

**Salem Public Schools  
Salem School Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
September 27, 2021**

On September 27, 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, 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, Michael Lister, Peter Doherty, and Amy Richardson

**Call of Meeting to Order**

Mayor Driscoll called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m and called attendance. Mayor Driscoll read the new Public Participation Policy 6409 and also explained the instructions for Spanish interpretation.

**Attendance**

Mayor Driscoll called the attendance.

Ms. Manning	Present
Mr. Fleming	Present
Dr. Pangallo	Present
Ms. Nuncio	Present
Mr. Cruz	Absent (entered at 7:06 pm)
Ms. Campbell	Present
Mayor Driscoll	Present

**Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to approve the Regular Agenda. Mr. Fleming motioned and Ms. Nuncio seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

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

Motion carries 6-0

### **Approval of Consent Agenda**

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

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

### **Public Comments**

The School Committee Secretary announced that there were no public comments.

Mr. Cruz entered the meeting.

### **Educator's Showcase**

Dr. Zrike announced that every school has been given a School Committee meeting date for the year to make a presentation. Dr. Zrike announced that 4 students from Saltonstall's 5th grade class would be first and introduced Principal Michael Lister.

Mr. Lister introduced Mr. Doherty, who explained that the 5th grade humanities class at Saltonstall began by exploring their identity and celebrating them. Mr. Doherty then introduced the following students, Calvin Mahady, Elizabeth Casiglia, Hannah Phelps, and Emily Pimentel, who presented their original Poetry Slam.

Dr. Zrike also asked Mr. Lister to explain the field trip that has been presented to the School Committee for approval. The field trip is scheduled for 10/25-10/29/21 (4 nights, 5 days) to Nature's Classroom in Yarmouth Port, MA. Mr. Lister said that Nature's Classroom agreed to match our mitigation policy and our staff would be staying overnight with the students. Mr. Lister would like to require a vaccine for the students attending and a survey of the families interested resulted in 84% who are interested in going support this. Mr. Lister explained that most of this trip is held outside, but their concern is with the night time, which is why they are requesting a condition of anyone attending to be vaccinated. Dr. Pangallo asked if there was any consideration of adding a testing requirement also. Ms. Campbell asked how many of the students that are interested are already vaccinated. She added that it did not seem that there would be enough time to vaccinate the students who aren't already vaccinated. Mr. Lister added that there is the possibility of postponing until the spring, if the timelines do not work. Ms. Manning asked if the students need to be fully vaccinated or would they be accepted after just 1 shot. Dr. Pangallo suggested that we consult with the School pediatrician for a cutoff date for students needing vaccines. Ms. Nuncio also voiced her concerns about students who would not be able to attend due to their parent's not being able to have them vaccinated. She believes that the trip should be postponed until the Spring, so that there could be more vaccinated

students eligible to attend. Ms. Campbell is afraid that if we wait for the medical consultation, then we will run out of time. Her suggestion is to establish a timeline for all field trips that way going forward, everyone will know the cutoff regarding the vaccination requirements. Ms. Manning agrees that a timeline and protocol needs to be established for all trips going forward.

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to approve the Saltonstall field trip to Nature's Classroom in Yarmouth Port, MA subject to students being vaccinated within a reasonable timeframe and the school given adequate time to allow for vaccination and that all students will be tested prior to departure and prior to return to school. Ms. Manning motioned and 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
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 7-0

Dr. Zrike announced that there was a second trip that was submitted for approval. Dr. Pangallo was more concerned about this trip since it includes traveling on commercial airlines and it takes place in Florida where the COVID protocols are different from those in Massachusetts. She recommends that additional testing take place upon return of this trip, possibly the test to stay program that is currently being offered. It was also suggested that the trip be looked at again before December since COVID restrictions could be different by then. Mr. Doyle, boys basketball coach, was present to answer questions for the Committee. Mr. Doyle confirmed that they would follow any mandates (regarding masks and testing) that are required here in Massachusetts. Mr. Doyle also confirmed that the entire trip is paid through fundraising and no students would need to pay out of pocket. Dr. Pangallo voiced concerns since the trip is several months away and there is no way of knowing what will happen with the virus. Mayor Driscoll suggested that since tickets for the trip need to be bought, we should vote on the trip today with the understanding that if conditions change, the trip will be revisited. Ms. Manning added that the vote should include the conditions in Florida and not necessarily the conditions in Massachusetts.

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to approve the SHS Boys Basketball Tournament trip to Orlando, FL subject to students being vaccinated within a reasonable timeframe and the school given adequate time to allow for vaccination and that all students will be tested prior to departure and prior to return to school and following the Massachusetts regulations. Mr. Fleming motioned and Ms. Manning 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
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 7-0

### **Report from the Student Representative - Hawa Hamidou Tabayi**

Mr. Cruz explained that Ms. Tabayi was not available to attend tonight and asked Mr. Cruz to give an update. He said that the students met last week and covered a few things. First there was a review of the bylaws passed by the previous council. They are planning on doing outreach to various student groups. They are also planning on setting up meetings with Mr. Rodriguez, Dr. Zrike and Mr. Burns to discuss their role within the district. They are focused on outreach and are still trying to recruit students to get full representation of the student body and also hoping to get in touch with the other high schools so that they can have representation there as well. Ms. Manning asked for clarification on how many were in the council and Mr. Cruz explained that the bylaws require representation of 13 students across certain student groups including the 2 additional high schools that are in the district.

### **Report of the Superintendent**

Dr. Zrike announced that Alexandra Fortich will be joining us next week as Director of Translation and Interpretation. Dr. Zrike introduced Marc Leblanc, Director of Instructional Technology to explain the live Spanish interpretation for all regular School Committee meetings.

#### **a. MCAS 2020-2021 Results Presentation & Student Support Plans for 2021-2022**

Superintendent Zrike explained that there were declines across the board. This was 18 months of educational gaps and the most important thing of tonight's presentation is to determine what the plan will be for the students around their academics. Dr. Zrike said tonight's presentation is strictly on academics and next week Mr. Colantuoni will present on the social emotional work.

Assistant Superintendent Kate Carbone and Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Amy Richardson presented the 2021 MCA results. It was explained that there were extended testing windows, grade 3-8 assessments were shorter, grade 3-8 students learning remotely could take the test at home. MCAS reported that there will be accountability determinations issued this year and DESE cautions against making comparisons across other districts or other schools within the same district. Last year there were some of the lowest participation rates with grade 8 science dropping as much as 18%. Additional comparisons were discussed, including ELA, Math and Science by grade level and subgroup. Ms. Richardson explained their comprehensive approach to accelerating student learning and addressing educational gaps. Part of their approach included summer programs, vacation academies, and the community office. When schools opened, they concentrated on providing a welcoming environment with 3 priorities: attending to students' social, emotional, and physical well-being, rebuilding connections, forming communities of learners, and moving ahead with grade level content and skills while addressing unfinished learning from previous grades. They also tried to pinpoint areas of unfinished learning by trying to determine what the students know and what they still

need to learn. Tutoring was deployed at the classroom level and online interventions were launched for 100 high-needs grade 2 students and full time math & literacy interventions at SHS. Several options for opportunities for learning outside of school hours were established, such as vacation academies, personalized tutoring, “success blocks”, partner programs and LEAP for Education - EL Street. Dr. Pangallo stated that she understands that this is an enormous task and challenge and feels that this should not all be addressed in one year. She asked what the plans are for the district for the next few years or how do we adapt moving forward. Ms. Carbone responded that they plan on going slow and steady with a laser focus and remain committed but at the same time we don't want to overwhelm students. She added that she feels we have a good assessment in place that can give us quick information. Dr. Zrike responded that we do have money from our ESSER funds from previous years that we can use for interventionists and tutors. Dr. Zrike said that he also wants to make sure that the staff does not get overwhelmed. Ms. Richardson just wanted to remind everyone that this was work that was started a few years ago and was interrupted by COVID. Now they want to get back on track. The Mayor, Dr. Pangallo, Mr. Cruz, and MS. Campbell all offered comments. Ms. Richardson responded that the important thing is that we see the students growing and progressing and not comparing them to any bar set by the state.

#### **b. Hispanic Heritage Month**

Superintendent Zrike shared that there will be several different events celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month. These celebrations began with a flag raising ceremony along with the City of Salem on September 15th at Riley Plaza. Ms. Nuncio shared that there will be an event honoring essential workers during the pandemic on Monday, October 18th at 6 pm at the Jean A Levesque Community Life Center. In keeping with COVID restrictions the room maximum capacity is 60 and anyone interested in attending should contact the center to RSVP.

Dr. Zrike also recognized 4 employees that have been nominated as outstanding Latino leaders across the state, Anaima Piccirillo, transportation assistant, Arabelis Luciano, Family Engagement Facilitator at Witchcraft Heights Elementary School, Rosaura Saldivar, Behaviorist and works with the Connections Program and in the Community Office at SHS and Manny Brito who is a teacher at Collins Middle School. Mr. Cruz provided some context by explaining his organization is hosting the State of Latino Education. This is a national conference that includes a regional event on October 7th, in which they will be recognizing legislatures, leaders and Latinx educators across the state with a citation.

Dr. Zrike mentioned that he will be presenting a vote at next week's meeting to change Columbus Day to Indigenous People Day on the school calendar to be consistent with the City of Salem.

#### **Old Business**

None

#### **New Business**

##### **a. Deliberation and vote on the disposal of school property that has been declared**

**to be obsolete or no longer usable for school purposes.**

Ms. Nuncio asked if the Policy subcommittee would need to create a policy for this. The Mayor stated that there are already procurement laws that should cover this. Ms. Campbell responded that the Curriculum subcommittee would like a policy created for what resources/curriculum are being used and if any are removed, for example textbooks that are no longer in use, then the subcommittee would receive a notification.

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion on the disposal of school property that has been declared to be obsolete or no longer usable for school purposes. fMr. Fleming 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

### **Finance Report**

None

### **Subcommittee Reports**

Mr. Fleming reported that the Building & Grounds subcommittee met tonight to review all the facilities work that was done over the summer and plans for additional work they are doing. He added that the Subcommittee will continue to monitor their work.

### **School Committee Concerns and Resolutions**

Dr. Pangallo mentioned an email from Dr. Zrike reminding everyone about the mask mandates. She also said that it looks like there will be a vaccine for grades K-6 and suggested that we start thinking about a plan for vaccine rollout. Also, she received notification from the Massachusetts Nurse Association and would like to ask Ms. Moske-Weber how our nurses are doing and to see where we are at.

Ms. Nuncio asked if the organization chart could be looked at again at the next meeting. Ms. Nuncio received a letter from a Spanish speaking parent regarding Hispanic heritage month. This parent advocated for the special characters in family last names and to make sure they are spelled correctly. Ms. Campbell explained that DESE does not allow the special characters on any documents that are uploaded.

### **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 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Nancy A. Weiss*

Executive Assistant to the School Committee & Superintendent

**Approved October 4, 2021**