

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2015

Mr. John Samia, Chairperson; Ms. Sandy Fryc, Vice Chairperson; Ms. Erin Canzano, Secretary; Dr. B. Dale Magee, and Mr. Jon Wensky; Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of the Shrewsbury Public Schools; Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent; Ms. Barbara Malone, Director of Human Resources; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations

The meeting was convened at 6:19 pm by Mr. Samia.

On a motion made by Dr. Magee, seconded by Ms. Fryc the School Committee voted unanimously to go into executive session for the purpose of a) discussing negotiations with the Shrewsbury Education Association, Unit A; b) for the purpose of reviewing and releasing executive session minutes from a prior meeting at 6:19 PM. Roll call vote was as follows: Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes and Mr. Samia, yes. Mr. Wensky was not present.

After executive session was adjourned, the meeting was recessed, and then was re-convened at 7:02 PM by Mr. Samia. All members were present.

I. Public Participation

None

II. Chairperson's Report and Members' Reports

None

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Sawyer shared that he attended the Unified Basketball team home game. He explained that the program is connected to Special Olympics and involves students with and without disabilities. He congratulated everyone involved in the program and noted that the turnout for the event was remarkable and the whole event was phenomenal. He also reported that the School Calendar and Start Time Committee met for the first time. This representative group, which consists of School Committee advisors, Ms. Fryc and Dr. Magee, along with school administrators, staff, students and community members was established for the purpose of researching and advising him in regards to their findings and recommendations on these topics. Dr. Sawyer also noted that later in the meeting agenda items would address specific topics in the state education news such as state testing.

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Student Presentation: SHS TV Studio Production Team

Ms. Maggie Korab, SHS Television Studio Production team teacher, and students David Crutchfield, Gwen Kerrigan, Jack Frederick and Declan Quinn made a presentation on the types of school events, collaborative efforts with other student groups and community events that they are involved with throughout the year as part of the television program. The students then presented videos that they

created themselves on subjects that are personal and meaningful to them as part of their classroom assignment.

Committee members asked a few questions such as the prevalence of television studios in other Massachusetts schools, the editing process and future plans related to the field. Committee members and Dr. Sawyer thanked Ms. Korab and commended the students on their innovation, creativity and hard work.

B. Student Presentation: Student Field Study for Marine Ecology

Mr. Bazydlo, SHS principal; Ms. Alex Wilson, SHS Environmental Science/Biology teacher, and SHS students, Matt Freeman and Jake Yankee, made a presentation on the Marine Ecology field study trip they attended in June 2015 to the Gerace Research Center in San Salvador. Ms. Wilson explained that the main objective of the field study was to: 1) investigate relationships between ecological systems and human activities; 2) investigate Bahamian culture; 3) perform protocols related to research methods and techniques, and 4) contribute to ongoing scientific investigations. Ms. Wilson gave an overview of what they did each day, including video footage. The students wrapped up the presentation with details about what they found were the most meaningful experiences during their trip, including investigating caves and boating to some outer reefs to study native species and their habitats.

Committee members commented on the value of these opportunities and asked some clarifying questions about the number of students that participate, collaboration with other students, and how their classroom experiences were connected.

Dr. Sawyer asked Ms. Wilson to elaborate on how the experience has influenced her teaching. He thanked the group for their presentation.

C. Proposed Overnight Student Trips for Marine Biology and TV Production: Votes

Mr. Bazydlo asked the Committee to vote in approval for Ms. Wilson to return to San Salvador for the field study and for Ms. Korab to travel with students to Atlanta to attend the Student Television Network convention.

Dr. Magee expressed his concern regarding the message portrayed by offering these field trip opportunities given that they are costly and may prevent some students from attending. Mr. Bazydlo explained how financial assistance may be provided for students in need, including participating in fundraising events with the Athletics Boosters.

Mr. Samia requested a motion to vote to approve travel by Shrewsbury High School students to the Island of San Salvador to participate in scientific field research in support of the science curriculum during late June/early July 2016 and for Ms. Korab to travel with students to Atlanta in March 2016 to attend the Student Television Network convention. On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Ms. Fryc, the School Committee voted 4-1 to approve the two overnight field trips, with Dr. Magee dissenting.

V. Curriculum

A. State Testing: Annual Report

Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent presented a report regarding the recent developments in state testing. Ms. Banios reviewed the assessment choice that the district made for this past spring's testing, which was the PARCC option. She showed test choice statistics statewide and she also compared performance levels for the PARCC option versus the MCAS test. Ms. Banios addressed key ideas of the

district including that these assessments are primarily used to inform instruction, they are considered just one point of reference, Shrewsbury students continue to score well above the state average, scoring for PARCC is new and should be considered tentatively, and Shrewsbury is in a stronger position to adapt having chosen PARCC.

Next, Ms. Banios highlighted the overall test results by showing comparisons to other districts. She explained that Shrewsbury had a range of scores from first to fourth in comparison to other districts with the strongest test results in ELA for grade 6 and in Math for grade 4. Overall scores were well above state average and have remained fairly level. She then explained the state's formula for determining growth scores. She also discussed the parent reports that families will receive and how to decipher.

Ms. Banios then discussed what is expected to occur in the future with state testing. She referred to the decision made by the Board of Education to transition to a new hybrid format called MCAS 2.0. The impact for Shrewsbury will be that Shrewsbury will continue taking the same PARCC tests this coming spring that were given last year. Going forward, Ms. Banios explained that PARCC would only have one testing window rather than two. For the spring of 2017, testing will continue as is for Grade 10, which is Math and ELA MCAS, grades 5,8, and 9 will take the MCAS 2.0 Science/Tech/Engineering, and grades 5-8 and grades 3-4 will also be administered the MCAS 2.0 in ELA and Math. She also noted that the district would be held harmless from any potential negative accountability ratings. For Spring 2018, it is likely that grade 10 will shift to MCAS 2.0 in ELA and Math and all other testing will remain the same. At that time, accountability ratings are expected to be back in effect and all testing will be online.

B. State Testing: Discussion

Committee members asked various questions such as how much difference there actually is with test results in comparisons with other districts and what technology might be needed for grades 3 and 4 in order to meet the requirements of online testing. Members also expressed their interest in hearing more detailed information once it is compiled and deciphered.

Dr. Sawyer noted that the district considers results of these tests to be only one tool used for assessment of student progress and should not be the primary focus. He indicated that the hope is the hybrid tests being developed will more effectively measure the district's progress towards the rigorous goals and priorities set by the district. He also reaffirmed the district's commitment to continuing its work of preparing students for the future and holding them to high standards.

VI. Policy

A. Updated Policy on Substitute Teachers: First Reading

Mr. Wensky reported that he and Ms. Canzano met with Dr. Sawyer to assess and update policy 314 on substitute teaching. This particular amendment had not been updated since 2002. In particular, amendments would pertain to item number one, which addresses degree requirements; number two, which addresses certification requirements by DESE; and number five, which addresses the provision of information.

Dr. Magee asked a clarifying question around long-term substitute requirements. Ms. Malone and Dr. Sawyer indicated that verbiage for item number two has been updated to reflect the requirements and to be in compliance with state requirements.

VII. Finance and Operations

None

VIII. Old Business

None

IX. New Business

None

X. Approval of Minutes: Vote

Mr. Samia requested a motion to approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting on October 21, 2015 and November 4, 2015. On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Dr. Magee, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting on October 21, 2015 and November 4, 2015

XI. Executive Session

Executive session was held prior to the general meeting – see above.

XII. Information Enclosures

None

XIII. Adjournment

Mr. Samia requested a motion to adjourn the School Committee meeting for November 18, 2015. On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Ms. Fryc, the meeting was adjourned at 8:51PM. On a roll call vote: Dr. Magee, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; Mr. Samia, yes.

Respectfully submitted
Kimberlee Cantin, Clerk

Documents referenced:

1. SHS TV Studio Production Team Slide Presentation
2. Student Field Study for Marine Biology Slide Presentation
3. State Testing Annual Report Slide Presentation
4. Proposed Updates to Policy #314 on Substitute Teachers