

Salem School Committee  
Committee of the Whole - School Committee Retreat Minutes  
Saturday, December 14, 2019

A School Committee Retreat of the Salem School Committee was held on Saturday, December 14, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. in Viking Hall, Room 123 at Salem State University, 352 Lafayette Street/1 Loring Ave., 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:** Kathleen A. Smith, Superintendent, Dorothy Presser, Field Director of Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC), Ms. Kristin Pangallo, Member-Elect, Salem School Committee, Kate Carbone, Assistant Superintendent, Kristin Shaver, Business Manager, Deborah Connerty, Acting Executive Director of Pupil Personnel Services, and Jill Conrad, Chief of Systems Strategy

### **School Committee Operating Protocols and Meeting Structure**

Dorothy Presser, Field Director Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC), shared a document with proposed language for the Committee's operating protocols. Ms. Presser drafted the protocols, which outline "how we govern" as a set of norms which are based on the Committee's previous discussions earlier in the fall. Members reviewed and discussed the draft. The discussion focused on wording preferences for some of the items, but in general, the group liked the concepts that were drafted. Ms. Presser will revise the draft based on suggestions and re-send to the Committee. The members agreed to rely on this draft as a starting point. The members also discussed what the appropriate place for these "norms" or operating protocols should be once finalized. Rather than have them become a policy, they agreed to adopt them as a group and put them on the website and to make them visible during meetings. While it is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that order is kept during all meetings, it will be up to members to remind one another of their agreements and to hold each other accountable for upholding these agreements.

Ms. Manning shared an update from the Policy Subcommittee that has been reviewing and discussing different approaches to public comment during Regular School Committee meetings. Ms. Manning shared information from state law as well as Salem City Ordinance of 11/18/10, Section 28C along with language drafted by the School Committee Counsel, Colby Brunt. In essence, the Policy Subcommittee is suggesting a proposed change to how could be handled at future School Committee meetings. The change would clarify that the School Committee meetings are business meetings of the School Committee, which are held in public, and not, in and of themselves, a forum for the public. That said, the Committee would both encourage and welcome public comment, but it would be held once during the meeting, generally, at the beginning of the meeting. Members of the public who wished to address the Committee for a period of 5 minutes or less would sign-up to speak and names would be called, in order, by the Chair.

Members discussed the proposed concept and debated the value of having two separate times for public comment on their agenda. Mr. Fleming opposed the idea of eliminating the second public comment period at the end of the agenda. The majority of other members disagreed arguing that maintaining a more

structured time and opportunity for public comment at the beginning of the meeting would make it more focused and productive. The members agreed to have the Policy Subcommittee draft a new policy to make this change, which would be a revision to SC Policy #6409.

### **Proposed FY20-21 Instructional Technology Organizational Structure**

Superintendent Smith summarized many of the challenges the district has faced over the past four years with the consolidated IT department (consolidated with the district and City). While the district has made many efforts to make this arrangement work, having the level of support and service needed to fully utilize technology tools for educational purposes has fallen short. To address this challenge in the future, the Superintendent shared a proposed plan to re-design the Information Technology function within the district that would re-claim some positions that are currently funded and managed by the City of Salem and further develop a department, over time, that would focus more on supporting instructional technology across all schools. The new department would also include a manager of state reporting and data as well as a Student Information System manager. School Committee members expressed support for this proposed plan and agreed to consider the changes during the upcoming budget planning process.

### **District Organizational Chart**

Superintendent Smith shared an updated district organizational chart with School Committee members and discussed possible changes she may be considering for the coming year. Members shared their feedback and discussed the role of the new Superintendent coming in and how that person might want to organize the leadership structure.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the School Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting this evening, Ms. Manning motioned adjourn. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 1:30pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Kathleen Smith, Secretary  
Salem School Committee