across all schools to ensure 40 minutes between busing tiers and simplify operations.
- 6) Recognize and consider the impact that significant school schedule changes can have on family and staff child care
- 7) Avoid having the high school end their school day so late that it significantly impacts co-curricular activities, after school employment, or sibling care.
- 8) Avoid having students, especially those in elementary school, waiting for the bus or getting dropped off in the dark. Sunrise in late December and early January is approximately 7:15am and sunsets are at approximately 4:15pm.

OPTION A:

Tier	School(s)	Start/ End Times for Students	Educator Time on Campus
Tier 1	High School	7:55am – 2:20pm	7:40am – 2:50pm
Tier 2	Middle Schools	8:35am – 3:00pm	8:20am – 3:30pm
Tier 3	Elementary Schools	9:15am – 3:40pm	8:45am – 3:55pm

Benefits of Option A:

- By standardizing the length of school day among schools and equalizing length of busing tiers, many high school students who take the bus will lengthen their morning sleep opportunity by 35 minutes (15 minutes for decreased need for early bus pick-up due to insufficient route time allocation plus 20 minutes in delayed start time from current time of 7:35am). Those who arrive by car will lengthen their sleep opportunity by 20 minutes.
- Middle school start time shifts 35 minutes later, increasing the length of sleep opportunity for students in the 10-13 year age range, which helps to support their biological sleep needs of 9 to 11 hours of sleep per night.
- Maintains the order of the current school start time schedule, which confers efficiency benefits for adherence to the afternoon busing timetable for all schools due to the ability to promptly load and dismiss all buses at once from the high school.
- High school students will be dismissed before middle and elementary school students, allowing high schoolers to provide child care at home for families who use older siblings for afternoon care.
- Staff may be less likely to require morning child care for their own children.
- Minimal impact to afternoon activities for all grade spans, including extra help, athletics, clubs, performing arts, and employment.

- Most, if not all morning bus pick-ups and afternoon drop-offs are likely to take place during adequate daylight, regardless of time of year.

Challenges of Option A:

- Other than the “no change” choice, this option provides the smallest increase in length of sleep opportunity for high school students.
- SPS staff with children may incur greater need for childcare in the afternoon, particularly those who work at the elementary level.
- Addition of Extended School Care morning program may be necessary at Sherwood Middle School.
- As part of standardizing the length of the school day, elementary teachers’ required time at school may increase from 7 hours, to 7 hours and 10 minutes.

OPTION B:

Tier	School(s)	Start/End Times for Students	Educator Time on Campus
Tier 1	Middle Schools	7:55am-2:20pm	7:40am – 2:50pm
Tier 2	High School	8:35am-3:00pm	8:20am – 3:30pm
Tier 3	Elementary Schools	9:15am-3:40pm	8:45am – 3:55pm

Benefits of Option B:

- By standardizing the length of school day among schools and equalizing length of busing tiers, high school students who take the bus will lengthen their morning sleep opportunity by 1 hour and 15 minutes (15 minutes for decreased need for early bus pick-up due to insufficient route time allocation plus 60 minutes in delayed start time from current time of 7:35am). Those who arrive by car will lengthen their sleep opportunity by 60 minutes.

- Middle school start time shifts only 5 minutes earlier, generally maintaining the current length of sleep opportunity for students in the 10-13 year age range.
- High school students will still be dismissed before elementary school students, allowing them to provide child care at home for families who use older siblings for afternoon care of elementary school students.
- SPS staff may be less likely to require morning child care for their own children.
- No impact to afternoon activities for middle school students, and mild impact for elementary school students.
- Most, if not all morning bus pick-ups and afternoon drop-offs are likely to take place during adequate daylight, regardless of time of year.

Challenges of Option B:

- Changes the order of the school start time schedule among grade spans, which challenges adherence to the afternoon busing timetable for all schools. Due to the physical layout, there is an inability to promptly load and dismiss at once from the middle school campuses.
- This option has the potential to necessitate reconfiguration of dismissal traffic patterns at the middle schools to accommodate the need for buses to begin afternoon routes in a timely manner, such that they arrive at subsequent school campuses on time.
- Increased potential for impact to afternoon activities for high school students, including extra help, athletics, clubs, performing arts, and employment. Co-curriculars would begin at approximately 3:30pm, to allow for a 30 minute extra-help window immediately after school.
- SPS staff with children may incur greater need for childcare in the afternoon, particularly those who work at the high school and elementary grade levels.
- As part of standardizing the length of the school day, elementary teachers' required time at school may increase from 7 hours, to 7 hours and 10 minutes.

Additional Considerations:

The Sleep Health Advisory Committee strongly considered an additional option, which involved starting the elementary schools in the first tier at 7:55am, followed by the middle and high schools. While this option aligned well with biological sleep needs and rhythms for all student age groups, it was ultimately not deemed to be a viable alternative based on feedback received from the ThoughtExchange survey and lessons considered from other districts who swapped elementary and high school start times. This option posed the most significant impact to family and staff schedules and child care needs, had the greatest likelihood of negatively affecting high school student participation in after-school athletics, co-curriculars, employment, and sibling child care, necessitated the addition of a morning ESC program at Sherwood Middle School, and would have required lengthening the afternoon elementary ESC programs, increasing their cost.

Preschool Schedules:

The schedules for preschool classes currently housed at Parker Road Preschool, Beal School, and Shrewsbury High School (Little Colonials) have not been part of the work of the Sleep Health Advisory Committee. If the high school schedule changes, the Little Colonials schedule will need some adjustments due to the fact that SHS students who take child development classes are part of that program. Similarly, there could possibly be slight adjustments to Parker Road and Beal preschool schedules if changes are made at the other levels, but it is not anticipated that schedule adjustments would be substantial at the preschool level. This is a topic that the Advisory Committee will review as it continues its work in the coming weeks.

V. Summary

Over the past 30 years, countless research studies have clearly shown the essential nature of adequate sleep for the healthy development and maintenance of physical and mental health, emotional regulation, safety, and academic achievement. Evidence strongly implicates early school start times as a key modifiable contributor to insufficient sleep during adolescence. A growing body of evidence has shown that delaying school start times is an effective countermeasure to chronic sleep deprivation. In turn, this Sleep Health Advisory Committee was formed to investigate, recommend, and plan for potential changes to school start times to better align with adolescent health needs for adequate sleep, which has been a goal in the SPS district's 2018-2022 strategic priorities and goals under the category of "enhanced well-being of all." In completing their work, Sleep Health Advisory Committee members have done extensive research, considered many variables, and developed in-depth reports that have provided integral information that has been used to develop two viable options for adjustments to school start times and scheduling operations:

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
<u>Option A:</u>	<u>High School</u>	<u>Middle Schools</u>	<u>Elementary Schools</u>
	7:55am - 2:20pm	8:35am - 3:00pm	9:15am - 3:40pm

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
<u>Option B:</u>	<u>Middle Schools</u>	<u>High School</u>	<u>Elementary Schools</u>
	7:55am - 2:20pm	8:35am - 3:00pm	9:15am - 3:40pm

Both Option A and Option B meet our guiding principles to:

- Provide a longer sleep opportunity for students at all ages
- Minimize or eliminate the need for additional district transportation expenditures
- Equalize the length of busing tiers to provide at least 40 minutes at each tier for buses to complete their routes on time
- Eliminate the need for excessively early bus pick-up of high school students
- Standardize the length of the school day across all schools to support bus schedule adherence
- Recognize and consider the impact that significant school schedule changes can have on family and staff child care
- Minimize significant impacts to after-school co-curricular activities, employment, or sibling care
- Raise the likelihood that students board and disembark from buses during daylight hours.

While there are also challenges with each option, this Advisory Committee worked to create scenarios where these are minimized. And as always, there is an option to make no change.

At this time, the Sleep Health Advisory Committee is seeking valuable feedback from stakeholders regarding each option presented. We continue to engage in ongoing work to review the two approaches to see whether any adjustments or implementation strategies could further improve their effectiveness. This committee will convene in January to review feedback received from the school community, and will shortly thereafter recommend a favored option to the School Committee. Practices that can support improvements in sleep hygiene for students will also be recommended at that time.

VI. Timeline of Remaining Process

December 15, 2022: Survey of stakeholder groups initiated to get feedback on options

January 4, 2023: Public hearing at the School Committee meeting to listen to feedback from stakeholders

January 18, 2023: Discussion of options by the School Committee and potential vote

January 25, 2023: Potential additional School Committee meeting for discussion/vote (if necessary)

February 1, 2023: Last recommended School Committee meeting for discussion/vote to implement any change for the start of the 2023-2024 school year (if necessary)

References

Meltzer LJ, Wahlstrom KL, Plog AE, Strand MJ. Changing school start times: impact on sleep in primary and secondary school students. *Sleep*. 2021 Jul 9;44(7):zsab048. doi: 10.1093/sleep/zsab048. PMID: 33855446; PMCID: PMC8271142.

Widome R., et al. Association of Delaying School Start Time With Sleep Duration, Timing, and Quality Among Adolescents. *JAMA Pediatr*. 2020;174(7):697-704.

Wise, M, et al. Consensus Statement of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine on the Recommended Amount of Sleep for Healthy Children: Methodology and Discussion. *J Clin Sleep Med*. 2016; 2016 Nov 15;12(11):1549-1561.



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **V. Curriculum**

MEETING DATE: **12/14/22**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **VI. Policy**

MEETING DATE: **12/14/22**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS/STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

ITEM NO: **VII. Finance & Operations**

MEETING DATE: **12/14/22**

A. Out-of-District Special Education School Tuition Increase: Potential Vote on Communication

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Massachusetts' Operational Services Division (OSD) is responsible for setting tuition prices for more than 200 approved special education programs in approximately 100 private schools. This price setting is necessary to accommodate students with needs that cannot be met by their current school district. The OSD recently made a recommendation for a 14% inflation factor increase for out-of-district special education school tuitions for the next fiscal year. The impact on districts will vary, but is expected to be a significant budgetary increase for all districts, including Shrewsbury.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the Committee vote to authorize the Chair to draft a letter on their behalf to the Operational Services Division, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the district's state legislative delegation, and the incoming Governor Healey administration regarding the proposed 14% tuition rate increase for out-of-district Special Education placements for the 2023-2024 school year.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Patrick C. Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **VIII. Old Business**

MEETING DATE: **12/14/22**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

MEMBERS/STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **IX. New Business**

MEETING DATE: **12/14/22**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **X. Approval of Minutes**

MEETING DATE: **12/14/22**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on November 30, 2022 and the School Committee Workshop held on December 7, 2022 are enclosed.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

That the Committee accept the minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on November 30, 2022 and the School Committee Workshop held on December 7, 2022.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Ms. Lynsey Heffernan, Chairperson

Mr. Jon Wensky, Secretary

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, November 30, 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; 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

Ms. Heffernan thanked attendees for their participation at the Strategic Priorities Planning kickoff event held recently in the district.

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Sawyer reported that there is a page on the Shrewsbury Public Schools (SPS) website that contains information on 2023-2027 Strategic Planning; commended all parties who helped plan and execute a successful Unified Thanksgiving Feast at Shrewsbury High School (SHS); and thanked individuals who donated to the Colonial Fund on Giving Tuesday to provide funding for career pathways programming.

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:

A. SHS Student Advisory Committee: Report

Mr. Andrew Smith, SHS Teacher, is the Faculty Advisor to the Student Advisory Committee (SAC), and students Shalini Biju (Chair), Laura Lee, Nicole Shen, Aanya Gupta, and Siri Ural gave the report. Their report included information on student life, co-curricular activities/athletics, and events/fundraisers at SHS. In response to questions from the Committee, the students provided additional information on: how to use the SchoolPulse wellness text program; impacts from elimination of the student activity fee (more student involvement); the waterfall class schedule at SHS (difficult for students in the Work Study program); and ways to engage students around Strategic Priorities planning (connect with students during the Advisory period).

B. SPS Sleep Health Advisory Committee: Task Group Reports

Dr. Sawyer provided background information and a timeline going forward for the work of the Sleep Health Advisory Committee.

a. Feedback from Stakeholders

Sarah Anane, Student, SHS Class of 2024; Hallie Burak, Oak Middle School Principal; and Dr. Lizotte began the report from the Feedback Task Group by describing the ThoughtExchange survey software platform utilized to collect feedback from stakeholders, the survey question asked, and the administration of the survey. They shared survey data by school; summarized “top thoughts”, “lowest-rated thoughts”, and polarized opinions/areas in common from students, parents/caretakers, and staff; and noted overarching themes from the survey feedback. Ms. Heffernan acknowledged the importance of looking at the different perspectives of the three groups surveyed.

b. Practices in Other Districts

Angie Flynn, Director of School Counseling, SHS; Noelle Freeman, Director of School Nursing; and Walter J. Paton School Principal Scott Mulcahy gave the report from the Practices in Other Districts Task Group. They described the charge of their Task Group and detailed the other districts that were surveyed, which included those that changed start times, those that did not change start times, and those that changed and then reverted back. Their report included: themes, time changes, and communication methods from districts that changed start times; themes from districts that did not change start times; case study takeaways from a district that changed and reverted back; and a summary of conclusions drawn from their work. Ms. Boucher (a member of the Practices in Other Districts Task Group) added that some local districts have already adopted later start time changes.

c. Childcare

Maj. H.W. Beal School Teacher Guinevere Molina and SPS parent Sara Russell gave the report from the Child Care Task Group, which included information on: the group’s purpose; types and sources of information gathered; other towns surveyed for the report; child care enrollment data (current and future) for SPS and other provider programs; child care provider opening and closing times; lead times needed from providers for changes to pick-up/drop-off times; and potential impacts to families and staff around child care from a variety of proposed scenarios incorporating different changes to school start times. Ms. Heffernan expressed appreciation for the large number of providers surveyed for the report.

d. Logistics

In the report from the Logistics Task Group, Mr. Collins provided current information on busing in the district (noting it is a three-tier system: elementary, middle, and high school; with separate busing for students at Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School); detailed ridership data in the district and broken out by school; and discussed transportation costs (currently an all-inclusive annual rate of \$80,752 is paid to the vendor for each bus). SPS parent Jennifer Parshall addressed existing transportation challenges in the district in the context of current start times, different student day lengths at schools, and insufficient time between busing tiers; presented a variety of considerations for after-school activities and athletics from changing start times; discussed key success factors and principles being utilized to form potential start time change options; and advised that specific options for consideration would be presented at a future meeting. For clarification, Dr. Sawyer noted that times cited in the report for the length of educators’ work days was only for the time they are required to be *on school campuses*, and did not reflect the additional time teachers spend engaged in work outside of those hours, either on campus or at home.

V. Curriculum

None.

VI. Policy

None.

VII. Finance & Operations

A. Fiscal Year 2023 Budget: Update

In the report, Mr. Collins provided: an overview of the Fiscal Year 2023 Town Appropriated Budget; an update on the use of COVID grant funding (noting a proposed amendment to Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER-3) fund use would be presented at a future meeting); details on variances in some categories of the Town Appropriated Budget (including overage for Day-to-Day and Long-Term Substitutes due in part to vacancies from COVID); and an update on Circuit Breaker funding. In response to a question from Ms. Boucher, Mr. Collins advised that three upper class SPS students unenrolled from vocational education programs between the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years.

B. Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Calendar: Review and Vote

Mr. Collins detailed a proposed timeline/calendar for development of the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget. In response to a question from Mr. Wensky regarding timing of the upcoming transportation contract, Mr. Collins advised that the bid opening was scheduled for late January 2023. Dr. Sawyer recommended adoption of the proposed budget calendar. On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Boucher, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Calendar as presented.

VIII. Old Business

None.

IX. New Business

A. Cafeteria Workers Collective Bargaining Agreement: Vote

Mr. Wensky (a School Committee Bargaining Representative along with Ms. Fryc) advised the three-year contract was effective from the 2022-2023 school year through the 2024-2025 school year, and detailed some of the changes from the previous contract. Ms. Fryc added that the new contract reflected an adjustment to the current market. Ms. Heffernan noted the student meal program is self-sustaining and Mr. Collins added that federal and state revenue currently pays for the program (meals are free to students). Dr. Sawyer recommended passage and advised that Town Manager Kevin Mizikar, who has the ability to cast a vote, was not in attendance at the meeting but had communicated that he supports the agreement. On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Boucher, the Committee voted unanimously to ratify the three-year successor collective bargaining agreement with the Shrewsbury Cafeteria Workers association for the three-year period starting July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025 as presented.

X. Approval of Minutes

Without objections from the Committee, the minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on November 9, 2022 were accepted as distributed.

XI. Executive Session

None.

XII. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Boucher, the committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:16 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

Student Advisory Committee Agenda

Sleep Health Stakeholder Feedback Task Group Report

Sleep Health Survey Data - All Participants

Sleep Health Survey Data - Students

Sleep Health Survey Data - Parents/Caretakers

Sleep Health Survey Data - Staff

Sleep Health Practices in Other Districts Task Group Report

Sleep Health Child Care Task Group Report

Child Care Providers List

Sleep Health Logistics Task Group Report

Sleep Health Advisory Committee Task Groups Slide Presentation

FY23 Budget Update Report

FY24 Budget Calendar

Cafeteria Agreement Memo

Cafeteria MOA

Set(s) of minutes as referenced above

**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
100 MAPLE AVENUE
SHREWSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS
MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE WORKSHOP
Wednesday, December 7, 2022
Shrewsbury High School, 2002 Conference Room**

Start Time: 5:35pm

Present: Ms. Lynsey Heffernan, Chairperson; Mr. Jason Palitsch, Vice Chairperson; Mr. Jonathan Wensky, Secretary; Ms. Sandy Fryc; Ms. Erin Boucher; Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools; Ms. Barbara Malone, Executive Director of Human Resources; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; Dr. Jane Lizotte, Assistant Superintendent for Community Partnerships and Well-Being.

Focused Schools/Strategic Planning

The School Committee and members of the Central Office team met with Ms. Kerry Purcell and Ms. Ashley Santiago, strategic planning consultants from “Focused Schools,” to discuss the next SPS five-year Strategic Plan. During this time, we discussed the process and reviewed the existing strategic plan to determine if we need to modify, maintain, or abandon current priorities as we craft our new five-year strategic plan. This discussion wrapped up at 7:10pm.

FY 24 Budget Development - Status Update

Dr. Sawyer kicked off the workshop advising that this is all preliminary budget work to give the School Committee a status on current year projections and preparations for the FY24 budget. Mr. Collins reviewed some of the key financial pressure points in the current FY23 budget. There has been an increased need for daily and long term subs costs. Absentee rates are similar to last year. Ms. Malone advised that paraprofessional staffing has been shorthanded on ABAs and CSA's for the half of year which required an increased need to call subs. She said filling substitute needs significantly improved with the added HR Manager's focus on hiring subs. It's made a big difference in the percentage of subs being filled daily. HR has hired well over 50 day-to-day subs. Ms. Fryc asked if there has been an increase in use of Family Sick Time as a result of the new SEA contract. Ms. Malone confirmed there were only four teachers requesting a conversion from Sick to Family Sick days. Additionally, there has been an increasing need for mandated paraprofessional services (i.e. students with intensive needs) and an increase in enrollment of the 18-22 year old population.

Other notable financial impacts include the decrease in vocational enrollment. School Committee members called out the potential need to respond to questions regarding where this vocational money has been spent as a result of the change in enrollment. Mr. Collins also advised that the supplies and material budgets have projected an increase of 4.25% for inflation implications. The other big variable to FY 24 budget will be the Transportation contract with bids beginning in late January 2023. Labor costs are confirmed as all contracts have been settled. In terms of transportation, in addition to the upcoming contract, Mr. Collins advised that there has been a significant rebound in bus ridership which generated more fee revenue than projected and the impact will be factored into FY24 budget projections.

Special Education Out of District Tuitions - For the FY24 budget, Special Education Out of District Tuitions are based on a different subset of students vs. current year - we could see costs shift here, especially with the 14% increase in tuition rates. Mr. Collins has budgeted for this increase. Circuit Breaker funding offsets demand on the operating budget. Mr. Collins reviewed a breakdown of Circuit Breaker funding from FY22 through projected year end FY24 (6/30/24) noting that the School Committee decided to retain a much larger reserve under the Circuit Breaker guidelines to ensure continued financial stability under the override framework.

ESSER-3 Amendment - Mr. Collins advised that they will be re-examining the use of grant funds through the ESSER-3 federal grant. The School Committee can expect an amendment to extend funding to some staff positions (one counselor and literacy tutors) vs. shifting FY 24 budget dollars as originally planned.

Next Steps - Mr. Collins advised there will be a validation of all budget line items and adjusting FY24 personnel budgets based on any additional staff changes in addition to a refinement of expected allocation grant funds and likely revision of ESSER-3 Financial and program plans. He will provide an update to the School Committee at our next budget workshop on Wednesday, January 11, 2023.

Sleep Health/Start Time Study Group - Dr. Sawyer and Mr. Collins briefed the School Committee on the status of this initiative in advance of the subcommittee presentation at our Wednesday, December 14, 2022 General Meeting.

Motion to adjourn the School Committee Workshop: On a motion by Mr. Palitsch; Seconded by Ms. Boucher, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn the workshop.

Workshop adjourned at: 8:25pm

Documents referred to:

Strategic Priorities Planning Slide Presentation

FY 24 Budget Development - Status Update Slide Presentation



**SHREWSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

ITEM NO: **XI. Executive Session**

MEETING DATE: **12/14/22**

- 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**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Executive Session is warranted for these purposes.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

Request a motion to adjourn to Executive Session:

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, and then return to Open Session only for the purpose of adjourning for the evening.

STAFF AVAILABLE FOR PRESENTATION:

Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools

ITEM NO: **XII. Adjournment**