

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

**MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday, March 13, 2019**

Present: Mr. Jason Palitsch, Chairperson; Ms. Erin Canzano, Vice Chairperson; Ms. Sandy Fryc, Secretary; Mr. Jon Wensky; Dr. B. Dale Magee; 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 Mr. Palitsch at 7:00 pm.

**I. Public Participation**

None.

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

Ms. Canzano noted she attended the opening night of a fantastic poetry and art project at Shrewsbury Public Library featuring work by students on the 8 White team at Oak Middle School.

**III. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Sawyer congratulated cast and crew of *Seussical the Musical*, the recently held annual Shrewsbury High School (SHS) musical, and noted that Lt. Governor Karyn Polito visited SHS earlier in the week to announce the receipt of a Project Lead the Way grant (a private/public partnership between the state and the Massachusetts STEM Hub) that would provide seed money (\$50,000) for a Biomedical Science class next year, and additional courses over the next few years, at SHS.

**IV. Time Scheduled Appointments:**

**A. Fiscal Year 2020 Curriculum & Technology Budgets: Report**

Ms. Clouter, Mr. Brian L'Heureux, Director of Information Technology, and Ms. Shawna Powers, Director of Instructional Technology & Media Services, gave the report. Ms. Clouter described budget drivers; noted how the district empowers learners (students and staff) and gave examples; noted budget stability (by category) from FY18 to FY19, and provided details on the proposed FY20 budget; and gave detailed information on Federal Grants from 2017-2019. Ms. Powers described ways technology is used to enhance learning in grade 3, providing examples of

tools utilized by students (iPads, Google docs, nearpod), and noted how technology enhances Professional Development opportunities for staff (Google Classroom, Seesaw). Ms. Clouter then listed the resources needed that comprise the FY20 budget recommendation. Mr. L'Heureux provided an overview of the IT Budget, noted increases for FY20, and described the strategic investments needed to meet district goals. Ms. Clouter finished the report by acknowledging the challenges around meeting needs and noting the importance of connected learning.

The presenters provided additional information to the Committee in response to questions relative to federal grants (Title IV funding cannot supplant Title I funding, but offers other support to the district), replacing classroom projectors, textbook use, and Hour of Code activities for students.

### **C. Fiscal Year 2020 Budget: Public Hearing**

Mr. Palitsch advised that this item would be taken out of order to better meet the Public Hearing estimated start time of 7:45 pm posted on the meeting agenda. Mr. Palitsch opened the Public Hearing at 8:03 pm. There were no speakers at the Public Hearing. Mr. Palitsch requested a motion to close the hearing. On a motion by Dr. Magee, seconded by Mr. Wensky, the committee voted unanimously to close the Public Hearing at 8:03 pm.

### **B. School Department Funding Sources: Report**

In his report, Mr. Collins provided information on: all funding sources for the district over a 10 year period, including a data table showing growth percentages; the General Fund; Circuit Breaker reimbursement; federal, state, and private grants; Food Service operations; and other special revenues and fees. Dr. Magee noted that multiple sources of funding are utilized by the district, and Mr. Collins provided additional information on fundraising relative to the *Campaign for Shrewsbury Athletic Fields*. Dr. Sawyer acknowledged Business Office personnel and Ms. Dotty Flynn, Accounts Payable Specialist, for their accounting work for the district.

### **V. Curriculum**

None.

### **VI. Policy**

None.

## **VII. Finance & Operations**

### **A. Fiscal Year 2020 Tuitions & Fees: Report**

Mr. Collins began his report with a timeline of the decision-making process relative to tuitions and fees, then presented fee history data and four FY20 scenarios each (highlighting the original budget assumption scenario) for bus fees, athletic fees, preschool tuition, and Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) tuition. Mr. Collins noted that the reduction in FDK tuition was consistent with the district's strategy of stepping-down tuition over three years in order to ultimately provide tuition-free FDK to all students, as is the current practice with most other districts in the Commonwealth.

Committee members noted ongoing traffic challenges at multiple schools at drop-off and pick-up times, recognized the importance of fee revenue while acknowledging costs for families were high relative to other districts in the state, and supported the rationale for gradually reducing FDK tuitions over time to meet district goals. Mr. Palitsch noted that information from the meeting would be posted for viewing and welcomed feedback from the public in advance of a recommendation from the Superintendent and a vote on tuitions and fees at the next School Committee meeting.

## **VIII. Old Business**

### **A. Extended School Care Tuition & Financial Aid Model: Vote**

Mr. Palitsch advised that Ms. Karen Isaacson, Director of Extended Learning, presented a report on the fiscal status of the program at the meeting on February 27 with recommendations to increase tuition and to use lunch subsidy eligibility as a proxy for financial need going forward. He added that the Committee subsequently received five emailed letters from the community endorsing the increase, and feedback from one family who would experience hardship relative to the changes around financial need. Dr. Sawyer advised that he supported Ms. Isaacson's recommended changes.

Ms. Isaacson provided additional information to the Committee, noting that a small number of families would be negatively impacted by the changes around financial need. Based on this feedback, Mr. Palitsch advised he would make a motion as an individual Committee member to allow families who are currently in the program, and would be negatively impacted by the change, the opportunity to pay a lower rate based on the previous model for one year.

On a motion by Dr. Magee, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the recommended 3.5% increase to Extended School Care tuition effective in Fiscal Year 2020.

On a motion by Mr. Wensky, seconded by Dr. Magee, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the recommended change to the Extended School Care financial aid model for FY20, so that aid is provided by discounting the tuition rate by 60% for students who are eligible for reduced-price lunch and by 80% for students who are eligible for free lunch.

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the Committee voted unanimously to allow families who are currently receiving financial aid for Extended School Care and who do not qualify for free or reduced lunch to be provided financial aid for the 2019-2020 school year at the lesser of either their current level of discount or a 60% discount.

### **B. Memorandum of Understanding with Shrewsbury Federal Credit Union for Partnership to Fund the Colonial Connections Program: Vote**

Mr. Palitsch noted that this agenda item would be addressed at the next meeting as the Committee was waiting on a report from the Edward J. Collins Center for Public Management that would provide relevant information on administrative capacity at SPS.

## **IX. New Business**

None.

## **X. Approval of Minutes**

Without objections from the Committee, the minutes from the School Committee Meeting held on February 27, 2019 were accepted as distributed.

## **XI. Executive Session**

**A. For the purpose of collective bargaining with cafeteria workers**

**B. For the purpose of collective bargaining with the Shrewsbury Education Association**

**C. For the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes**

Mr. Palitsch requested a motion to adjourn to executive session for the purpose of collective bargaining with cafeteria workers and for the purpose of collective bargaining with the Shrewsbury Education Association, where deliberation in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body; and for the purpose of reviewing, approving, and/or releasing executive session minutes, and return to Open Session only for the purpose of adjourning for the evening. On a motion by Ms. Canzano, seconded by Dr. Magee, on a roll call vote: Dr. Magee, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; and Mr. Palitsch, yes, the School Committee voted to adjourn to executive session at 8:47 pm.

## **XII. Adjournment**

On a motion by Dr. Magee, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 PM. Roll call votes were as follows: Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Mr. Wensky, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; and Mr. Palitsch, yes.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth McCollum, Clerk

Documents referenced:

1. FY20 Curriculum and Technology Budgets Report
2. FY20 Curriculum and Technology Budgets Slide Presentation
3. Revenue Funding Sources Report Slide Presentation
4. Special Revenue Funding Sources History
5. FY 20 Fees Memo
6. FY20 Fees Slide Presentation
7. FY20 Fee Change Scenarios
8. MA Survey of Fees
9. Full Day K Tuition Rates
10. Full Day K Tuition Map
11. Set(s) of minutes as referenced above