

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2014

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

The meeting was convened at 7:00 PM by Ms. Sandra Fryc.

I. Public Participation

None

II. Chairperson's Report and Members' Reports

None

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Joseph Sawyer highlighted the successful Shrewsbury High School (SHS) visit from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). He said SHS faculty and staff spent about three years preparing the self-study report in preparation for the accreditation process and on-site visit. Dr. Sawyer shared that the visit went perfectly and the feedback received from the chairperson at NEASC has been extremely positive. Mr. Todd Bazydlo, SHS Principal, said the staff from NEASC were very impressed with the SHS business partnerships, community connections, vocational training, curriculum, standards, polite SHS students and the overall culture at SHS. He said overall it was a fantastic visit and the NEASC members commented that they were amazed at how much SHS does on a shoe string budget. Mr. Bazydlo said there will be some recommendations from NEASC for things that need to be worked on and improved. He said the SHS Steering committee worked with students on an amazing panel presentation for NEASC visitors and he hopes to share this with the Shrewsbury community at some point. Dr. Sawyer said he could not have been more proud of the SHS faculty, staff and students. NEASC members shared feedback that the Shrewsbury community needs to increase school funding. Mr. Bazydlo said this NEASC assessment about resources validates the needs at SHS.

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. SHS State Champion Athletes Recognition

School Committee members honored the SHS winter season state champions, track athlete Domonique Hall and the boys Hockey Team. Mr. Jason Costa, Athletic Director, and Nick DiPilato, Head Indoor Track Coach, commended Domonique on being an amazing student athlete and congratulated her on winning the indoor track Division 1 state championship in the 300 meter dash for the second year in a row, setting a meet record of 39.69 seconds. Domonique will attend Georgia Tech in the fall, participating in track and receiving a half college scholarship. The SHS Boys Hockey Team members were present to be honored for capturing the Division III State Championship and have the best record in

the school's history 21-2-1. Senator Michael Moore presented the student athletes with citations from the State Senate and the School Committee members also honored and congratulated the champions. Dr. Sawyer congratulated Coach Nick DiPilato for being honored by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association as one of the 2014 coaches of the year.

B. State Sen. Michael O. Moore: Discussion of state issues

State Senator Michael Moore presented information to the School Committee members. He said today the Massachusetts House Senate shared budget information and has come to an early local aid resolution. Senator Moore said the information has to be looked at and said the State will be allocating a total of \$100 million in Chapter 70 funding. School Committee members asked questions and Senator Moore said he was hopeful that it would be possible to carry through with funding the Circuit Breaker initiative. Mr. John Samia discussed issues related to the formula for Chapter 70 being outdated and not addressing the current costs for special education and technology. He said these are challenges faced by all schools in Massachusetts. Dr. Sawyer thanked Senator Moore for coming to the meeting and stated that the full funding of Circuit Breaker is a major issue for the Shrewsbury district. In addition, Dr. Sawyer mentioned Mr. Samia's point that the current Chapter 70 formula does not adequately address the needs in the Commonwealth and this needs to be evaluated. Senator Moore said he thinks the foundation formula review is very important. Ms. Sandra Fryc and Dr. Sawyer thanked Senator Moore for coming to speak and said they appreciate his work with the Shrewsbury district.

V. Curriculum

A. Mathematics curriculum alignment: Report

Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Ms. Amy Couter, Principal, Coolidge School; Dr. Ann Jones, Principal, Oak Middle School; Ms. Jean-Marie Johnson, Mathematics Department Director; Ms. Jennifer Dufault, Grade 8 Math Teacher, Oak Middle School and Ms. Melissa McCann, Advanced Math Coach, Sherwood Middle School presented a comprehensive report on the district's work to align the K-8 mathematics curriculum with the Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks. Due to resource constraints, the district has not yet aligned its K-8 curriculum to match the updated framework the Massachusetts Board of Education adopted in 2011. This year, some teachers in each of the grades have been piloting an updated curriculum using updated materials. Ms. Banios said because the Shrewsbury district is delayed in implementing the 2011 standards students being assessed on these standards are not well prepared. In addition, teachers have not received the necessary training. Ms. Banios said that one of the most important elements of the 2011 standards is that there is an increased emphasis on the application of real world problem solving. The faculty presenters shared detailed information about teaching the Math In Focus and Connected Math Program (CMP) to students in different grade levels. Mr. Jason Palitsch asked a question about some misconceptions of the new standards and what this means for the rigor of the mathematics curriculum for students. Ms. Banios said she thinks some of the misconceptions are related to Algebra and the Shrewsbury district is looking to take a lot of what is currently in the Grade 9 curriculum to Grade 8. Dr. Ann Jones said that in the past there was the thinking that middle school students were not ready to learn this material. She said now the view is that it is important for middle school children to understand conceptual challenges. Ms. Jennifer Dufault said she wants to assure people that the teachers are really bringing down some of those freshmen concepts to be taught in middle school. Dr. B. Dale Magee asked about how the new math curriculum affects students who test at different levels. Dr. Jones said teaching the real world connections as part of the curriculum helps all students to understand the material easier. Ms. Jean-Marie Johnson said that when SHS first started teaching the new program, teachers worked with students who were struggling with the mathematical concepts and needed help with connecting. Ms. Melissa McCann said the goal is to give all students an opportunity to learn and feel more confident with the concepts and curriculum. Dr.

Sawyer thanked all the presenters and said he wanted to remind everyone who was watching the meeting about the tradition of excellence in math education in both the Shrewsbury district and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. He said the Shrewsbury district is and has been well positioned in this area compared to other schools in the State. Dr. Sawyer asked the School Committee members for guidance regarding moving forward to begin planning and training to implement the new math curriculum regardless of the decisions on the budget. School Committee members asked questions including the estimated cost for the program and implementation. Dr. Sawyer said he believes the program will be less than the \$652,000 in the revised budget. School Committee members agreed this was a timely priority and encouraged Dr. Sawyer and faculty members to move forward to implement the math programs and begin training teachers using the new curriculum and materials.

VI. Policy

None

VII. Budget

A. Fiscal Year 2015 Budget: Discussion & Possible Revision

Dr. Sawyer said the new information regarding the budget will be reviewed at the School Committee Meeting on April 30th.

B. Fiscal Year 2014 Budget: Update

Mr. Liam Hurley, Director of Business Services, gave an update for the Fiscal Year 2014 Budget. He said the district is currently in a good position for landing the year on budget. Mr. Hurley said he is confident the district can find some additional money to off-set the math program.

VIII. Old Business

None

IX. New Business

None

X. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Sandra Fryc requested a motion to approve the School Committee meeting minutes for March 19, 2014. On a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the March 19, 2014 meeting minutes.

XI. Executive Session

XII. Information Enclosures

XIII. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Dr. Magee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:04PM. On a roll call vote: Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Mr. Samia; Ms. Fryc, yes.

Documents referenced:

- 1) Shrewsbury Math Implementation Report and slide show
- 2) Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Update Report