

Shrewsbury Public Schools  
Preschool - Grade 4 Capital Planning Study Committee  
Monday, October 30, 2023

Meeting Minutes

Members Present

Sandy Fryc (School Committee Chair)  
Erin Boucher (School Committee Vice Chair)  
Theresa Flynn (Select Board Vice Chair)  
John Sarnia (Select Board Clerk)  
Bridget Nichols (Director, Parker Road Preschool)  
James Dealy (Parent, Parker Road Preschool)  
Jennifer Foran (Staff Member, Parker Road Preschool)  
Kristen Gasper (Principal, Beal School)  
Rajesh Velagapudi (Parent, Beal School)  
Margaret Aulenback (Staff Member, Beal School)  
Tiffany Ostrander (Principal, Coolidge School)  
Justine Maloy (Parent, Coolidge School)  
Kelly Finnaran (Staff Member, Coolidge School)  
Lisa McCubrey (Principal, Floral Street School)  
Krysty Ralys (Staff Member, Floral Street School)  
Scott Mulcahy (Principal, Paton School)  
Colleen Luzzo (Parent, Paton School)  
Bryan Mabie (Principal, Spring Street School)  
Peter Welland (Parent, Spring Street School)  
Alison Kimball (Staff Member, Spring Street School)  
Keith Baldinger (Assistant Town Manager for Operations)  
Chris Girardi (Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations)  
Joe Sawyer (Superintendent)

Members Absent

Varanasi Pokala (Parent, Floral Street School)  
Aaron Detrick (Staff Member, Paton School)  
William Tuttle (Division Manager, Public Buildings)

Non-Members Attending

Bill Lupini (Collins Center for Public Management)

Interested Committee members were provided with a tour of the Paton School at 6:00 p.m. prior to the meeting.

Superintendent Sawyer opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. with an updated introduction of Committee members, as well as a review of the Charge to the Committee, and updates on

interaction with the Massachusetts School Building Authority with respect to the proposed Shrewsbury High School project.

Dr. Sawyer and Mr. Girardi then presented the October 1st enrollment data, along with future enrollment projections provided by the New England School Development Council (NESDEC), McKibbin Associates, and the Town Administrator's office. Following the presentation, Committee members worked in groups to generate questions based on the presentation. Dr. Lupini then facilitated a discussion of these questions from each group.

Questions/observations provided by the groups were as follows:

- Where are middle school kids going?
- The grade 9-12 numbers do not include Assabet students? I want to confirm that they are included in these projections.
- Why do numbers seem to go up in third and fourth grade and down in fifth grade?
- Overall the numbers are consistent, but do show a decline, which is in line with nationwide trends.
- Coolidge is the elementary school which is showing the most increase over time (in the projections).
- How many of our students are still under school choice?
- Can we combine building/renovation options, which could include redistricting?
- If the population is decreasing, how do we position ourselves to close an elementary school and build a new, larger school?
- If universal preK is implemented, do we have the space or a plan?
- Are there pockets of Shrewsbury with greater turnover because current owners are older?
- I wonder if the majority of preK students at Parker Road live in single family homes?
- How much space does Beal really have?
- What role does redistricting play in the number of classrooms, the number of teachers, etc.? What are the political implications?
- The median age in town is 43.7 (2020) and projected to 46.6 (2030).
- Many don't own their home - contributes to move in/out.
- What is the "churn" rate per school?
- What is the source of in-flow and out-flow (local preschools, etc.)?
- Is there turnover of home ownership from older or younger homeowners?
- It's hard to consider consolidating elementary schools because we have numbers, but would need to look at street addresses.
- Consider the implications of more affordable housing in Shrewsbury.
- If state requirements change for preK, how will that impact our numbers?
- How important is the concept of neighborhood schools in Shrewsbury?
- How will the following impact enrollment projections: 40b, affordable housing, MBTA, move-in's as residents age out?
- How do increased learning needs impact space needs? ELL? Special education?
- What are the geographic considerations / impacts of consolidation?

- Birth rates have decreased in 2020 and 2022.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Dr. Sawyer indicated that the next meeting, which will be held on Monday, December 4, 2023 at 6:30 p.m., will focus on neighborhood schools.