

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

**MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday, November 15, 2023**

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

**I. Public Participation**

None.

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

None.

**III. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Sawyer expressed appreciation to all parties who helped observe Veterans Day - including an annual assembly held at Oak Middle School and a Paton Pride/All-School Meeting - at schools in the district.

**IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:**

**A. RISE Program Update: Report**

The report was given by Ms. Meg Belsito; Ms. Meghan Bartlett, Assistant Director of Special Education; Ms. Christine Pellerin, RISE Program Coordinator; Ms. Jennifer Tabor, "Maple & Main" Retail Manager; and RISE Special Education Teachers Ms. Erin Hruskoci and Ms. Kristi Menard. The report included a brief overview of the Reaching Independence through Supported Employment (RISE) Program and a description of its move to the "Maple & Main" retail business/education space at 557 Main Street, Shrewsbury; video footage from the "Maple & Main" Grand Opening and ribbon cutting ceremony in November; program projected enrollment, activities, budget and funding sources, and building maintenance/operation/security; and a description of the Capital Campaign that will provide additional funding to expand the program.

In response to questions from the Committee, the presenters advised that a Capital Campaign account had been set up exclusively for RISE donations; students were adapting quickly to working with customers and the store's point-of-sale system; building capacity is currently approximately 30 students; and there is potential for out-of-district students to attend the program (on a tuition basis) in the future.

## **B. SHS Career Technical Education & Career Exploration: Report**

Dr. Lizotte and Shrewsbury High School (SHS) Principal Mr. Todd Bazydlo gave the report; Ms. Angie Flynn, SHS Director of School Counseling, was not able to attend the meeting. Their report included information on curricular offerings/pathways for students; experiential learning activities available during the 2023-2024 school year; *Lunch and Learn* conversations with guest speakers; expanding business partnerships; job fairs; funding opportunities and sources; and next steps.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Bazydlo and Dr. Lizotte advised that potential challenges around providing these types of opportunities include having adequate resources for grant procurement and reporting and coordination of the programming, maintaining relationships with business partners, and knowing/understanding student needs.

## **C. Future Plans of the SHS Class of 2023: Report**

Mr. Bazydlo gave the report; Ms. Angie Flynn, SHS Director of School Counseling, was not able to attend the meeting. After summarizing current trends in college admissions, Mr. Bazydlo provided information on the Class of 2023's public and private two- and four-year matriculations; future plans by student gender, Special Education, Free/Reduced Lunch, and English Learner status; race/ethnicity data; college applications, acceptances, and enrollments; and matriculation by college/university geographic region. Mr. Bazydlo also presented data on SHS enrollment and School Counselor caseloads that included a comparison with other districts.

In response to questions from the Committee Mr. Bazydlo provided information on the overall responsibilities of School Counselors, and Dr. Sawyer detailed how the district identifies students eligible for free or reduced-cost opportunities based on financial need through direct certification by the state, and by families submitting applications to the district.

## **V. Curriculum**

None.

## **VI. Policy**

### **A. District Strategic Goals and Action Steps for 2023-2024: Report & Vote**

Dr. Sawyer began the report by using the acronym VUCA to describe what is currently being experienced in public education (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) as well as the district's response to this environment (Vision, Understanding, Clarity, Agility). Dr. Sawyer went on to examine the district's response in the context of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan Commitments; shared examples of proposed 2023-2024 Process Goals for Developing Systems and Performance Goals for Determining Progress; provided caveats relative to the goals and summarized their intent; provided details on the proposed 2023-2024 Strategic Goals and Action Steps (noting the associated Staff Responsible) for each of the Priorities associated with the three Strategic Plan Commitments; and recommended that the Committee vote to approve the proposed goals and action steps. Committee members shared their perspectives in turn, with all expressing support for the draft. On a motion by Ms. Boucher, seconded by Ms. Sharifipour, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the enclosed proposed District Strategic Goals and Action Steps for the 2023-2024 school year as presented.

## **VII. Finance & Operations**

### **A. FY25 Budget Priorities, Guidance, & Calendar: Vote**

Ms. Fryc and Mr. Girardi advised that no feedback from the public had been received since the draft of Budget Guidelines and Priorities for the Fiscal Year 2025 was posted after being presented at the School Committee meeting on October 25, 2023. There were no questions from the Committee. On a motion by

Ms. Boucher, seconded by Ms. Sharifipour, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Priorities & Guidance as presented. He noted the written report included

### **VIII. Old Business**

None.

### **IX. New Business**

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

Dr. Sawyer described the different types of programs the Assabet Valley Collaborative (AVC) offers to member and non-member districts, and noted Shrewsbury Public Schools utilizes AVC for cost-effective specialized student transportation to out-of-district placements. There were no questions from the Committee.

### **X. Approval of Minutes**

Without objections from the Committee, the minutes from the School Committee Workshop held on October 18, and the School Committee Meeting held on October 25, 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. Sharifipour, on a roll call vote:

Ms. Sharifipour, yes; Ms. Boucher, yes; Ms. Heffernan, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes, the School Committee voted to adjourn to Executive Session at 9:05 pm.

### **XII. Adjournment**

On a motion by Ms. Sharifipour, seconded by Ms. Boucher, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 9:48 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:

RISE Program Update Report

RISE Program Update Slide Presentation  
SHS Career Technical Education & Career Exploration Report  
SHS Career Technical Education & Career Exploration Slide Presentation  
SHS Class of 2023 Future Plans Report  
SHS Class of 2023 Future Plans Slide Presentation  
Proposed 2023-2024 District Strategic Goals and Action Steps  
Proposed 2023-2024 District Strategic Goals and Action Steps Slide Presentation  
FY25 Draft Budget Priorities & Guidance  
FY25 Draft Budget Calendar  
Assabet Valley Collaborative Update Report  
Set(s) of minutes as referenced above