

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Present: Ms. Sandra Fryc, Chairperson; Ms. Erin Boucher, Vice Chairperson; Mr. Jon Wensky, Secretary; Ms. Lynsey Heffernan; Ms. Rachel Sharifipour; Mr. Christian Girardi, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; 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. Fryc at 7:00 pm.

I. Public Participation

None.

II. Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports

None.

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Sawyer reported that The Olson Group had been contracted through an RFP process to conduct a safety and security audit of the district and that a report to the School Committee on the findings is planned for December 2023. Dr. Sawyer congratulated Shrewsbury High School (SHS) Performing Arts, Music, & Choral Teacher Mr. Michael Lapomardo on being named as one of 25 semifinalists in the nation for the GRAMMY Awards 2024 Music Educator Award.

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:

A. Superintendent's Awards: Student Recognition

Dr. Sawyer recognized, in alphabetical order, the two students from the SHS Class of 2024 with the current highest grade point average (GPA) as recipients of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS) Superintendent's Award for Academic Excellence: Krish Gupta and Marla Zacks. Dr. Sawyer also recognized SHS Class of 2024 students Tyler Fontanez and Yana Teixeira as the recipients of this year's National School Development Council Award for Academic Growth and Student Leadership in Learning, noting the students were recommended for the award by SHS Assistant Principal and grade administrator for the Class of 2024, Ms. Maureen Monopoli, who was in attendance at the meeting along with SHS Principal Mr. Todd Bazydlo. Dr. Sawyer provided biographical information for all the award winners, and the students had an opportunity to share brief remarks.

The Committee and Dr. Sawyer congratulated the students, who were then invited up to be recognized with certificates, and to have their photos taken with the Committee, Dr. Sawyer, Mr. Bazydlo, and Ms. Monopoli.

B. Special Town Meeting – Investments in Schools: Discussion & Vote

After Dr. Sawyer provided background information on Article 3 that will be presented at the upcoming Shrewsbury Special Town Meeting, Public Buildings Division Manager Mr. Bill Tuttle, Director of Public Works Jeffrey Howland, and Mr. Girardi provided information regarding temporary air conditioning (AC) improvements being proposed. Their report noted the purpose of the AC improvements (mitigating heat in select physical locations on high temperature days), detailed the associated project components (physical units, electrical upgrades, carpentry), and included a description of the AC units (rolling floor units). In response to questions from the Committee, additional information was provided on plans to install the units temporarily during select time periods during the school year (April/end of school year and August/start of school year). Because of their sensitive nature, no details about the safety and security investments were discussed.

Dr. Sawyer expressed hope that Article 3 would be approved at the Special Town Meeting and recommended the Committee vote to endorse the proposed investments to signal their support in advance of the October 2023 Special Town Meeting.

On a motion by Ms. Boucher, seconded by Ms. Heffernan, the Committee voted unanimously to endorse investments in Special Town Meeting items for funding for temporary air conditioning for top floors and other spaces in non-air-conditioned school buildings, as well as some safety/security improvements to school buildings.

V. Curriculum

None.

VI. Policy

None.

VII. Finance & Operations

A. Food Services & Student Meal Price: Report & Vote

In their report, Mr. Girardi and Food Service Director Ms. Beth Nichols (who attended remotely via video) provided information on: Food Service offerings and staffing; relevant United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) updates (including the USDA requirement that the weighted average lunch price be equal to the Federal Free Reimbursement Rate); lunch meal and a la carte pricing; commodities; student participation; debt and financials; and Food Service goals and challenges.

In response to clarifying questions from the Committee, Ms. Nichols advised that the qualifications for a proposed District Chef position would prioritize having a culinary background. Dr. Sawyer recommended that the Committee vote to approve increasing the price for purchasing a second lunch to \$4.50. On a motion by Ms. Boucher, seconded by Ms. Sharifipour, the Committee voted unanimously to increase the paid price of purchasing an optional, second lunch to \$4.50 at all grade levels to comply with United States Department of Agriculture requirements.

B. PreK-12 Enrollment & PreK-8 Class Size: Report

In his report, Dr. Sawyer presented key enrollment data points by level; current total enrollment by grade; 10-year enrollment histories (preschool - grade 12, kindergarten, grade 1, increase from kindergarten to grade 1); and 5-year enrollment histories (grade 1 by elementary school, total school enrollment by school, Special Education out-of-district placements, vocational technical school placements, English Language Learners (noting a 63% increase from 2022 to 2023), and Special Education prek-12 in

district). Dr. Sawyer noted current School Committee class size guidelines prior to presenting 10-year historical class size averages by grade for grades kindergarten through 8. Referencing the English Language Learner increase of 63% from 2022 to 2023, Ms. Heffernan noted the importance of utilizing this information to inform the budget process.

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 September 27, 2023, were accepted as distributed.

XI. Executive Session

Ms. Fryc requested a motion to adjourn to Executive Session:

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, 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; and return to Open Session only for the purpose of adjourning for the evening. On a motion by Ms. Boucher, seconded by Ms. Heffernan, on a roll call vote:

Ms. Sharifipour, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Boucher, yes; Ms. Heffernan, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes, the School Committee voted to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:30 pm.

XII. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Ms. Heffernan, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Ms. Sharifipour, yes; Ms. Heffernan, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Boucher, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

Article 3 from Shrewsbury Special Town Meeting Materials

2023-2024 Food Service Department Report

2023-2024 Food Service Department Slide Presentation

PreK-12 Enrollment & PreK-8 Class Size Report
PreK-12 Enrollment & PreK-8 Class Size Slide Presentation
Set(s) of minutes as referenced above