

**School Committee Workshop
Shrewsbury High School
Principal's Conference Room
64 Holden Street
SHREWSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS**

Thursday, February 15, 2018

Present: Dr. Dale Magee, Chairperson; Ms. Sandy Fryc, Secretary; Ms. Erin Canzano; Mr. Jason Palitsch; Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent of Schools; Ms. Amy Clouter, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Patrick Collins, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations; and Ms. Meg Belsito, Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services

Absent: Mr. Jon Wensky, Vice Chairperson

Workshop opened at 6:33 PM

I. Discussion regarding Dr. Magee's *Fiscal Projections: Town Trends* report/presentation.

Dr. Magee discussed the information contained in his *Fiscal Projections: Town Trends* report. The report includes Shrewsbury's historical data pertaining to Proposition 2 ½ overrides, student growth, revenue growth, population growth, and funding sources for the Shrewsbury school budget.

The group discussed the type, amount, and format for presenting this information to various audiences; including other town boards, PTOs and the community at large. How do we use these topics and a visual aid in order for people to understand the historical data and ongoing issues with school funding in Shrewsbury?

Mr. Palitsch discussed the need to find conceptual ways to communicate complex topics that are easily understandable. He also suggested there are two separate topics: 1) historical data related to Shrewsbury's budget process; and 2) Proposition 2 ½ override discussions. Mr. Palitsch stated that it is helpful for citizens to understand Proposition 2 ½ overrides from a historical perspective, but that it is important to note that an override is not imminent.

Ms. Canzano said that some people do not relate to charts, graphs, and numbers. She believes there should also be discussion regarding what is currently happening in classrooms. How do we maintain current service levels in our schools with increased costs and decreased funds? Ms. Canzano indicated the need for the messaging to directly relate to student learning.

Ms. Fryc stated that it is important for people to understand why the district continues to experience issues with the town's ability to fully fund school budget requests. The data Dr. Magee presented provides a historical perspective regarding the current educational program. Ms. Fryc also commented that the Proposition 2 ½ data from other districts shows successful small dollar overrides. There is a perception in Shrewsbury that a Proposition 2 ½ override is for

millions of dollars. A Proposition 2 ½ override is just one tool available to towns and cities in Massachusetts to raise funds above the 2.5% cap on the tax levy.

Dr. Magee stated that at a recent PTO meeting he attended there were questions about course offering and programs provided in other local school districts. Dr. Sawyer advised there is some data for the DART districts, but there also has to be consideration given to whether or not a program is something we would offer a part of the educational program, as well as available funding and/or space.

The group discussed how to present historical data and ongoing budget issues with the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee at upcoming budget meetings. There needs to be discussion regarding the reality that if the annual school budget is not fully funded, the school system will degrade.

Dr. Magee thanked the group for the guidance provided and acknowledged the need for additional discussion. He will work on fine-tuning the talking points in his slides and use the feedback provided to draft messaging for future budget meetings.

IX: Adjournment

On a motion from Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the meeting was adjourned at 7:59 pm. Roll call votes were as follows: Ms. Palitsch yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; and Dr. Magee, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Fryc - Secretary

Documents referenced:

1. Fiscal Projections: Town Trends