

**Salem Public Schools  
Salem School Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
January 19, 2021**

On January 19, 2021 the Salem School Committee held its regular School Committee meeting at 7:00 PM using the Zoom platform.

**Members Present:** Mayor Kimberley Driscoll, Ms. Mary Manning, Ms. Amanda Campbell, Dr. Kristin Pangallo, Mr. Manny Cruz, and Ms. Ana Nuncio

**Members Absent:** Mr. James Fleming

**Others in Attendance:** Superintendent Stephen Zrike, Assistant Superintendent Kate Carbone, Dr. Jill Conrad, Ms. Chelsea Banks, Ms. Liz Polay-Wettengel, Ms. Deb Connerty, Mr. Duncan Mayer, Ms. Deborah Jeffers, Ms. Anne Hillman, and Mr. Gavin Softic

**Call of Meeting to Order**

Mayor Driscoll called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Mayor Driscoll read the new Public Participation Policy 6409 and also explained the request for Spanish interpretation for participation.

**Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to approve the Regular Agenda. Ms. Manning motioned and Dr. Pangallo seconded. The Mayor called a roll call vote.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes
Motion carries 5-0	

**Approval of Consent Agenda**

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Manning motioned and Dr. Pangallo seconded. The Mayor called a roll call vote.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes

Mayor Driscoll            Yes  
Motion carries 6-0

### **Public Comment**

The School Committee Secretary announced that there was a public comment request. Ms. Ann Berman, 1401 Crane Brook Way, Peabody requested to speak. Ms. Berman thanked the teachers for repeatedly going above and beyond to their dedication to the students of Salem Public Schools.

### **Recognition**

Dr. Zrike announced that Deb Jeffers, the Director of Food Services has retired. Mayor Driscoll, Superintendent Zrike, and Mr. Cruz spoke of Ms. Jeffers dedication to the Salem Public Schools and commended her on her 26 years of service to the district.

### **Superintendent's Showcase**

Dr. Zrike announced that he would like to begin a monthly feature that will be a showcase of students with extraordinary stories. The Superintendent introduced Anna Hillman, an ELL teacher at the Bates School. Ms. Hillman explained the story of one of her students, Yoan Mendez Enamorado. Yuan is from Honduras and has been here for 1 year. Yuan, who is emergent bilingual, read a story to the Committee regarding his life in Honduras before coming to Salem.

### **Report from the Student Representative**

Duncan Mayer announced to the Committee that the Student Advisory Council is scheduled to meet tomorrow. They are planning to draft questions and thoughts for Dr. Zrike for the next meeting regarding mental health. He added that they have received good results from the student survey and are now trying to do some targeting of different grades and design more specific surveys. He explained that he has been hearing that students are experiencing anxiety over returning to school in person.

### **Report of the Superintendent**

Dr. Zrike began with a reopening plan presentation. The Superintendent explained that the district was fully remote the first week in January and during that time they conducted district wide testing for staff, students and their families. There were 1,820 tests completed with overall 31 positives, which resulted in a 1.7 positivity rate. In addition, testing for staff and high school students continues, including all student athletes who are tested weekly. Dr. Zrike also said that they are exploring additional student testing through DESE funding. The Superintendent announced that there will be a health webinar for staff and families tomorrow, January 20th from 4:30-5:30 pm via zoom. There will be health officials answering questions. Dr. Pangallo, who will also be on the webinar, added that there will be some great information shared and she recommends everyone watching. Dr. Zrike also gave an update on in-person learning. He said that 775 students returned to in-person learning (gr. 3-8 hybrid) and the high school is planning to return February 4th.

Mr. Cruz announced to the Committee that 35 legislators at the State House have written a letter requesting that when the vaccine becomes available to K-12 educators, that it become a priority to low income districts. Mr. Cruz asked if Salem's School Committee would also consider sending a letter requesting prioritization.

Questions were asked regarding the chance of spread within the classrooms and it was explained that although that has not been the case, the importance of contact tracing (with both our nurses and the Board of Health), helps to contain any spread.

a. Semester 2 High School Reopening Plan - Dr. Samantha Meier, SHS Principal  
Dr. Zrike introduced Dr. Samantha Meier and Dr. Emily Flores to introduce the Salem High School plan for the second semester and the Salem High School 2021-2022 Program of Studies. Dr. Meier began the presentation with explaining the connection to the redesign, which is relevance, relationships, and equity and access. Dr. Meier and Dr. Flores gave an update on the school-wide standards based shift which began in 2016-2018 with 4 courses and evolved to 87 courses in 2021. They also reported that the shift will be completed by the end of 2022-2023 school year. They also explained the process they used, which of the courses were removed, which of the courses were modified, and which of the courses were added. Mr. Mayer asked a question regarding how AP classes would be handled and Dr. Flores explained that AP classes already function as standard based courses because they use a rubric and that rubric becomes the proficiency scale that gets used in standard based. Mr. Mayer asked additional questions and explained concerns regarding early quarter grading and difficulty scoring in the higher percentile. Next Dr. Meier explained the semester 2 plan for the high school, the safety protocols that were put into place were explained, as well as the timeline to welcome back students on February 4th. Dr. Meier also shared information regarding the students concerns that were collected by guidance and the student advisory council. These concerns include students feeling like they are drowning in work, a sense of hopelessness and concerns with completing assignments on time. Dr. Meier explained some of the interventions that they are putting into place for grades 9-12, but especially for freshmen. The plan she introduced was broken down into 3 areas, academics, social emotional learning, and family and community engagement. Dr. Meier ended the presentation by providing additional information on the support they are providing to students.

b. Northshore Education Consortium Annual Report 2020-2021  
Dr. Zrike shared the Northshore Education Consortium Annual Report with the Committee. He explained that this was for informational purposes only.

c. Job Description and Timeline for Executive Director of Special Education Search  
Dr. Zrike explained that in addition to the Executive Director of Special Education, he will also be posting for the Director of Food Services. He has planned on posting the Food Services position tomorrow and begin the search process. He is also planning on posting the Special Education position tomorrow, but is planning on using a consultant for this search. He is also requesting a school committee member to sit on the search committee. Mr. Cruz and other

members added that they believe there should be 2 school committee members for the search committee.

d. 2021-2022 Enrollment Targets - Sayonara Reyes, PIC Manager

Dr. Zrike introduced Dr. Jill Conrad and Sayonara Reyes who will give an overview of the district's student assignment policy. Dr. Zrike explained that it is his goal to create school enrollment targets to bring to the Committee for their review. These targets aim to increase the equitable distribution of students of different backgrounds across the district and is necessary for kindergarten planning.

Dr. Zrike ended his portion of the meeting with reading a letter from a family who does not have children in the district, but lives near the Carlton School. They wanted to comment that they noticed how wonderfully a teacher was interacting with the students all while following the COVID protocols.

**Old Business**

None to report.

**New Business**

a. Deliberate and Vote on High School Program of Studies

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to approve the High School Program of Studies. Mr. Cruz motioned and Ms. Nuncio seconded. The Mayor called a roll call vote.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 6-0

**Finance Report**

a. FY2021 Quarterly Budget Status Report

Interim School Business Administrator, Mary DeLai gave a review of the FY2021 Quarterly Budget Status Report. Ms. DeLai announced that the quarterly budget would end in a deficit, but explained it was because when they built the budget, they planned for 3 fewer days for teachers and staff which will show a deficit in the Personnel line. She added that there were some savings in the Special Education Transportation line. In addition, there was also a deficit in the Building & Grounds line, which she explained has been underfunded for the past several years.

b. Budget Transfers

Ms. DeLai also requested the following Budget Transfers:

FY21 Budget Transfer Request 10 - The Pupil Personnel Services Department requests the transfer from Fringe/Stipends to Tutors in the amount of \$5,250.

FY21 Budget Transfer Request 11 - The Athletics Department requests the transfer from Contracted Services to Rental and Lease in the amount of \$8,035.

FY21 Budget Transfer Request 12 - The ELL Department requests the transfer from Contracted Services to Instructional Supplies in the amount of \$35,000.

Mayor Driscoll requested an omnibus motion to approve FY21-10, FY21-11, and FY21-12 Budget Transfers. Dr. Pangallo made the motion and Ms. Nuncio seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 6-0

### **Subcommittee Reports**

#### **a. Policy Subcommittee**

- i. Policies for First Reading
  - 3504.01 Emergency Plans
  - 5109 Emergency Closings
  - 5713 Emergency Medical and Safety Plans

Mr. Cruz made a motion for first reading of the above mentioned policies and Ms. Nuncio seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 6-0

- ii. Policies for Second Reading
  - 5102.02 Children of Full-time Staff Members
  - 5224 Animals in School
  - 5405 Drug Abuse

Mr. Cruz made a motion for second reading of the above mentioned policies. Ms. Nuncio seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 6-0

Mr. Cruz explained that there were three policies that were tabled at the last meeting (5222 Parental Notification of Courses Involving Human Sexuality, 5401 Hazing, and 5411 Dress Code Policy). He said that there were questions that Dr. Pangallo had regarding the tabled policies. Ms. Manning added that she believed they had come to a resolution, but had not yet discussed Dr. Pangallo's questions. It was decided to not move on these policies until they can further discuss them.

iii. Policies for Third Reading

3601 Student Transportation Services

5217 Student Publications

*5222 Parental Notification of Courses Involving Human Sexuality - TABLED*

5300 Class Size

5400 Student Conduct

*5401 Hazing - TABLED*

5401.01 Prohibition of Bullying and Cyber-bullying

5403 Alcohol Use by Students

*5411 Dress Code Policy - TABLED*

Ms. Nuncio made a motion for third reading of the above mentioned policies other than the tabled items. Mr. Cruz seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 6-0

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

Ms. Manning asked if there was previous discussion regarding setting an amount limit to the budget transfers. Mayor Driscoll suggested that this be discussed in either Policy or Finance Subcommittee.

Mr. Cruz brought up again for discussion the vaccine prioritization asking if the Committee would like to sign on to the letter being circulated at the State House or if they would be interested in their own resolution. The Committee agreed on both.

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to sign on and support the letter from colleagues in Holyoke and also our own resolution advocating for support for the prioritization of vaccinations for employees in school districts serving economically disadvantaged students particularly in communities that are in high risk categories. Mr. Cruz made the motion and Ms. Campbell seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 6-0.

Mr. Cruz asked to be recognized and wanted to thank the Superintendent and Mayor for their messages regarding recent incidents at the Capital and acknowledge today's occasion and move forward to a better tomorrow.

### **Adjournment**

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to adjourn. Ms. Manning motioned and Dr. Pangallo seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Nancy A. Weiss*

Executive Assistant to the School Committee & Superintendent