

**Salem Public Schools  
Salem School Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
September 8, 2020**

On September 8, 2020 the Salem School Committee held its regular School Committee meeting at 7:00 PM using the Zoom platform.

**In Attendance:** Mayor Kimberley Driscoll, Amanda Campbell, Ana Nuncio, Kristin Pangallo, Manny Cruz, James Fleming, Superintendent Stephen Zrike, and Assistant Superintendent Kate Carbone

**Not in attendance:** Mary Manning

**Others in Attendance:** Mary DeLai, Jill Conrad, Deborah Connerty, Liz Polay-Wettengel, Chelsea Banks, and Scott Connolly

**Call of Meeting to Order**

Mayor Driscoll called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Mayor Driscoll read the new Public Participation Policy and also explained the request for Spanish interpretation for participation.

**Agenda**

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to approve the Regular Agenda. Mr. Fleming motioned and Dr. Pangallo seconded. Mayor Driscoll called a roll call vote.

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

Motion carries 6-0

**Consent Agenda**

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Fleming motioned and Ms. Nuncio seconded. The Mayor called a vote by roll call.

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

Mayor Driscoll                Yes  
Motion carries 6-0

### **Public Comment**

Dr. Conrad announced that there were 2 public comments that had been submitted.

Michael Fritz, 57 Summit Street, sent a comment regarding his support for the Salem High School fall athletic season. He has asked the Committee to consider voting yes on this matter.

Debra T, (no address included), sent in 2 questions. First, she voiced concern regarding if the buildings are safe for teachers to be teaching from their classroom and second, she asked if DESE will be removing snow days and ask students to just work remotely on those days?

### **Report of the Student Representative Duncan Mayer**

Duncan Mayer was not present. The Superintendent announced that Duncan Mayer has been in touch with him and has scheduled a meeting for Thursday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. regarding extra-curricular activities.

### **Report of the Superintendent**

#### **a. Back to School Update**

Superintendent Stephen Zrike wanted to provide a back to school update. He stated that the district is currently on day 7 of teachers returning and preparing for students to return on September 14th. Dr. Zrike explained that in this time, the staff has been participating in professional development regarding remote teaching and health and safety overview.

The Superintendent began his update by stating the core values; wellness, equity, community, and flexibility. Dr. Zrike explained that most students will begin the school year primarily remote. There are 840 Tier 1 students that have been invited to participate in person, but so far, only 440 have accepted. He added that although it will be remote learning, the expectations will be different than in the spring. There will be a full schedule for the student, attendance will be taken and there will be grading and teacher evaluations. He added that Hub Connects should launch the second week of school and participating with the Tier 1 students, will be special education students.

Dr. Zrike stated that the technology team is in the process of distributing Chromebooks and giving internet support. In addition, there will be family trainings at every school and a bilingual tech help desk has been set up.

The Superintendent spoke about the safety protocols and guidance that have been created for the district and said that over \$225,000 has been spent for PPE. Dr. Zrike also gave an update on the HVAC assessment and repairs. He reported that systems are operating as intended for Bates, Carlton, Collins, Saltonstall, Salem Prep, and New Liberty and as of today, Witchcraft Heights and Salem High. There are ongoing repairs at Bentley/ECC and Horace Mann ventilation systems. Because of this, Dr. Zrike is recommending that the Tier 1 students from those schools

be temporarily relocated for the beginning of the school year. Also, the community meal program will continue to distribute meals for those who need them and supplemental childcare at a reduced rate will be provided to support families who require help.

Dr. Zrike reported that they are continuing to monitor the COVID data along with the Board of Health and City of Salem and will evaluate when and how to increase in-person options. There is a break in the beginning of November, and they hope to re-evaluate at that time.

Both Ms. Campbell and Mr. Cruz asked questions and requested clarification with regards to technology. Both the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent responded to their concerns. In addition to technology, questions were asked by Mr. Fleming regarding transportation safety and protocols. Dr. Pangallo and Ms. Nuncio gave updates of the school tours that they went on and spoke of their concerns with the buildings. Mr. Cruz explained that the Building & Grounds Subcommittee had been meeting with Ryan Monks, Director of Building & Grounds prior to COVID regarding the maintenance of the buildings, but now some of the priorities have shifted.

Mayor Driscoll asked the Superintendent to clarify the back to school plan. Dr. Zrike said that the first day of school will be Monday, September 14th as a full day of school for grades 1-12 (the hours are posted online). Individual schools will be sending out schedules. Buses will pick up for the in-person students on September 14th and it will be remote learning for the others. On Wednesday, September 16th will be the first day for PreK and Kindergarten.

**b. Superintendent Entry Plan**

Dr. Zrike wanted to share a few highlights of his entry plan. It is intended to be between now and December. At that time, he will give a more detailed plan. He said they have had several meet & greets by zoom at the schools and have met with the majority of the staff. He will also schedule 1 to 1 meetings on Fridays with people. Also plan to visit every classroom in the district, whether by zoom or in person, to be able to meet the staff and the students. He mentioned that he is not planning on creating a new strategic plan, since we are currently in the middle of a 5 year plan, but he does hope to build off of it.

Mr. Cruz asked a question regarding the Superintendent evaluation that they usually do in December. The Mayor responded that since this is an unconventional year, it would make sense to wait until the spring.

**Old Business**

- a. Deliberation and vote to amend the 2020-2021 School Committee meeting calendar and reschedule the scheduled 9/28/20 meeting on Tuesday 9/29/20. Mayor Driscoll requested a motion. Mr. Fleming made a motion to amend the School Committee meeting calendar as indicated on the agenda and seconded by Mr. Cruz. A roll call vote was called.

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

Motion Carries 6-0

### **New Business**

- a. Deliberation and vote on the Superintendent's recommendation regarding participation in fall sports for the 2020-2021 school year.

Dr. Zrike introduced Scott Connolly, Athletic Director, in case there are any questions. The Superintendent explained that fall sports participation has been in question across the state. The state has scheduled the fall season to be broken down into 2 seasons, Fall 1, which would include low to moderate risk sports and Fall 2, which would include high risk sports. In addition, Salem was initially a "red" community and would not be able to participate in Fall 1. The Superintendent indicated that the School Committee can make the decision if a district is in remote learning, whether we can participate. The Superintendent is recommending Salem High School participate in Fall 1 season and is authorizing Mr. Connolly along with the high school principal to discuss with the other NEC districts starting the Fall 1 season on October 2nd, including scheduling with any communities that may be designated "red". Mr. Fleming asked to amend the recommendation to allow practice beginning September 21st. Mr. Cruz agrees that participation in the sports program is a good opportunity for students to connect. The Mayor asked for a motion to approve the Superintendent's recommendation which includes the participation of red schools and the friendly amendment offered by Mr. Fleming that enables practices to start on September 21st. A roll call vote was called.

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

Motion Carries 6-0

- b. Discussion of the School Department owned land at Salem High School and a parcel located at 5 Rear Frederick Street for feasibility of creating affordable housing options, in particular housing preferences for teachers and school staff.

Mr. Fleming asked that this be referred to the Building & Grounds Subcommittee for discussion. The Mayor made a recommendation that rather than the Building & Grounds Subcommittee that it be referred to the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Fleming agreed and moved that this be referred to the Committee of the Whole. Mayor Driscoll added for discussion that there is a

need for affordable housing in Salem. The theory of looking at school sites for housing is that lower cost housing could potentially be offered to new teachers. Mr. Fleming made a motion to move this discussion of school owned land to the Committee of the Whole. A roll call vote was taken.

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

Motion Carries 6-0

Duncan Mayer rejoined the meeting and wanted to let the Committee know that they have been meeting with Dr. Zrike by Zoom and trying to educate students about what this year will look like.

### **Finance Report**

#### **a. Budget Transfers**

Mary DeLai, interim Business Manager, announced there were no budget transfers at this point.

The Mayor asked the Superintendent and Ms. DeLai for an update on COVID expenses for the next meeting.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

#### **a. Policy Subcommittee**

##### **i. Policies for Third Reading**

5416 Use of Physical Restraint

4105 Staff Conduct with Students

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion for the policies for the third reading for Policy 5416 Use of Physical Restraint and Policy 4105 Staff Conduct with Students. Ms. Nuncio motioned and Mr. Cruz seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

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

Motion carries 6-0

ii. Policies for Second Reading  
5221 Co-Curricular and Extra Curricular Activities

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion for the second reading of Policy 5221 Co-Curricular and Extra Curricular Activities. Ms. Nuncio made the motion and Mr. Cruz seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

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

Motion carries 6-0

**School Committee Concerns and Resolutions**

Mr. Cruz made a comment regarding the policy regarding Public Comment. He explained that he has met with Dr. Zrike and they are hoping to connect with a parent advisory council with a discussion regarding 2 way engagement. He hopes to give an update at the next meeting.

**Adjournment**

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

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

Motion carries 7-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Nancy A. Weiss*

Executive Assistant to the School Committee  
& the Superintendent