

Salem School Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 6, 2017

A regular meeting of the Salem School Committee was held on Monday, November 6, 2017 at 7:08 p.m. in the School Committee Chambers at Collins Middle School, 29 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA.

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

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Margarita Ruiz, Superintendent, Margaret Marotta, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services, Kate Carbone, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Kristin Shaver, Business Manager, Jill Conrad, Chief of Systems Strategy, and Kelley Rice, Chief of Communications

Call to Order

Mr. Patrick Schultz called the regular meeting of the Salem School Committee to order at 7:08 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Fleming moved to approve the agenda as presented. Dr. Walsh seconded the motion. The Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Deliberation and Vote on the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting held October 16, 2017

Mr. Fleming motioned to approve the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting held on October 16, 2017. Dr. Walsh abstained; he was absent from that meeting. Ms. Amaral seconded the Motion. The Motion carried.

Questions and Comments From the Audience

Andrea French, 7 Cleveland Road, invited elementary school-age families to the free (Salem Special Education Parent Advisory Council) SSEPAC Technology workshop event on Monday, November 13, 2017 at the Bates Library at 6pm. Spanish translation services will be provided. Translation services may be addressed by contacting the --- office at (978) 740-1247. Childcare is also available.

Superintendent Report – Margarita Ruiz

Superintendent Ruiz reported that all of the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students would have received their assigned Chrome Books by the end of November. The Collins Middle School is piloting the district's first One to One Initiative as they build on the vision to leverage technology in the classrooms in all content areas. The Collins School leaders have been hosting parent/student meetings on how the devices will be used in school and other expectations. Currently, the Chrome Books are being used only during the school day. Ms. Ruiz stated that they look forward to working with the Policy Subcommittee to create a school policy on this as they look toward expanding the pilot program in the coming school years. She announced that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) approved the Chapter 74 application as they continue to focus on college and career for the students to provide Medical Assisting programs as part of the Career and Technical Education curriculum offered through the Salem High School. Ms. Ruiz reminded School Committee members that the offering was piloted last year. The growth expectancy for qualified Medical Assistants over the next ten

years is 29% and is faster than other industries according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. They look forward to partnering with the Salem Medical Center. Superintendent Ruiz also reported that the Vision and Action plan to redesign the High School experience took another step forward last week at their first community conversation held at the Salem High School. This is part of the District's vision to ensure that all students are locally engaged, globally connected, and fully prepared. More than 80 teachers, parents, community members, and elected officials came together to discuss ideas, challenges, current practices, and contribute to this process. Ms. Ruiz thanked School Committee members Mary Manning, Kristine Wilson, and Mayor Driscoll for their participation in the event. There was great energy and a high level of engagement. She looks forward to learn of the suggestions and ideas that were brought into the conversation and thanked the Salem High School team for putting everything together. The Massachusetts School Building Authority recently released its 2016 School Survey Report. Salem received the highest possible ranking for all seven of the schools that were part of Statewide Facilities review. Architectural and Engineering experts visited seven of the Salem Schools last fall to assess the general condition of each building. The assessments evaluated several key factors including: building condition, general environment, capacity, technology, security, and maintenance. Superintendent Ruiz acknowledged Paul L'Heureux and the Building and Grounds Personnel for their work and dedication to ensuring school safety and well-maintained buildings. The Superintendent also reported that tomorrow starts the first day of their differentiated, Teacher-led Professional Development model. Ms. Ruiz announced that the Salem schools and district offices would be closed this Friday in honor of the country's past and present military veterans. She thanked them for their services on behalf of the entire district. She congratulated Dr. Brendan Walsh who was named a Massachusetts Association of School Committee Life Time Member for his long career and service to the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC). Ms. Ruiz completed her presentation.

Discussion

Dr. Walsh asked Superintendent Ruiz if, in light of her acknowledgement of Paul L'Heureux, she would provide a written recommendation in file of his work and dedication to ensuring school safety and well-maintained buildings. Ms. Ruiz said she would be happy to do that.

Presentations and Reports

2017 MCAS 2.0 – Student Performance

Superintendent Ruiz acknowledged and thanked all the school leaders of the Salem Public Schools and members of their senior management team that are present this evening. She is reporting this evening on the collective work of this team. Ms. Ruiz reminded everyone that the scores on MCAS 2.0 for grades 3-8 are a baseline, and not to be compared to previous years. The presentation has multiple measures. She explained beforehand that when talking about the achievement level, the MCAS 2.0, they are talking about the percentage of students that meet or exceed expectations, information which is included in the presentation. In the Achievement level for the Legacy MCAS, achievement level is the percentage of proficient or advanced. The Student Growth Percentile (SGP) is available for all tests. Ms. Ruiz informed and walked members through the 2017 MCAS 2.0 MCAS Data overview presentation, which began with an overview of her last presentation. The presentation consisted of Performance Measures overview, District-Level Data, Sub-Group Performance, School Highlights, and the Strategies Underway. The state changed the term '*low income*' to '*economically disadvantaged*' which is measured through direct reporting (matching those who receive state services directly to the state database). The Science Performance was done with the Legacy MCAS. Ms. Ruiz highlighted the changes put in place this year at the Bowditch School to support learning and increase social-emotional support.

Discussion on District-Level Data (Salem Public Schools Demographics Over Time)

Mr. Schultz asked Superintendent Ruiz if low income or economically disadvantaged students are able to take better advantage of the assessments over time. Ms. Ruiz responded that groups of economically disadvantaged students include other risk factors, such as homelessness and trauma, which may affect how they do in school. The economically disadvantaged is a more precise measure, because it is directly certified by the state (matching students directly to the state database) whereas before it was done through applications for free and reduced lunch. Members shared input, feedback, and discussed the topic in greater detail.

Discussion on the Comparison With State & Urban Districts

Ms. Manning asked if they might see the listing of the urban districts information used in the Superintendent's comparison with the state. Mr. Schultz said he would like to see a list of the urban district's students and similarities of comparison to the Salem Public Schools. Superintendent Ruiz said it would be provided.

Discussion on Science Performance (Science CPI (All Grades))

Members discussed their concern on the trend between 2013-14 through 2016-17 and decline in 2015-16. Superintendent Ruiz and School Committee members agreed there is work in progress for consistency of continuous positive increase. Members shared further insight and feedback. Mayor Driscoll asked what the expectations were if there was going to be a *Next Generation* MCAS for Science. Superintendent Ruiz responded that the expectation would be that all of the assessments would move into the *Next Generation*, including High School. Further discussion on the topic continued.

Discussion on ELA Grades 3-8 (Achievement Level Assessments)

Mr. Fleming inquired about the comparisons. Superintendent Ruiz clarified that they are not comparing assessments; they are comparing the size of the gap between Salem and the state average in 2014 compared with the size of the gap in 2017.

Discussion on Improvement Highlights – Sub-Group Performance

Superintendent Ruiz said that the Sub-Group Performance comparison is a district comparison. Ms. Amaral asked if there was a comparison to the states' data. Ms. Ruiz said she would be happy to provide that.

Discussion on Economically Disadvantaged (ED)

Dr. Walsh said he would like to see a comparison to include all districts. Superintendent Ruiz agreed. Mr. Schultz asked Ms. Ruiz if they have done an analysis on the overlap of the economic disadvantage and ELL. She responded that they have not. Further discussion on the topic ensued.

Discussion on Percentage of Advanced/Proficient of all Students (% Advanced + Proficient)

Salem High School took the *Legacy* MCAS test. Mr. Schultz asked Superintendent Ruiz if they have a preliminary assessment as to why the 9% decrease in ELA at the High School. Ms. Ruiz responded that they are looking more closely at the reasons now. It needs a more granular assessment.

Discussion on Schools Narrowing Gap With the State

Mr. Schultz inquired more data on the Witchcraft Heights Elementary School. Superintendent Ruiz clarified that the information provided this evening are highlights on the schools that have improved. Ms. Manning thought it important to be informed of the schools that have

maintained a level balance or have dropped. Mayor Driscoll added that more information on the challenges of individual schools may require a separate meeting to consider what some of the benchmarks are and what can be used, for example, to dig deeper into its needs. The Bowditch School also has some challenges. Mr. Schultz said that, in terms of public presentation, challenges should also be highlighted.

Discussion on Strategies Underway

Mr. Fleming asked Superintendent Ruiz if there is a way to compare the Bowditch School to each of the districts and the state, due to its decline, as others may want to know. Ms. Ruiz responded that she would be happy to schedule a Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting for further discussion and follow-up of the school.

Final Discussion

Mr. Schultz summarized the evening's presentation: ELA, MATH, and SCIENCE in grades 3-8, they decreased the gap (significantly in some cases) between the district and state, over three years, improved success and achievement rate of students with disabilities at the Salem High School, and the Salem High School has generally improved. Members agreed to Mr. Schultz's summation. Ms. Manning reiterated the importance of librarian and staffing school libraries with professionals who provide good instructional media to provide directional support to students and teachers. She feels strongly about this and intends to continue on the issue throughout her time as School Committee member. Ms. Amaral said that parents should have received their reports in the mail by now or should be receiving it within the next day or two. She received hers. She thought it was easily readable. Superintendent Ruiz shared that reports to the parents have all been mailed out.

Action Item

Deliberation and Vote on the Culinary Arts Class School Field Trip for Salem High School 11th – 12th Graders to Johnson and Wales College, Providence, RI on December 11, 2017 from 7:30am – 3:00pm

Discussion

Correction: The field trip destination is to Providence, Rhode Island. Additional '*New York*' wording needs to be deleted/removed.

Mr. Fleming motioned to approve the request, as amended, for Salem High School 11th and 12th Graders to Johnson and Wales College in Providence, Rhode Island on December 11, 2017. Ms. Manning seconded the motion. The Motion carried.

Finance Report

a. Approval of Warrants

October 12, 2017 in the amount of \$83,535.83

November 2, 2017 in the amount of \$720,893.00

November 9, 2017 in the amount of \$92,726.23

Mr. Fleming motioned to approve the three warrants in the amounts stated on the Agenda. Dr. Walsh seconded the motion. The Motion was approved.

b. Budget Transfer Requests

The School Committee approved the following budget transfers FY18-11 and FY18-12 recommended by the School Business Administrator, Kristin Shaver. She explained that Central Office (Teaching and Learning) has requested that the fund be transferred in order to align the funds with the intended expense as follows:

Account Description/Use	Account Number	Amount From	Amount To
Human Capital Office			
Salaries	13482020-5160	\$4,000	
Contract Services	13482021-5320		\$4,000
Teaching & Learning Department			
Teaching & Learning Stipends	13990160-5150	\$26,584	
Saltonstall – Tutor	13570720-5114		\$10,500
Collins – Instructional Materials	13570921-5514		7,692
Collins – Stipends	13570920-5150		6,400
Collins – Contract Transportation	13570921-5333		1,992

Ms. Amaral moved to approve the budget transfer requests as listed. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Subcommittee Reports

Policy Subcommittee

Deliberation and Vote on the First Reading of Policy 6406 Voting Method – Tabled from 10/16/17

Discussion

Ms. Amaral reported that the Policy Subcommittee met several times on this policy. They met again today. She explained the meaning of the language change in Policy 6406. Members discussed their concerns of the change in policy and shared their feedback.

Ms. Amaral motioned to remove Policy 6406 off the table. Dr. Walsh seconded the motion. The motion to remove Policy 6406 off the table was approved.

Mr. Fleming motioned to amend 4 votes in the hire and dismissal of the Superintendent. Dr. Walsh seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Ms. Manning moved Policy 6406 for First reading. Dr. Walsh seconded the motion. The motion for First Reading on Policy 6406 was approved.

Deliberation and Vote on the Second Reading of the Recommendation of the Policy Subcommittee on the Revision to Policy 6101: Vision, Mission, and Core Values

Ms. Amaral motioned to approve the Second Reading of the revision of Policy 6101: Vision, Mission, and Core Values. Mr. Fleming seconded the motion. The motion for Second reading of Policy 6101 was approved.

Deliberation and Vote on the Third and Final 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

Dr. Walsh motioned to approve the Third reading of the recommendation of the policy subcommittee on the revisions to the policies in the 3000-Policy series. Ms. Manning seconded the motion. The motion for Third reading of the recommendation of the Policy Subcommittee on the revisions to the 3000-Policy series as listed was approved.

School Committee Concerns and Resolutions

Mr. Fleming reported that the Personnel Subcommittee met with the Superintendent and the Business Manager to, as originally posted, revise and revamp the Transportation Office - due to a resignation and the realignment of some of the Personnel Office. There was no necessity for realignment or revamping of that office. They have revamped the duties and will have a better and more efficient operation with the existing personnel. Mr. Fleming also inquired about the status of the Hall of Fame Committee on the issue that was referred to the Superintendent. Mayor Driscoll responded that she spoke with Principal Angeramo. Her understanding is that Principal Angeramo and the athletic director were pulling together a meeting with the Hall of Fame Committee. They were going to review the qualifications in order to move forward for recognition to the Hall of Fame. Mr. Fleming reminded the Mayor that it was two individuals who submitted their applications. Mayor Driscoll confirmed that the Hall of Fame was processing the applications and that it may not be a lengthy process. Dr. Walsh shared that he was at a conference and had a conversation with the Acting Commissioner. He had previously called his office to schedule to meet. They had an odd situation with the Carleton School. They have students who are academically doing 4th grade work now but are chronologically 3rd grade, because of its Innovation School structure; students have to take the 3rd grade MCAS. He wondered if bureaucracy was getting in the way of an innovation when it is used to sponsor innovation in other cases. The Acting Commissioner's conclusion was that there is not much they can do about it. Dr. Walsh commented a personal observation on the test score information that was presented this evening. He wondered if the information meant that the Carlton School reduced the gap in all three areas and stated that this Committee and administration must admit they are not fully funding the things that make that particular model work. He is very much concerned that if it continues in that respect, the model will begin to fail. He is hoping that anyone who watch on television and may or may not occupy one of the School Committee seats will keep that in mind.

Questions and Comments From the Audience

There were no questions or comments from the audience.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the School Committee this evening, Mr. Fleming 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 November 6, 2017
- Minutes of the October 16, 2017 Regular School Committee Meeting
- Salem Public Schools 2017 MCAS Data Overview Presentation
- Salem High School 11th and 12th Grade Culinary Arts Class Field Trip Request
- Budget Transfers
- Policy 6406 Voting Method
- Policy 6101: Vision, Mission, and Core Values
- Policies in the 3000-Policy Series