

**Salem Public Schools
Salem School Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 25, 2021**

On Monday - October 25, 2021 the Salem School Committee held its regular School Committee meeting at 7:00 PM using the Zoom platform.

Members Present: Mayor Driscoll, Ms. Mary Manning, Ms. Amanda Campbell, Dr. Kristin Pangallo, Ms. Ana Nuncio, and Mr. Manny Cruz (entered at 7:14p),

Others in Attendance: Superintendent Stephen Zrike, Assistant Superintendent Kate Carbone, Chelsea Banks, Liz Polay-Wettengel, Marc LeBlanc, Linda Farinelli, Adam Colantuoni, Hawa Hamidou Tabayi, Matthew Condon, Mohamed Al-Freihy, Darren Taku, Brian Edmunds, Robyn Murtaugh, Kelly Cronin, Kerry Murphy, Chief Lucas Miller

Call of Meeting to Order

Mayor Driscoll called the meeting to order at 7:04p and entertained a motion to call the meeting to order. Ms. Manning motioned and Ms. Nuncio seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes
Motion Carries 5-0	

Approval of Agenda

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to approve the Regular Agenda. Ms. Manning motioned and Dr. Pangallo seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes
Motion carries 5-0	

Approval of Consent Agenda

Mayor Driscoll entertains a motion to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Nuncio motioned and Dr. Pangallo seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes
Motion carries 5-0	

Public Comments

Aurelia Pangallo, 25 Buffum Street: Salem School Committee, my name is Aurelia Pangallo and I go to Collins Middle School. My statement and questions are: if kids' sleep is important then why do most schools start earlier than most adult jobs? My school starts at 7:30 and I know that my father's work starts at 8. It's really hard to wake up so early every day of the school week. It makes my learning harder because I'm more tired during school. I've talked with some of my classmates, and they agree with me. Can you please try to make school start later? Even if that means ending the school day later.

Mayor Driscoll suggests the Superintendent respond to that comment in conjunction with the School Committee in addressing the concerns mentioned.

Educator's Showcase: Collins Middle School and The Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship

Mr. Condon opens his presentation introducing the students (Mohamed Al-Freihy and Darren Taku) participating and Mr. Brito, the creator of the program. Mr. Brito shares how the program promotes the students' understanding of entrepreneurship and its popularity among the three grade levels. Mr. Brito shares the incentives for the program and the engagement from the student body.

Darren Taku shares the business plan he created in the program. His business is a basketball business and his plan outlines regulations of the sport, encouraging people to think smart about their money while being paid to play basketball. He details locations for his business, considers salary for the players, staff, and coaches. His business plan breaks down the age range for specific roles within the business and he includes information about the NBA draft regulations.

Mohamed Al-Freihy shares his business plan which is an eco-friendly water company. His business plan is to make cheap clean water, and produce additional products to make more money for the business. He discusses the concern of plastic and the cost of clean water. He includes ideas to have this water available on city sidewalks and in city parks. He notes his business will be available for all within the community and notes his plans for promoting his business.

Mr. Condon notes the CMS scholars are able to see a problem in their own world and work toward a solution with a business plan. Mr. Cruz shares his excitement for this program and makes a suggestion to Mr. Condon regarding the E-For All group in the community and provides his assistance in connecting Mr. Condon with the group. Mr. Condon explains that they have a relationship with E-for-All and notes a potential speaker down the line. Mr. Cruz commends Mr. Brito's work on this program and his multiple recognitions as a Latino Educator within the district.

Recognition of Student Recipients of M.A.S.S. Superintendent's Award for Academic Excellence

Dr. Zrike shares superintendents are able to award academic excellence awards annually and based on the size of the district, Salem awards two students. He notes one student is unable to attend tonight and will be recognized next week. He introduces Mr. Edmunds and student Robyn Murtaugh, who is receiving the award this evening. He reads a bio regarding Robyn's academic and social work. Mr. Edmunds mentions there being a lot of candidates who could receive the award and congratulates Robyn on being a recipient of the award tonight.

Superintendent's Report:

Partnership with Salem Police Department and Salem Public Schools - Chief Lucas J. Miller

Chief Miller provides an overview of this work over time from the start of his career to what led him to lead the Salem Police force. He shares his commitment to be transparent regarding the work of the police department and presents information about a SRO program and the need for the SRO on school grounds. His intent is for SROs to be a positive presence for students. He discusses the roles of SROs in the school to be a resource to school administrators. A curriculum for SROs is being altered to include new learning for SROs. The SRO development will look much like a teacher noting there is always room for learning. He shares data of numbers per year for arrests/warrants and per year for summons/hearings and provides explanations for higher numbers with situational context.

The partnership and work with Dr. Zrike will include training for disasters and emergencies and the best process will be done without disrupting schools. He suggests preparedness in a gentle way without having emergencies weigh on students and families.

Chief Miller notes the roles of SROs could alter the job duties as they are now incorporating the SRO's prior work experience into the curriculum and schools. He notes having regular meetings between SPD, SPS, and the DA's office for all entities to be involved in activity for this. An MOU is underway pending refinement surrounding student information access and details surrounding the approach to arrest and SRO engagement. Chief Miller shares excitement to reopen the work of a summer youth camp after being shelved in 2020 due to the pandemic. He shares his gratitude for being on the SPD and being a part of the Salem community.

Following the presentation, Dr. Zrike shares that the committee has access to the draft MOU. Mr. Cruz notes his past and his interaction with a SRO in his high school years and that the

experiences are not the same for all students and the work to be done will be ever-changing. Questions include: how are we formalizing processes for the input of students and families, specifically thinking about the advisory groups for students and families? He also wonders how to solidify informing the community of the work of the MOU. He questions if there could be a report-back structure to outline changes, trainings, and other happenings with the SRO program. He also touches upon the transparency of data and wonders if there is more data to be provided: calls from principals? House visits? Interactions with a SRO that doesn't lead to arrest/warrant/summons/etc.? Having that data could provide more context. Mr. Cruz finishes his note with concern about coming back from a pandemic and noting that we see children are expressing behaviors, and hoping that students are not being labeled and tagged by SPD as that could be more damaging for a student when coming back in the vulnerability of the return to school for students. He requests follow-up at a later time to his questions and thoughts.

Chief Miller responds that SROs tend to act within the schools in the police frame, he notes that the current protocol is reporting on a police report but wonders if there is a different process that could be used. He shares that police officers have discretion with misdemeanors versus with felonies which are typically non-comparable per the criminal justice system.

Hawa notes a couple questions and mentions that she hopes the SAC could meet with Chief Miller in the future. Her questions include: How are police officers held accountable for misconduct? Are there outside parties involved in the accountability system? And, how would a student report misconduct at the hands of SROs?

Chief Miller notes one of the captains is the head of internal affairs and someone can add a complaint (or compliment) on the website, noting that all complaints are investigated. A complaint made in person, via telephone, or using the website submission, will be investigated. Hawa makes a clarifying statement: it's the Salem police department investigating the Salem police. Chief Miller concurs and notes there are other investigative agencies that look in on the SPD investigations, the DA's office and post-commissioner will also look into the complaint. Every complaint is mandated to be reported to the post-commission for review.

Hawa questions, if a student were to have a negative interaction with a SRO they would have to go to SPD website to file a complaint, there wouldn't be a more direct way or any control or advocacy regarding how that negative interaction would be handled? She clarifies: how would they [the student] be part of the investigation? Chief Miller notes one component of the investigation is the party who submitted the complaint being informed of the results of the investigation and disciplinary action taken based on the investigation results. Hawa asks if there is anyone on the SPS level who would be part of that if the complaint were made from a SPS student. Chief Miller suggests that if the complaint came from the schools/through the schools the answer is yes but it wouldn't automatically go through the schools.

She notes the mention of discretion of the SROs and questions what training is done with SROs and how they interact with parties they are handling and how discretion is taken into account based on race, gender, and class. Chief Miller states the department does implicit-bias training,

but explains acting out of bias as a police officer is illegal. Among other things, he goes through the statistics to see where the department skews in terms of the demographics of people the department interacts with.

Hawa follows-up questioning how long the training is for police officers and asks how a party is to complain about an officer acting out of bias? Is the department depending on the gathered data of the year or per face-to-face complaints? Chief Miller notes it would be a legitimate complaint and if someone believes a police officer is acting out of bias, an investigation would be opened and the police officer would be investigated regarding their historical actions. Additionally, the post-commission would examine the bias on the police officer and the police department. Is the department taking the complaints received seriously? Are police officers being disciplined? Questions of the like.

Hawa asks how citizens of Salem see data of the history of the SPD? Chief Miller notes currently it is not available on the website but with the revamping of the website, the intent is to include this data on the website.

Dr. Pangallo refers to the MOU and notes she was pleased to see the equity light within the MOU. She wonders if students have been involved in helping to cultivate the role of the SRO role. Dr. Zrike mentions the draft was completed last week and wanted to get it community facing to allow students, the public, and staff to review and allow questions and comments. Dr. Pangallo also asks about the timeline of the MOU and if there is any oversight the SC has over the MOU. Dr. Zrike shares that he's requesting input on the MOU on an annual basis using the school committee platform, but the SC doesn't need to vote on it. Dr. Pangallo asks about the training for the SROs and notes there are some specific to schools but she wonders if the MOU should include more opportunities for the SROs to receive school-specific training along with potentially joining the SPS professional development training surrounding anti-racism. Discussion around future training occurs between Dr. Zrike and Chief Miller.

Chief Miller refers to an earlier question by Hawa about police officers investigating police officers. He notes the post-commission by legislation has chiefs as advisors but the members are not police officers by law. Hawa requests insight to the roles of the members on the commission. He notes a judge, social worker, member of the defense bar off the top of his head, Hawa requests clarification that they are members of the criminal justice system. He notes the social worker is not but the others are and clarifies the roles of the police chiefs and their representation.

Mr. Cruz notes criminal justice reform being followed by police reform and clarifies the "post" members are appointed by elected people in the Commonwealth. He shares he'll provide Hawa with information regarding the appointments of these positions and how folks are interconnected with the justice system.

Ms. Campbell notes having questions surrounding the MOU and wants to know if this is the only time to have those discussions or if there is room for comment and further discussion. Feedback should be sent to Dr. Zrike. The agenda topic is closed and future discussion is encouraged.

Farm to School Task Force Presentation - Kelly Cronin

Dr. Zrike welcomes: Kelly Cronin and Kerry Murphy and provides some background information of Ms. Cronin's robust work from the start of Dr. Zrike's appointment and now leading her presentation in front of the School Committee.

Ms. Cronin takes over the presentation and notes the involvement of all on the Farm to School team. She provides background regarding the purpose, values, and members. She notes the diversity of the team, and notes working with the state initiatives of Farm to Table.

She shares the value and notes the three core values: cafeteria, classroom, and community. The Farm to School program delivers education to students and families about making sensible food choices, school gardens provide students with robust food availability, and the Farm to School Program provides procurement for food instability and insecurity. She provides a list of the benefits for the Farm to School program across grade levels from K-12 and shares the research surrounding the effectiveness of these benefits.

Ms. Murphy joins the conversation noting evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the Salem diets throughout the community. The results showcased food insecurities, lack of accessibility to fresh produce, data regarding health risks, and provided the obesity factor raised in student and family populations.

The Farm to Table program provides more nutrition meals to students as well as allowing students to become more excited about fruits and vegetables. Ms. Cronin rejoins the conversation and shares the timeline of Farm to Table activities for the past ten years, noting that the effort is voluntary. She notes a future for the Farm to School program in Salem. She hopes to see a Farm to School Coordinator who can lead the efforts and keep the goal on track to keep this program robust across the district, referencing the proposal shared.

Mr. Cruz expresses gratitude to Ms. Cronin, Ms. Murphy, and everyone working on the issue. He notes Ms. Cronin's advocacy for the work and the importance of non-shaming students for food-insecurities. He refers to Dr. Zrike stating this would be a good use of the ESSER dollars given the impact the pandemic has had on the student body. He notes the Farm to School initiative is important and supports the progress of the program.

Mayor Driscoll notes the sustainability components and determining greater sustainability within the schools. She notes the shortcomings in non-eco materials, working more on recycling, and questions if there is opportunity for the person in this proposed position to take on those shortcomings. Ms. Cronin replies, noting that the position would allow for additional work in the respect of the mentioned as well as providing training to staff to better handle these components of sustainability.

Dr. Pangallo notes that students are hesitant to try unfamiliar foods at times and this program could help to steer the hesitancy to excitement. She also notes utilizing the outdoor spaces for learning brings another layer of respect to this program. Regarding sustainability, she hopes, in respect to plastic and styrofoam, to see the students take ownership of their space and how being involved in gardening and being involved in creating that environment outside could help the students find that pride.

Mayor Driscoll directs Dr. Zrike to discuss the funding and what options the district has to get the work going and to meet the requests of the proposals. Dr. Zrike shares he'll have follow-up conversations with Ms. Cronin and Ms. Murphy regarding what the next steps will be.

Report from the Student Representative - Hawa Hamidou Tabayi

Hawa opens her report showcasing that the SAC has been focused on meeting the equitable membership requirements, to include SPHS and NLIS students, with representation of Latinx.

She notes the main priorities currently on the table, including: restorative justice alternatives, hoping a scheduled meeting next week will provide insight to how the SAC can inspire restorative justice here in Salem.

She notes transportation issues are becoming problematic regarding afterschool programs and extracurricular activities. Due to the lack of an afterschool bus, the SAC is looking at an alternative solution to the issues. Currently looking at taxi vouchers, instating grace periods for tardy students, and eliminating penalties for being late.

The SAC is also trying to maintain the sustainability to past graduating seniors for the council and have increased the membership within the last two weeks which started to include more sophomores and juniors which is helpful because that means it could open a seat next year to someone who will have some connections to the council.

She mentions the SAC was in attendance for the district-wide Equity Imperative call last week and that's where students were able to identify ways the district can better listen to the student's social, emotional and academic needs. This provided opportunities for the SAC to connect with student voices of the elementary and middle school level, prompting excitement for future connections with varying grade levels.

She notes the last SC meeting request to receive updates and shares she's decided she will not provide an update of events unless requested or noted as essential information. If interested in having Hawa note specific information, the request can be made directly to her to add to her report for each meeting.

Mayor Driscoll suggests at some point considering having a conversation with SC members and the SAC to have more of a social engagement along with the social building of the committee with the student voices.

Mr. Cruz notes a prior conversation with Hawa about the relationship with SC members and the importance for folks to set up less formal 1:1 meetings similar to a retreat setting to discuss her priorities along with hopes for each member for what she brings to the table per the SAC voices.

Old Business

None

New Business

- a. Deliberation and vote that all students will be required to be vaccinated for high respiratory extra curricular activities unless they have a medical or religious exemption.**

Chelsea Banks shares the next step in the mitigation plan requiring vaccines for students participating in high respiratory extra curricular activities (unless they have a medical or religious exemption) with a deadline of December 1, 2021. The data shows Salem behind in the vaccination numbers. Dr. Zrike shares that the MIAA notes masks will not be required and decisions for masks are at the local level.

Ms. Campbell has questions regarding data. She notes the data is for the city of Salem. Wonders if there is specific data for the school system and does it mirror the city's numbers? Do the vaccine rates by athletics versus band/chorus closely correlate with those age range statistics noted as well? Dr. Zrike tracks much higher vaccination rates with music programs whereas athletics are close to those original data points. Ms. Campbell questions if there are other types of activities that could benefit from the new vaccination requirement.

Ms. Banks shares there are other after school programs and activities where kids congregate and currently are outside and would like to try to remain that way as long as possible. Ms. Campbell notes that other districts are not taking these measures. Is there insight to what other districts are doing and are there things to consider in addition to what strategies we're taking as a district? Dr. Zrike notes this is a symptom of the work we have as a school system, to work with our families and provides a reminder to build those meaningful relationships with families.

Dr. Pangallo notes moving in this direction from previous meetings. She would like to see information about how we could implement COVID-19 vaccination for school attendance. She notes different districts are moving at different speeds and currently see it as conditional until full FDA approval. She would like to see what the district would propose for vaccinations for attending schools. Dr. Pangallo notes concern with indoor sports and the movement to eating indoors as we approach winter. Her final comment notes maintaining our understanding of equity and accessibility within the community in respect to vaccination.

Ms. Manning mentions she doesn't see drama included in the extra curricular activities and based on the close grouping, they should be included. She also mentions the intramural sports and programs to be included in this grouping. Do we then consider PE? Ms. Manning questions

if we are asking for a vote on this tonight, and wonders the security of the second shot being guaranteed. Ms. Banks notes there is no specific language regarding the second dose but a scheduled second dose date would be required prior to December 1st and would require follow-up after. Dr. Zrike notes drama is included, physical education would require masks because it's school wide, and the partner programs have their own requirements.

Ms. Nuncio voices her support for this motion for students to be vaccinated in this group, but notes the piece needed is for the City to do more work on collecting data about the after-effects of the Covid-19 vaccines among members of the Latino population of Salem, to address concerns about severe reactions to the vaccine that often lead to loss of workdays or work hours. She suggests finding data for further discussion

Mr. Cruz notes the equity-related concerns and to be cognizant about some of the options available to us. A specific mention is having different requirements for kids versus adults. Thinking about the adult versus kid stipulations, and to discuss the family vaccination rates and equities. To the extent possible, think about the alternative options for students and reassess based on if this becomes more punitive among different populations of students.

Dr. Pangallo notes widening the population but states the proposed language is for 12 and up and she is wondering if the language could be crafted to note the elementary aged students. Ms. Campbell raises that in addition to community engagement, reaching out to the SAC regarding the student voice on what peers are saying regarding getting or not getting the vaccines and the impacts on school and extracurricular work.

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion on adopting the policy for requiring all vaccine-eligible students to be required to be vaccinated for high respiratory extra curricular activities unless they have a medical or religious exemption. A request is made to the Superintendent to return to the next meeting if there are broadened details regarding the policy adopted tonight.

Mr. Cruz made the motion and Ms. Manning seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes
Motion carries 6-0	

After the motion carries, Ms. Manning and Mr. Cruz noted different entities to help get the word out regarding the vaccination roll out.

Finance Report

None

Subcommittee Reports

Policy Subcommittee:

i. Policies for First Reading

1101 School-Community Relations Goals

Review the motion of the first reading and note the vote.

Mayor Driscoll entertains a motion for first reading of the policy. Ms. Nuncio motioned and Mr. Cruz seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Nuncio notes the exploration of the topics regarding having no changes and does not have a definitive answer about the process of the readings and requirements to those policies requiring no change.

After discussion a vote was taken for the motion made.

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

Motion carries 6-0

School Committee Concerns and Resolutions

Mr. Cruz flags the discussion regarding policies for city workers and public employees regarding vaccinations and requests information on this. Mayor Driscoll notes the Superintendent can report out on this.

Adjournment

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

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

Motion carries 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:29pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jensen Frost

Executive Administrative Assistant to Assistant Superintendent