

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

**MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 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 School; Ms. Melissa Maguire, Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services

The meeting was convened at 7:02 PM by Dr. B. Dale Magee

**I. Public Participation**

None

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

**III. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Sawyer shared the news that Ms. Wirzbicki, Director of Business Services, has submitted her resignation to the district and will be leaving her position at the end of June. Dr. Sawyer thanked Ms. Wirzbicki for the contributions she has made and the contributions that she will be making from now until the end of the school year.

Dr. Sawyer congratulated students on the Destination Imagination Teams for their recent successes. Dr. Sawyer congratulated everyone involved with the Shrewsbury High School Musical Cinderella and said that everything about the production was amazing.

**IV. Time Scheduled Appointments**

**A. Clinical, Mental & Behavioral Health Services: Report**

Ms. Melissa Maguire, Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel; Terry Cassidy, Executive Director of Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services; Kenia Franjul, Clinical Coordinator, Family Success Partnership; Dr. Aaron Gritter, Lead Psychologist; Dr. Kim Kusiak, Consulting Psychiatrist and Daryl Rynning, Clinical Coordinator, Shrewsbury Public Schools presented a report on all clinical, mental and behavioral health services offered by the district. She discussed psychological supports and services and details about the prevention and crisis response details. Ms. Maguire highlighted the great work that the team did to make a check-list for mental and behavioral health. The Family Success Partnership (FSP) wrap-around program was discussed and the programs links students, parents and families to resources. FSP involvement has been linked to a positive impact on behavior and on academic performance in school.

The effective partnership between the Shrewsbury School district and the Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services organization was discussed during the report. Ms. Maguire shared the summary and highlights for the clinical, mental and behavior health services that included increased student supports to address mental health, social and behavioral challenges; increased professional treatment opportunities; increased parent support to access community resources and the increased ability for a student to remain in the least restrictive setting. Committee members asked various questions including types of positive outcomes due

to supports, specific recurring trends, how families find out about the Family Success partnership (FSP) program and what the district does with the data that is collected from the regional youth health survey. School Committee members thanked Ms. Maguire and her team members for presenting the report.

## **V. Curriculum**

None

## **VI. Policy**

### **A. Policy on Physical Restraint: First Reading**

Ms. Maguire presented information on the first reading of a proposed revision to Policy #325 on physical restraint of students. Ms. Fryc said that she, Mr. Palitsch, Dr. Sawyer and Ms. Maguire met to discuss the policy on physical restraints. Ms. Maguire presented information regarding the policy and said the biggest change is that all situations which require restraints must be reported to the state. She said that parent communications include communicating with the parents about what caused a restraint or time out. Ms. Canzano asked about who is doing the reporting. Ms. Maguire said the staff member involved in the restraint provides information and the school principal submits the information about the restraint incident to the state. Ms. Maguire said that we are fortunate in the district because we have five trainers and that we are in a very good place with our program. She said there are only a few instances of restraining that occur in the schools in the district. Dr. Magee said the vote for the policy will likely take place at the March 25, 2015 School Committee meeting. The policy information will be posted on the district website for public viewing and commentary.

### **B. School Choice: Report & Hearing**

Dr. Sawyer presented an annual report on the topic of the potential for participation in inter-district school choice in the 2015-2016 school year. Dr. Sawyer shared some background on the school choice initiative and that it was created as part of the original Education Reform in early 1990s. Dr. Sawyer shared a report with information and statistics including that Shrewsbury “sending” school choice has doubled over the last decade. He said that this trend peaked in 2014 with a steady climb up from 2011. Dr. Sawyer said that he is not recommending that the district participate in school choice for 2015-2016. He said the Committee may want to re-visit this at a later date in 2015 depending on the budget. Dr. Magee asked if the School Committee Members can vote again on school choice if they decide to vote no now. Dr. Sawyer said yes and that School Committee members could take another vote on school choice at a later date. He told the School Committee members that he will double check on the dates for school choice deadlines. Dr. Magee said there are no members of the public in the audience for a public hearing. He invited members of the public to share commentary as a follow-up to the School Committee meeting.

## **VII. Budget**

### **A. State Aid for Education: Report**

Dr. Sawyer shared a report on state financing of education and how it is expected to affect Shrewsbury in 2016. Dr. Sawyer, Dr. Magee and Mr. Palitsch attended a hearing held by the commission on Chapter 70 aid. He shared some background information about the Foundation Budget approach created as part of original Education Reform in the early 1990s school aid referred to by law: “Chapter 70 aid”. He said the Chapter 70 funding formula changed in 2007 to take a community’s ability to pay and local income and local property wealth became part of the calculation to determine “target share” of the Foundation. Dr. Sawyer said that Shrewsbury is in a situation where the formula has only been providing us minimal aid

within the last few years. Among all Massachusetts school districts, Shrewsbury's shortfall below target is 15<sup>th</sup> greatest out of 351 communities (4<sup>th</sup> percentile). Dr. Sawyer said the projections that were made in the early 1990s for the aid provided by Chapter 70 funding in Shrewsbury and throughout the Commonwealth no longer hold. At the commission hearing, Dr. Sawyer made suggestions to not allow unexpected special education costs to be as volatile to the budgets of school districts. Dr. Sawyer shared some information on the salaries for Shrewsbury teachers and said this information has been presented in the past and is available to the public. He said he thinks it is important to note that the data we provide is accurate and transparent. Dr. Sawyer said that he is more than happy to address any questions that the community has about this information. Mr. Palitsch thanked Dr. Sawyer for the testimony he gave at the committee hearing. Mr. Palitsch said that Shrewsbury is not alone in the situation with the formula for state aid and funding. Dr. Magee said the strong feeling among most people is that the formula is inaccurate. Dr. Magee said he hopes that the formula is made more accurate and understandable. Dr. Magee thanked Dr. Sawyer for his report to the School Committee members.

### **VIII. Old Business**

None

### **IX. New Business**

#### **A. Discussion of the Administration of Finance and Operations**

Dr. Sawyer said he thinks it is important to consider the best path forward in finding the replacement for Ms. Wirzbicki's position. He said he thinks it is important that the position be defined to indicate that it is an executive role. Dr. Sawyer said that this position is critical and is essentially both the chief financial and chief operating officer position for the district. He said he is concerned with the turnover in the role. Dr. Sawyer said that he thinks moving very quickly to define the position and start a search is important. He suggested that the new title for the position be Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations. Dr. Sawyer said that barring any objections from the Committee, he is planning to shift the job description. He said it will be important to have a compensation package that is competitive for the role and responsibilities. Dr. Sawyer said he wanted to make sure the Committee is aware of what he is thinking and asked if there are any objections. School Committee members supported Dr. Sawyer's plans for redefining the position and conducting a search to fill the role. In addition, School Committee members expressed that they believe retention is important in the role and that re-defining the position seemed like a positive strategy.

### **X. Approval of Minutes**

Dr. Magee requested a motion to approve the minutes of the School Committee Meeting workshop meetings for January 14, 2015 and March 2, 2015. On a motion by Ms. Fryc, seconded by Mr. Palitsch, the School Committee members voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the School Committee Meeting workshop meetings for January 14, 2015 and March 2, 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. He said the Committee would then

reconvene for the purpose of adjourning the meeting. On a roll call vote: Mr. Samia, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Dr. Magee, yes. The School Committee members entered into executive session at 8:36 p.m.

## **XII. Adjournment**

Dr. Magee requested a motion to adjourn the School Committee meeting for March 11, 2015. On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Fryc, the School Committee members voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:19 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) Special Education Clinical and Mental/Behavioral Health Services and Supports Report and Slide Presentation
- 2) Policy and Physical Restraint First Reading
- 3) School Choice Status and Recommendation Report and Slide Presentation
- 4) State Aid for Education Report and Slide Presentation
- 5) School Committee Workshop Minutes for January 4 and March 2, 2015