

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, February 5, 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; Ms. Barbara Malone, Director of Human Resources; Ms. Melissa Maguire, Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel; Mr. Jonathan Green, Director of Technology and Mr. Daniel Morgado, Shrewsbury Town Manager

Not present: Mr. Liam Hurley, Director of Business Services

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

I. Contract Agreement with the Shrewsbury Education Association: Possible Vote for Ratification

The School Committee (SC) and Shrewsbury Education Association (SEA) reached a tentative agreement on January 13, 2014 and the SEA ratified the agreement on February 3, 2014. The three-year contract is retroactive to the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year and ends in August 2016. The School Committee feels this is a fiscally responsible agreement; gives teachers modest compensation increases while they continue to do good work under difficult circumstance; and the compensation adjustments are reasonable and affordable. School Committee needs to vote to ratify the contract agreement.

Ms. Sandra Fryc called for a motion to approve the new contract for August 2013 to August 2016. Per state law, the Town Manager may also vote on this matter. On a motion by Mr. John Samia, seconded by Mr. Jason Palitsch, on a roll call vote: Mr. Daniel Morgado, yes; Dr. B. Dale Magee, yes; Ms. Erin Canzano, yes; Mr. Jason Palitsch, yes; Mr. John Samia, yes; Ms. Sandra Fryc, yes; the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the new contract with the SEA.

Ms. Sandra Fryc thanked everyone who worked on the collaborative effort to reach an agreement beneficial to the teachers and the Town of Shrewsbury.

II. Public Participation

None

III. Chairperson's Report and Members' Reports

None

IV. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Sawyer shared that on January 25, 2014 SHS hosted auditions for the All State Musical Festival. Eight SHS were selected to participate in the Festival. They will perform in Boston on March 3rd and the Festival includes a concert at Symphony Hall. Dr. Sawyer congratulated the SHS students and the faculty members who prepared them for the auditions.

Dr. Sawyer congratulated the Shrewsbury students who received gold key, silver key and honorable mentions for the Boston Globe's Scholastic Art Awards. He also congratulated the visual arts faculty members who prepared the students. The gold key award winners will be honored at City Hall in Boston during March and have their art work displayed.

Dr. Sawyer shared that the SHS Speech and Debate team attended the New England district tournament and five SHS students qualified to participate in the national competition. The nationals will take place in Overland Park, Kansas in June 2014.

The SHS Gymnastics team finished the regular season undefeated. Dr. Sawyer wished the team and coaches the best of luck during the upcoming playoffs for the regional and state competitions.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Change in Shrewsbury School Calendar: Vote

Dr. Sawyer shared that the district is now able to move forward and schedule needed professional days since the contract with the Shrewsbury Education Association has been ratified. Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent, told SC members that the district is proposing to add three professional development days to the 2013-2014 school calendar. She said there is a backlog of training and this training is needed given the mandates. Dr. Sawyer said that two professional development days will be early release days for students and there will be a full professional development day scheduled on June 6. He recommended that this adjustment to the school calendar be voted on this evening so there is time to communicate with families about changes. Ms. Sandra Fryc called for a motion to vote on the proposed changes to the 2013-2014 school calendar. On a motion by Mr. John Samia, seconded by Mr. Jason Palitsch, the SC unanimously voted to approve the adjusted 2013-2014 Shrewsbury school calendar.

B. Calendar Proposal for 2014-2015: Discussion

Dr. Sawyer said the vote for the proposed 2014-2015 school calendar is supposed to be done by April 30th so a draft of the calendar is being put forward at this time. The 2014-2015 calendar is similar to this year's school calendar including the first day of school taking place before Labor Day. Dr. Sawyer said the proposed calendar includes five early release days for staff meetings and that they have consulted with the SEA about the draft calendar. He said the draft 2014-2015 school calendar will be posted to the district website. Dr. Sawyer will ask the SC to vote on the proposed calendar during an upcoming SC meeting.

VI. Curriculum

None

VII. Policy

None

VIII. Budget

A. FY15 Curriculum Needs: Report

Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent, presented a detailed report of the curriculum needs for the Shrewsbury School district. She shared research that cited that the number one factor related to student achievement is a guaranteed and viable school curriculum. Ms. Banios said the combination of instructional quality and a curriculum that is planned and implemented well has a tremendous impact on student achievement. She said that if you improve class size numbers without implementing the

infrastructure the desired level of educational impact will not be achieved. Ms. Banios said that 19 curriculum positions, 70% capacity, has been lost since 2007 and the FY2015 curriculum budget request includes bringing back six curriculum positions. She said that an important need addressed by the proposed FY15 curriculum budget is the K-8 Math area. Ms. Banios said the plan for this spring is for all K-8 math teachers to be trained in key shifts and new core instructional materials. She said it is important to look at the key shifts in the common core and standards. Students are now required to acquire more deep conceptual knowledge. Ms. Banios said this shift in the common core is the biggest reason the current K-8 math materials are not working with the core standards. She showed a brief video demonstrating how modeling builds on students' conceptual understanding of math principles. Ms. Banios said it is necessary to replace the core math materials, provide professional development and the total cost is \$722,000. She said the current challenge is that students are being assessed on their knowledge of the core math materials and there is a sense of urgency to acquire these materials for the district. Ms. Banios shared that previously there was a curriculum review cycle in place within the district and changes were made in particular content areas during each review cycle. She said that due to the loss of curriculum positions and resources, the curriculum review cycles have stopped. Ms. Banios said she hopes the district will be able to implement these review cycles again. She shared information about the FY15 budget request for curriculum coordination and coaching including the number of requested curriculum and instruction support staff positions.

B. FY15 Technology Needs: Report

Mr. Jonathan Green, Director of Technology, presented a report on the technology needs for the district. He shared a revision of the report document with the School Committee members which includes a change in the relative number in the budget. Mr. Green discussed the district's vision for teachers to use technology to create learning experiences that are not otherwise possible. He shared the plan for providing access to learning devices that are up-to-date. Mr. Green said the district does not have the ability to implement the vision and plan for technology due to chronic underfunding. Mr. Green showed a comparison of the expenditures of other school districts and shared that Shrewsbury spends in the bottom 2% of school districts in the state on curriculum and technology materials. He said the district has over 200 computers circa 2002 and the list for equipment needs is lengthy. Mr. Green said the widespread support the district has received for technology needs through generous donations from the PTO and the Celebration in the Garden is greatly appreciated. He said he hopes the donations continue at the previous levels to fill in the gaps. Mr. Green said the Media Centers need more support and the SHS Wi-Fi lacks the coverage and capacity to support the Personal Learning Device Program. He said the Technology Department is stretched thin the team spends more time dealing with crisis management. Mr. Green shared a summary of the FY15 proposed Technology Budget with the expenses broken down into three buckets: catch-up; one time; short-time and annual budget needs. He said the FY 2014 budget is \$166 per student and the proposed FY15 budget is \$170 per student. Mr. Green said this is right around the state average and more than 75% of the budget request is for one-time and catch-up costs. He said the district purchases the newest version of a device and makes this last as long as possible. Dr. Sawyer made some comments about the technology funding for the district and said there is a substantial amount of dollars coming from private sources. He said the district has been working hard to find alternative sources of funding. Dr. Sawyer said the district charges some rental fees for the use of buildings and some of that funding is used for wireless internet. He said that as a result of growth in the district, there have been investments in new buildings that have been outfitted with technology resources. Dr. Sawyer said there is a host of opportunities the district is trying to use and there is a great benefit from SELCO.

IX. Old Business

None

X. New Business

None

XI. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Jason Palitsch requested that the January 8, 2014 meeting minutes be amended to state that Mr. John Samia was present at the meeting. Ms. Fryc requested a motion to approve the amended meeting minutes. On a motion by Dr. B. Dale Magee, seconded by Mr. John Samia, the School Committee unanimously voted to approve the amended January 8, 2014 meeting minutes.

XII. Executive Session

None

XIII. Information Enclosures

None

XIV. Adjournment

On a motion by Dr. B. Dale Magee, seconded by Mr. John Samia, the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 PM. On a roll call vote: Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Mr. Samia, Ms. Fryc, yes.

Respectfully submitted
Christine Taylor, Clerk

Documents referenced:

- 1) Fiscal Year 2015 Curriculum Needs: Report
- 2) Fiscal Year 2015 Technology Needs: Report