

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, March 4, 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, Shrewsbury Public Schools; Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent, Shrewsbury Public Schools; Ms. Cecelia Wirzbicki, Director of Business Services, Shrewsbury Public Schools; Ms. Barbara Malone, Director of Human Resources, Shrewsbury Public Schools

The meeting was convened at 7:03 PM by Dr. B. Dale Magee

I. Public Participation

None

II. Chairperson's Report and Members' Reports

Dr. Magee shared that there was a new episode of School Talk taped at Coolidge School and the episode is about how parents prepare children for school. Dr. Magee, Dr. Sawyer and Mr. Palitsch attended a legislative hearing regarding the potential revisions for the Chapter 70 formula. They said there were good conversations about the Chapter 70 revisions.

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Sawyer continued discussing the Chapter 70 funding issues and said he was pleased to see good attendance at the hearings. He said that recommendations for Chapter 70 funding revisions are expected to be made by June, but there would be no changes coming for the next fiscal year.

Dr. Sawyer congratulated Shrewsbury students who have had art pieces recognized and are on display at a Worcester Art Museum exhibit that runs through March 30th. In addition, Dr. Sawyer congratulated students, coaches and advisors from several teams on great performances in recent competitions.

Dr. Sawyer congratulated Shrewsbury High School and Dartmouth College alumna Megan Krumpoch for breaking a world record for a relay race. He said that Megan currently works at Joslin Diabetes Center as a technician, runs for New Balance as a professional runner, and hopes to go to the Olympics.

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments

None

VI. Policy

None

VII. Budget

A. Per Pupil Expenditures: Five Year Comparison

Dr. Sawyer presented a five year comparative report on the school district's expenditure per pupil to the School Committee members. He shared that the Shrewsbury Public Schools have consistently spent less on a per pupil basis than the vast majority of school districts in Massachusetts. Dr. Sawyer shared information showing the history of per pupil spending over the last five or six fiscal years for which the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provides data. The information Dr. Sawyer shared included a comparison of Shrewsbury's data against different groups, including the Assabet Valley Collaborative districts, the District Analysis and Review Tools (DART) comparison districts selected by the DESE based on size and demographics, and a group of other districts selected for this report due to similar size that are comparable in various ways. The graphs Dr. Sawyer showed the School Committee demonstrated that in almost all categories Shrewsbury's expenditures are lower than in comparison districts. Dr. Sawyer told the Committee members that an increase for Shrewsbury will be seen when the current year is complete in some areas including teacher expenditures. Mr. Palitsch commented and said he believes that most people are aware that the Shrewsbury School district expenditures are lower than other school districts in the state. Dr. Magee asked whether the percentage of Shrewsbury district employees who elect to take the insurance is different than in other communities. Dr. Sawyer said that the vast majority of employees who are taking the health insurance are using a Fallon product. He said the Fallon insurance product has been less expensive than other insurance products and this has helped control costs. Dr. Sawyer said it is very important for the state to take a look at the Chapter 70 formula as the health care variable in the formula is vastly below the real costs. He said that most people seem to agree that the Chapter 70 formula is not working well for most of the school districts in the state.

B. Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Recommendation: Public Hearing

Dr. Sawyer summarized the information regarding the Fiscal Year 2016 Budget that was proposed at the School Committee's meeting on January 21, 2015. Mr. Samia commented that he thinks this budget delivers what the School Committee and district promised the taxpayers last year. Mr. Samia asked Dr. Sawyer if he knows what the recommendations are for the budgets for school districts in the Assabet Collaborative. Dr. Sawyer said he did not have the numbers in front of him. He said that when superintendents previously discussed proposed budget recommendations for 2016, the recommended increase in percentage for the Shrewsbury district was by far the lowest. Dr. Magee invited comments from members in the audience, but there were no participants in the hearing to share public feedback regarding the 2016 budget recommendations.

VIII. Old Business

A. 2015-2016 School Calendar: Report & Vote

Dr. Sawyer shared a summary of the feedback he received from the public regarding the proposed school calendar that was discussed at the February 4 School Committee meeting. The proposed calendar includes two full professional development days and five early release days. The draft calendar has been available for public comment since February 5. Dr. Sawyer said he received feedback from some families to consider consolidating the February and April breaks into a March spring break. Dr. Sawyer said he thinks there are reasonable arguments on both sides of the different school vacation schedules. He said that his recommendation for the calendar does not change to what it was a month ago. Dr. Sawyer expressed his thanks to those who took the time to email and write to share feedback and comments. Dr.

Sawyer said a memo will be posted that the calendar recommendation stands. Ms. Fryc said she thinks it would be good to revive the Calendar Committee for the School Committee members so this issue can be reviewed in the future. School Committee members agreed that they would like get a new calendar committee together for fall 2015.

Dr. Magee requested a motion for the School Committee members to vote to approve the proposed calendar for the 2015-2016 school years. On a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Mr. Palitsch, the School Committee members voted unanimously to approve the proposed calendar for the 2015-2016 school year.

IX. New Business

None

X. Approval of Minutes

Dr. Magee requested a motion to approve the School Committee meeting minutes for January 21, 2015 and February 4, 2015. On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Mr. Samia, the School Committee members voted unanimously to approve the meeting minutes for January 31, 2015 and February 4, 2015.

XI. Executive Session

Dr. Magee requested a roll call vote for the School Committee members to go into executive session for a potential discussion of collective bargaining negotiations with cafeteria workers association and/or paraprofessionals association; potential discussion of compensation guidelines for administrator contract negotiations and/or contract negotiations with non-union personnel. On a roll call vote: Ms. Canzano, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Mr. Samia, yes; Dr. Magee, yes. The School Committee members entered into executive session at 8:04 p.m.

XII. Adjournment

Dr. Magee requested a motion to adjourn the School Committee meeting for March 4, 2015. On a motion by Ms. Fryc, seconded by Mr. Palitsch, the School Committee members voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 PM on a roll call vote: Mr. Samia, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; and Dr. Magee, yes.

Respectfully submitted
Christine Taylor, Clerk

Documents referenced:

- 1) Per Pupil Expenditure History Report and Slide Presentation
- 2) Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Slide Presentation
- 3) Recommendations for the 2015-2016 School Calendar Report
- 4) School Committee Meeting Minutes for January 21 and February 4, 2015