

**Salem Public Schools  
Salem School Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
December 4, 2023**

On December 4, 2023 the Salem School Committee held its regular School Committee meeting at 7:00 PM using a hybrid model.

**Members Present:** Mayor Dominick Pangallo, Ms. Mary Manning, Mr. Manny Cruz, Ms. Beth Anne Cornell, Ms. Amanda Campbell and Ms. Veronica Miranda

**Members Absent:** Dr. Kristin Pangallo

**Members Present Virtually:** Ms. Veronica Miranda (arrived in person at 7:35pm)

**Others in Attendance:** Superintendent Stephen Zrike, Ms. Elizabeth Pauley, Ms. Ellen Wingard, Dr. Kimberly Talbot, Mr. Christopher O'Donnell, Ms. Laura Assade, Mr. Marc LeBlanc, and Dr. Jill Conrad

**Call of Meeting to Order**

Mayor Pangallo calls the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and requests a call of attendance. He explained the Public Participation Policy 6409 and also explained the availability of Spanish interpretation.

**Attendance**

Mayor Pangallo recognizes the attendance with members absent and joining virtually. Ms. Campbell motions for approval and seconded by Mr. Cruz.

Ms. Campbell	Present
Ms. Cornell	Present
Mr. Cruz	Present
Ms. Manning	Present
Dr. Pangallo	Not Present
Ms. Miranda	Present
Mayor Pangallo	Present

**Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Pangallo requested a motion to approve the Agenda. Ms. Campbell motions for approval and seconded by Ms. Cruz. A roll call vote is taken.

Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Manning	Yes
Ms. Cornell	Yes
Ms. Miranda	Yes

Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Pangallo	Yes
Motion Carries 6-0	

### **Approval of Consent Agenda**

Ms. Manning makes a request to move Item C - Approval of Salem High School Basketball Team to Orlando, FL - out of order from the Consent Agenda.

Mayor Pangallo requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Campbell motions for approval and seconded by Mr. Cruz. A roll call vote is taken.

Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Manning	Yes
Ms. Cornell	Yes
Ms. Miranda	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Pangallo	Yes
Motion Carries 6-0	

Superintendent Dr. Zrike makes a note that all School Committee members have an updated request regarding the approval of the Salem High School Basketball Team to Orlando, FL. This is a revised plan of the trip submitted by Mr. Doyle.

Ms. Manning notes one of her main concerns regarding this field trip is the students missing three days of school. The school committee requested a revised proposal at the last school committee meeting which was two weeks ago. Ms. Manning notes she has not been given more time to consider and she would have preferred this information much sooner. Ms. Manning notes this is mainly just a bonding trip with no basketball play. Ms. Manning notes there are plenty of options in Massachusetts to enjoy a bonding experience. Perhaps keep these annual trips more localized.

Mr. Cruz notes the MIAA would not include an exception to this trip so student athletes can engage in activities such as basketball.

Ms. Cornell notes her frustrations with the MIAA and we do need a more clear policy behind these field trip requests. There needs to be an educational component aligned with the request. Mayor Pangallo notes the one month time frame does not allow enough of a time frame for field trip requests.

Mr. Doyle notes the benefits of team travel. Financially we cannot travel on a school vacation week. This proposal was a best case scenario with the parameters Mr. Doyle was given.

Mr. Cruz moves to approve Salem High School Basketball Team to Orlando, FL. Seconded by Ms. Manning.

Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Manning	Yes
Ms. Cornell	Yes
Ms. Miranda	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes

Mayor Pangallo  
Motion Carries 6-0

Yes

### **Public Comment**

The School Committee Secretary announced that there were no public comments.

### **Superintendent's Report**

#### **Human Resource and Staffing Update (Strategy 2.1, 2.4 and Strategy 4.2)**

Dr. Jill Conrad notes the two priority areas that Human Resources works on the most. To empower educators and to strengthen our foundation. The Human Resources team welcomes all new staff, provides ongoing support and services to all employees, and works to achieve the district's talent acquisition and retention goals. Human Resources also works closely with the Payroll, DEI, Technology, and Academics teams as well as all principals and department leaders. The main department team goal is to be highly effective in serving the strategic talent needs of the district/schools and provide efficient, responsive services and support to all employees. Some of the work, besides just hiring, consists of recruitment/talent acquisition, hiring/onboarding, employee services, school services, management supports, labor relations, legal compliance, and data management.

Dr. Conrad notes for this current year the new hires consist from 7/1/23-11/14/23. The total of new hires for SY 23-24 as of 11/14/23 was 158 new hires. Overall, we've had fewer new hires this year than we had at this same time last year. We have had significantly more internal staff transfers this year than we had at this same time last year - already more than the total for last year. Some of this is likely due to principal transfers.

Ms. Cornell asks about keeping stability with staff while at the same time offering other opportunities to current staff. How to keep this balance?

Dr. Conrad notes retention trends. The retention rate is based on the number and percent of educators who were working in the same job classification from one school year to the next (via consecutive October EPIMS collections). The overall staff retention rates have trended downward (similar pattern statewide). We are diversifying the SPS Workforce at this time. Our diversity recruitment efforts, while improved in recent years, are still not where they need to be to meet our goals for student learning. We hired very close to the same proportions of new hires of color in SY23-24 as the previous year. 14.5 % of new teachers were of color, 40% new administrators were of color, and lastly 35.1% of new paras were of color. Historically, we have not done a great job retaining the staff of color that we have ( see a significant dip from FY 22-23). However, early estimates show promise. We may have higher retention rates for our staff of color between FY 23 to FY 24.

Ms. Morenda asks if we have noticed patterns of which school buildings or where staff of color are leaving? Also, if there are any barriers to becoming an administrator, is there anything we can do as a district to assist with these barriers?

Dr. Zrike notes we do not have enough administrators of color and that we do need to look more closely at each school building and why staff of color are leaving. Emergency license closures will have an impact on our district. We can do more investing in leaders of color.

Ms. Laura Assade notes that as a district her and her team are making sure that all staff of color feel a sense of belonging. Utilizing the strategic plan to drive this work forward and avoid losing staff after two years. Some goals and plans to look forward to within the next 3 years are expanding our reach and pipelines and continue building the school leader capacity to recruit and retain staff of color.

#### Superintendent Self-Evaluation (Strategy 2.3)

Dr. Zrike has shared his self-evaluation with all School Committee members and has also posted his goals to view on the Salem Public Schools website.

Mr. Cruz notes for members of the committee that he has forwarded the tools and guidelines for each member to use for the Superintendent Self- Evaluation.

#### Student Representative Report

none

#### Old Business

none

#### New Business

- A. Deliberation and vote on approval for \$1000 donation from Cummings Properties to be used for the Music Program at Horace Mann Laboratory School

Mr. Cruz makes a motion to approve and Ms. Manning seconded.

Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Manning	Yes
Ms. Cornell	Yes
Ms. Miranda	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Pangallo	Yes

Motion Carries 6-0

- B. Deliberation and vote on the request from All Business Basketball to waive the facility fee for the use of the Horace Mann Laboratory School gymnasium on 1/26/24-1/27/24 - Ms. Manning makes a motion to move this agenda item to the Building & Grounds subcommittee. Seconded by Mr. Cruz.

Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Manning	Yes
Ms. Cornell	Yes
Ms. Miranda	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Pangallo	Yes

Motion Carries 6-0

### **Finance & Operations Report**

none

### **Subcommittee Reports**

Mr. Cruz and Mayor Pangallo just sent a letter to the STU for dates of bargaining. Mr. Cruz looks forward to another round of bargaining with the STU.

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

#### **Adjournment**

Ms. Cornell makes a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Cruz.

Ms. Cornell	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Manning	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Miranda	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Pangallo	Yes

Motion Carries 7-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:45PM.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Krista Perry*

Executive Administrative Assistant to the School Committee & Superintendent