

**Salem School Committee
Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes
July 5, 2023**

A Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting of the Salem School Committee was held on Wednesday, July 5, 2023 at 5:30 pm. This meeting was held in person at 29 Highland Ave., Rm. 227, Salem, MA.

Members Present: Mayor Dominick Pangallo, Ms. Mary Manning, Dr. Kristin Pangallo, Ms. Amanda Campbell, Ms. Veronica Miranda

Members Present Virtually: Ms. Beth Anne Cornell

Others in Attendance: Superintendent Stephen Zrike, Mr. Marc LeBlanc, Ms. Liz Polay-Wettengal, Ms. Jennifer Doucette-Ly, Ms. Heidi Guarino, and Ms. Christine Ross

Call of Meeting to Order

Mayor Pangallo calls the meeting to order at 5:30pm. Mayor Pangallo takes a roll call.

Mayor Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Manning	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Ms. Miranda	Yes
Ms. Cornell	Yes
Motion carries	6-0

Discussion about the draft SPS strategic plan

Dr. Zrike notes schools have been planning around this document. This was not a surprising plan to SPS staff. Ms. Heidi Guerino gives an overview of the draft for Salem Public Schools 2023-2026 strategic plan. From June through August the finalization stage is to develop narrative, finalize plans, create visuals, and share with the community. Last November/December, there was a set up, review of related plans, and the kick off. January through April was time for engagement consisting of mission and vision, stakeholder surveys, focus groups, cabinet meetings, and analysis. April through June was development consisting of framework, draft plan, gathering feedback, and developing metrics. This summer the goal is to develop a narrative around the plan which will help the community understand and plans to share with the community at the start of the school year. The draft plan has been deeply informed by stakeholder input. The focus groups included multiple stakeholder groups including parents, teachers, principals, middle and high school students, Salem newcomers, SPED parents, OST providers, community partners, City Connects, and the Early Childhood program staff.

Key elements of the Strategic Plan consisted of the mission which was the purpose behind what you do as an organization, the vision which is what you want to be different in the world as a result of what you do, the values consisting of the core principles that define what you believe and guide

decision making and action, priorities, strategies and action steps which are the categories key initiatives and activities that support achievement of the mission and lastly the metrics/outcomes. Expected results, timeline for when they will occur, and how they will be measured.

Dr. Pangallo asks if we identified certain things that we should pull back from.

Dr. Zrike notes using the Parent and Teacher Advisory has been beneficial as well.

The previous strategic plan was built in 2017 as a five year plan. Dr. Zrike notes we used Stakeholder feedback aligned across top priority areas. Equity, diverse workforce, academics, students, systems and facilities, access, communications, and extracurricular activities.

Ms. Guerino notes the latest version of the plan reflects input from key stakeholders. Primary feedback revolved around the need to more deeply align to Salem's mission and vision and more clearly integrate social justice and equity throughout the plan. Draft Strategic Plan - mission, vision, values, priorities, strategies, action steps, metrics, and outcomes. This plan has been designed to lay out goals that are achievable, build on what's already working in the district, represent the needs of the wider community, lead to clear action with outcomes, prioritize wellness, and align to the district's mission statements.

Dr. Zrike notes some of the goals we have heard from people throughout to speak to our commitments. There has been a push for academic pieces as well. This has been a message to the schools in regards to their planning.

Ms. Manning asks about the push towards academics with real learning.

The draft plan is built around four core priorities that reflect stakeholder input and direction. Dr. Zrike notes four priorities, elevating learning; building and maintaining a district-wide culture of universally high academic expectations for every learner, empowering educators; make Salem Public Schools an inclusive district where student-centered, innovative, and highly effective educators want to work, grow, and stay, center for belonging; build joyful welcoming and supportive school communities , and strengthen our foundation; develop consistent reliable systems and structures to disrupt inequities and support the work of the district.

Ms. Manning asked about the foundation and the use of the word.

Ms. Guarino notes we were thinking about the foundation as a house.

Ms. Guarino asks as a review, what do you like about the draft plan, what do you dislike and why, and what is missing? Ms. Guarino asks each School Committee member for their feedback.

Dr. Pangallo asks about the metrics and numbers.

Dr. Zrike notes a new survey to be developed for parents and families. We took a look at national data as a baseline for families. We have a dashboard that pulls data for chronic absenteeism for real time. Same for dropouts and proxy data. The end of the year goals and data will be reported at the next School Committee meeting.

Dr. Zrike notes we monitor these metrics annually and quarterly. Dr. Zrike notes this plan is a 3 year plan.

Ms. Guarino notes it is important that the set metrics are all real numbers.

Ms. Campbell asks about teacher vs staff metrics. Ms. Campbell also notes many struggles with percentage vs percentage points increase. Best to see specific numbers.

Dr. Zrike notes we will combine staff instead of separating. Including metrics of hiring. Perception data only. Dr. Zrike would like to separate out teachers vs staff.

Dr. Zrike notes there is a category of looking at just teachers and ALL staff.

Ms. Manning asks to provide enrichment opportunities. Enrichment can be understood as “extra” perhaps better to say enriching instead of enrichment.

Ms. Guarino gives the School Committee members a 15 minute break to gather feedback on the draft of the strategic plan overview.

Ms. Campbell notes metric 1 and how central offices can or cannot support buildings. Increase favorable response.

Dr. Zrike notes there needs to be feedback on what central office staff wants feedback on.

Mr. Leblanc asked all SPS staff about their satisfaction regarding the IT department.

Ms. Manning notes the mental health with staff and students is of importance.

Dr. Pangallo notes her concern is it's a really challenging time in education but nationally there is a huge amount of burn out and if we are trying to push students to achieve, if students do not achieve will burn out our district's educators. Part of the role can be helping diagnose are we doing these action steps and are we assessing and redirecting. We want to be cognizant of if we still see progress and are these the right goals. Do they align and build off each other?

Dr. Zrike notes he does feel outcomes are where they should be. The growth is stronger than the achievement which we are not yet where we were pre pandemic. If you do not set goals then it can give some people a pass.

Ms. Manning notes look at this progress vs this goal that we reached. Can we set realistic goals after one year?

Ms. Beth Anne Cornell notes another layer of accountability ignores the layers of accountability we already have.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:44PM.

Mayor Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Manning	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Ms. Miranda	Yes
Ms. Cornell	Yes
Motion carries	6-0

Respectfully submitted by,

Krista Perry

Executive Assistant to the School Committee & Superintendent