

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

**MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday, April 26, 2017**

Present: Ms. Sandy Fryc, Chairperson; Dr. Dale Magee, Vice Chairperson; Mr. Jon Wensky, Secretary; Ms. Erin Canzano; Mr. John Samia; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Ms. Barb Malone, 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 7:02pm.

**I. Public Participation**

None.

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

Members noted that Mr. John Samia would be stepping down after serving nine years as a member of the School Committee. Members spoke individually and thanked Mr. Samia for his hard work on behalf of students in a wide variety of areas including, but not limited to, negotiations with the Shrewsbury Education Association and on fiscal projections and planning. Dr. Sawyer and Ms. Malone also expressed their appreciation for Mr. Samia's work, insights, and commitment to students, staff, and the greater community during his tenure on the Committee. Mr. Samia was presented with a gift from the Committee, shared remarks on his time as a member, and noted that he planned to continue to contribute to the community going forward.

**III. Superintendent's Report**

None.

**IV. Time Scheduled Appointments**

**A. Student Recognition: SHS Class of 2017 Senior Scholars**

Dr. Sawyer recognized the ten senior students at Shrewsbury High School with the highest grade point averages in their class - Michael O'Connell, Brian Chen, Varun Swamy, Prithu Dasgupta,

Urvi Savant, Laura Townsend, Patrick Chen, Erin Bean, Subin Jeong, and Aditi Trivedi . Dr. Sawyer provided a biographical sketch of each student, who then gave brief remarks on their school experience and future plans. Ms. Fryc noted that the Committee looks forward to hearing from these students each year about how they excelled during their time at Shrewsbury Public Schools. Dr. Sawyer offered his congratulations, and the students were invited up to be recognized by the Committee and to receive a gift.

## **B. Perspectives from Business & Industry: Panel Discussion**

A number of parents who work in various roles in business and industry have been participating in the *Portrait of a Graduate* working group. In advance of presentation by that group, some individuals offered to speak to the Committee regarding their perceptions on what kinds of skills are required in today's workplace as part of this panel discussion. Ms. Banios opened the discussion by asking panel members to introduce themselves. Thomas Siwek, Vice President, Global Safety & Compliance, SharkNinja; Mary Simone, General Manager, Marlborough Courtyard by Marriott; Kim Mullen, Senior Licensing Executive, Microsoft; and Ashish Cowlagi, Product Management & Strategy, Watson Health at IBM, engaged in a discussion on topics that included:

- essential skills for today's workplace
- how expectations for new hires have changed over time
- working individually and collaboratively
- seamless navigation between content areas
- managing stress and finding work/life balance

In a discussion of the importance of "soft skills", Dr. Magee asked how the need could be operationalized in the context of a test- and data-driven environment. Ms. Banios advised that while the outcome is clear, the path is still in process, and Dr. Sawyer noted that elementary and middle schools at SPS have been separating academics from habits of mind for some time, and that work is ongoing at SHS regarding rubrics that outline expectations for student learning relative to effective communication skills.

## **V. Curriculum**

### **A. SHS Mathematics: Curriculum Update**

Jean-Marie Johnson, SHS Director of Mathematics, and Todd Bazydlo, SHS Principal, addressed the Committee. Ms. Johnson began discussion of Curriculum Implementations for 2016-2017 with a description of the ALEKS online assessment and learning system that included information on how it is being used, survey data on its features that students feel best support their learning, and feedback from students on the program. Ms. Johnson went on to describe Core Plus Investigations, which are collaborative, have an integrated spiral curriculum, and involve making sense of data that spans multiple content areas. She also addressed student growth by presenting data in terms of average progress by course, and then summarized successes and next steps based on experience from the first year of the program. Finally, Ms. Johnson presented information on Advanced Math II Topics, a partnership with Quinsigamond

Community College that helps struggling students prepare for math coursework in college. The Committee asked clarifying questions about the programs, opportunities for students of varying abilities, and ALEKS licensure. Dr. Sawyer thanked Ms. Johnson and Mr. Bazydlo for the report, and noted that the math department - from Pre-kindergarten through high-school - exhibits strong forward thinking and provides value and opportunities to all students at SPS.

## **VI. Policy**

### **A. Strategic Priorities Progress Report: Increasing Value to the Community**

Dr. Sawyer requested that due to time constraints, this report would be presented at the School Committee meeting to be held on May 10, 2017.

## **VII. Finance & Operations**

### **A. Fiscal Year 2018 Budget: Final Recommendation & Vote**

Dr. Sawyer began the report on the Fiscal Year 2018 Budget with an overview of the budget process. Mr. Collins continued and advised that over time, for SPS:

- state aid and charges improved favorably
- the local revenue estimate improved
- decreases in other municipal budgets allowed for an increase to SPS' funding
- revised Out-of-District Tuition budgets resulted in decreased costs for SPS

These changes, combined with some reductions at Tier 2 of the potential reduction plan formulated earlier in the budget season, result in a Superintendent's Recommended FY 2018 Budget of \$62,375,000, which equals the Town Manager's recommended budget, and represents an increase of 3.26% over the FY 2017 Budget.

Dr. Sawyer noted that while things evolved in a positive way for SPS as the budget cycle evolved, it has not always done so historically, and that preparation for potential cuts has a negative impact on morale.

On a motion by Ms. Canzano, seconded by Dr. Magee, the Committee voted unanimously to recommend a FY18 School Department appropriated budget of \$62,375,000 for Town Meeting approval.

## **VIII. Old Business**

None.

## **IX. New Business**

None.

## **X. Approval of Minutes**

On motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting on April 12, 2017.

## **XI. Executive Session**

### **A. Negotiations with Superintendent of Schools**

Ms. Fryc requested a motion to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss negotiations with the Superintendent of Schools, where deliberation in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body. On a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Ms. Canzano, on a roll call vote: Mr. Samia, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes, the Committee voted to adjourn to Executive Session at 9:37 pm.

## **XII. Adjournment**

On a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 9:58 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Ms. Canzano, yes; Mr. Samia, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

1. Class of 2017 Senior Scholars Report
2. SHS Mathematics Department Report
3. SHS Mathematics Department Slide Presentation
4. Superintendent's FY18 Budget Recommendation Memo
5. FY18 Operating Budget Recommendation Spreadsheet
6. FY18 Budget Reduction Plan Spreadsheet
7. Town Manager's Fiscal Projection Spreadsheet
8. FY18 Line Item Budget
9. FY18 Superintendent's Recommended Budget Slide Presentation