

Salem School Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 1, 2018

A regular meeting of the Salem School Committee was held on Monday, October 1, 2018 at 7:09 p.m. in the School Committee Chambers at Collins Middle School, 29 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA.

Members Present: Ms. Mary Manning, Ms. Kristine Wilson, Ms. Ana Nuncio, Mr. Manny Cruz, and Mayor Kimberley Driscoll

Members Absent: Mr. James Fleming, Ms. Amanda Campbell

Others Present: Margarita Ruiz, Superintendent, Kate Carbone, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Kristin Shaver, Business Manager, Jill Conrad, Chief of Systems Strategy, and Kelley Rice, Chief of Communications.

Call to Order

Ms. Manning called the regular meeting of the Salem School Committee to order at 7:09 p.m. and explained to the audience of the new Consent agenda and the five items on it for this evening.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes

Deliberation and Vote on the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting held September 17, 2018

Deliberation and Vote on the Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting held September 24, 2018

Approval of Warrants

September 27, 2018 in the amount of \$12,150.00
October 4, 2018 in the amount of \$882,322.70

Mr. Cruz motioned to approve the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting, the Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting, and the warrant amounts as listed on the agenda. Ms. Nuncio seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Deliberation and vote on the approval of the BACS PTA request to use the school parking lot for fundraiser in October

Deliberation and vote on the approval of the Carlton School PTO request to use the school parking lot fundraising in October

Discussion

Mr. Fleming was absent at this meeting. Ms. Manning explained that Mr. Fleming had requested to have these matters tabled until the next School Committee meeting, that is scheduled for October 15, 2018, when he will be present. Superintendent Ruiz informed everyone that Mr. Fleming, Chair of the Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee, asked these matters be tabled to allow him and the School Committee time to review and retake the items during the regular School Committee meeting on October 15, 2018. The deliberation and vote on the approval of the BACS PTA and Carlton School PTO request is tabled for the next School Committee meeting.

Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Cruz moved to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Nuncio seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Public Comment #1: Questions and comments from the audience – There were no questions or comments from the audience.

Presentation and Reports

Superintendent's Report – Margarita Ruiz

Superintendent Ruiz reported that Chromebooks were distributed to all Salem freshmen students last week. The Salem High School began its 1 to 1 technology device initiative where students would be able to use their devices in the classroom, for personalized learning as detailed in the strategic plan. Ms. Ruiz shared that she attended the Spanish Heritage celebration, last Friday, at the Bentley Academy where Kindergarten through fifth graders showcased their Spanish skills, in both Language and Geography. Ms. Ruiz announced that the annual Chamber of Commerce Haunted Happenings parade would be held this Thursday, October 23rd. Ms. Ruiz asked everyone, at the request of the Salem Police Chief and for everyone's safety, to please refrain from throwing candy out towards the crowd during the Haunted Happenings parade. Superintendent Ruiz reminded everyone that all schools would conduct the first of two ALICE drills during the month of October this year. The drills will be conducted in partnership with the City of Salem's Emergency Response personnel and lead by the Salem Police Department.

Other Reports

New Statewide Accountability Framework

Superintendent Ruiz talked about the new state accountability framework data, highlights, and everything about the framework. Ms. Ruiz explained they still have an accountability percentile that compares school performance with other similar schools as well as progress towards targets. The new accountability system places a high premium on a school or district's ability to make progress towards their targets, especially with the lowest performing group of students and sub-groups. In the past, they could have closed the achievement gap if their higher performing group scored lower, from year to year. The new accountability system focuses on lower performing students and each school's ability to lift the performance of that group. Superintendent Ruiz said they are discontinuing the accountability levels 1 through 5 -- that system is no longer being used. Districts are no longer being classified based on their lowest performing school, in terms of accountability. Instead, all Salem Public School students become the basis for the accountability of the district. An example would be to think of all the students in Salem in one school is what would determine the accountability for the district.

Superintendent Ruiz walked members through the new indicators of the accountability system and the differences of K-8 and High School grades. Superintendent Ruiz continued to walk members through the presentation, on accountability and performance areas, and answered questions for School Committee members.

Overview of 2018 MCAS and Accountability Results

Superintendent Ruiz explained that the new accountability framework system has additional indicators that provide more information about student performance and opportunities beyond the test scores. Ms. Ruiz walked members through the Salem Public Schools 2018 MCAS results presentation. Ms. Carbone talked about curriculum, where they are and how they are moving forward with the High School redesign process, and K-8 student experience.

Discussion

Mayor Driscoll asked Superintendent Ruiz for a follow-up on tracking school tardiness factors and school bus transportation and other possible transportation alternatives. Mr. Cruz inquired about the time investment on examining how schedule affects chronic absenteeism and vacation extensions students take. Superintendent Ruiz responded they have to deeply analyze the data. They work with families and try to persuade them on its impact on the student's ability to grow academically. Ms.

Ruiz continued there are other issues that also contribute to chronic absenteeism. Ms. Manning added that the number of families who take extended vacations have diminished, shared she thinks there is a personnel piece that contributes to that, and suggested follow-up calls to parents be made solely by a personnel member with a sole responsibility to that task, when students are absent. Mayor Driscoll asked Ms. Carbone on a development to engage students and staff on the Salem High School experience. Members asked questions and engaged in discussion.

Action Items: Old Business – None

Action Items: New Business

Deliberation and vote on donation from the Independent Order of Odd Fellow Fraternity Lodge #118 in the amount of \$1,050 to support the Saltonstall School field trip to the Nature's Classroom.

Mr. Cruz motioned to approve the donation from the Independent Order of Odd Fellow Fraternity Lodge #118 in the amount of \$1,050 to support the Saltonstall School field trip to the Nature's Classroom. Ms. Nuncio seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Subcommittee Reports

Ms. Nuncio reported that the Policy Subcommittee members met this evening and reviewed Personnel policies in the 4000 series and discussed the continuation of an Equity Subcommittee.

School Committee Concerns and Resolutions

Public Comment #2: Questions and comments from the audience

Fawaz Abusharkh, 4 Harrison Road, expressed his concern on the high number of student absenteeism and said that the School Committee should take a deeper look on the reason(s) why and the sudden drop of students from 8th grade through High School.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the School Committee this evening. Ms. Nuncio entertained the motion to adjourn. Ms. Manning seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Angelica Alayon, Secretary
Salem School Committee

Meeting Materials and Reports

School Committee Consent Agenda October 1, 2018
Minutes of the September 17, 2018 Regular School Committee meeting
Minutes of the September 24, 2018 Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting
Bentley Academy Charter School (BACS) PTA annual parking fundraiser request
Carlton School PTO parking lot fundraising request
2018 Accountability Data – Salem & Salem Public Schools 2018 MCAS Results