

Salem School Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, October 2, 2017

A regular meeting of the Salem School Committee was held on Monday, October 2, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the School Committee Chambers at Collins Middle School, 29 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA.

**Members Present:** Mayor Kimberley Driscoll, Dr. Brendan Walsh, Ms. Mary Manning, Mr. Patrick Schultz, Ms. Kristine Wilson, and Ms. Deborah Amaral

**Members Absent:** Mr. James Fleming

**Others Present:** Margarita Ruiz, Superintendent, Margaret Marotta, Assistant Superintendent, Kate Carbone, Assistant Superintendent, Kristin Shaver, Business Manager, Kelley Rice, Chief of Communications, and Jill Conrad, Chief of Systems Strategy

**Call to Order**

Mayor Driscoll called the Regular Meeting of the Salem School Committee to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Ms. Amaral moved to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes**

Deliberation and Vote of the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting held September 18, 2017

Ms. Wilson motioned to approve the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting held on September 18, 2017. Ms. Amaral seconded the Motion. The Motion carried.

**Questions and Comments From the Audience**

There were no questions or comments from the audience.

**Superintendent Report – Margarita Ruiz**

Superintendent Ruiz reported that the Collins Middle School was recently recognized in the Department of Education's Extended Learning (DESE) Times Newsletter. DESE acknowledged strong academic gains, increasingly strong teacher leadership, and distributive school leadership transparent practices that have also been adopted in classrooms by both teachers and students and the STEM pathways opportunities that they offer students in each grade. Ms. Ruiz thanked Chief Mary Butler and the Salem Police Department for adding another resource officer to the school and the relocation of an officer to the High School. She updated the committee on the MCAS data in terms of its release and status. Superintendent Ruiz stated that the island of Puerto Rico was ravaged by the recent hurricane and announced that there will be a Drive. It is scheduled for this Saturday, October 7, 2017 9-1pm at the Immaculate Conception Parish. They are seeking donations for water, non-perishable foods, diapers, baby formulas, blankets, towels, underwear for all ages, bug sprays, flashlights, batteries, and other supplies. She urged everyone to please contact them, through social media and their website links, if they are able to donate to Puerto Rico and other places that have experienced the same disasters and to volunteer. Superintendent Ruiz repeated the announcement for the Drive in Spanish for the viewers.

## **Discussion**

Mr. Schultz asked if the participation rate of 95% is the only metric point that determines leveling. Ms. Ruiz responded that it would be used only to identify level 3 schools. Mayor Driscoll clarified that the issues Superintendent Ruiz talked about in terms of the timing of when the data will be available, the conversion charts, etc. is not unique to Salem; that is something that every single school district is contending with at the same time, because everyone is made to switch over to MCAS 2.0. She asked if there were any feelings that the district that took the PARCC the year before is sort of in a better shape because the Park is supposed to be more rigorous than MCAS. Superintendent Ruiz said that they would see within time what the data reveals. Members continued discussion on the topic of data. Mayor Driscoll thought it worthwhile for the Superintendent and staff to reach out to officials at DESE on allowing school growth with MCAS 2.0 results. Mr. Schultz commented that a correlation with leveling would also be useful. He asked how much time would the district need to process raw data and to come up with a more complete analysis of the students' results after the data is received. Ms. Carbone responded that the data released this year is unlike the data released in the past. They are getting the data very close to the date it is released to the public. It would normally have been a few weeks in-between where they have the final results and are able to look at them. It appears there is less time for that this year. They will do their best to process the data and come up with a complete analysis.

## **Presentations and Reports**

Pillar 1 – Create a Vibrant K-12 Teaching and Learning Ecosystem  
Standards Based Grading Update

Assistant Superintendent Kate Carbone and the team updated members and the public on Pillar 1 – Create a Vibrant K-12 Teaching and Learning Ecosystem and the Standards Based Grading. Ms. Carbone introduced members to the presentation that talked about the connecting work under way to the Strategic Plan and Standards-Based Grading Timeline – the standards based project rollout. Michelle Herman, Director of Teacher and Leader Development, talked about some of the upsides on the K-8 side and the High School Pilot of Standards-Based Practices. Amy Selvaggio, Salem High School History Teacher (9<sup>th</sup> Grade) also talked about the Standards-Based practice in the field and shared how that shifted her own practice and the cultural learning at the Salem High School. Andrew Wulf, Administrator of Teaching and Learning, informed members on the details of the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Draft High School Report Card, how students' progresses are reported to parents. David Angeramo, Salem High School Principal, talked about scaling how the Standards-Based practices work.

## **Discussion**

Mayor Driscoll asked about the difference between a Standards-Based report card and what one may have seen in the past or may have traditionally used. Ms. Carbone responded that a Standards-Based report card is based on clear criteria around content. What the teachers have done is identify priority standards. This is the content that students, at a particular grade level, must absolutely master before they move on the next grade level for each of those priority standards they built what people use the term '*rubric*' they call them '*proficiency scales*' here in Salem. A Proficiency scale takes each one of those priority standards and breaks it down into the subscales in order to master this particular standard, what content and discreet subscales a student must be taught, and support it in learning. Prior to that, it varied from teacher to teacher and grades often included other things such as homework and attendance which somewhat distorted the true meaning of the grade. The Standards based report card separates those things out. They still report on homework, attendance, punctuality, and ability to work well with others – skills that are just as important for being successful overall – but these are reported

separately. Mr. Schultz asked Ms. Herman and Ms. Carbone why English Language Development (ELL) and World Languages were lagging. Ms. Carbone responded that it was because they did not have curriculum maps in those areas; they were starting from scratch. Ms. Herman briefly detailed how the standards of ELL are constructed differently, a different development process. Members asked Ms. Selvaggio further questions on the Standards-Based practice and were responded to accordingly. Mayor Driscoll asked Mr. Wulf if there are any other High Schools besides Salem Academy that are using the Standards-Based model for grading. Ms. Carbone said there are. They have found that one Standard-Based approach is not another's Standard-Based approach. They are doing a model very similar to the Salem Academy with a few tweaks. They had to do a lot of customization earlier around the model. Aspen is very intrigued with the work they are doing. They have been working with them. Aspen sees their model as something that is going to inform a launch of a new product for them that may be released for wider use for schools that use Aspen. Mayor Driscoll asked if parents are understanding it. Mr. Wulf responded that there have been questions, emails, and telephone calls, he is available to parents who seek clarification. They are going to be organizing a Parent group for feedback in terms of how they are perceiving the work. Students will be a part of that as well. Dr. Walsh asked if, other than performance, the Standards-Based report card tracks how hard students are working. Mr. Wulf explained that the Standard-Based grading behaviors are taken out of the grade, it really is based on student learning. Teachers, in collaboration with other schools in the district, identify habits of learners; teachers are able to give a rating on the report card on habits of learners. This would include completing homework and passing in materials on time. Parents are also able to receive feedback on student behaviors that dramatically impact student learning although it is not part of the grade.

#### **Action Item**

#### **Deliberation and Vote on the Overnight Camping Field Trip Request for New Liberty 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> High School Graders to the AMC's Cardigan Lodge in Alexandria, NH on October 23-25, 2017**

Ms. Amaral motioned to approve the request for New Liberty 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> High School Graders to the AMC's Cardigan Lodge in Alexandria, NH on October 23-25, 2017. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The Motion carried.

#### **Discussion and Vote to Approve a Request of \$5,000 From the Dominion Fund to Support Expenses Related to the Community Convening as Part of the Redesign of the High School Experience in Salem Public Schools (Pillar 2 of the SPS Strategic Plan)**

Dr. Walsh motioned to approve the request for \$5,000 from the Dominion Fund to support expenses related to the Community Convening as part of the redesign of the High School experience in Salem Public Schools (Pillar 2 of the SPS Strategic Plan). Ms. Amaral seconded the motion. The Motion carried.

#### **Finance Report**

##### **a. Approval of Warrants**

September 28, 2017 in the amount of \$328,629.56

October 5, 2017 in the amount of \$574,988.06

Dr. Walsh motioned to approve the two warrants in the amounts stated on the Agenda. Ms. Manning seconded the motion. The Motion was approved.

##### **b. Budget Transfer Requests**

There were no Budget Transfer requests

### **Subcommittee Reports**

#### **Policy Subcommittee**

#### **Deliberation and Vote on Policy 6406 Voting Method – Tabled from 9/18/17**

Policy 6406 remains tabled.

#### **Discussion**

Dr. Walsh stated that the Policy Subcommittee met this afternoon. They talked about some possibilities and shared ideas. They will be meeting again on Friday, October 6, 2017 and again on November 6, 2017. They will be asking for a Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting on November 20, 2017.

#### **Deliberation and Vote on the First Reading of the Recommendation of the Policy Subcommittee on the Revisions to the Following Policies in the 3000-Policy Series:**

- 3406 Expense Reimbursements
- 3502 Building Inspection
- 3503 Buildings and Grounds
- 3504 ~~Emergency Evacuation Drills~~ - left out of First Reading 10/2/17
- 3506 Building Construction and Rehabilitation
- 3602 School Bus Drivers' Responsibilities
- 3603 School Bus Accidents

#### **Discussion**

Ms. Amaral requested to remove Policy 3504 from the list for First Reading. After discussion with the Administration, they realized there are changes.

Dr. Walsh motioned to approve the First Reading of Policies 3406, 3502, 3503, 3506, 3602, and 3603. Ms. Manning seconded the motion. The Motion was approved.

#### **Motion to Hold a Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting on November 20, 2017**

Mayor Driscoll entertained a Motion to set a Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting on November 20, 2017. The Action Item will be posted on the Agenda with the policies for review.

Dr. Walsh motioned to approve a Committee of the Whole meeting on November 20, 2017. Ms. Wilson seconded the Motion. The Motion carried.

#### **School Committee Concerns and Resolutions**

Dr. Walsh reported that parents at the Carlton School who were concerned about the MCAS testing, have students who are doing 4<sup>th</sup> Grade work, are required to take the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade MCAS although they have not used the materials in quite a while. One of parents was concerned of the considerable language changes between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade Math. He asked the Superintendent if they were aware of this. Ms. Carbone said that it has. They have been working with the Department of Education to figure that out. They have learned that the student does not need to take every year's worth of MCAS, but they must be assessed in a given year in one of those grade levels. They are working on how to code students. She, Jill Conrad, and Beth Ann have been meeting to strategize how students are coded and how they collaboratively accommodate the trimester transitions. They had a meeting last week and are accounting for that. Dr. Walsh asked if they would be articulating this to parents. Ms. Carbone agreed. Mr. Schultz reported that they are trying to schedule a Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting for the purpose of the Superintendent's evaluation. Dates have been

circulated to members to seek consensus dates for the initial meeting.

### **Questions and Comments From the Audience**

Lynn Mullen, 360 Littleton Road, Chelmsford, MA, Art Teacher at the High School, invited everyone this Friday, October 6, 2017 from 7pm until 9pm. They are having an Opening for their first Annual Alumni Art Exhibit. They have 10 artists ranging from the Graduating Class from 1980 all the way up to the Graduating Class of 2016 that will have their work on display. It will be on display at the High School through November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### **School Committee Executive Session, as Per Exemption #5, to Discuss AFSCME's (Collective Bargaining Matter in Particular) Level 4 Grievance.**

Mayor Driscoll entertained a roll-call vote to move into Executive Session as per Exemption #5, under the Open Meeting law, to discuss collective bargaining matter in particular, the level 4 Grievance discussion involving the Collective Bargaining agreement with AFSCME.

### **School Committee Secretary Roll Call:**

Ms. Deborah Amaral	Yes
Ms. Mary Manning	Yes
Mr. Patrick Schultz	Yes
Dr. Brendan Walsh	Yes
Ms. Kristine Wilson	Yes
Mayor Kimberley Driscoll	Yes

6 members voted – 6 in the *Affirmative* to convene Executive session and would not return to open session. The Motion carried.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the School Committee this evening. Mayor Driscoll entertained a roll-call vote to move to Executive Session as per Exemption #5, to discuss AFSCME's (Collective Bargaining Matter in Particular) Level 4 grievance. Members would convene in Executive Session and would not be returning to open session.

Dr. Walsh entertained the motion to adjourn. Ms. Amaral seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

---

Angelica Alayon, Secretary  
Salem School Committee

### **Meeting Materials and Reports**

- School Committee Agenda October 2, 2017
- Minutes of the September 18, 2017 Regular School Committee Meeting
- Strategic Planning Update Presentation
- Field Trip Request for the New Liberty Overnight Camping Field Trip to the AMC's Cardigan Lodge in Alexandria, NH on October 23-25, 2017
- Policy 6406 Voting Method
- Policies in the 3000-Policy Series