

Salem School Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, November 9, 2017

A Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting of the Salem School Committee was held on Thursday, November 9, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. in the School Committee Chambers at Collins Middle School, 29 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA.

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

**Members Absent:** Dr. Brendan R. Walsh

**Others Present:** None

**Call to Order**

Mr. Patrick Schultz called the Committee of the Whole (COW) Meeting of the Salem School Committee to order at 4:00 p.m.

**Discussion on Review of Superintendent Margarita Ruiz's Evaluation**

School Committee members carefully reviewed the documents before them: Evaluation template, Assessment document dated November 7, 2017, Superintendent Self-Assessment for the past year with highlights Student Learning, Professional Practice, and Goals and entire Educator Evaluation rubric tool. Member gathered their paperwork together. Mr. Schultz reaffirmed that they were waiting to receive the *Learning Goals* from the Superintendent. They were waiting on data. Superintendent Ruiz agreed. Mr. Schultz listed the data that they have thus far. They have the AP data comparing 2015 to 2016 and 2016 to 2017. That is one thing they do not have. He suggested to the Superintendent that it would be okay if she could send that to them. Superintendent Ruiz agreed and confirmed that she would. Mr. Fleming suggested they proceed with what they do have at this time. Mr. Schultz stated that the professional practice is really all about the Strategic Planning process. They have enough information to score that. All agreed. Mr. Schultz guided members forward to the Student Learning page and explained that these goals are broken down to benchmarks. They will look at each individual benchmark. The first benchmark is the CPI.

Superintendent Ruiz informed that she did not bring the data for the benchmarks, because the goal is rated in absence of the data that the goal is stated on. Mr. Schultz set an example to clarify Ms. Ruiz's statement and asked if for example "CPI in Math for the district will increase by at least 4 points?" Members discussed this further for clarification. To clarify, Mr. Fleming asked that they would not have the benchmark information but would be looking at the CPI. Mr. Schultz confirmed. Superintendent Ruiz stated that it is not possible to make a year-to-year comparison, because 2017 student performance data was Next Generation MCAS.

Ms. Ruiz continued that the only thing they could compare is the district's performance gap with the state. Mr. Schultz said that they could not choose any of the CPI unless they agree to score that on the gap closure percentage. They would all have to agree on the same metric. Discussion ensued on how best to measure progress given the change in the tests. After much discussion, members agreed to use High School CPI and science, which were not impacted by Next Generation MCAS. Mayor Driscoll agreed and said they are looking at Student Learning. They would be closing the gap in terms of the state average, based on what they saw.

Mr. Schultz said they have the High School and asked if they could work with that. Members confirmed. Mr. Schultz commented that they could see the improvement from 2016 and 2017 when looking at ELA. Members agreed and said they could use the gap. Mayor Driscoll asked Superintendent Ruiz if she had those numbers handy. Superintendent Ruiz read the 2015 and 2016 measurements for the High School:

- In ELA the CPI in 2015 was 95.1 and in 2016 it was 92.1.
- In Math the CPI in 2015 was 79.4 and in 2016 it was 82
- In Science the CPI in 2015 was 65.9 and in 2016 (for the district it was 70.1 as they used the 'Legacy') which equaled to 4.2 – *the goal was met*

Mr. Schultz asked Superintendent to please go over her data presentation. They would first look at the Math data, the SGP and then the gap between district and state. Superintendent Ruiz looked at her paperwork, skipped through the urban district (as agreed) and reported the benchmarks - the closing and the gaps. This would be the state gap data for Salem Public Schools (SPS) ELA and Math on grades 3 through 8<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Schultz read the data that the gap between the state and Salem Public Schools closed by 7 points in ELA twice. Superintendent Ruiz said that it is a percent in proficient advancement in 2014. Mr. Schultz read the data that the math gap closed by 4 points. Superintendent Ruiz agreed. Mr. Schultz stated that the science gap closed by 8 ½ percent. Members agreed that science was a win.

Superintendent Ruiz reported the growth for the High School and the SGP in both ELA and Math.

High School SGP:

- In ELA the SGP in 2015 was 43 and in 2016 it was 43.
- In Math the SGP in 2015 was 48 and in 2016 it was 60.5

SGP growth rate aggregate for the entire **district**:

- In ELA the SGP in 2015 was 57 and in 2016 it was 49
- In Math the SGP in 2015 was 49.5 and in 2016 it was 46

Superintendent Ruiz said she had the subgroup, which compares them with the states'. Mr. Schultz clarified asking it was for student with disabilities. Ms. Ruiz said yes and that she also has it for ELL, for grades 3 to 8 combined. Mr. Schultz reviewed that there was modest improvement but there was improvement in both for Math and ELA, both subgroups. Ms. Ruiz agreed. Ms. Ruiz said that one of the things she has been talking about with principals and to the team was that when they started in 2015 and Rebecca Westlake had began to do the review for the entire ELL Department, it was one of the data points here in Salem that was concerning – Ms. Westlake started working with the schools in fortifying ESL instruction, the ESL instruction that students with different levels receive, with a focus on the pull out program for the levels 1 and 2 which is where students are in need of intensive help. They are working on fortifying that program and see gains in some areas for that. The next level of work where they are at, there is the question “How do we work well with teachers when ELL levels that are in 3, 4, and 5 are in the general education classrooms; they are not being pulled out for ESL and how is learning being done. Ms. Ruiz continued that it is the next phase of the work. They have been doing a better job of having ELLs across the district, which is great news and is helping with the diversity of the district, but it also means that they need to train teachers that are non-ESL, the content area teachers in really implementing the SEI strategy. Ms. Amaral asked that

once the SEI is endorsed, is not mandated to do anything more after that. Superintendent Ruiz agreed and continued that Rebecca's first two years of work consisted in focusing on the teachers and fortifying that. They have a great cohort of teachers and now they have the WIDA assessment model and data cycles for ELLs in the ESL program. The area of intense work now is when the ELLs are not with the ESL teacher and they go to Math, Science, and other content areas. Mr. Schultz said that the low numbers are concerning. With this new assessment, they only have 4% of ELLs getting in the two highest categories. Superintendent Ruiz agreed. Mr. Schultz asked members if they had any other data points they might like to address. Mayor Driscoll asked if they would like to look at the SATs. Mr. Schultz and members responded not yet. Mr. Schultz suggested looking at the first 3 Student Learning goals CPIs in Math, Science, and English were good with the data and now they are left on their own to decide on whether or not that is okay. Superintendent Ruiz said that the total AP enrollment have been increasing from 2016/2017 to the present the numbers they have now. Ms. Ruiz apologized for not having the information from year 2015/2016. She spoke with Dave about this data and the numbers have increased, not by major numbers. It is a modest improvement. Mr. Schultz clarified that the modest improvement is for this year. Ms. Ruiz said she would get that data. Mr. Schultz asked to also get the demographic data. Mr. Fleming said they need the AP data (number of enrollments) list for 2015-2016. Mr. Schultz commented that if the goals were written and agreed to in November/December of last year that would be the increase in the AP number of enrollments. Mr. Fleming said it would be the 2% number they have before them. Mr. Schultz and Superintendent Ruiz agreed. Mr. Schultz said that they set the goal at 2% and it shows to be met according to the current enrollment shown on the data before them. Mr. Schultz said this seems to be accurate. Mr. Schultz said that the numbers they have are the numbers they need; they do not need 2015-2016. Superintendent Ruiz stated that this (the data on the last column they were looking at) would become the 2017-2018 baselines. Mr. Schultz commented that Ms. Ruiz had maybe mentioned it would be her goal for 2017-2018 but if the 22% number they were looking at exists now, that would be the baseline. Superintendent Ruiz agreed. She asked when are they going to do this process again as they need to talk about the timeline, because they would be talking about different numbers if they are wrapping up her evaluation this year and at the end of June. They could use the information they have as a baseline and she would have that data for next fall if they were doing her evaluation in October. Mr. Schultz and Mr. Fleming said that would be fine. Members further reviewed the data for diversity. Mr. Schultz reviewed the SAT data increased the number of students taking it by 10%. Ms. Manning sought clarification as to why members thought it was okay to use 2015-2016 data for certain evaluations and 2017-2018 for others. Mr. Schultz explained that it was because the enrollment for AP courses happens in the spring. That happened during this evaluation period. However, a better number are students in courses now because it is past the drop date. Mr. Schultz guessed that the percentage would probably have been higher in the spring. It would make sense if they changed the evaluation cycle in order to get the MCAS data into the final evaluation otherwise the final evaluation would have been in June. Mayor Driscoll commented that Superintendent Ruiz would not have the 2017-2018 MCAS testing data until next year, which comes after the school year whereas she does have the AP enrollment data as that happens at the beginning. They know how many students are enrolled in AP, but they do not know how many took the SAT or the SAT for 2017-2018; it is a little inconsistent. Superintendent Ruiz used the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 on the SAT and SAT but not on the AP enrollment because she happens to have the most up-to-date number. Ms. Manning clarified that it does not matter that they are not the same year. Mr. Schultz and Mr. Fleming agreed that it does not. Mr. Fleming stated that it is the only measurements they can use. Mr. Schultz and Mayor Driscoll agreed. Mr. Schultz confirmed the numbers with Superintendent Ruiz. Members discussed the revisit for actual goals. Mr. Schultz said that Ms. Ruiz is going to present her goals this evening. They will have an opportunity to provide feedback on those

goals. Superintendent Ruiz reminded the members that she added the AP goals as a result of the feedback she received from the Committee. Mr. Schultz said they have the ACT and the SAT. Everyone would take that and simply figure out the percentages. The ACT percentage is almost there but the SAT is not. Members agreed and noticed the huge drop on the SAT. Mayor Driscoll asked Superintendent Ruiz if she knew what might have triggered the decrease or if it was a reflection of fewer students and part of low enrollment. Members wondered if this was in relation to fewer senior students. Ms. Ruiz responded that she does not have the enrollment numbers of the senior class but could certainly get that. They had a drop of close to 40 students from one year to the other. Mayor Driscoll said she does not know what 204 would relate to, how many students are in the class versus 225? Is it 225 out of a class of 300 and 204 out of a class of 275? Superintendent Ruiz understood to provide more detail relating to student proportion. Members further discussed the PSAT and SAT topic for juniors and seniors. Mr. Schultz suggested to finding out the total number of student who took the SAT. Ms. Ruiz noted to provide the total percentages of sophomores, juniors, and seniors who took the tests out of relative enrollment for those grade levels. Mr. Schultz said that would be good, because then she would have the total number of students too. Everyone agreed. Mr. Schultz asked Superintendent Ruiz if there is any chance they might receive the data the following day. Members said there was no school the following day. Mr. Schultz went over what they have. They have what they need for the Student Learning. Members agreed. Mr. Schultz suggested if they could quickly go through the District Improvements. He asked Superintendent Ruiz if she could give them a nutshell analysis.

### **District Improvement**

Superintendent Ruiz said they did a lot of work. It may have been presented to the Committee at the Summer Institute. They launched the work of the structures at the school level showing that all the schools have prescheduled data cycles and that they have protocols. They talk about the structure for data analysis when they visit schools and meet with school leaders. Ms. Ruiz gave an example of when she met with four principals. She asked them to upload artifacts that show the data cycles, the materials they use, and different levels of analyzed data at school level as part of their evaluation. They have cemented that practice in the schools. Now, on year 3, she is in the process of going back and talking with the school leaders and asking for that evidence. Moving forward this year, she is excited about the School City online platform where she is able to see and review the data. That is going to facilitate the data cycles tremendously. They ask school leaders to upload artifacts. They have a Google drive where they ask them to upload samples that answer some of the following questions:

- ✓ What do you use?
- ✓ What is your agenda for a Data meeting?
- ✓ Who is involved?
- ✓ When does your Isle team meet to look at data?
- ✓ When are your teachers' planning time?

All these things are organized at the school level and they have to provide evidence for that. Mr. Fleming asked what evidence they have that it has been done across the district. Mayor Driscoll pointed out that they did not have any uniform assessment tool before they had ANET. They have Galileo at the High School. Every school now has an ILT. They never had formal ILTs in every single school. They have data walls. She remembered that previously Carlton and the Collins school were the only schools that had a data wall. They certainly did not have a lot of data usage within their schools and now they do. There has been a lot more qualitative training and not quantitative. Mr. Schultz asked of any new happenings last year. Superintendent Ruiz responded that working with the principals on establishing the structure of

the data cycles. They had noticed the first year that schools were not really down to the subgroups. One thing they did last year, that Rebecca Westlake did, instituted the WIDA model, which is an assessment system for ELL. This was before the ESL teachers did data cycles, because they did not have an instrument. To clarify, Mr. Schultz asked Superintendent Ruiz that they had not used WIDA until last year. Mr. Fleming said they did use WIDA last year. Superintendent Ruiz clarified that she was referring to the 'assessment'. The WIDA standards have been implemented in the district, but then WIDA came out with an actual formative assessment for ELLs. This was being rolled as a new assessment in a lot of districts out when she first started in Salem. Mr. Schultz asked if this is a choice that districts have or a mandate. Superintendent Ruiz responded that it is a choice and provided the members with an overview of the benefits and how the WIDA assessments are being used.

### **Discussion on Instruction Rigor**

Mr. Schultz asked Superintendent Ruiz what is happening with rigor on grades K through 8 or 3 through 8 with the students who are relatively high achievers. Are there extra things they are doing? Superintendent Ruiz responded that differentiating instruction also look at students that are performing on or above grade level. They implemented an accelerated program last year for all the middle school grades 6 through 8. They are being careful that they do not build differentiation as a way of only addressing low achievers. Ms. Ruiz shared further insight as to why. Mr. Schultz asked if there are pullouts anywhere in the district for high achiever students in Math, English, or any topic for additional supplementing. Superintendent Ruiz responded that is what they want classroom teachers to do. There is no pullout. Ms. Amaral commented that there is an academy. Ms. Ruiz said there is an accelerated Math program she mentioned but students are not pulled outside of the classrooms to do acceleration. She thinks that is also part of what should be happening in Tier 1 Instruction. Mr. Fleming asked if there is any other differentiated support, besides the accelerated Math program. Ms. Ruiz said they have taken a step in the right direction with the middle accelerated program. Ms. Manning stated that there were many differentiated instructions in the ELA. Superintendent Ruiz commented a differentiated program at the High School and said she would provide that information to them.

### **Discussion on the Implement Instruction Closely Aligned to the Common Core**

Superintendent Ruiz informed members that all the work around Standards Based Practices that Ms. Carbone has presented to the Committee fall under Common Core. Members briefly discussed student literacy learning in their native language.

### **Discussion on Data Cycles**

Superintendent Ruiz informed members that in building capacity to leverage school staff and structures to implement a highly effective tier model is related to the data cycles. They have, in addition to teachers, adults in their schools. They looked at data cycles and instruction differentiation, and then paraprofessional leveraging. Special Ed teachers work together with other teachers and in leveraging their reading specialist. Superintendent Ruiz provided further details on the work they did around DLT and school visits. When doing school visits, Superintendent Ruiz, Kate Carbone, Margaret Marotta, and Rebecca Westlake conduct a series of observations throughout the building. They all use their own lens and provide principals with specific feedback. Mr. Schultz asked Superintendent Ruiz if she also meets with other members of school leadership teams when she returns and debriefs them on her observations and to provide other information she brings to these visits. He asked if she sits down with their leadership team, because the principal may not know everything. Superintendent Ruiz said they do not do that with the leadership team, because that is the role of the principal. Assistant Principals are present when these meeting take place. The understanding is that Principals take the feedback, return to the Instructional Leadership team and teachers to determine the types of

instructional rounds they need to conduct and review their professional development based on the feedback. Ms. Ruiz said they do not do that work for them. They see the Principal's role is to leverage that work of the school level. Meeting with team leaders would be taking on the Principals' role. Mr. Schultz shared his view that it may or may not be that way. It would be meetings on occasion, because with a random visit where a challenge is observed and the principal had not originally observed that as a challenge – then how well equipped is that principal is to then manage his leadership team on that issue. Superintendent Ruiz said that with the new catheter of principals they have now, often times what happens is that they would say, "*We are glad that you saw that because this is something we are seeing too*". Often times it is affirming to them.

#### **Discussion on Building Capacity to Leverage School Staff Instructors**

Ms. Ruiz said they follow up on their next visit to see if school leaders have acted upon the feedback they provided, if they see growth or necessary changes have been implemented, and if any resources are needed to help provide them in that growth. Mr. Schultz asked if that would speak to that third bullet: ***Build Capacity to Leverage School Staff Instructors to Implement Highly Effective...*** Ms. Ruiz said yes.

#### **Discussion on Leadership – Monitor Instruction**

Superintendent Ruiz said that one of the ways they do this is through the school visits mentioned earlier. The other is they look at how principals are giving feedback to teachers. As part of the principal's evaluation, they sit on Teach Point and get an example of teachers and look at the feedback that teachers are getting and how targeted the feedback is. They look at whether it is aligned with the focus of the work of the school.

#### **Discussion on Supporting Implementation of Scaffold Instruction**

Superintendent Ruiz said that this involves a variety of entry points. It is the vein of Rebecca Westlake and Margaret Marotta, the bucket of work that they've been doing in terms of working with the coaches and teacher teams. There has been a lot of progress but there is still work to be done.

#### **Final Discussion on Superintendent's Evaluation II**

Mr. Schultz asked members if they needed any more information to fill out their evaluation. Members said they have what they need. Mayor Driscoll said they were just looking at the Instructional goals, Performance goals. She asked Superintendent Ruiz if there was anything else with respect to the rest of the Standard that she may want to make sure they knew. Ms. Ruiz responded she believes she provided a comprehensive list of highlights by standards. School Committee members said she gave that at the last meeting. Members agreed they have enough information. Mr. Schultz said they are just waiting on a little bit of information from Superintendent Ruiz.

#### **Discussion on New Goals**

Superintendent Ruiz began sharing the new goals for the 2017-2018 school year. She said that one of the biggest accomplishments, in terms of the work they had last year, was the completion of the strategic plan. The AIP was in place when she first began work in Salem. The AIP was in some sense the guiding document for the work. Now, the Strategic Plan takes place of that. Ms. Ruiz's handouts provided the members of a visual. They have the four pillars in their strategic plan but they also have the conditions for success that are at the base. Ms. Ruiz read those conditions out loud for the members stating that those areas are very much part of the work. Some are not fully fleshed in the Superintendent's evaluation rubric, but she also wanted to highlight that they are going to continue working on making gains of student performance but

also looking equity and access in their district, given they are a district who have many high needs students. How do they equitable access to learning opportunities and operational efficiencies. They are going to continue with a strong focus on looking at the needs of their high needs students and strategies, systematically and individualized, to address those factors. In addition to doing the operational work they are going to take a deep look at their transportation office and operation for efficiencies and prevent the pitfall they had this fall. Mr. Fleming asked if that has started. Ms. Ruiz said they are earnest in that work with the new staffing. She wanted to assure the members of this, because her student learning and professional practice goals do not necessarily encompass this information. Superintendent Ruiz said that the Student Learning goals are aligned with the Strategic Plan and continued with her goals on shrinking the gap between the Salem schools and the states'. Members sought clarification, shared feedback, and discussed the performance gap percentages on Superintendent Ruiz's future goals in greater detail. Members suggested change in wording to clarify actual goal percentages exact target point. Superintendent Ruiz agreed to make the changes in the wording and exact target point on her goals for the coming year. Mr. Schultz asked if the action steps have completely been laid out. Superintendent Ruiz responded that they are in the process of doing that. Members and Superintendent agreed that goals be more specified.

#### **Discussion on Increasing Enrollment and Diversity in AP Courses**

Mr. Fleming said he thinks that should still be a call, because it did not show much increase this year. Mayor Driscoll said she is fine with AP still being there. She just wants to make sure they are measuring what they really care about. She said they also talked about dual enrollment. She wondered if that was a real potential to increase dual enrollment. More students are looking at dual enrollment as opposed to AP. They have some programs with Salem State. Superintendent Ruiz responded that they are getting some programs off the ground. Mayor Driscoll asked if that is something they want to look at: to have the SAT or ACT measurement. She thinks AP is great but it would be helpful if they also have a movement towards goal enrollment. Mr. Schultz said he thinks they have to pick one. He shared that, in terms of rigor, statistically; students do better in college if they take AP rather than dual enrollment by 7 or 8%. Members shared further discussion, insight, and feedback on college prep and facilitating the process of college applications for High School students: how to increase standards for college readiness. Superintendent Ruiz suggested she look at where they are and propose a draft goal on what is the metric of student that apply for college.

Ms. Manning asked if they would be meeting again for continuation of the Superintendent's evaluation. Members said they would.

#### **Final Discussion on Superintendent's Goals**

Mayor Driscoll suggested that members provide Superintendent Ruiz with more feedback before she updates her draft to incorporate the requested changes. Ms. Ruiz would make the edits on the Student Learning Goals and members would provide the feedback. She would add some of the target data they talked about this evening; make an amended version of this evening's goals to request some of the conversations to date and ask the members for feedback on those areas before providing School Committee members with an updated version of the goals. Members hope to approve the final set of goals before the end of this calendar year.

Superintendent Ruiz will refine the goals based on the conversations they had this evening, benchmarks they changed, and additions. She will send it out electronically to the members where they would provide their feedback on those areas. Members and Superintendent Ruiz would meet again to finalize. In the meantime, members need the evaluation by Tuesday.

Superintendent Ruiz would provide them with the percent of students who took the SAT, increased enrollments. Superintendent Ruiz said she could get the accelerated differentiation program but the percent of students who took the SAT may take longer. Members need one more meeting to relook at the goals.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee of the Whole (COW) School Committee this evening. Mr. Schultz entertained the motion to adjourn. Ms. Amaral seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Angelica Alayon, Secretary  
Salem School Committee

**Meeting Materials**

COW Notice 10/16/17

Evaluation Template

Assessment Document

Superintendent Self-Assessment for the Past Year with highlights

Educator Evaluation Rubric as a tool