

**Salem Public Schools
Salem School Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2023**

On September 18, 2023 the Salem School Committee held its regular School Committee meeting at 7:00 PM using a hybrid model.

Members Present: Mayor Dominick Pangallo, Mr. Manny Cruz, Ms. Mary Manning, Ms. Beth Anne Cornell, Dr. Kristin Pangallo, Ms. Veronica Miranda, Ms. Amanda Campbell

Others in Attendance: Superintendent Stephen Zrike, Deputy Superintendent Kate Carbone, Assistant Superintendent Elizabeth Pauley, Mr. Marc LeBlanc, Ms. Laura Assade, Ms. Jennifer Doucette-Ly, Dr. Kimberly Talbot, Ms. Ellen Wingard, Ms. Jill Conrad, and Ms. Natalia Feliz

Call of Meeting to Order

Mayor Pangallo calls the meeting to order at 7:00pm and requests a call of attendance. He explained the Public Participation Policy 6409 and also explained the availability of Spanish interpretation.

Attendance

Mayor Pangallo recognizes the attendance with members absent and joining virtually. Mr. Cruz motions for approval and seconded by Ms. Manning.

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| Ms. Campbell | Present |
| Ms. Cornell | Present |
| Mr. Cruz | Present |
| Ms. Manning | Present |
| Dr. Pangallo | Present |
| Ms. Miranda | Present |
| Mayor Pangallo | Present |

Approval of Agenda

Mayor Pangallo requested a motion to approve the Agenda. Ms. Manning motions for approval and seconded by Ms. Cornell. A roll call vote was taken.

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| Ms. Cornell | Yes |
| Mr. Cruz | Yes |
| Ms. Manning | Yes |
| Dr. Pangallo | Yes |
| Ms. Miranda | Yes |
| Ms. Campbell | Yes |
| Mayor Pangallo | Yes |

Motion Carries 7-0

Approval of Consent Agenda

Mayor Pangallo requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Manning motions for approval and seconded by Ms. Cornell

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| Ms. Cornell | Yes |
| Mr. Cruz | Yes |
| Ms. Manning | Yes |
| Dr. Pangallo | Yes |
| Ms. Miranda | Yes |
| Ms. Campbell | Yes |
| Mayor Pangallo | Yes |

Motion Carries 7-0

Public Comment

Mr. Ben Churtok notes parent band night for up and coming 4th grade band and orchestra students. The instrumental staff will be on hand to answer any questions.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Zrike notes he would like to thank the Witchcraft Heights Elementary School community for their flexibility and taking great care of our children, supporting our families with an interrupted day. Dr. Zrike also wants to thank the Salem Police and Salem Fire for dealing with the unexpected. Dr. Zrike also would like to express his support to the LGBTQ+ community after last week's events.

A. Pre-Kindergarten/Early Childhood Program Update

Ms. Kate Carbone notes these two programs are helping us get our youngest learners off to the best start possible. Authentic family engagement and quality programing are two of our main goals. Ms. Carbone notes "the evidence has been mounting for decades: Programs that help children learn and grow in their earliest years can change the trajectories of their lives." The ParentChild+ program coordinated family and community engagement grants. Priority one - to dramatically increase access to high-quality education opportunities by expanding and strengthening the district and community early childhood and elementary education programming. Salem Public Schools PreK classrooms include an early childhood center, Bates elementary & HMLS, and extended day program. The CPPI grant supports the following: high quality curriculum and assessments, classroom materials, early learning instructional coaches, behavior specialist and SLPA, joint professional development, outside reviews, and boosting teacher salaries and reducing family costs.

Ms. Shawna Erps notes the accessed literacy skills such as picture naming, alliteration, rhyming, which one doesn't belong, and sound ID. Ms. Erps reviews the impact of the early literacy data stating over the course of the years we went from 43 children improving and not at risk.

In addition to early literacy, numeracy skills were looked at as well including oral counting, counting 1:1, quantity comparison, and number naming. Kindergarten data for students who were in PreK in 2021-2022 - the first year of the PreK expansion in SPS. The early literacy proficiency in their first year shows a 13% increase in the fall and by the end, 70% of our PreK students increased their literacy moving into first grade. The impact staff is working on is the emotional support, class organization, and instructional support for all students.

Dr. Zrike notes the sustaining quality and accessibility of the FY25 Early Childhood Budget Projection which is currently ESSER funded. Possible Funding Sources - school choice dollars - \$500,000 received annually. Shifting some of these positions to CPPI grants if possible. When you look at the data the progress is impressive and this will set this district up very well as children move through their grades. Salem Public Schools and community partners need to sustain this program. This was the right kind of investment for what our kids needed. Ms. Carbone also notes quality early education transforms children.

Ms. Campbell asks what distinguishes our early childhood programs from our Pre-K programs. Ms. Erps notes the early childhood programs include aspects of social and emotional development and there are options to integrate play into the classrooms. Ms. Erps notes we are making sure to use our consultant to help develop other ways to measure if our kids are growing. Ms. Erps notes we are still looking at the priorities in the framework as well.

B. ParentChild+ Update

Ms. Maureen Pasek-Tourville notes ParentChild+ is a free early literacy home visiting program and serves families with children ages 18 months to 4 years. A one-on-one engagement with a trained Early Learning Specialist. The mission and purpose is to support all children regardless of race or socioeconomic status to ensure they have equal opportunities from the start. Early Learning Specialists share a community connection with families and many are former parents in the program. Most are bilingual and represent the cultures and backgrounds of families in the program. The home visiting model reaches families where there are 96 twice-weekly home visits over a 2-year cycle. Building trust, promoting parent/child interaction, and facilitating strong community connections. Over 60 families have graduated.

Ms. Manning asks if we have a waiting list for families to get their children into this program?

Ms. Pasek-Tourville notes at this time we have a few openings and we can have as many children as we can afford and funding to pay the early intervention specialist.

Ms. Carbone notes the funding for this program has been stable however just last week we learned that the grant has been reduced by half. The host of the grant is Peabody Public Schools and has nine different communities. The funding did stay the same even though the number of communities increased.

Dr. Zrike also notes he would like to congratulate Ms. Laura Assade as this evening he was just alerted that Ms. Assade will be featured on a mural in Salem on Saturday, September 30th at 1:00pm. We are lucky she is a part of the Salem Public Schools.

Student Representative Report

Ms. Feliz notes due to school just starting we are trying to coordinate meetings. Before the School Committee meeting, Ms. Feliz met with Dr. Zrike regarding the Yondr pouches. The phones are gone and are helping student engagement. It does become challenging when waiting in line to show proof that your phone was away. She also states time will tell with how this will be. Dr. Zrike notes moving forward Ms. Feliz will meet with him and quarterly she will meet along with the student advisory board, with the School Committee as well. We want to work with the students schedules to make sure it coordinates with students schedules.

Dr. Pangallo asks Ms. Feliz if her second year is helpful as a continuity and leadership role as the student representative? Ms. Feliz notes we have not started really and whoever is the next student rep, to be familiar with the club and included in more conversations. We are working on bringing in new members and pushing for more freshmans and sophomores.

Old Business

none

Finance Report

none

New Business

none

Subcommittee Reports

a. Policies for second reading:

- Security Cameras in School

Ms. Cornell makes a motion to accept security cameras in school. Seconded by Ms. Campbell.

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| Ms. Cornell | Yes |
| Mr. Cruz | Yes |
| Ms. Manning | Yes |
| Dr. Pangallo | Yes |
| Ms. Miranda | Yes |
| Ms. Campbell | Yes |
| Mayor Pangallo | Yes |

Motion Carries 7-0

- SPS Transgender, Gender Non-conforming, and Gender Expansive Student Guidelines

Ms. Cornell makes a motion to accept SPS Transgender, Gender Non-conforming, and Gender Expansive Student Guidelines. Seconded by Campbell.

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| Ms. Cornell | Yes |
| Mr. Cruz | Yes |
| Ms. Manning | Yes |

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| Dr. Pangallo | Yes |
| Ms. Miranda | Yes |
| Ms. Campbell | Yes |
| Mayor Pangallo | Yes |

Motion Carries 7-0

School Committee Concerns and Resolutions

Mr. Cruz notes Hispanic Heritage Month. Mr. Cruz also extends his thanks to Superintendent Dr. Zrike as well as Mayor Pangallo who engaged in advocacy today regarding the gaps we are experiencing with the Student Opportunity Act. Today was the legislation with Senator Lovely regarding this Bill and it would be extremely helpful at a future School Committee meeting to include this resolution and Mayor Pangallo's testimony and issue a resolution from this committee to the joint school committee for the record.

Ms. Miranda reports to the School Committee that prior to the School Committee meeting, there was a Buildings & Grounds subcommittee meeting. The topics discussed were HVAC and boilers that will be needed between 2-5 years and what we are looking towards replacements and repairs. There was an extensive report given by Mr. Alepakis, the Director of Building Services. Ms. Manning notes Mr. Alepakis has given an overview of the school system and the condition we are facing in the heating system and backup information regarding the cooling system which we will evaluate more in a future meeting. How to get ahead of building repairs and come up with a plan and try to figure out the funding issues. The next steps will be a full assessment and we will report out on that.

Dr. Pangallo notes we do need to think about air conditioning and the ongoing need to filter our air and the health and well being of everyone.

Adjournment

Mr. Cruz makes a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Ms. Manning.

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| Ms. Cornell | Yes |
| Mr. Cruz | Yes |
| Ms. Manning | Yes |
| Dr. Pangallo | Yes |
| Ms. Miranda | Yes |
| Ms. Campbell | Yes |
| Mayor Pangallo | Yes |

Motion Carries 7-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:41PM.

Respectfully submitted by,

Krista Perry

Executive Administrative Assistant to the School Committee & Superintendent