

Salem School Committee
Approved Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 6, 2020

A regular meeting of the Salem School Committee was held on Monday, January 6, 2020 at 7:00 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. Ana Nuncio, Mr. Manny Cruz, Ms. Amanda Campbell, Dr. Kristin Pangallo, and Mayor Kimberley Driscoll

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Kathleen Smith, Interim Superintendent, Kate Carbone, Assistant Superintendent, Jill Conrad, Chief of Systems Strategy, Kristin Shaver, Business Manager, and Jillian Flynn, Student Representative

Call of Meeting to Order

Mayor Driscoll called the regular meeting of the Salem School Committee to order at 7:04 p.m.

Consent Agenda

- a. Minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held December 14, 2019
- b. Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting held December 16, 2019
- c. Approval of Warrants: 12/12/19 in the amount of \$313,881.91, 12/19/19 in the amount of \$208,940.68, and 12/26/19 in the amount of \$150,076.33

Mr. Fleming motioned to approve the Consent agenda. Ms. Manning seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Before approving the full agenda, Mayor Driscoll pointed out that prior to the meeting they she, as Chair and Mayor held a swearing in ceremony for the newly elected and re-elected members: Dr. Kristin Pangallo, Mary Manning, and James Fleming. She offered her congratulations to the members and said she was looking forward to working with all of them in the new year.

Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Fleming motioned to approve the regular meeting agenda. Ms. Manning seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Public Comment #1: Questions and Comments from the Audience

None

Student School Committee Representative Report – Jillian Flynn

Ms. Flynn reported that the Student Advisory Council had been working in the past month to find more members. All students in grades 9-12 are welcome to come to their meetings. The meetings are the first and third Wednesdays of every month. The location sometimes changes to Collins Middle School due to convenience. They are also working on a presentation for the Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee regarding the high school bathrooms. They are also working on their social media outlets to help spread the word. They will be holding a retreat on Saturday, January 25th from 9-3. They have a Remind account which is @SalemSAC. If you text that to 81010 you can join it. Ms. Flynn also reported on various fundraising activities by the different classes at the high school. In addition, Salem High School will be presenting the play, Sister Act on January 17, 18, and 19. The next Student Advisory Meeting will be Wednesday, January 8th from 5-7pm at Collins Middle School.

Mr. Fleming asked that Item VIIA –Old Business the Deliberation and Vote on the Candidate Profile be taken out of order. Ms. Campbell seconded the motion. The motion carried.

VII. Action Items: Old Business

- a. Deliberate and vote on the Candidate Profile for the Superintendent of Schools

Mayor Driscoll requested the search consultants from the UMass Collins Center – Dr. John Brackett and Mr. Ed Gotgart to come forward to present on the Candidate Profile for the Superintendent of Schools (see attached materials). Mr. Gotgart spoke first reporting that the process of conducting focus groups with key stakeholder groups had concluded and they have a robust candidate profile to share tonight. He also reported that there was a great pool of candidates who had already applied for the position of Superintendent. A total of 31 candidates have applied with a number of them being veteran superintendents from MA and also from outside of MA. There are also a number of veteran central office administrators such as Special Education Directors and Assistant Superintendents. There is a group of “rising Superintendents” who are fresh out of graduate school or serving in interim roles – a group that are really some super stars. There are also a number of educational leaders, those currently serving as a principal or other role. Finally, there are some non-traditional candidates.

Dr. Brackett spoke about the candidate profile. The profile centers around three main questions: 1) What are the characteristics that you think the next Superintendent should have? 2) What are the priority issues that you think the next Superintendent will have to deal with?; and 3) What is really fantastic about Salem that needs to be preserved? The profile was developed based on feedback from eight (8) focus groups involving 64 people as well as 171 responses to an online survey (169 English responses and 2 Spanish responses). Of these, 122 were parents, 46 were students, and others.

The candidate profile will be shared with all of the candidates. The profile describes an individual who is an experienced district leader with strong and clear core values which include integrity and the commitment to the success of all students; someone who is an effective communicator; has demonstrated the ability to create a psychologically safe working environment; and can build a sense of community both within the district and across the community. More details are available in the report.

Mr. Fleming asked about his request to have the full school committee review all applicants. Dr. Brackett shared the legal opinion that had been received on this from the City Solicitor (based on an Attorney General Advisory) which is that the Search Committee is a Subcommittee of the School Committee and all candidate interviews and screening procedures will be conducted in Executive Session. There are three members of the School Committee on the Search Committee. To allow the full School Committee to review all applicants would have to be done in open session, which would both be out of the bounds of the Executive Session purpose and violate the candidates’ confidentiality.

Mayor Driscoll shared that while the full School Committee may not be able to see all of the candidates, she assured the group that the candidate profile grounds the process and the search committee is highly representative of the community and she felt confident that they would take their work seriously and provide the School Committee with a good group of candidates.

With no further discussion on this topic, Ms. Campbell made a motion to approve the item. Mr. Cruz seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Superintendent’s Report

The Superintendent opened her remarks by wishing everyone a Happy New Year and invited Dr. Samantha Meier to present on delayed start times for Salem High School during ACCESS testing.

Delayed Arrival for Salem High School for ACCESS Testing on January 14 and 15

Dr. Samantha Meier, Interim Principal at Salem High School reported that there will be a three-hour delay on January 14th and 15th for students who are non-English Learners. This will allow those students who are English Learners adequate time to take the online ACCESS exam which is a required annual exam to measure English Language Proficiency. Salem High School currently has 109 students who are designated as English Learners. Doing this allows the EL students to complete their testing in two days by involving all staff members as proctors. This practice is

similar to how the school conducts its MCAS testing and it also provides a way for all staff to connect with and share responsibility for the EL student population. The practice also reinforces the importance of the test for the students who are taking it, because it is given the same amount of gravitas as the MCAS test.

Dr. Pangallo asked if this practice impacted the number of days required for instruction and also bus schedules. Dr. Meier responded that it does not. Any student who arrives on the bus at the normal time will have a place to go for study hall during the time before the 10:24 start of the day. Superintendent Smith further clarified that any half day or delayed start day counts as a full day from the standpoint of the state's instructional days requirement.

The Superintendent continued with her report and informed the School Committee of the resignation of one of the high school's Assistant Principals. Since the resignation is mid-year, the school will be working internally to fill the position through the end of the year with the intent of recruiting someone new for next year.

A new Executive Assistant to the School Committee has been hired. Her name is Jennifer Gariepy and she has deep knowledge and experience having previously worked for a Superintendent and School Committee. We will be welcoming her on board in early February. The Mayor reminded the Committee that they will need to vote to approve this position and asked that the item be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

Superintendent Smith also reported that the temporary assignment of principal JJ Munoz to provide coaching and support to the Bentley school leadership team has gone well. She met with the Bates staff and they are comfortable with this move as well. Mr. Munoz is involved in the Influence 100 program on leadership so this opportunity and need fits into this program. Superintendent Smith thanked Mr. Munoz for helping out a fellow school leader in this way.

Salem has two principal search processes underway right now. Superintendent Smith asked Deborah Connerty to provide an update on the search for a principal for the Bentley school. Ms. Connerty shared that the 11-member screening committee will begin tomorrow. The posting is up and open but there are 12 candidates that will be screened now (additional candidates will be screened as they come in). The screening committee includes a fellow principal from the Carlton Innovation School since the Bentley may become an innovation school, an internal administrator from the school, three teachers, two parents, one community partner, and one school committee member. The process will lead to a set of finalists, possibly two or three candidates who will be sent to Superintendent Smith and the Executive Team who will conduct a second round of interviews with a performative to then select the final candidate for the position. If all goes well, we should have a candidate identified by mid-February.

Superintendent Smith provided a brief update on the Salem High School principal search. Assistant Superintendent Kate Carbone has been taking the lead on this and was asked to provide an update on the process. Assistant Superintendent Carbone shared that they met with the Personnel Subcommittee on December 23rd to ask to hire a search consultant. They are now in the process of vetting different applicants for that process and will have a decision on that soon. The job will be posted by January 15th. An online survey will be available for community members to provide input and it will be posted for two weeks, January 20th to 31st. The next task will be to convene a team of stakeholders to screen applicants. The committee will include two school committee members, two students (one from student government and the other from outside the student government – there will be a process by which students can apply), three parents (one from the Latino Leadership Coalition, one from SEPAC, and one by a lottery from the Superintendent), three teachers, two central office staff members, and one community partner. From there, we would turn the process over to the consultant to facilitate, but the process would likely be very similar to what Ms. Connerty described happening with the Bentley search. As for timeline, the goal is for the Superintendent to be in a position to make an appointment by the end of March.

The Superintendent also reminded everyone about the upcoming Kindergarten Info and Expo Night scheduled for Tuesday, January 14th at 6:30 pm at the Collins Middle School. Also Chief of Public Relations, Liz Polay-Wettengel has been on board for about one month and she has already begun talking with people internally and externally about putting communications systems in place and improving communications across the district. There is a lot to be done across all platforms. She will be reporting to the Superintendent and in turn, the Superintendent will report back to the School Committee with a plan.

The Superintendent also raised the issue of the presidential primary date of March 3rd. At this time, Salem does have school scheduled for that day. For safety purposes, the Superintendent is going to meet with Chief Butler

and others to ensure that safety precautions are put into place.

Lastly, the Superintendent provided a summary of the School Committee retreat that was held on Saturday, December 14th.

Action Items: New Business

Deliberation and Vote on the waiver of fees for the use of school facilities by the public

Mr. Fleming motioned to refer this to the Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee. Ms. Manning seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Mayor Driscoll asked for clarification on this item since there was no documentation to support the item in the packet. Mr. Fleming clarified that it is not a waiver of fees, but rather personal use of a facility. We have a request for a person to come in and work on his own vehicle.

Policy Subcommittee

Deliberation and Vote on the Second Reading of the recommendation of the Policy Subcommittee on the revisions to the following policies:

- 5102.03 Students Experiencing Homelessness
- 5204 Grading and Reports on Academic Progress
- 5206 Promotion, Retention, and Level Change
- 5207 Parent/Guardian Conferences
- 5208 Homework
- 5210 Home/Hospital Bound Instruction
- 5211 Home Schooling

Ms. Campbell motioned to approve the Second Reading of the recommendation of the Policy Subcommittee on the revisions to the policies as listed on the agenda. Ms. Nuncio seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Subcommittee Reports -- None

None

School Committee Concerns and Resolutions -- None

None

Public Comment #2: Questions and Comments from the Audience

Tom Furey, City Councilor, 36 Dunlap Street spoke about a letter he sent to Committee members urging them to consider naming the stage at Salem High School after Cynthia Napierkowski. Mr. Furey cited the incredible work and influence Ms. Napierkowski has had on so many students in the district as the leader of the instrumental music program.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the School Committee this evening, Ms. Campbell motioned to adjourn the regular School Committee meeting. Ms. Manning seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kathleen Smith, Secretary to the
Salem School Committee

Meeting Materials and Reports

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Candidate Profile for the Superintendent of Schools

Second reading of the following policies:

- 5102.03 Students Experiencing Homelessness
- 5204 Grading and Reports on Academic Progress
- 5206 Promotion, Retention, and Level Change
- 5207 Parent/Guardian Conferences
- 5208 Homework
- 5210 Home/Hospital Bound Instruction
- 5211 Home Schooling