

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2013

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

Not Present: Dr. B. Dale Magee

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

I. Public Participation

None

II. Chairperson's Report and Members' Reports

Mr. Jason Palitsch and Mr. John Samia stated that the Fiscal Study Committee for 2013 has completed the report and it is now available on the Shrewsbury Town website.

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Joseph Sawyer said that the district will be launching a year-end giving campaign and creating the Colonial Fund to fund district initiatives including technology. Dr. Sawyer congratulated the Shrewsbury High School football team on its win against Wachusett High School football team on Thanksgiving Day.

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Representative Beaton: Legislative Update

State Representative Matthew Beaton updated the School Committee on potential changes with the Chapter 70 formula. He said that the House Bill 457 is currently in committee and he has heard that this may move forward to simplify the formula and bring forth regional fairness. Representative Beaton said he has seen successful school districts like Shrewsbury overlooked, he hopes there will be a change and he will keep the School Committee posted on developments. Representative Beaton discussed the Days Inn initiative in Shrewsbury as a new emergency homeless shelter. He said that he is working with Senator Moore and others to organize a meeting for officials to meet to discuss the community impact, how services will be paid for and the need for a plan at the state level. Dr. Sawyer said the district will provide students residing at the Days Inn with the best education possible but the district did not have warning or time to plan for this situation. He said the initiative has good intentions, there are great responsibilities for the Shrewsbury community to help families in need, however with no resources and no time to plan this is a troubling situation for the school district. Representative Beaton said that Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services (SYFS) and St. Anne's Parish have been engaged in various levels of assistance to help families and encouraged members of the Shrewsbury community to consider lending a hand to these families in transition. Ms. Sandra Fryc thanked Representative Beaton and

Senator Moore for scheduling a meeting with officials to discuss the important issues related to the Days Inn initiative. She extended an invitation for Representative Beaton to return to a future School Committee meeting as more information becomes available to share.

V. Curriculum

A. State Mandates: Report

Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Ms. Melissa Maguire, Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services, shared a report on issues associated with government mandates. They provided an overview of the ways in which mandates are having an impact on educational programs. Ms. Banios said that outside pressures being put on classrooms and teachers are related to the fact that the district is part of a Local, State, National, Federal and Global system. She said that some mandates are having a larger impact than others. Ms. Banios said all the mandates have excellent intent and the programs are good however the challenges are associated with the need for additional resources and the impact on the budget. Ms. Maguire explained that some of her biggest concerns are that the district is now supporting students with needs that have not been seen in the past. This has increased the need for resources and additional trained educators and personnel. School Committee members asked Ms. Banios and Ms. Maguire questions about the needs for supplies, what is necessary to realign the curriculum and the shifts in instructional methods. The conclusion of the School Committee members was that locally the short-term solution is for the town to do its best to try and provide additional resources.

VI. Policy

None

VII. Budget

A. Fiscal Year 2014 State Funding: Report

Mr. Liam Hurley presented the Fiscal Year 2014 State Funding report including Chapter 70 and Circuit Breaker funding. Mr. Hurley said that Shrewsbury has been spending less on education than the state's calculated formula. Shrewsbury is considered to be below its targeted local share of education funding based on its property and income wealth. As a result state levels of funding could stagnate in the future. Although there is a hope that the legislature will update the Chapter 70 formula to address areas where current educational needs are different than what they were when the formula was established about twenty years ago. Dr. Sawyer and School Committee members acknowledged that the formula is not designed to reward communities like Shrewsbury who are identified by the state as not paying their fair share of the state's mandated Foundation Budget.

VIII. Old Business

A. PARCC Field Testing: Discussion

Dr. Sawyer presented an update on the PARCC Field Testing and said that the Department of Secondary Education has mandated that districts have a random sample of classes in various grades participate in PARCC field testing. He said superintendents have been asked to decide whether classes selected for certain field tests will be exempted from MCAS in the same subjects. Dr. Sawyer and School Committee members discussed this issue and Dr. Sawyer thanked them for their opinions and feedback. He said he will reflect on this issue further and will likely have students take both the assessments while implementing the pilot test program as smoothly as possible.

IX. New Business

A. Assabet Valley Collaborative Agreement: Vote

Dr. Sawyer recommended that the School Committee vote to approve an updated agreement to participate as a member of the Assabet Valley Collaborative. State law required collaboratives to amend their agreements to conform to new regulations. On a motion by Mr. John Samia, seconded by Mr. Jason Palitsch and Ms. Erin Canzano, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the agreement.

B. Cafeteria Substitute Pay Rate: Vote

Mr. Hurley recommended that the School Committee vote to approve a rate increase for cafeteria substitute workers from the current rate of \$8.62 per hour to \$10.10 per hour. Mr. Hurley said the hourly pay rate for substitute cafeteria workers has not been raised since 2005 and it has been difficult to procure substitutes. On a motion by Jason Palitsch, seconded by Mr. John Samia, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve a rate increase for substitute cafeteria workers.

X. Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Mr. John Samia, seconded by Ms. Erin Canzano, the School Committee voted unanimously to collectively approve the minutes for the School Committee Meeting for November 20, 2013.

XI. Executive Session

At 8:52 PM, on a motion by Ms. Sandra Fryc, seconded by Ms. Erin Canzano, the School Committee voted to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing negotiations. On a roll call vote: Ms. Canzano, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Mr. Samia, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes.

XII. Information Exclosures

XIII. Adjournment

On a motion by Ms. Canzano, seconded by Mr. Samia the meeting was adjourned at 9:25PM. On a roll call vote: Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; Mr. Samia, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes

Respectfully submitted
Christine Taylor, Clerk

Documents referenced:

- 1) State Mandates: Report
- 2) Fiscal Year 2014 State Funding: Report
- 3) PARCC Field Testing: Discussion
- 4) Assabet Valley Collaborative Agreement
- 5) School Food Service-Substitute Rate Increase Proposal