

Salem School Committee  
Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes  
Monday, September 24, 2018

A Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting of the Salem School Committee was held on Monday, September 24, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the School Committee Chambers at Collins Middle School, 29 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA.

**Members Present:** Ms. Mary Manning, Mr. James Fleming, Ms. Kristine Wilson, Ms. Ana Nuncio, Mr. Manny Cruz, Ms. Amanda Campbell, and Mayor Kimberley Driscoll

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Margarita Ruiz, Superintendent, Kate Carbone, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Kristin Shaver, Business Manager, Jill Conrad, Chief of Systems Strategy, Kelley Rice, Chief of Communications, Ellen Wingard, City Connects School Adjustment Counselor, and Brad Maloon, City Connects Coordinator for Collins Middle School

### **Introduction**

Superintendent Ruiz began the meeting by saying they are going to provide an update, per the request of the School Committee, on the implementation of City Connects. Ms. Ruiz introduced Ellen Wingard, the Supervisor of all of the City Connects coordinators for the district. Ms. Ruiz also introduced Brad Maloon, the City Connects Coordinator for the Collins Middle School. Last year was the first year of the City Connects implementation. Ms. Ruiz continued that Ms. Wingard would be sharing how that first year went, some of the data they have, and Mr. Maloon would be sharing some expectations.

### **Update on City Connects**

Ms. Wingard referred to the 2017-18 End-of-Year Report data sheet and explained it is a snapshot of the data they collected districtwide. The other side of the report sheet shows City Connect's difference from a year ago. Ms. Wingard stated that City Connects coordinators put their best foot forward across the district last year and came together as a team to embark on this major structural change around student support in the district. Ms. Wingard highlighted the data information and said that one of the hallmarks of City Connects is that they look to serve all students. One hundred percent (100%) of the Pre-K through eighth grade students last year underwent a whole class review. This means that coordinators, teachers, and staffs looked at students' strengths and needs across all four domains of healthy living. Ms. Wingard explained that they typically look at academics and social emotional but do not usually systemically look at family and health in a systemic way. Those reviews looked at all four of those domains and strength and needs for each student. From there, they set afoot creating individualized plans for student success. That could have meant putting into play services or enrichment for early or intensive intervention or a combination of any of those. This was the initial gathering of information around students and families and their strengths and needs.

Ms. Wingard continued that some schools sent out surveys to parents and received a lot of rich information on things that students were already participating in, information that is also included into their database. The parent surveys allowed City Connects to get a better sense of what students are doing which opened up partners to them they were unaware of before. They were also able to get parent voice around what they wanted for their students. They have increased partnerships which means that they have a broader landscape to choose from when trying to tailor services for students. Ms. Wingard explained that three thousand seventy one (3,071) students were the initial whole class reviews. When Coordinators do the whole class review, the teacher and the coordinator tier the student's needs. If the student's needs were tiered at 3, it is an automatic referral to the student's support team for that intensive plan. They were able to get through their level 3 tiered students and move into a 2b, which is the *still at risk* but leaving out *as intense*. All of the students that came

through their doors last year received this review – where they have strengths and needs for every student in their database. Reviews and service referrals are ongoing. Ms. Wingard continued to walk members through the data and stated that the 27, 258 number amount shown on the data is the total number of services delivered across all four domains and across intervention levels.

In response to Ms. Manning's question, Ms. Wingard explained that services include both district-provided services, beyond curriculum, and community-provided services beyond the City Connects person. The City Connects Coordinator is the heart of student support. They are not the deliverer of all services; the Coordinator is the hub for student support and they often deliver the service but are not always the deliverer of services most of the time but they are the collector of all that information. Ms. Wingard continued to walk members through the data and highlights of some of the higher partner-provided services that showed a glimpse of what students are participating in. Enrichment Academics are different academically driven enrichment activities that students participate in where the aquarium comes in and does enrichment in the schools, for example. Enrichment-raw arts community provided are activities like dance, instrumentals provided outside of the school. Many students are participating in those activities offered outside of the school. Mr. Fleming asked Ms. Wingard how they measure the effectiveness of the services provided. Ms. Wingard responded that they look at whether the students are thriving and whether City Connects is being faithful to the program. There are two different fidelity measures around observations, checklists, data that is called through herself and Boston College, who also helps them go through it. City Connects has followups for every one of the referrals that has been put into place and staying the course with the City Connect's plan. If, for example, a student is reviewed in student support team and an intensive plan is written, that whole team comes back together six to eight weeks later, looks at the progress (because they are writing goals) and reviews whether they are making progress or not. They move forward towards a next goal if they are making progress and decide what they need to do if they are not. That is on a very microscopic level. Ms. Wingard said she would look at the percentage of that data and come back with the information. Ms. Wingard shared that part of the student support team is to look at all of the data, and they do not stop reviewing until the student is making progress.

Members asked questions and continued to engage in further discussion. Superintendent Ruiz clarified that the City Connects' role is not to evaluate the effectiveness of the service offered by the programs. Their role is to identify the needs of the students for an afterschool program and connecting the student with the service that might supply that need which is ultimately considered as a successful delivery of service. Students in Tier 3 (those that need the intensive support) are automatically referred to the student support team process. That process (a plan with very specific goals) is crafted and looked throughout the year to ensure progress is in place and consistent. Ms. Wingard added that they have district measures academically, throughout, that are put in place and where they look into to see whether the student is making progress. Members shared insight and engaged in further discussion on the topic of measuring effectiveness. Ms. Wingard continued to walk members through the City Connects data. In response to Ms. Nuncio's question regarding the well-being of the students who transferred from the Nathaniel Bowditch School to other schools, Ms. Wingard explained they have welcoming procedures for them as all other students. They also have students who were flagged for September, because they needed something specific and immediate. Mia Finn was at the Nathaniel Bowditch School and is now at the Collins Middle School. She was able to connect and meet with all of the coordinators to go over each of those student's needs and follow ups are ongoing. Ms. Wingard continued that this is part of the City Connects' function. Ms. Wingard briefly shared details of their Family and Community Engagement facilitator counselors. Members shared feedback and engaged in discussion. Mayor Driscoll said she would like to know of measurements on that process.

### **Summary of the Policy Subcommittee work to date on forming an Equity Subcommittee**

Ms. Nuncio reported that the Equity working group consisted of two Policy Subcommittee members working for the last four months. Ms. Manning, Mr. Cruz, and she met over the last four months and examined various approaches used by school districts throughout Massachusetts and the nation to move towards achieving more equity within their systems. Ms. Nuncio continued that they agreed, at

their last Policy Subcommittee meeting, an Equity Subcommittee would be the best vehicle for further investigation on this important subject and achieve an equitable school system. They recognize that the entire school committee would be to craft line to add this new committee to the School Committee. There are already existing subcommittees, this would be an additional subcommittee. They shyed away from supporting the formation of an equity task force and chose to instead support the formation of a new equity subcommittee that can, at any point during its work, call an outside expert or experts and resources to help with its work. Ms. Nuncio continued informing the School Committee that they agreed that participation from members of each existing committee was needed. One idea that was put forth was to have the Chairs from each existing subcommittee participate in the equity subcommittee.

Ms. Nuncio informed the School Committee that, at their last Policy Subcommittee meeting, they agreed on the importance of arriving at a definition of equity for their district and she found a good working definition from the Cambridge Public Schools. Mr. Cruz also found a good working definition from the Amherst-Pelham district. Ms. Nuncio said they also recognize that there are at least two or possibly three existing groups, within the Salem Public School district, working to achieve a more inclusive and equitable school system. Ms. Nuncio shared further details and said where they are right now is that they believe there needs to be a coordinated flow and a regular reporting from these groups to the school committee. Perhaps a newly formed Equity Subcommittee could coordinate that flow and hear from these groups themselves on a regular basis. Mr. Cruz talked about the information he found from the Amherst-Pelham district, and Ms. Manning shared her understanding and feedback on where they are. Mayor Driscoll said that they, as a School Committee, have the choice to create another subcommittee that would be charged with equity, a great opportunity to have a subcommittee that can work directly with different individuals involved at the staff level depending upon the set goals. Another choice would be to create a task force. Mayor Driscoll and Ms. Manning briefly talked about what a task force might do. Mayor Driscoll said that an equity subcommittee and task force are the two operational or procedural places they could go with. Members shared insight, feedback, and engaged in further discussion.

Mayor Driscoll suggested the School Committee task the Policy Subcommittee with drawing up a recommendation for language to insert into their by-laws such as add Equity to the bottom of the list of subcommittees. Members agreed to amend the policy and add Equity to the list of subcommittees that is already listed, and leave the content to the committee as Mayor Driscoll suggested. Members would then go through the process of a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> readings. Assignments would then be sent out to seven subcommittees rather than six. Members agreed to amend the policy subcommittee and their by-laws to add a new Subcommittee, and the new subcommittee would be charged with coming up with a new agenda or list of work products for the upcoming year or months timeframe. This would be added onto the list of action items for the next School Committee meeting.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee of the Whole (COW) School Committee meeting, Mr. Fleming motioned to adjourn. Ms. Campbell seconded the motion. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Angelica Alayon, Secretary  
Salem School Committee

### Meeting Materials

Committee of the Whole (COW) School Committee Meeting Agenda  
City Connects School Year 2017-18 End-of-Year Report (two-sided sheet handout)  
Equity Task Force Charge  
Equity Working Group Report to Salem School Committee Sept. 24, 2018