

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

Present: Ms. Sandra Fryc, Chairperson; Ms. Erin Boucher, Vice Chairperson; Mr. Jonathan Wensky, Secretary; Ms. Lynsey Heffernan; Ms. Rachel Sharifipour; Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools; Ms. Barbara Malone, Executive Director of Human Resources; Mr. Chris Girardi, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations; Ms. Amy Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

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

The meeting opened at 6:00 PM and Ms. Fryc immediately requested a motion to adjourn to Executive Session: A. For the purpose of addressing G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(4) “to discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices, or strategies with respect thereto” (“Purpose 4”). On a motion by Ms. Heffernan, seconded by Ms. Boucher, 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 6:00 PM. The Committee returned to open session at 7:00 PM, and the meeting was recessed. The meeting was reconvened at 7:02 PM.

I. Public Participation

None.

II. Chairperson’s Report & Members’ Reports

Ms. Boucher reported attending one of the Winter Concerts at Shrewsbury High School (SHS) and congratulated students and staff on a job well done.

III. Superintendent’s Report

Dr. Sawyer congratulated student musicians at Shrewsbury Public Schools (SPS); reported attending an all-school meeting at Sherwood Middle School (SMS) where students from the RISE Program (Reaching Independence Through Supported Employment) gave a presentation; noted the *Maple & Main* retail business, presented by RISE, recently participated in a successful Yuletide Market and would be hosting a pop-up market with other area merchants the following day; and reported 30 SHS students attended a recent STEM Day (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) hosted by Olympus in Westborough, MA, which included some hands-on learning opportunities.

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:

A. Safety and Security Audit: Report

After Mr. Girardi gave introductory remarks and shared background information on the project, Mr. Zachary Pope and Mr. Eric Petroski, consultants from the Olson Group Ltd who conducted the safety and security audit, presented general information on The Olson Group Ltd. and introduced their Project Team; detailed the purpose, scope, timeline, and methodology of the project; described Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED); and provided a high-level overview of the project findings relative to policies, plans, procedures, interviews, survey data, and site assessments. Dr. Sawyer added that during an Executive Session held with municipal partners prior to the start of the open meeting the full report - which is not a public document due to the need to protect the confidentiality of safety and security plans - was discussed in greater detail, was very positive overall relative to existing strengths in the district, and cited some areas where there is opportunity for improvement.

Committee members noted the importance of student “belonging” as a component of school safety, and expressed appreciation for the objective perspective of the report which resulted from partnering with an outside entity - The Olson Group Ltd - to conduct and prepare it.

V. Curriculum

A. Literacy Program: Personnel & Processes Update

The report was given by Ms. Amy B. Clouter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment; Ms. Kristin Osborne, Literacy Consultant, Mass Tiered Literacy Initiative; Reading Specialists: Maureen Henry (Calvin Coolidge School), Vanessa Collieran (Floral Street School and Walter J. Paton School), Heather Mistretta (Maj. Howard W. Beal School and Spring Street School), Susan Dizenzo (Sherwood Middle School); and Walter J. Paton School Literacy Tutor Kristin Sayegh. The report included: total Tutor headcount and hours by school; the district’s vision for literacy; a job description of the Reading Specialist role; Fall and Winter 2023 student data on Classroom, Tutor, and/or Intensive support by grade; a description of staff and system support; information on new data cycles and the use of the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) assessment for tracking students in Grades 7 and 8; observations from Trimester 1; and emerging needs from Trimester 2. Additional information was provided in response to clarifying questions from the Committee on differences between assessments and screeners, determining how much support (staffing, budget) is needed for literacy initiatives (e.g. students getting support in foundational reading is an important metric at the middle level), student experiences (shared examples of frequency and length of support sessions, and group sizes) and how progress is communicated to parents (progress reports that align with report cards are one mode).

VI. Policy

None.

VII. Finance & Operations

A. Summer Enrichment Program Tuition Rates: Vote

Director of Extended Learning Karen Isaacson reported that the teaching stipend for Summer Enrichment had not increased in at least a decade, the class fee had also not changed in that time frame, and the type and number of proposals from teachers has decreased in recent years. In order to increase the stipend to bring it in alignment with current market rates, and to drive more teacher participation and proposals, Ms. Isaacson recommended that the School Committee increase the class fee from \$80 to \$100, which remains a competitive rate for families.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms. Isaacson advised that the cost was \$100 per morning session and \$100 per afternoon session, and that extended day options were available to families. Dr. Sawyer recommended that the Committee vote to increase the class fee.

On a motion by Ms. Boucher, seconded by Ms. Sharifipour, the Committee voted unanimously to increase the summer enrichment class fee to \$100 per class.

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 November 29, 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; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Boucher, yes; Ms. Heffernan, yes; and Ms. Fryc, yes, the School Committee voted to adjourn to Executive Session at 8:23 pm.

XII. Adjournment

On a motion by Ms. Sharifipour, seconded by Ms. Boucher, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 9:28 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:

Safety and Security Review Report

Safety and Security Review Infographic

Safety and Security Review Slide Presentation

Literacy Personnel & Processes Report

Literacy Personnel & Processes Slide Presentation

Summer Enrichment Program Tuition Rate Report

Set(s) of minutes as referenced above