

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2014

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 of the Shrewsbury Public Schools; Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent of the Shrewsbury Schools; Ms. Barbara Malone, Director of Human Resources; Mr. Todd Bazydlo, Principal of Shrewsbury High School, Ms. Cecelia Wirzbecki, Director of Business Services, Mr. Stephen Rocco, Transportation, Safety and Security Coordinator, Mr. Jason Costa, Director of Athletics

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

I. Public Participation

None

II. Chairperson's Report and Members' Reports

None

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Sawyer thanked faculty and staff for facilitating the many curriculum nights taking place throughout the district. He said the number of parents attending curriculum nights has been very good. Dr. Sawyer said that Spirit Week starts next week and Homecoming Weekend is scheduled for September 27-28.

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Athletics: Student Presentation

Mr. Bazydlo, SHS Principal, Mr. Costa, Director of Athletics and student athlete leaders Meghan Collins, Lauren Ineson, Dan Quinlivan and Rebecca Wallace presented the report. Shrewsbury students discussed the positive influence that school athletic participation has on their academic performance and growth and student role models and leaders in the community. School Committee members asked the student representatives various questions related to how being a student athlete influences their time in the classroom and how the impact of being a member of an athletic team has helped them move forward in life. Committee members thanked the students for attending the meeting and presenting. Next, Dr. Sawyer thanked the students for presenting and made comments about how athletics are one way to help prepare students to achieve goals. Dr. Sawyer asked Mr. Jason Costa, Athletic Director, to speak about how serving as a team captain or co-captain helps students develop leadership skills. Mr. Costa said he thinks that the Shrewsbury district empowers student-athletes to lead. Students stated that being a captain and team leader enables you to be a role model in the community. Dr. Sawyer said he places high importance on the display of sportsmanship and the positive contributions that student-athletes make to the school community. Dr. Sawyer invited the students present to shake hands with the Committee members and receive recognition certificates for presenting at the School Committee meeting.

B. Athletics: Annual Report

Mr. Costa and Mr. Bazydlo presented the athletics report. Mr. Costa thanked all the Shrewsbury staff members and administrators for the support of the SHS athletics program. Mr. Costa and Mr. Bazydlo presented highlights of the athletics program including that the 2013-2014 year was highly successful with 30 out of 31 varsity teams qualifying for post-season play. They said that the athletics program provided a variety of outstanding experiences that helped student-athletes develop their athletic abilities, teamwork and leadership skills. Mr. Costa and Mr. Bazydlo shared that during the 2013-2014 school year the district provided a total of 34 competitive sports at the high school and middle school levels, and from those 34 sports there were 60 teams that participated at various levels of competition ranging from middle school, to freshman level, to junior varsity, to varsity level. Coaching positions totaled 67 with an additional 29 volunteer positions and there was a part-time trainer for each of the three seasons. Mr. Costa discussed some upcoming needed facility improvements, including turf fields and track resurfacing. He thanked Dr. Lee Mancini for his pro bono work with the athletic teams. Mr. Costa discussed details about working with the boosters and parents who participate in volunteer fundraising efforts for the athletics programs. He said that all the fundraising initiatives total approximately \$150,000 to help support the athletics program. The Committee asked various questions concerning overall participation and participation in winter sports, how the coaches' evaluations are conducted and requested statistics regarding athletic concussions during the year. Mr. Costa replied with information about the expectations for coaches and a new evaluation tool that provides coaches with the chance to self-reflect and plan. Mr. Bazydlo addressed the concussion issue stating that the highest rate of concussions occurs while students are playing soccer and he believes that Shrewsbury reported 62 concussions last year to the state. Mr. Costa said that students are educated to play sports as safely as possible and he will provide the breakdown for the number of concussions that occur by category of sport. Dr. Sawyer commented that he sees a lot of benefits from athletics. He said the new Coordinators of Development and Volunteer Services are soliciting support from local businesses. Dr. Sawyer said that he believes if we invest in Shrewsbury school athletic facilities there will be future opportunities to rent space for special events, and this will help offset some of the costs.

C. Girls' Ice Hockey Status: Vote

Mr. Bazydlo presented information and said that SHS is hoping to change the Girls' Ice Hockey team from a club to a varsity sport. He provided information outlining the program including that it is a cooperative sport with athletes from other districts. Committee members asked questions about the projected per-pupil expenditure if this becomes a varsity sport and the cost to the district. Mr. Costa described the cooperative program structure for the team. He said that including Shrewsbury there are only five cooperative teams in Central and Western Massachusetts and Shrewsbury has the largest cooperative. Committee members said they would like more information about costs and other details before a vote is taken. Dr. Sawyer and presenters were comfortable with discussing this as an informational topic with a vote to be considered at a later date.

D. Transportation Update: Report

Ms. Cecelia Wirzbicki, Director of Business Services, and Mr. Stephen Rocco, Transportation, Safety and Security Coordinator, presented the Transportation Update and Report. Ms. Wirzbicki welcomed Mr. Rocco as a new member to the team at the Shrewsbury district. Ms. Wirzbicki and Mr. Rocco shared an overview of the Transportation Program and said that the district is currently using 47 buses from AA Transportation to transport 4,577 students. They said the total cost for busing for the school year is \$2,732,580 and that \$58,140 is the cost per bus. Ms. Wirzbicki, Mr. Rocco, Dr. Sawyer and Committee members discussed the issues and problems associated with the families who do not register for busing by the deadline. The group discussed the need to get families to register by deadlines in the future including

sharing some news articles discussing the negative impact on all families using bus transportation when some families do not register on time.

E. Bullying Statistics: Annual Report

Dr. Sawyer presented the annual report regarding the frequency of bullying incidents. Dr. Sawyer said that for a district the size of Shrewsbury, incidences of bullying are very low.* He shared details about the report with Committee members. Ms. Canzano asked Dr. Sawyer about the consequences and what happens after a bullying incident is confirmed. Dr. Sawyer said that situations vary and actions may include suspensions, changing students' class schedules, and providing referrals for counseling services. He said the goal is to make the school environment a safe and comfortable place for students. Dr. Sawyer said that once a bullying incident has been handled there are very few instances of students repeating bullying behaviors with different students.

V. Curriculum

A. PARCC Testing Method: Vote

Ms. Banios presented information and shared that approximately 60% of the school districts in Massachusetts have chosen to administer the PARCC test for the upcoming school year. She said the Shrewsbury district is recommending that Sherwood and Oak Schools administer the electronic versions of PARCC and that the Shrewsbury elementary schools administer the paper version of PARCC. Dr. Magee asked Ms. Banios if there is a plan B if the network connection crashes during the electronic administration of the PARCC tests. Ms. Banios said she is confident that the district will receive adequate directions on how to handle issues that arise related to administering the tests.

On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Fryc, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve administering the written version of PARCC in grades 3-4 and the electronic version of PARCC in grades 5-8.

VI. Policy

A. Fingerprint-based background checks: First reading

Mr. Palitsch discussed the draft policy details with Committee members. Committee members asked questions about who would be included to be checked when the new policy is implemented, such as substitute teachers and other personnel. Committee members asked questions about the fees of \$35 and \$55 that employees and potential employees must pay to go through the fingerprint-based background checks. Mr. Samia said he thinks potential challenges could arise when trying to implement this type of background check policy. Dr. Sawyer said that he would recommend adding volunteer coaches as a category for the proposed background check. Dr. Magee said that he does not think Committee members should be included in this background check since they do not fit the criteria of interacting directly with students and this does not seem appropriate or necessary. Mr. Palitsch stated this was the first draft of the policy and review will continue.

VII. Budget

None

VIII. Old Business

None

*With a total of 13 confirmed cases of bullying for the entire district in 2013-2014.

IX. New Business

None

X. Approval of Minutes: Vote

Dr. Magee requested a motion to approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting on September 3, 2014. On a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Ms. Fryc, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting on September 3, 2014.

XI. Executive Session

XII. Adjournment

Dr. Magee requested a motion to adjourn the School Committee meeting for September 17, 2014. On a motion by Mr. Palitsch, seconded by Ms. Fryc, the meeting was adjourned at 9:04 PM. On a roll call vote: Mr. Samia, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Dr. Magee, yes.

Respectfully submitted
Christine Taylor, Clerk

Documents referenced:

- 1) Annual Athletics Report
- 2) Girls' Ice Hockey Memorandum
- 3) Transportation Program Update
- 4) Bullying Prevention and Intervention Annual Report
- 5) Paper or Electronic Administration of PARCC Memorandum
- 6) Fingerprint-based Background Checks First Reading Policy Draft