

**Salem Public Schools
Salem School Committee Retreat
Meeting Minutes
September 30, 2023**

On September 30, 2023 the Salem School Committee held its School Committee Retreat meeting at 9:00a.m.

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

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

Call of Meeting to Order

Attendance

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

Approval of Agenda

- I. **Discuss The Opportunity Myth**
 - A. **Gallery walk and jigsaw**
 - B. **What does grade-level work look like?**
 - C. **Discuss collective impact & strategic plan**

Superintendent Dr. Zrike begins the presentation noting the school factors that impact opportunity. Dr. Zrike notes there is another investment in wrap-around support and that the Salem School district does that well. Today we are going to speak on grade level assignments. Going from a good system to a great system is what happens in classrooms between the teachers and students. Kids do not have opportunities to engage with higher expectations but sometimes it is at lower level expectations. To return to a culture of academic achievement and the opportunity to make choices for college, career or both. Dr. Zrike strongly believes for every

student to have the choice and right now many students do not currently have these choices. Dr. Zrike notes the purpose of this conversation is to get us centered around academic achievement and what it is that we want for our students and to give our students choices.

Priority 1.1 in our strategic plan. Ms. Carbone notes goals for the morning such as defining the opportunity myth, articulating specific ways in which students experience low expectations, sharing 1-3 criteria and articulating how I can help ensure that all students have regular access to grade-level. Ms. Carbone notes what role and responsibility we have to create grade level work and what is our role and how to better create traditions to help students. Ms. Carbone notes we are going to engage in a gallery walk, jigsaw, analyze a student assignment, and reflect on a strategic plan. Please read what it is on the poster and respond to what you see and reflections.

Ms. Carbone opens up the gallery walk debrief-pair/share with committee members.

Mr. Cruz notes his primary question is regarding educator preparation. Are we setting folks up to be trained or advocating change with educator preparation.

Ms. Manning notes it feels like we are trying to fix a situation and if the preparations with teachers are getting changed with the needs that they have. The study where they speak on economic or racial groups and STEM came along.

Dr. Pangallo notes the “how” we make the shift? Dr. Pangallo notes she spends hours teaching subtraction and some students cannot recognize a sentence. Think about the “how” and the academics to manage transitions for everyone and consistently over time. Handle the emotions and academic piece. The support will look different at the elementary level vs the high school level.

Ms. Cornell notes we cannot solve 50% and it is systemic. This is a real tangle and as a teacher think about the real big picture vs system and structures.

Mayor Pangallo notes since 2018 there has been a world of changes. Strong construction and idea of engagement.

Dr. Zrike notes our support for teachers and guidance can be improved as well. We have to set up a system to provide coaching and structures. When is their regular feedback on leaders on what quality teaching looks like and when teachers are regularly speaking on student work and seeing game changing results for kids. Teachers are getting regular feedback and time to have the discussions to understand the questions that are being asked of kids. Having a more diverse workforce and teachers who represent the cultures of our students.

Dr. Jill Conrad notes the culture of high expectations and what the myth report does is looks at culture which is why it's hard to understand.

Mr. Cruz notes how we will meet our gap for students for a lot of our gateway cities.

Mayor Pangallo notes he would like to better understand where a teacher's mindset comes from with assigning word searches.

Ms. Campbell notes it is the complexity of the standard. Unintentionally teaching the standard is what can happen at times. If teachers are too overwhelmed, at times this is where the word searches come into place.

Ms. Carbone reviews the qualities of challenging assignments. First to form triads, review and discuss the assignment review protocol, and find as many connections in the protocol and the high quality 7th grade task.

Ms. Assade thought of herself as a multilingual student in 7th grade and her and Dr. Pangallo had discussion on making spaces for students knowing particular terms and subjects but they just might discuss and solve in their own language. If they feel intimidated and how teachers can project their insecurities. Dr. Pangallo notes in order to meet criteria at the highest level.

These are the end of school assessments and we want teachers to look at this and say what kind of plan do I need to engage my students in.

Ms. Wingard notes we are helping teachers unpack the assessment together and the scaffolding for the teachers knowing what to teach and how to be successful. Both a confident builder and content knowledge builder for the teacher.

Ms. Campbell notes the challenge is the accessibility of the standard and the requirements.

Ms. Manning asks if we will be able to use the new plan for next year's school year.

Ms. Cornell notes complexity of thought. It is hard to consider how effective this plan looks in the classroom. Ms. Cornell notes this does not seem to be a compelling instruction.

Ms. Campbell notes students making their own meaning of multiple choice equations. The opportunity for students to make their own meaning of it. Students have the ownership of them and improve record response and visual multiple choice.

Ms. Carbone notes for every unit of study there is an end of student assessment and two other areas of student assessment that will set them up for success. These assessments are done in a system and results are immediate. A student explanation needs to happen and we would need to confirm with the coaches if that was done.

Making a case-data informed instruction.

Salem is focusing on data driven instruction...

the district's use of common assessments...

I've been inspired by the opportunity myth and why...

What role does the School Committee play in supporting and creating opportunities for students to have increased frequent access to grade-level or beyond academic experiences.

Discuss controlled choice assignment policy

D. Implications of our controlled choice assignment policy

E. What information is needed for further analysis?

Perception vs. Reality - there is a perception among some of us here and in the community that controlled school choice is impractical, inequitable, or not economically viable, but we rarely devote time to discussing those perceptions or to researching the benefits or drawbacks of a controlled school choice model. Objectives were to understand how Salem arrived at a

controlled choice model, to identify and discuss the perceived pros and cons of the model as it exists today, and to identify the data sets and information needed to assess and potentially make changes to the controlled choice model. School choice in Salem started in the 1980s and for magnet schools - public schools organized around a particular theme. It is unlikely that those were the program's original goals. By the 20-teens, the socioeconomic disparities in the Salem Public Schools had become so egregious that a new policy was instituted to ensure that each school reflected the city's socioeconomic profile.

Ms. Cornell gives a brief overview for the School Committee of what is school choice and asks for a small group discussion. As a group, discuss what are some of the perceived/suspected drawbacks to intradistrict school choice?

Also - what data do we have or do we need to collect to support those perceptions/suspicions?

Some positives everyone in the city has equal opportunity to engage in a dual language program, school start times, people looking to move into salem are attracted by the choice, specialized programs, desegregating, even if you move, stay in same school, managing overcrowding, geography of where school is located does not blend well, children located in the point only have one option.

Some drawbacks - transportation costs, accessibility, chronic absenteeism, racist ethnic equity, community building stunted, multiple choices and parents deciding to transfer their kid, closure of the Bowditch, irregular start times. This is stressful on parents choosing the right school for their child, schools are different than what they are, not everyone is capable of being equally engaged, innovation schools are causing issues, Saltonstall is chosen a lot due to K-8. Look at attendance data.

Dr. Pangallo would like to see data on what families are choosing Saltonstall vs. Collins and Collins vs. Saltonstall.

Meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Krista Perry

Executive Administrative Assistant to School Committee and Superintendent