

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

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2014

Present: Ms. Sandra Fryc, Chairperson; Mr. John Samia, Vice Chairperson; Mr. Jason Palitsch, Secretary; Ms. Erin Canzano; Dr. B. Dale Magee; 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

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

Dr. Sawyer shared that Bernie Witkowski passed away over the weekend. He was the head custodian at Sherwood Middle School and instrumental in helping with the move into the new school. Dr. Sawyer commented that Bernie's passing is a loss to the Town of Shrewsbury and that he will be greatly missed.

I. Public Participation

None

II. Chairperson's Report and Members' Reports

A. Ms. Sandra Fryc shared information that a tentative agreement with the Shrewsbury Education Association (SEA) and the School Committee has been reached. She said that it is hopeful that this agreement will be ratified between the SEA and School Committee. Ms. Fryc said that when an agreement is ratified updated information will be released to the public.

III. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Joseph Sawyer shared that SHS senior Elizabeth Grip is the second female Shrewsbury basketball team player to reach 1,000 points. He commended the Sherwood Middle School music staff and students on a great job with the sixth grade concert.

IV. Time Scheduled Appointments

None

V. Curriculum

A. SHS Program of Studies: Vote

Mr. Todd Bazydlo discussed the change to the class name Accelerated Spanish 1. School Committee members have been informed of this course title change and this information was sent in a document under a separate cover. Ms. Sandra Fryc asked if there had been any feedback from the parents on the proposed changes. Mr. Bazydlo said that there had been no feedback and that they are moving forward with enrollment. Dr. Sawyer said he appreciates the work completed by staff members, he thinks the district is doing the best with the resources that are available, and he supports the changes for the SHS Program of Studies. Ms. Sandra Fryc called for a motion for the vote on the proposed changes for the SHS Program of Studies. On a motion by Mr. John Samia, seconded by Mr. Jason Palitsch, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the changes for the SHS Program of Studies.

VI. Policy

None

VII. Budget

A. Fiscal Year 2015 Budget: Superintendent's Recommendation

- **Overview of Full Budget & Special Education**

Dr. Sawyer and staff members presented a recommendation for the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget and details of the Fiscal Year 2015 Special Education Budget. Dr. Sawyer discussed the mission of the Shrewsbury district and shared that ultimately a budget is a statement of the values for an organization. He mentioned the strategic priorities for the district including bringing class sizes to the level of recommended guidelines and providing resources to implement the curriculum. Dr. Sawyer discussed how the district is slipping in regards to the quality of education provided to students and shared the example of the Shrewsbury district moving from a level 1 to level 2 district. He said that it is important to invest in the district now or pay more later and that Shrewsbury spends in the bottom 11% of school districts in the Commonwealth. Dr. Sawyer's recommendation for the FY 2015 budget is \$59,840,582 and will provide resources for additional teachers to reduce class sizes; curriculum materials; resources to address mental and behavioral health of students; high school in-school support program; technology; special education in district program development and support, and operational expenses.

Ms. Barbara Malone, Director of Human Resources said that the largest part of the district budget recommendation is to address the large class size issues. Ms. Mary Beth Banios, Assistant Superintendent discussed critical needs in curriculum that are part of the budget recommendation including K-8 math investment. Mr. Jon Green, SHS Director of Instructional Technologies shared the vision for the needs for technology in classrooms, that the district has needs due to chronic underfunding. Mr. Liam Hurley, Director of Business Services, discussed operational expenses including the athletic program; the transportation costs increasing next year due to an increase in the daily rate for busing and an additional bus; and the homeless transportation line item increasing.

Ms. Melissa Maguire, Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel presented the Special Education Budget Report FY 2015 and shared what is required to move the special education department and programs forward. Recommendations included special education in-district program development and support; special education and support personnel to address class size and caseloads; special education resources to address mental and behavioral health; and special education operations. During her presentation, Ms. Maguire shared that the cost of educating students in the district is substantially less than sending them outside of the district. Dr. Sawyer thanked colleagues for providing information. He said that the Shrewsbury community is at a crossroads, the district has a difficult problem of not having enough resources, and that we have been struggling since 2004. Dr. Sawyer said that the plan is an expensive solution; however it does not restore many of the things lost in the district over the last ten years. He said he realizes that the School Department is not the only Town Department that needs these resources and the solution to the problem requires a financial commitment from the community.

Dr. B. Dale Magee asked a question about the plans for full-day kindergarten in the district next year and commented that this is a product people are willing to purchase. He said that decreased availability for full-day kindergarten may trigger substantial revenue losses for the district and cause students to leave the district to attend charter schools. Dr. Sawyer responded and shared that in order to help fix class size issues at Floral School then some first graders will need to be educated at Beal School. Ms. Erin Canzano asked why the highest numbers of students leaving the district to be educated are included in the categories of emotional and behavioral health. Ms. Maguire responded that some other educational settings have more opportunities for small staff to student ratios and counselors present in classrooms.

School Committee members said that they supported the FY 2015 budget and recommendations. Dr. Sawyer shared that the budget information and document will be posted on the district website the next day. He said there will be a public hearing held on the last Wednesday in February and probably another public hearing scheduled in March.

VIII. Old Business

None

IX. New Business

None

X. Approval of Minutes

None

XI. Executive Session

At 8:34 PM, on a motion by Mr. Samia, seconded by Ms. Canzano, the School Committee voted to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing negotiations, and open session for the purpose of adjourning. On a roll call vote: Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Mr. Samia, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes

XII. Information Exlosures

XIII. Adjournment

On a motion by Ms. Canzano, seconded by Mr. Samia, the meeting was adjourned at 9:01PM PM. On a roll call vote: Dr. Magee, yes; Ms. Canzano, yes; Ms. Fryc, yes; Mr. Palitsch, yes; Mr. Samia, yes

Respectfully submitted
Christine Taylor, Clerk

Documents referenced:

- 1) Superintendent's Budget Recommendation FY 2015
- 2) Special Education FY 2015 Budget Report