

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2015

Present: Dr. B. Dale Magee, Chairperson; Mr. Jason Palitsch, Vice Chairperson; Ms. Erin Canzano, Secretary; Ms. Sandra Fryc, Mr. John Samia, Dr. Joseph Sawyer, Superintendent; Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent; Ms. Cecelia Wirzbicki, Director of Business Services; Ms. Barbara Malone, Director of Human Resources

The meeting was convened at 7:00 PM by Dr. B. Dale Magee

I. Superintendent's Report:

A. Superintendent's News Updates

Dr. Sawyer shared some brief student activities updates with the School Committee. He said he was very pleased to report that the Shrewsbury High School (SHS) Robotics Team participated in the world championship competition in St. Lois during April school vacation week. Dr. Sawyer said the Robotics Team was eligible to compete in the world championship competition because they earned the Chairman's Award at the regional competition at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI).

Dr. Sawyer told the School Committee that he had the opportunity to attend the Curiosity Challenge event at MIT yesterday and see five Shrewsbury district students compete. He said the Curiosity Challenge is part of the Cambridge Science Festival. Dr. Sawyer congratulated the Shrewsbury students on their accomplishments and great work.

B. Fiscal Year 2016 Superintendent's Revised Budget Recommendation

Dr. Sawyer thanked the team of Shrewsbury district staff members and administrators who worked on putting together the budget recommendation. He shared information about state funding with the School Committee and explained how this relates to the revised budget recommendation. Dr. Sawyer said that according to the state, the Circuit Breaker program is fully funded. He said that overall the state funding situation has improved for the Shrewsbury district, although not substantially. Dr. Magee asked Dr. Sawyer if he could comment on the bottom line and share information about how much more funding the Shrewsbury district will receive from the state. Dr. Sawyer said it is expected that the Shrewsbury district will receive \$200,000-\$300,000 more than was originally projected for the budget. He mentioned the strategic priorities for the Shrewsbury district that the Fiscal Year 2016 budget recommendation will support: provide a world class education; engage and challenge all students; promote health and wellness; enhance learning through technology; and increase value to the community. Dr. Sawyer reminded the School Committee that the Fiscal Year 2016 Budget priorities are to sustain the current level of personnel and programming and meet mandates in cost-effective ways. Dr. Sawyer told the School Committee that the numbers from the Fiscal Year 2016 budget recommendation have been adjusted and updated as of

April 2015. He discussed the cost of carrying current personnel forward and said the change is mainly due to the lower projected cost for teachers, now estimated at about \$150,000 less than in January 2015. Dr. Sawyer said that overall the budget needed to take personnel forward is now about \$190,000 less than was projected in January. He said the updated budget recommendation and the total cost to carry personnel forward is \$1,484,644. School Committee members asked questions about why this is the case and Dr. Sawyer and Ms. Malone said they have received news earlier this year about teachers' contracts not being renewed due to a variety of factors including performance. Factors for teachers' choosing to leave include job changes, relocations and teachers deciding not to return to their positions after maternity leaves. Dr. Sawyer discussed the operational costs with the School Committee members and referenced the documents illustrating details for the Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Recommendation. Dr. Sawyer shared that the year-over-year operational costs will be reduced by \$661,866 and this figure is based on updated projected tuition costs, projected Circuit Breaker state reimbursement costs, costs mitigated by shifts in digital materials, updated projections, and the use of alternate funding sources. Dr. Sawyer told the School Committee that he is pleased to share that the School Department will be able to sustain its program in Fiscal Year 2016 with a relatively small increase of \$1,259,241 or 2.20% in appropriated funds. He said that looking forward to the future regarding the fiscal year budgets, the volatility of the special education program may come into play and this may be an important factor next year. Dr. Sawyer said the goal for the Shrewsbury district is to maintain the investment in education. He said the School Department wants to do this in a way that meets students' needs and is most cost effective.

Dr. Magee thanked Dr. Sawyer for making an excellent presentation. He asked the School Committee members if they had any questions or comments about the Superintendent's revised Fiscal Year 2016 budget recommendation. Mr. Samia commented on sustainability. He said he thinks this budget delivers what the School Department and School Committee said would be delivered to the community. Mr. Samia discussed technology and mentioned the initiative to roll out new technology to include grades 5th through 12th in the district. He said he is excited about the innovation in the schools and about how this will positively impact learning in the classroom. Mr. Samia asked Dr. Sawyer about the difference in the projection for teacher cost from January to April, and if this is similar to other fiscal years. Ms. Malone answered the question and said that the district received information early this year about contract renewals and non-renewals. Ms. Fryc asked a question about a budget line item for infrastructure. Dr. Sawyer said the good news is that some of the infrastructure moves the School Department has made during the past few years have been positive for the long-term budget. Ms. Canzano said she thinks the hard work the district has done with innovation in the last few years has been positive for the budget. Mr. Palitsch commented that he thinks this is a very lean budget and the School Department is doing a good job sustaining the program. Dr. Magee commented that this was a very good presentation and this points out the fact that the school system runs on many sources of money. He said the way to continue to avoid problems is through innovation. Dr. Magee asked Dr. Sawyer if he thought the School Committee should vote this evening on the budget recommendation. Dr. Sawyer said yes, if the School Committee is in support, he would recommend that they vote on the budget recommendation.

Dr. Magee requested a motion to accept the 2016 Fiscal Year Budget Recommendation from Dr. Sawyer. On a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Mr. Palitsch, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the 2016 Fiscal Year Budget Recommendation from Dr. Sawyer.

II. Adjournment

Dr. Magee requested a motion to adjourn the School Committee meeting for April 27, 2015. On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Mr. Samia, the School Committee members voted unanimously to adjourn the School Committee meeting for April 27, 2015 at 7:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted
Christine Taylor, Clerk

Documents referenced:

- 1) Fiscal Year 2016 Superintendent's Revised Budget Recommendation: Report
- 2) Updated Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Recommendation: Memo
- 3) Fiscal Year 2016 Line Item Budget: Spreadsheet Illustration