Salem School Committee

Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 16, 2016

A regular meeting of the Salem School Committee was held on Monday, May 16, 2016 at 7:30 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. Rachel Hunt, and Kristine Wilson

**Members Absent:** Mr. James Fleming, Mary Manning, Patrick Schultz

**Others Present**: Ms. Margarita Ruiz, Superintendent, Kate Carbone, Assistant Superintendent, Margaret Marotta, Assistant Superintendent, Philip Littlehale, School Business Manager, Dr. Jill Conrad, Chief of Operations Strategy, Chief of Communications Kelley Rice and Eileen Sacco, Secretary.

**Call to Order**

Mayor Driscoll called the Regular Meeting of the Salem School Committee to order at 7:30 p.m.

**Approval of the Agenda**

Dr. Walsh moved to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the Regular School Committee Meeting held on May 2, 2016 were presented for approval.

Dr. Walsh moved to approve the minutes of the May 2, 2016 Regular School Committee meeting. Ms. Wilson seconds the motion. The motion carried.

**Questions and Comments from the Audience**

City Councillor Tom Furey addressed the School Committee and encouraged the School Committee to consider implementing School Choice in the Salem Public Schools. He stated that he feels that the Salem Public Schools has a lot to offer and could benefit from allowing students from other districts to attend the Salem Public Schools.

**Superintendent Report – Margarita Ruiz**

**New Leaders Appointed in Salem Public Schools**

Ms. Ruiz stated that as Superintendent, she is pleased with the high caliber of the individuals who are eager to be part of our leadership team. She explains that she has made the following Principal appointments for the 2016-­‐2017 school year as follows:

Bethann Jellisonwill serve as the new principal at the Carlton Innovation School. Bethann has taken on increasing leadership at the Salem Public Schools since joining us in 2002. Ms. Jellison took on the role of teacher leader in math for grades 3-­‐5 at Carlton and, last year, she secured her principal licensure.

Nick Gesualdiwill be the Principal at Saltonstall School after serving as interim this school year. During the last year at Saltonstall, Nick has demonstrated the drive, determination and passion to propel student achievement and provide support and guidance to the teaching community.

Dr. Chad Leithhas committed to continuing as Principal at the Horace Mann. The Salem Public Schools and Salem State University are entering into an exciting time in our partnership. Dr. Leith’s continued leadership will help support and strengthen this partnership.

**Salem High School Class of 2016 Valedictorian**

Ms. Ruiz stated that she is pleased to report that William Phu is the Valedictorian of the Salem High School Class of 2016. She reported that William will be attending MIT in September and will be studying computer science. Ms. Ruiz noted that William was a participant in the Salem Public Schools Parent Child Home Program offered her congratulations and that of the Salem Public Schools and wished him well in the future.

**Bus Accident**

Ms. Ruiz reported that there was a bus accident last week involving students from the Nathaniel Bowditch School. She reported that there were no serious injuries from the accident and noted that NBS Principal Johanna Evan went to the accident scene to assist students. She commended the transportation staff on their handling of the situation noting that Eric Ferman, Gary Meyer, and Kenny Dehalla assisted police in getting the children to parent who arrived on the scene to pick their students up as well as assisting students to another bus that was provided to continue taking the students home.

**By All Means Initiative**

Ms. Ruiz reported that she and Mayor Driscoll and members of the Salem Children’s Cabinet will be attending a two day workshop at Harvard University on the By All Means Initiative. She thanked Mayor Driscoll and Ms. Kris Wilson for their participation in the Children’s Cabinet and states that she looks forward to the collaboration that this effort will provide for the Salem Public Schools. She also noted that the Strategic Planning Process will blend well with these initiatives and she looks forward to this collaborative process. She notes that there will be a presentation this evening from New Profit which is providing pro bono assistance to the Salem Public Schools on the Strategic Planning Process.

Ms. Ruiz reported that she and Salem High School Principal David Angeramo were invited to an event at Salem High School last week for what they thought was a Teacher Appreciation event. She reported that some staff members used the event as an opportunity to promote personal agendas and stressed that she and Mr. Angeramo were not willing participants in that event. She noted that she does not condone that kind of activity at during school hours. She further noted that she has talked with Salem Teachers Union President Beth Kontos about this as well and informed her of her feelings regarding this matter.

**Arts In the Evening**

Ms. Ruiz reported that Salem High School will be hosting Arts In The Evening on May 25, 2016 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. She stated that students will be exhibiting their work and other activities are planned. She noted that she is looking forward to this event for students to showcase their work.

**Presentations and Reports**

Jane Feinberg and Superintendent Ruiz made a presentation on the strategic planning process that is underway in the Salem Public Schools. She and Superintendent Ruiz reviewed the following information in their presentation:

# **Introduction**

The following is an executive summary of a scope of work to facilitate, in partnership with the Salem Public Schools (SPS), a Strategic Planning Process that is developed and owned by SPS, and in which the entire Salem community is deeply and fully engaged. During the next 10-12 months, we look forward to helping the Salem Public Schools lead a series of important conversations with school and community stakeholders that will inform and help shape the future direction of SPS—which, of course, is tied directly to the future success of Salem itself. These conversations, and the important data that emerge from them, will result in a Strategic Plan for SPS—a roadmap for the district and each of its schools in the years ahead.

Now, as perhaps never before, the fates of our cities depend largely on how well we educate our children. The world is rapidly changing and our young people will need to acquire knowledge, skills, and dispositions that have not been demanded of previous generations. The Strategic Planning Process can help SPS and its many stakeholders create a compelling vision to enable its young people to meet their futures—and Salem’s collective future—fully prepared to lead and contribute as productive workers, committed family members, and engaged citizens.

Salem joins many districts in Massachusetts and around the country in “remodeling” its schools for modern life. Like a beautiful historic home, SPS has “good bones”—excellent facilities, many talented leaders and teachers, and numerous innovative programs. But as is the case with any historic home, many aspects of public schooling need to be brought “up to code.” Fortunately, there are models both within and beyond Salem that can guide SPS in its modernization efforts.

As a non-profit venture philanthropy firm that aims to improve the quality of life in America’s cities and towns, New Profit feels privileged to take this journey with the Superintendent, the Senior Leadership Team, the School Committee, and the many other stakeholders who want the best for Salem’s children and the professionals who work with them. Given what we have seen and heard to date, we believe that SPS is uniquely poised to become “THE district of choice on the North Shore”—one of the most desirable places for young people to learn, grow, and thrive.

# **Project Overview & Philosophy**

As you know, upon assuming her new role, Superintendent Margarita Ruiz embarked on a ‘listening and learning tour’ to inform her Entry Report to the Salem School Committee. This tour yielded several clear areas of focus for the district; one of those was developing a powerful Vision and Strategic Plan for the future.

New Profit heard about Salem’s aspirations and made an initial outreach to Mayor Kim Driscoll and Superintendent Ruiz to explore how we might make a contribution to the district’s efforts. Our rationale for doing so was straightforward. The Reimagine Learning Fund at New Profit focuses on ensuring that all young people have access to the supports and opportunities they need—within and beyond the school day—to achieve academic and life success. In order to make a sustainable impact, we wanted to be as close to the ground as possible to learn what it really takes to turn around a district, in exchange for our organization’s resources and expertise in the areas of strategic planning, project management, data collection and analysis, communications, and facilitation. In addition, the lead funder of Reimagine Learning, the Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation, has deep roots in Essex County and was especially committed to improving education in this geographic area.

After a series of exploratory conversations, Superintendent Ruiz invited New Profit to help facilitate the district’s Strategic Planning Process.

New Profit is deeply committed to behind the scenes leadership. We provide ongoing thought partnership and essential leverage to those we work with in a way that makes it possible for them to do more, faster than they would be able to do without us, but also ensure that we are always in service of the objectives and approach that most strongly resonate with our partners. Put differently, we look for projects where we have shared aspirations and values, but do not enter a situation with a pre-set agenda or set of outcomes that we are trying to bring to life. We are deeply committed to co-creation.

For the Salem Public Schools, this means that we see ourselves as SPS’s strategic thought partner and essential leverage for planning, but that the ultimate decisions to be made – e.g., choice of approach, model, timing, etc. – are yours. We will provide our best advice and guidance and then work to bring to life the vision that feels most right and relevant to the district and the community.

With that in mind, we would like to share a few specifics with you about our approach:

1. **Acting as Facilitators:** We are, first and foremost, facilitators. We believe strongly that the school district and the community as a whole are the creators and owners of the Strategic Plan. While we bring valuable strategies tools, resources, and perspectives, our role is to enable district leadership and other stakeholders to develop a robust and effective Strategic Plan, one that is both ambitious and doable. Toward this end, we will share our toolbox, gather data, ask guiding questions, and help facilitate the important conversations that will animate the Strategic Planning process and help prepare the district for implementation.
2. **Community-Engaged Planning:** Historically, Strategic Planning has been the province of top- level leadership, who then “roll out” a plan to stakeholders, with an expectation of immediate buy-in and implementation. Research has shown that such an approach can backfire, and that a preferable approach is to engage all stakeholders in creating a vision and giving life to it. In other words, people have a stake in what they’ve helped to create. We look forward to helping SPS create a community-engaged Strategic Planning Process, one that invites all sectors of the community to be at the table.
3. **Building on Assets:** Oftentimes, in trying to improve an organization, it is natural to focus on what is not working. While every school district in the country, including SPS, wrestles with challenges, we believe there is much to be gained by assuming a stance of “appreciative inquiry,” that is, by recognizing the existing “bright spots”—those aspects of the organization that are valued by internal stakeholders and produce value for the external stakeholders. We believe that this stance is especially important in Salem because there is much to be hopeful about: there are many examples of excellence in SPS that can be appreciated and possibly adopted elsewhere in the district.
4. **A Whole Child, Student-Centered Focus:** Perhaps most salient to us from our initial conversations in Salem thus far is that the city is devoted to its children, and that it regards all domains of development—cognitive, social, emotional, and physical—as intertwined and important to success in school and in life. Emerging science tells us understanding the whole child and adopting a “student-centered” approach enables more brightly and creates the opportunity for students who struggle to benefit from a variety of innovative practices that are showing promise around the country. A perspective that puts students at the center also helps us gain much better clarity about what the adults who serve children need to succeed.
5. **Connection to the New Profit Network:** Though we are charged with helping to facilitate the Strategic Planning Process, we also have in mind the longer term needs of the district. The New Profit network consists of many thought leaders and practitioners. We would be happy to make whatever connections the district would deem appropriate to inform the Strategic Planning Process more deeply and, over time, to support implementation of the Strategic Plan.
6. **Adaptable Planning:** The focus of a Strategic Plan is on the future. An effective Strategic Plan is regularly used and frequently revised to reflect new trends or developments. It helps focus on the distinctive capabilities of the organization in its specific context, sets a formal direction for the organization with a pro-active orientation, creates an environment of teamwork, where all participants can make more effective decisions and utilize their skills more fully; and provides external audiences with a concise basis for analysis, evaluation, and input. Our hope is to help SPS create a Strategic Plan that provides direction now – outlining priorities and a pathway to achieving them in the near term – but also serves as both an analytical tool and a working document that will guide the district’s action over time.

# **A Multi-Stage Process for Developing and Implementing a Strategic Plan**

Having had the opportunity to meet with and interview key members of the Senior Leadership Team, we have gained a preliminary understanding of the current strengths and challenges in Salem. This was very helpful in developing a scope of work for the Strategic Planning Process.

We envision the following three-stage process for the planning and implementation of SPS’s Strategic Plan.

1. **From Vision to Plan:** Translate the high-level vision, mission and areas of focus that emerged from the Superintendent’s Listening Tour into detailed plans of action to bring these changes to life.
2. **From Plan to Pilot:** Identify early wins and execute against these, and secure necessary resources for longer-term change priorities including financial support, partners and internal capacity.
3. **From Pilot to Full Implementation:** Fully executed change management process that ensures all of the identified priorities and change levers are translated into district operations in a manner that will support positive impact on learners in the district. New Profit’s support focuses solely on the first stage, from Vision to Plan, with the intent of enabling Salem to think through the more detailed design considerations that will need to be addressed in order to bring the vision of the future of the Salem Public Schools to life in schools and classrooms across the district.

# **Governance and the Structure of the Strategic Planning Process**

In order to ensure the fidelity of the process, we have partnered with the Senior Leadership Team to design a governance structure that fosters participation and accountability across a wide swath of stakeholder groups. The governance structure is described in the schematic below, followed by a narrative about the role of each group.

## **The Role of the Salem School Committee and the Superintendent of Schools**

The School Committee and the Superintendent will ratify the final Strategic Plan. Two members of the School Committee will sit on the Steering Committee and other School Committee members will have the opportunity to join Work Teams.

## **The Role of the Superintendent and the School Leadership Team**

* Co-create the plan for the Strategic Planning Process with New Profit
* Staff the Steering Committee
* Staff the Work Teams
* Participate in Community Conversations
* Report on progress to the School Committee
* Attend meetings with New Profit at key mileposts

## **The Role of the Steering Committee**

**Who:**

* A representative body of approximately 13 people, consisting primarily of the Leads of the Work Teams
* Includes two (2) School Committee Members
* Includes parent, student and teacher representatives
* Superintendent & Senior Leadership Team serve as staff
* Steering Committee meets approximately four (4) times over the life of the Strategic Planning Process

## **What:**

* Establish a charter for itself and select members of the Lever for Change Work Teams
* Serve as a multi-stakeholder body that keeps an eye across all of the Levers for Change and the connections among them
* Share and communicate discoveries through communications channels
* First reviewer of drafts leading up to the final Strategic Plan

# **Vision & Entry Plan Priorities**

Building on hundreds of conversation with stakeholders that have taken place since Superintendent Ruiz began her tenure, the Superintendent and Senior Leadership Team recently came together for a full-day retreat to discuss and vet the Mission, Vision and Core Values that were drafted by the Superintendent and the School Committee. The Strategic Planning Process will build on the existing draft vision for the district:

**“All students prepared to achieve, inspired to learn”**

**Identifying Priorities**

Superintendent Ruiz also identified a number of priorities in her Entry Plan that articulated the core capabilities required to allow the Salem Public Schools to deliver high quality education to all students. These priorities are as follows:

## Ensure Learning & Growth for Every Student, Every Day

* Strengthen Infrastructure to Support Our Schools
* Inform and Engage Our Parents and Community at Every Level
* Develop a Powerful Vision of the Future of SPS

Building on the Vision for the district and the core operational capabilities identified in the Entry Plan Findings, the Senior Leadership Team engaged in a deep discussion of what it considered the Key Change Levers for district transformation. Six Change Levers were identified, with a Work Team dedicated to each Lever. The Work Teams will develop strategies for each Lever, keeping in mind the core capabilities required to drive change in service of SPS’ vision.

## **Vision for Portfolio Schools in Salem**

Is SPS a school system or system of schools? This important question speaks to many critical decisions— from budgeting to organizing professional development to hiring and retaining staff and determining the models of educational design that are most suited to the needs of Salem’s school-age population. What values, principles and practices will enable SPS to make an informed decision about the architecture of the educational delivery system?

## **Teacher Leadership and Empowerment**

To be effective in today’s 21st century world, teachers—like students--must master a much broader set of skills and strategies than was ever expected of their counterparts in previous generations. How do we recruit and retain the best talent and ensure that SPS teachers have best-in-class opportunities to advance their learning, exercise their leadership in meaningful ways, and feel empowered to design experiences that fully engage children’s heads, hearts, and hands?

## **Family and Community Engagement**

In earlier times, the school and the community were viewed as separate spheres, often competing for resources. Today, we recognize that: 1) children succeed when their families are engaged in their learning 2) families become engaged when they feel competent, respected, and welcome in the schools and 3) community partners are truly aligned with the needs of the students. How will SPS ensure that family and community are part of the very fabric of the educational experience?

## **Vision for Early Childhood in Salem**

Recent developments in neuroscience make clear that the first months and years of life are a critical period for development, and that quality early learning experiences make a significant difference in children’s later learning outcomes. Today, there are not enough affordable and high-quality Pre-K options to meet demand. How might Salem design a Pre-K strategy that will enable children to succeed as part of a robust Pre-K-12 system?

Ms. Ruiz stated that the vision for early childhood education in Salem is a high point and will connect well with the “By All Mean Initiative” and the work being done with them will be helpful in the strategic planning process.

## **The Future of High School in Salem**

It is widely recognized that the American High School was built for an industrial economy in which only a small percentage of students were expected to go onto post-secondary schooling. Today, the realities of 21st century life require that all young people have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to thrive in complex environments. In addition to helping students master the basics, how will SPS ensure that they also know how to solve problems, analyze data, communicate clearly, and work well with diverse groups of people?

## **Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners**

Despite the fact that the U.S. educational system has been designed in large measure for “the average learner,” we now know that such a design excludes the vast majority of our young people. Experts recommend instead that we “design to the edges,” i.e., customize the educational experience in a way that enables each student to experience growth and meet or exceed standards. How will Salem customize learning for all students, from those who are academically excelling to those whose first language is not English, who have learning disabilities, learning and attention issues, or have been exposed to trauma and the effects of chronic poverty?

# **Role of the Work Teams & the New Profit Team**

# **THE ROLE OF THE WORK TEAMS**

Each Change Lever of the Strategic Plan will have a Work Team consisting of 6-10 people who will:

* Develop strategy for the particular Lever
* Define the landscape for the content area
* Develop a learning agenda for determining best practices
* Determine goals, strategies, objectives and tactics for the Lever

Work Teams will meet 5 – 6 times throughout the Strategic Planning Process. A team member from New Profit will staff each Work Team, in order to support project management.

## **The Role of the New Profit Team**

* Co-create the plan for the Strategic Planning Process with the Superintendent & Leadership Team
* Facilitate key conversations
* Develop strategies for communications, outreach, and building buy-in
* Help establish Work Team culture and norms
* Gather and analyze relevant data to inform the plan
* Conduct interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders
* Facilitate Community Conversations
* Draft early versions of the Strategic Plan for vetting by stakeholders

**Timeline of Activities**

The Strategic Planning Process will yield a five-year plan that outlines a vision for what we want to accomplish as a district. To fully develop and implement this plan, we see a three-phased process. New Profit will support SPS through the ‘From Vision to Plan’ phase of the process.

April – May 2016 Planning to Plan

June – December 2016 Work Teams Launch: Data Gathering and Action Plan Creation

 Develop Integrated Strategic Plan

January – March 2017 Socialize and Refine Plan

* The planning process will encompass six discrete work teams that address key Levers for Change identified by the School Committee and Salem Public Schools Leadership Team
* The Work Teams will meet separately and then bring their work together into an integrated plan that addresses the interconnected aspects of the districts operating plan

The “From Vision to Plan” phase of the plan encompasses four tasks and will result in a full strategic plan that has been vetted with community members. Below is a detail of each of these elements.

**Completed:**

March, 2016 - Proposed scope of work submitted

April, 2016 – Scope of work revised and accepted by Superintendent and Senior Leadership

 Team

May, 2016 – Senior Leadership Team Retreat

May, 2016 – Salem School Committee Presentation

**Remaining:**

May, 2016 - Select Steering Committee Members

May, 2016 – Staff Work Teams

May, 2016 – Finalize meeting schedule for all groups.

June – October, 2016 – Work Teams Launch; learning and data gathering

October- December, 2016 – Work Team Goals and Action Plan Creation; Steering Committee meets twice; Work teams meet every two weeks

November, 2016 – Steering Committee debriefs Community Conversation #1

December, 2015 – Work Teams finalize plans and deliver to Steering Committee

January – February 2017 – Steering Committee and Staff integrate Work Team Plans into coherent first draft

February, 2017 – Community Conversations #2 to vet the draft plan; Steering Committee meets to debrief

March, 2017 – Senior Leadership Team and New Profit team finalize draft and submit to School Committee

April, 2017 – Strategic Plan submitted to School Committee; Community Celebration of Strategic Plan

**Conclusion:**

In May 2015, Mayor Kim Driscoll gave a presentation at the annual conference of the Massachusetts Association of Planning Directors. The title of the presentation was “Planning and Implementing the Salem of Tomorrow." On Salem’s 400th birthday, she said: “…The city has the potential to be a community that is leading the way with innovations and entrepreneurs that are the envy of the nation.”

New Profit believes that the Salem Public Schools are a key driver and incubator of this vision, and that a remodeled education system will deliver on the promise of ensuring that the diverse talents and strengths of Salem’s young people are maximized for the common good. It is our hope that, by facilitating the Strategic Planning Process in partnership with the district and the larger community, we can help you realize the vision of a 21st century education system that is second to none.

Mayor Driscoll stated that we need to keep in mind the goals and objectives of the AIP in the Strategic Planning process. Ms. Ruiz notes that the AIP is more a series of objectives with actions steps and metrics to move us forward, but agrees that it needs to be a consideration in the strategic plan.

There being no further questions or comments regarding this presentation, Mayor Driscoll thanked Ms. Ruiz and Ms. Feinberg for their presentation.

**Action Items**

1. Deliberation and Vote on the Superintendent’s Recommendation that Salem NOT be a School Choice Community for the 2016-17 School Year.

Ms. Hunt moved approval. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Discussion:

Ms. Ruiz addressed the School Committee and made the following remarks regarding her recommendation on School Choice:

The vote to become a Choice District was tabled during the School Committee, which was held on May 2nd. Before I state my recommendation, I would like to add a series of important facts that will be important for us to consider in the decision to become a Choice District.

* School Committee can determine choice for any grade level, school, cap on enrollment, etc. based on the district's capacity or interests. Becoming a Choice District could pose a very interesting option for increasing our declining enrollment, especially at the high school.
* Currently DESE has not had a situation where a district with an intra-district student assignment policy becomes a receiving choice district. Salem Public Schools would have to do an in-depth analysis of how this would work if we included elementary students in terms of alignment to our student assignment policy.
* The fundamental principle that is enforced by law is that students enrolling from out of district must have the same access to programs and offerings/educational opportunities as resident students. That said, there may be some limitations with respect to Vocational programs. When we contacted DESE we learned that recent regulation changes suggested that districts with Vocational programs would need to serve home students first before serving others. Another issue might be in terms of having students do their "exploratory" in their home district. This is also new requirement in the new Vocational regulation, which would have an impact in our ability to receive students for the Vocational program at SHS.
* A key decision point would be whether or not we'd set a cap on enrollment of out of district students or just be open. If open (no cap) we would just enroll students in the same way that we do all Salem Students whenever they would apply (at any point in the year). If we set a cap, we would take in applications, hold onto them until the date we would set a lottery. Let's say the cap was 50 students, if more than 50 students apply we'd hold a lottery end register those who got in via lottery. If less than 50 applied we'd just enroll all of them and continue enrolling throughout the year until we reached the cap.
* We could limit choice to just Salem High School and pursue any out of district tuition-based students for New Liberty per the Innovation Plan as it is written. We could have two separate avenues of bringing in students from other districts, at the high school level, if that were pursued in that manner.

The question of becoming a Choice District can offer Salem Public Schools an opportunity to increase our enrollment, to strengthen our programs, and to be very strategic in our approach. However, considering out of district choice for the elementary and middle school grades would require a deep analysis of how an out of district choice program would impact our internal choice student assignment policy.

Considering our high school grades for out of district choice could help our declining enrollment at the high school, but the question regarding the new Vocational education regulations and their impact on choice students would need to be deeply explored. We are launching our strategic planning process, of which the future of high school education is one of the areas that will be discussed and planned for as part of the process. Becoming a Choice District in the high school grades is a question that would be important to consider as we discuss the future of high school education in Salem Public Schools.

I am very open to considering Salem Public Schools as a Choice District as long as we have the opportunity to research and analyze the implications for our high school, and possibly, our elementary and middle grades for the year following the SY 16-17. Therefore, I am recommending that Salem Public Schools do not become a Choice District in the school year 2016-2107 with a strong commitment to research and consider Salem Public Schools becoming a Choice District in whatever capacity we determine makes sense for our needs, for the school year 2017-2018.

Ms. Hunt explained that the Policy Subcommittee met last Friday to discuss the matter and noted that the School Committee has never really held an in depth discussion about School Choice in the past. She explained that the conversation this year is the beginning of a process, noting that it is late in the school year to get ready for a School Choice process and she respects the Superintendent’s decision not to adopt School Choice this year but to continue exploring the possibility for next year.

Ms. Wilson stated that with the declining enrollment in the Salem Public Schools, allowing students from other districts would help increase the enrollment. She noted that she would have to think twice about School Choice for the elementary schools noting our own school choice program and families don’t always get their first choice.

Ms. Hunt agreed and notes that the Administrative Team would have to prepare for the conversation and suggested that the process start earlier during the winter months so that a proposal can be considered timely.

Mayor Driscoll also agreed that the process should start in early January to give the School Committee time to consider all of the options.

Mayor Driscoll called for a vote on the motion made by Ms. Hunt and seconded by Ms. Wilson that Salem NOT be a School Choice Community for the 2016-17 school year. A vote was taken and the motion carried.

1. Deliberation and Vote on the Superintendent’s request for $15,000 from the Dominion Funds to cover expenses for the Strategic Planning Process

Dr. Walsh moved approval. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Finance Report**

1. **Approval of Warrants**

The following warrant totals were presented for approval this evening.

May 5, 2016 in the amount of $190,665.49

Dr. Walsh moved to approve the warrant as stated. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Budget Transfer Request #18– Human Resources**

Mayor Driscoll explained that Assistant Superintendent Kate Carbone is requesting a transfer of

$26,500 from the non Personnel Educational Training line to the Personnel line Fringe/Stipends. The transfer is requested to move funds to the appropriate line for Fringe/Stipends.

The transfer request is summarized as follows:

5/9/16 From 13990161 5317 Prof. Development $26,500 To pay stipends

5/9/16 From 13990160 5150 Fringe/Stipends $26,500 To pay stipends

Dr. Walsh moved to approve the budget transfer request. Ms. Hunt seconded the motion. The motion was approved (4-0).

**Budget Transfer Request #19 – Year End Transfers**

Mayor Driscoll explained that Ms. Mertz is requesting the year end transfers to facilitate the year end process by consolidating available funds totaling $98,485.30 spread across multiple lines to one or more line items. Ms. Hunt moved approval. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried (4-0).

**Subcommittee Reports**

There were no subcommittee reports this evening.

**School Committee Concerns and Resolutions**

Dr. Walsh reported that the adult recipient of this year’s Giving Tree Award at Salem High School is Joanne Scott, Executive Director of the Salem Boys and Girls Club. He noted that the student recipient will be announced at the annual Senior Awards Night at Salem High School.

**Questions and Comments from the Audience Regarding the May 2, 2016 Agenda**

Salem High School Principal David Angeramo addressed the School Committee and stated that there will be two community meetings held to gather input as they work to define and improve our community at Salem High School. The meetings will be held on Wednesday, May 18, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. at Salem High School and on Tuesday, May 24, 2016 at 7:00 in the Community Room at 135 Lafayette Street, Salem.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the School Committee this evening, Dr. Walsh moved that the School Committee adjourn the meeting. Ms. Hunt seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Eileen M. Sacco, Secretary

Salem School Committee

**Meeting Materials and Reports**

Minutes of Regular School Committee Meeting May 2, 2016

School Committee Agenda May 16, 2016

Budget Transfer Request #18

Budget Transfer Request #19

Presentation on Strategic Planning Process

Superintendent’s Recommendation on School Choice