

**Salem Public Schools
Salem School Committee
Meeting Minutes
November 15, 2021**

On November 15, 2021 the Salem School Committee held its regular School Committee meeting at 7:00 PM using the Zoom platform.

Members Present: Ms. Mary Manning, Mr. Manny Cruz, Ms. Amanda Campbell, Dr. Kristin Pangallo, Ms. Ana Nuncio, and Mr. James Fleming

Others in Attendance: Superintendent Stephen Zrike, Assistant Superintendent Kate Carbone, Chelsea Banks, Liz Polay-Wettengel, Marc LeBlanc, Linda Farinelli, Adam Colantuoni

Andre Fonseca, Elizabeth Rogers, Amy Candelora, Meg Russo, Nayelis Carmona, Deirdre Shea, Megan Otteson, Pilar Rufianchas, Ashley Belis

Call of Meeting to Order

Ms. Manning called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and requested a call of attendance. Ms. Manning mentions Mayor Driscoll will arrive shortly. She read the new Public Participation Policy 6409 and also explained the availability of Spanish interpretation.

Attendance

The school committee secretary called the attendance.

Ms. Manning	Present
Mr. Fleming	Present
Dr. Pangallo	Present
Ms. Nuncio	Present
Mr. Cruz	Present (7:02pm)
Ms. Campbell	Present
Mayor Driscoll	Present (7:22pm)

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Fleming made a motion to approve the Regular Agenda. Mr. Cruz seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Mr. Fleming	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes

Motion carries 6-0

Approval of Consent Agenda

Ms. Manning requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Dr. Pangallo motioned and Mr. Fleming seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Mr. Fleming	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes

Motion carries 6-0

Public Comments

One public comment was submitted and read by the School Committee Secretary:

Phillip and Jean Giglio of 54 Lawrence Street - Salem, MA 01970

Good Evening School Committee members

With All the negativity this has been on my heart to not forget the positive's.

Has anyone noticed or seen that the Salem public school's system as well school committee is doing an amazing job? I certainly have !! Is there much more to be done? Of course we are A village A community and we the parent's and we need to do our part get involved as well showing appreciation, and kindness. Starting with Dr Stephen Zrike who took on his title in the middle of covid. He promises and honesty with families, students and staff are a huge difference. My main still concern is the commitment for not just Superintendent Dr Stephen Zrike but all staff we need to improve better communication and. Let's not forget our wonderful amazing teachers and staff and our school Committee mayor Kim Driscoll who have worked hard tirelessly .. Mrs Kate Carbone congratulations finally well deserved 🌟 family's, Parent's, Caregivers..

We all may have exhibited this behavior in the past few Last week's This was going on before Pre Covid . I thank God that we live in a community and the School District will never let this type of behavior affect you staff members and teachers or Scholars. Thank you Dr. Zrike and the School Committee voted on the wellness day's while some people were not happy with the vote sent out most of us were .

Lastly We are treat with everything We are Our children's role model's Yes use their voices as we should !! kindness and compassion excepted feel safe and want our children to have the same respect from all staff members . We need to remind our children everyday if they see something say something to someone they can trust.

Boston Children's Hospital In Boston Massachusetts number 1 hospital in the state I know we've had several local doctor's etc. And greatly appreciate the knowledge . Maybe someone who can suggest Dr Richard Malley infectious disease department work with families such as myself Asthma, allergies and pulmonary. Possibly A webinar with and Q&A for Caregivers including our Salem State Scholars

Covid is up ticking and we still have unvaccinated now is not the time to put our guards down and that masks indoors businesses and especially when social distance is not a option and remain until January and revisit at that point .

Thank you to all the teachers and everyone school committee involved constantly with keeping our kids safe!

Educator's Showcase

Dr. Zrike introduces the Bentley team and Principal Liz Rogers who shares a video that shows a glimpse of interdisciplinary curriculum work they're developing and utilizing across the general education and dual language program.

Ms. Rogers introduces the team and shares excitement for the program they're developing in conjunction with Lynn Public Schools and school committee member, Ms. Campbell. She shares the interdisciplinary curriculum started in kindergarten and this year is being introduced at the first grade level. She recognizes the amazing efforts of the teachers and team of staff helping to develop the curriculum amid the current state of kids returning to school and still navigating a pandemic. She opens the floor for the team to introduce themselves.

Ms. Candelora explains the overview of the curriculum in terms of it having various units. The unit being showcased tonight is about "Our Roots." This provided an opportunity for students to explore school, city, and world maps to learn about different places and parts of the world. She continues on to share that the students were then able to explore their own roots about culture, family, and heritage. The unit continued with comparing peers' roots and the roots of people around the world. There is a screen share with a video that showcases learning that occurred during this unit.

Gratitude to the team and the work of collaboration between SPS and LPS is provided by Dr. Zrike.

Update on multilingual education programming

Dr. Zrike invites Andre Fonseca to begin his presentation. Mr. Fonseca begins his presentation thanking the committee for the opportunity to present. He begins with an overview of change of language. Taking the guidance of WIDA, students learning English will no longer be referred to as English Language Learners but rather Multilingual Learners.

Mr. Fonseca reviews the results of ACCESS testing and the factors that played into the results seen this time around. He provides data based WIDA levels and scores for ACCESS testing for the following domains: Receptive Language (listening and reading), Expressive Language (speaking and writing), and an Overall Comparison (2020 vs. 2021). He notes the data from SPS mirrors similarly to the results nationwide. He reminds the committee that ACCESS testing was encouraged but not required last year due to COVID. He shares highlights of the results in our schools. He closes the presentation with next steps and plans including WIDA Model assessments and facts regarding the population of multilingual learners.

Mayor Driscoll enters the meeting.

Dr. Pangallo asks about the background of the students at the high school receiving an additional speaking assessment. She asks if we have an understanding of the balance for how to address learning a second language, as we know it's harder to do the older we get.

Mr. Fonseca shares there are sixteen students at SHS that are part of the newcomer program and therefore are in their first year in the United States. These students are enrolled in a program that's designed specifically for newcomers where every classroom is scaffolding in structure to support their language learning. Other students may be at a beginner or intermediate level and could be at either level for some time. Mr. Fonseca shares that the department is investigating the length of time some multilingual students spend in the newcomer program as they age through the grades.

Ms. Nuncio raises a question about the 67 students in the Dual Language program at the kindergarten and first grade level. Mr. Fonseca shares that at this time there are 2 classrooms for each of those grades and will add two more for each grade level moving forward. Ms. Nuncio also asks about the video shared by the Bentley school and wonders if there is a Spanish counterpart where they talk about themselves and families in Spanish and wonders if the curriculum is given in Spanish as well. Ms. Rogers is no longer in the meeting and there is no response regarding the language of the video. Mr. Fonseca provides clarity around the curriculum of the dual language program, explaining that it's all provided in English and in Spanish. Ms. Nuncio suggests it would be interesting to see the video presented in Spanish to see how they express themselves with a native language. Mr. Fonseca shares from general observation in the discussion surrounding students' background and roots, the students were eager to freely share and explain to their peers where they live and where they come from. Ms. Nuncio asks if mirrors and windows could be explained in terms of curriculum resources. Mr. Fonseca shares that for "mirrors" we want students to be able to read literature that shows them characters and stories that they can connect to that reflect some of their backgrounds and experiences. The texts referred to as "windows," allow them to look into other worlds that don't resemble their backgrounds or experiences but give them a way to see other cultures and communities and other groups that they can learn.

Ms. Hamidou Tabayi asks how the program benefits students who do not come from an English or a Spanish speaking background. Mr. Fonseca shares that the dual language program isn't exclusive to only English and/or Spanish speaking students but anyone with a different native language can join the program and after successful completion would be equipped with knowing three different languages.

Mr. Cruz raises a flag for future discussion for expansion of dual language programming, no action required at this time except to give praise to those working within the program and to keep the wheels turning for thinking of what the future of that expansion could look like.

Mayor Driscoll notes an article she's recently read surrounding culturally competent family engagement that she will pass along which highlights the struggles post-COVID. She notes the article touches upon filling the gaps in terms of engagement with our families and how as a district we can work to increase the effectiveness of family outreach and engagement. Discussion continues around using translation apps and of shared experiences talking with families about their experience with SPS engagement.

District improvement planning process

Ms. Banks shares a presentation to discuss the District Improvement Plan. He revisits the strategic plan he inherited along with the updated strategic priorities as developed with student and family voice and through discussion with the school committee over his time in Salem. He discusses the equity statement and the creation behind the equity statement with next steps to transform the statement into action.

Ms. Carbone provides an overview of the work and the result of the work being a connected puzzle. The four domains of improvement include: District Priorities & Initiatives, District Metrics, School Improvement Plans, and District Improvement Plans. She provides an overview of the contents of each SIP template. The new element to the improvement planning process is the DIP which is provided for district level improvement goals. The templates are similar to that of SIPs

Ms. Banks begins her portion of the presentation sharing an overview of how each priority and metric element is broken down into three big rocks of action planning and work within the domain. She shares a link to access the 12 priorities in the draft. She continues by sharing the timeline for the use of the SIP and DIP data showing a moment mid-year for a step back to assess if the plans and goals are attainable, need to be restructured, and should be thought about in relation to budget season.

Mayor Driscoll asks if there are any out of district contacts helping to leverage this work and identify the best use of time and resources within the district, she raises the question of who else is included in the dialogue surrounding this work. Dr. Zrike shares that a number of the initiatives have partners to help think through the work. He suggests doing a Special Education audit to assess the results of how we are using resources to provide better support to students. Dr. Zrike shares it's very rare to see work like this done well, he notes there should be a balance of progress surrounding the District Improvement Plan. The importance right now is ensuring the families are aware of the work being done. Ms. Manning asks about the intent of the Special Education audit and whether it would be through DESE or an independent audit. Dr. Zrike confirms it would be an independent audit.

Mayor Driscoll notes a good time to dive into the work of the District Improvement Plan would be during the retreat following the holidays.

New hire report

Dr. Zrike shares the personnel summary, noting many positions are still not fulfilled. He shares many new positions due to new funding with ESSER dollars. He notes concerns for the para position for Special Education and Multilingual positions with the consideration of sign-on bonuses. Mayor Driscoll suggests making the push to get the information out to fulfill the positions to ensure we can get through the remainder of the school year.

Dr. Zrike notes a discussion of the ESSER Funds and the Charter School topic to be discussed in one of the December meetings.

Report from the Student Representative - Hawa Hamidou Tabayi

Ms. Hamidou Tabayi shares that the SAC is working on elections for Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer and determining the distribution of labor. She shares the Holyoke restorative justice group discussing and addressing community conflict. She mentioned bringing some practices to Salem from Holyoke specifically surrounding community circles as an alternative to suspensions and tension as it calls for different community members such as peers or teachers that have deep relationships with students to address whatever conflicts the students are identified as having. She notes the SAC is a tangible practice that could have follow-through in our district.

She continues to share the group met with Dr. Zrike to improve communication and support with the SAC. A timeline of meeting monthly or bi monthly was proposed for consistent communication in the future for support. During the initial meeting conversation surrounding a student rights handbook was had. The last update is surrounding the retreat that the group hopes all members will take part in.

A former idea of school committee and SAC informal meeting was discussed again and Ms. Hamidou Tabayi suggests revisiting this after elections and holidays.

Mr. Fonseca shares that he enjoys the plan for restorative circles and believes those could be implemented across the grade levels throughout the district. Hawa agrees

Old Business

None

New Business

Deliberation and vote to amend minutes of Regular School Committee meeting held on October 25, 2021

Discussion around the amending the minutes from October 25, 2021 and the purpose of a slight change in wording is had. The changes to amend are noted in green to be voted on. Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to approve the proposed amendment to the regular school committee meeting minutes held on October 25, 2021. Ms. Manning made the motion and Dr. Pangallo seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Mr. Fleming	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 7-0

Deliberation and vote to omit multiple readings of policies that undergo no changes as part of the policy review process. School Committee members will be informed of the policy number, title and the date reviewed at the subsequent regularly scheduled School Committee meeting.

Ms. Nuncio shares the idea of the new process surrounding the policies that undergo no changes, no longer requiring three readings but to be brought to the full committee as being reviewed with no changes and dated as reviewed by the subcommittee.

Mayor Driscoll entertains a motion to adopt a procedure that would enable the school committee policy review process to reflect the fact that if there are no changes to that policy then it wouldn't have to go through the traditional process that's outlined in the policies. Ms. Manning made the motion and Mr. Cruz seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Mr. Fleming	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 7-0

Deliberation and vote to edit language related to protected classes throughout the policy manual as noted in the revised Policy 1101.01 Non-Discrimination.

Ms. Nuncio shares the review of the policy and proposes having the school committee secretary change the language anywhere within the policy manual there is mention of the protected classes in terms of what is showcased in Policy 1101.01 Non-Discrimination for consistency. Dr. Pangallo raises questions for clarity surrounding the process and timeline of updating the proposed language. Mr. Cruz explains the process of housekeeping in terms of making adjustments to the language once the policy is adopted by the school committee following the third reading to keep the language surrounding non-discrimination universally consistent.

Discussion continues regarding the clerical task of these changes if the proposed language update is adopted. The suggested action is to identify the policies that would require the language update and provide the list to the full committee to understand which policies would be amended to reflect the updated language surrounding non-discrimination.

Mayor Driscoll entertains a motion to support the process to ensure we have uniform language, similar to what will be in the newly adopted non-discrimination policy to identify protected classes where they exist within the existing policies. Ms. Manning made the motion and Mr. Fleming seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Mr. Fleming	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 7-0

Ms. Nuncio raises the next steps of consideration for gender language in the policies and puts the need for discussion on the table. She notes the mention of the district core values of equity and the discussion surrounding updating pronouns within the policy manual as part of updating the non-discrimination policies and language. Mayor Driscoll notes the city council has also discussed this process which is a heavy lift on clerical staff for making these changes. Mr. Cruz mentions that this particular proposal isn't requiring action just yet but is something for the full committee to reflect on and consider for future changes. Mayor Driscoll notes the importance of these changes that will perhaps be discussed further in the new year.

Ms. Manning reports on Mr. Jeff Perrotti who is a consultant working on LGBTQ+ issues and will be joining the next school committee meeting for reporting to community.

Subcommittee Reports

Policy Subcommittee

- I. Policies for first reading:
 - a. Policy 1101.01 Non-Discrimination Policy
 - b. Policy 1103 Distribution of Notices

Approval of first reading:

A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Mr. Fleming	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 7-0

Ms. Nuncio motioned, Mr. Cruz seconded.

- II. Policy for third reading:
 - a. 1101 School-Community Relations Goals

A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Mr. Fleming	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 7-0

School Committee Concerns and Resolutions

None reported.

Adjournment

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to adjourn. Mr. Fleming motioned and Mr. Cruz seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning Yes

Mr. Fleming Yes

Mr. Cruz Yes

Dr. Pangallo Yes

Ms. Nuncio Yes

Ms. Campbell Yes

Mayor Driscoll Yes

Motion carries 7-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:52pm

Respectfully submitted by,

Jensen Frost

Executive Administrative Assistant to Deputy Superintendent