

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, June 14, 2023

Present: Ms. Sandra Fryc, Chairperson; Ms. Erin Boucher, Vice Chairperson; Mr. Jon Wensky, Secretary; Ms. Rachel Sharifipour; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; Ms. Amy B. Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Ms. Meg Belsito, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services; 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.

Not present: Ms. Lynsey Heffernan.

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

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

I. Public Participation

None.

II. Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports

Ms. Sharifipour expressed appreciation to Shrewsbury Public Schools (SPS) staff, parents, and PTOs for planning and executing a number of successful elementary and middle school end-of-year celebrations, and reported attending the last All School Meeting at Maj. Howard W. Beal School, which served as a send-off for Principal Chris Girardi (Mr. Girardi will assume the role of Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations beginning July 1) whose departure was recognized with a gift of a Buddy Bench to Beal School from the PTO.

Ms. Boucher expressed appreciation to Oak Middle School staff and students for sending off Grade 8 students with a number of successful year-end events.

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Sawyer congratulated all SPS students and teams on successes in a number of academic and co-curricular activities and competitions, including the Shrewsbury High School (SHS) Mock Trial Team's finish as a Top 16 Team in Massachusetts, and the completion of a very strong season by the SHS Under-17 Boys Crew Team.

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:

A. Retirement Recognition

Committee members began the recognition of Mr. Collins at his last School Committee meeting appearance by sharing their perspectives, in turn, on their experiences with Mr. Collins' and his excellent work in his role as Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations (later in the meeting Ms. Fryc expressed congratulations on behalf of Ms. Heffernan, who was not in attendance). Dr. Sawyer presented official citations for Mr. Collins on behalf of State Sen. Michael Moore from the Massachusetts Senate,

and on behalf of State Rep. Hannah Kane from the Massachusetts House of Representatives, before sharing his personal remarks on Mr. Collins' outstanding work on behalf of students and the district during his tenure at SPS.

Mr. Collins spoke and expressed appreciation to a number of SPS colleagues and family members who had influenced his career and work (including former SPS Superintendents Dr. Anthony Bent and Dr. John P. Collins, Dr. Sawyer, the School Committee, municipal leaders, and his wife Andrea), before being invited up to be recognized by the Committee and presented with a gift as a token of appreciation.

B. SHS DECA Business Club: Report & Student Recognition

SHS Instructional Technology Teacher Jason Andreola was unable to attend the meeting so Principal Todd Bazydlo introduced Class of 2024 students Fawwaz Naeem, Shiv Patel, Swathi Kannan, and Nayan Kaul, who gave the report. Their presentation included information on Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA), DECA competition protocols, development of the SHS chapter, benefits to students, an overview and key achievements of the 2022-2023 season, and goals for the upcoming year. After answering questions from the Committee (in-person Economics was suggested as a course needed at SHS) the students were invited up to be recognized by the Committee and Nayan Kaul was presented with a certificate for earning a First Place State Medal for the Highest Personal Financial Literacy Written Exam Score.

C. Social and Emotional Learning and Well-Being Initiatives: Report

Dr. Lizotte began the report by presenting examples of student and staff well-being in grades preK-12, and later in the presentation detailed desired short- and long-term student outcomes relative to Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in the district. SPS Mindfulness Director Jordan Grinstein introduced a video of students leading an all-school mindfulness session via the Zoom technology platform, and shared details about his work meeting in person with classes of students on mindfulness. SHS students Valentina Fonseca and Vivienne Dos Santos led meeting attendees in a Welcome Meditation mindfulness practice. Jennifer Wilson, Intensive Learning Center Teacher at Sherwood Middle School (SMS), described the positive impacts to students and staff in her classroom from utilizing mindfulness practices. SMS Grade 6 Math and Science Teacher Hannah Collins discussed integration of the Character Strong curriculum at Sherwood and provided examples of SEL daily calendars and prompts for students. Oak Middle School (OMS) Grade 7 English Language Arts Teacher Sinead Slabine and Grade 7 Special Education Teacher Sarah Powers presented information on daily, weekly, and monthly SEL opportunities at OMS that included Book Club and Chess Club; Career Day; their Advisory "formula"/routine, and examples of associated Advisory reflections and projects.

Additional information was provided in response to questions from the Committee (one student presenter advised they use mindfulness prior to taking final exams; most requests for mindfulness opportunities come from SHS).

V. Curriculum

None.

VI. Policy

A. No Homework Calendar for 2023-2024 School Year: Vote

Noting Policy 523: Homework Policy had been updated in April 2023, Dr. Sawyer advised that implementation of an annual "No Homework" Calendar is a policy requirement. Dr. Sawyer detailed the recommended "no homework" dates for 2023-2024 in order, presented the dates in both list format and calendar format, and recommended that the Committee vote to approve the proposed dates. Committee

members expressed support for the proposed dates and noted the importance of communicating the calendar dates to the school community.

On a motion by Ms. Boucher, seconded by Mr. Wensky, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the “No Homework” Calendar for 2023-2024 School Year as presented.

VII. Finance & Operations

A. Fiscal Year 2023 Budget: Final Report & Vote on Fund Transfers

Noting the district was 95% through the fiscal and school year, Mr. Collins provided a status on COVID-19 funding (ESSER, ESSER-2, and ESSER-3 grant funds) and on the General Fund (approved at the annual Shrewsbury Town Meeting). Mr. Collins projected there would be no budget surplus or deficit by June 30. He provided updates on areas including March/April 2023 investment planning, substitute costs (trending downward), and Circuit Breaker Funds (FY23 is projected to end with the maximum allowable amount). There were no questions from the Committee.

On a motion by Ms. Boucher, seconded by Mr. Wensky, the Committee voted unanimously to authorize the administration to make budget transfers from the original budget plan as necessary to eliminate deficits and surpluses, with the intent of fully expending the total FY23 appropriation by June 30, 2023 and balancing all accounts.

B. Fiscal Year 2024 Non-Represented Staff Compensation Adjustments: Vote

Dr. Sawyer provided a brief history of compensation-related information for non-represented staff, including that this group experienced a total compensation freeze for Fiscal Year 2021. For FY24 Dr. Sawyer recommended compensation increases for non-represented hourly employees (3.0%), Extended School Care Program Childcare Providers and Lead Providers (2.75%), and crossing guards (stipend of \$40 per day, up from \$29.02), and provided his rationale for the recommendations.

On a motion by Ms. Boucher, seconded by Mr. Wensky, the Committee voted unanimously to approve compensation adjustments to non-represented staff for Fiscal Year 2024 as presented.

VIII. Old Business

None.

IX. New Business

A. Superintendent’s Contract: Vote

Noting a market adjustment had been done the previous year, Ms. Fryc recommended that changes to Dr. Sawyer’s contract for Fiscal Year 2024 include a salary increase, a one-year extension, and the addition of language regarding Family Sick Time and earned and unused personal/sick time benefits in order to align with that of other district Administrators.

On a motion by Ms. Boucher, seconded by Mr. Wensky, the Committee voted unanimously to authorize the Chair to execute an updated employment agreement between the School Committee and Dr. Joseph M. Sawyer as Superintendent of Schools for the dates July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2028, which will provide a salary increase of 2.50% for a salary of \$244,065 for the Fiscal Year 2024, and which will update personal leave benefits to align with those of other district administrators, with all other contract terms remaining unchanged.

X. Approval of Minutes

Without objections from the Committee, the minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on June 7, 2023, were accepted as distributed.

XI. Executive Session

None.

XII. Adjournment

On a motion by Ms. Sharifipour, seconded by Ms. Boucher, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Ms. Sharifipour, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Boucher, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

SHS DECA Business Club Slide Presentation
Social and Emotional Learning and Well-Being Initiatives Report
Social and Emotional Learning and Well-Being Initiatives Slide Presentation
2023-2024 “No Homework” Calendar Memo
2023-2024 Proposed “No Homework” Dates - List Format
2023-2024 Proposed “No Homework” Dates - Calendar Format
FY23 Final Budget Report
FY24 Non-Represented Staff Compensation Memo
FY24 Non-Represented Staff Pay Rate Schedules
Set(s) of minutes as referenced above