

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, November 29, 2017

Present: Dr. Dale Magee, Chairperson; Mr. Jon Wensky, Vice Chairperson; Ms. Sandy Fryc, Secretary; Ms. Erin Canzano; Mr. Jason Palitsch; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; Ms. Amy B. Clouter, 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 Dr. Magee at 7:02 pm.

I. Public Participation

None.

II. Chairperson's Report & Members' Reports

Mr. Wensky thanked parents for their attendance and support at ongoing PTO meetings held at schools throughout the district.

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Sawyer provided a brief update on the Beal Building Project, noting there are complications around conservation zoning with one of the three sites being considered - Camp Winnegan - so there will be increased focus on the Allen Farm and Glavin Center properties; advised that the SPS Colonial Fund enjoyed a very successful #GivingTuesday; and noted the Shrewsbury High School (SHS) Performing Arts Department is celebrating its 50th musical this year and kicking off the timeline with an event from former SHS alum Catherine Brunell, who will be coming back to Shrewsbury for a one night cabaret event at SHS on Saturday, December 16.

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:

A. District Goals 2015-2017: Report

In April 2015, the School Committee unanimously approved two-year district goals, and this past spring results on some of these goals were included in the reports to the School Committee on

the five-year strategic priorities. Ms. Clouter's presentation detailed progress on student goals relative to Writing and Math, and explained that the data collection for the goals in these areas was different than originally planned due to a variety of factors, including the shifting state expectations and decisions at different grade spans to shift assessments to better measure what was most important relative to student learning in those subjects. She noted the importance of utilizing common assessments, and added that initially growth was measured within a given year (not year to year). Ms. Clouter described the different areas of focus at the elementary, middle, and high school levels for Writing. For Math, Ms. Clouter noted the importance of finding exemplars at different student levels, and noted that collaboration among teachers was somewhat more challenging at the high school level because of the lack of common planning time.

Committee members commended teachers for calibrating as needed as things progressed, and asked clarifying questions about measurability and any additional resources that might be needed going forward.

B. Strategic Planning: Report on Potential Priorities

Ms. Clouter, Ms. Margaret Belsito, Director of Special Education & Pupil Personnel Services, and Dr. Jane O. Lizotte, Principal, Sherwood Middle School, provided a report on three areas identified as important to determining district priorities for the next five years based on feedback from public forums and surveys: 21st century skills, inclusive schools, and social and emotional learning (SEL).

Dr. Lizotte described the five core competencies of SEL and noted the link between strong student-teacher relationships and students' social emotional and academic outcomes. She presented a video featuring grade 1-12 students talking with her about different ways teachers help them in areas ranging from meeting friends to managing schoolwork, and detailed the type of assessment of current practices that is needed now. Ms. Clouter discussed engaging and challenging students, especially as it relates to preparing our graduates for success in the future. She addressed building proficiency in students (communication skills, problem solving, collaboration, resilience, leveraging technology) and staff (professional development, project-based learning, leadership training). Ms. Clouter noted the importance of schools and staff providing non-academic support and activities to students who need additional academic help, and showed a video clip called "Building a Vision Together" that featured a student with Down Syndrome from Colorado named Megan Bomgaars who challenges educators by exhorting them "Don't limit me!" Ms. Belsito addressed inclusive schools by detailing the continuum of supports currently in place at SPS, defining "inclusive schools", showing a video illustrating inclusive practices at the Walter J. Paton School and SHS, and describing how the district can build a vision for the future that results in effective inclusive schools in Shrewsbury.

Committee members noted the importance of all three areas, especially as they relate to the embedded nature of resilience, problem solving skills, habits of mind, individualized education for all students, and mitigating anxiety. Mr. Palitsch noted that to facilitate these priorities it would be necessary to operationalize with staff and resources. Dr. Magee expressed concern about overloading students and staff who are already overloaded and asked about looking to

other districts working on this for guidance. Dr. Lizotte advised that SPS does pull from other districts and organizations, will work to create systems that work for individual school communities, and acknowledged that measurement of SEL would be the most challenging aspect of the work. Dr. Sawyer added that Shrewsbury was one of about 38 districts who applied for a cohort of 8 school systems working on SEL, and while SPS was not selected, he noted SEL is a key priority at the state level due to student anxiety and depression. Finally, he noted that recommendations for strategic priorities for the next five years would be presented at the School Committee meeting on December 6, 2017.

V. Curriculum

None.

VI. Policy

None.

VII. Finance & Operations

A. Fiscal Year 2018 Staffing Levels: Report

Ms. Barbara Malone, Director of Human Resources, provided a report on staffing levels for FY 18 effective October 1, 2017, which included a chart indicating the utilization of staff by position, department, and school level. She added that two staffing reports are generated - the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) report, and the SPS staffing report (which is based on payroll records).

Ms. Malone noted that overall actual 831.25 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions represented +6.94 FTE over the projected 824.31, then broke down staffing by categories: Administration, Instructional Classroom, Instructional Specialist, Instructional Support, and Classified. She described anticipated needs relative new students (moving in/aging in), special education students, and human resources (to address work volume and state reporting).

B. Enrollment Projections: Report

Mr. Patrick C. Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, noted that the enrollment projections report was done annually for capital planning purposes and near-term class size and staff planning. He noted two projection methods were used - Town Manager's (which does not include preschool) and New England School Development Council (NESDEC). Comparing the two for K-12 enrollments, NESDEC projected modest continued growth at one and five-year marks while the ten-year interval showed a small decline, and the Town Manager projection indicated a very small decline at the five and ten year intervals. Mr. Collins went on to show projections segmented by grade span and historical data for both methodologies; provide initial 2018-19 projections at the elementary and secondary levels; and show projected versus actual numbers for 2017-18. He expects that 2018-2019 will see continued enrollment growth, SHS will be at all time high enrollment of approximately 1,863 students, additional teaching staff

will not likely be needed for Kindergarten-Grade 8, and full-day kindergarten seats will need be reduced to accommodate increased kindergarten enrollment of approximately 40-45 students.

Committee members noted that both projections are historical and don't capture growth in housing stock, that grades K - 12 don't exhibit the same pattern of regular growth that preschool does due to students aging in for special education services, and that the Beal Building Project enrollment projection methodology does incorporate housing projections in the pipeline and migration factors. Dr. Sawyer advised that month-to-month enrollment numbers do not change dramatically, and that enrollment is not expected to get smaller, especially in the short term.

VIII. Old Business

None.

IX. New Business

None.

X. Approval of Minutes

Without objections from the Committee, the minutes of the School Committee meeting on November 15, 2017 were accepted as distributed.

XI. Executive Session

None.

XII. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Mr. Wensky, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

1. Staffing Report Presentation Slides
2. Staffing Report Memo
3. Staffing Report Spreadsheet
4. Set(s) of Minutes as Referenced Above
5. Enrollment Projection Report

6. Enrollment Projection Slides
7. NESDEC Enrollment Projection
8. Town Manager's Enrollment Projection
9. District Goals Report
10. District Goals Slides
11. Strategic Planning Priorities Report
12. Strategic Planning Priorities Slides