

**Salem Public Schools
Salem School Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 2, 2022**

On May 2, 2022 the Salem School Committee held its regular School Committee meeting at 7:00 PM using a hybrid model including in-person congregation and streaming via the Zoom platform.

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

Members Absent: James Fleming

Others in Attendance: Superintendent Stephen Zrike, Assistant Superintendent Kate Carbone, Chelsea Banks, Liz Polay-Wettengel, Marc LeBlanc, Linda Farinelli, Adam Colantuoni, Jennifer Winsor, Jennifer Thomas, Leanne Smith, Shawna Erps, Lisa Hagen

Call of Meeting to Order

Mayor Driscoll calls the meeting to order at 7:03pm and calls the attendance. She welcomed the community to the in-person meeting and explained the Public Participation Policy 6409 including an electronic and in-person option; and also explained the availability of Spanish interpretation.

Attendance

Mayor Driscoll notes Mr. Fleming is not in attendance for the record.

Ms. Campbell	Present
Ms. Cornell	Present
Mr. Cruz	Present
Mr. Fleming	Not Present
Ms. Manning	Present
Dr. Pangallo	Present
Mayor Driscoll	Present

Approval of Agenda

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to approve the Regular Agenda. Mr. Cruz motioned and Ms. Manning seconded.

Mayor Driscoll asks: all those in favor, all those opposed, the “I’s” have it. No opposition.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Manning motioned and Ms. Campbell seconded.

Mayor Driscoll asks: all those in favor, all those opposed, the “I’s” have it. No opposition.

Public Comments

Ann Berman 1401 Crane Brook Way - Peabody, MA 01960

Good evening Mayor Driscoll, Supt. Zrike, members of the school committee and members of the Salem Community. I am honored to stand up here today, the first day of Teacher Appreciation Week, to say Thank You to our educators! Every single one of them deserves to be recognized for their service to our community and our kids. I am proud to represent them as we fight for what our kids need. This has been the most challenging of any year in my 28 year teaching career and I hear the same from my colleagues, regardless of their years of service in teaching.

While we are finishing up this second year of teaching through covid, our kids have not recovered from their learning interruption. I don't like to call it a learning loss, because that would negate all the work that our teachers and kids did virtually and in person. Yes, they are not where their peers were two years ago, but they will get there. Our teachers will continue to do what they do best; meet every kid where they are and help them move forward.

However, to do that, we need funds and we need staffing. There is no way for us to move our students along and make up that interruption without the additional staff in our buildings. I appreciate all the work going into this year's budget; I do believe that, for the most part, it puts the needs of our kids first. I am also aware that our SOA money did not come through the way we anticipated and hoped for. I know that Mayor Driscoll, Supt. Zrike, and myself have reached out to both Senator Lovely and Representative Tucker to get more monies for Salem and I have been told that they are working hard to make this happen. At this time, we don't know where that will lead and we can only hope they can fix this deficit in funding.

I urge you to reconsider any budget adjustments that impact staffing numbers. We need teachers to cover all our classes and we need paraprofessionals to assist our neediest students. Some of our programs and classes are already understaffed; we cannot do our job without the assistance of other adults in our classrooms. In order to fix that learning interruption, we need our classes to be smaller in number. My largest class is currently 26 students. My smallest is 19. There is a huge difference in teaching those two classes even though they are both the same grade level classes.

Our teachers are human and they are exhausted. This week of appreciation is awesome; I know there are celebrations going on in every school and I know our community has reached out with free items for teachers. And it is appreciated by every teacher. But let's let the celebration continue by funding a budget that gives all our kids adequate staff to help them grow and learn. I understand you all have a fiscal responsibility to the residents of Salem, and that you are being pulled in nine different directions in regards to who or what to adjust in the budget. But let's not make it any adult who works directly with our kids. We cannot afford that. Thank you.

Student Showcase - Early Childhood Center

Ms. Smith opens noting students will not be joining due to their age and the timing of the meeting but she's brought along Ms. Erps and Ms. Hagen to share in a typical day at the Early Childhood Center. She notes the highlights will include the Three Cheers for PreK Curriculum Unit called Animals All Around. The powerpoint presentation walks through different essential questions proposed to the students and content based instruction with videos that support the curriculum unit.

Mayor Driscoll and Mr. Cruz thanked the team for the presentation and the offer to visit the ECC to observe learning. Ms. Cornell notes using the essential questions with the youngest learners and how important it is to introduce the language of learning at that age.

Dr. Zrike thanks the ECC team for their presentation and also notes the upcoming school year change at ECC including more opportunities for a 5-day schedule along with wrap-around services for before- and after school care. He also notes conversations had with Mayor Driscoll surrounding the sustainability of the funding for early childhood education.

Dr. Zrike shares his gratitude for the staff throughout the district noting Teacher Appreciation Week which is celebrated as Staff Appreciation Week here in Salem along with National Principals' Day which was yesterday. He thanks the community for their support in the different incentives available to the staff throughout the week and also highlights that we have over 90 submissions of appreciation from families and students recognizing various staff members.

Follow up FY23 budget discussion

Dr. Zrike notes the Budget Hearing being canceled to reassess the budget plan for SY23 to ensure the district remains fiscally responsible while assessing the needs of the district. He notes coming to a place that doesn't compromise access to quality education for young learners. Dr. Zrike shares a tentative timeline with the committee for financing which includes:

- May 9th: Finance Subcommittee Meeting at 5:15pm
- May 16th: Revised Budget Presentation, 6pm with a Budget Hearing following at 7:30pm
- May 23rd: Final Vote on the SY23 Budget

Mayor Driscoll provides some insight to the work to be done to land in a place where funding supports Salem as a gateway city.

Mr. Cruz asks about the timeline to have the budget presentation available for the public ahead of the budget presentation which would be followed by the budget hearing. Dr. Zrike believes that the presentation needs to be completed 48 hours before the meeting but he isn't completely sure of that timeline. He notes the presentation to share wouldn't be completely overhauled but would note the changes.

Ms. Campbell asks for clarity on the finance subcommittee meeting holds and on the timeline for the May 16th meeting if the regular school committee would still happen in addition to the budget presentation and hearing. Dr. Zrike clarifies that the school committee meeting would not happen and the budget presentation/hearing would replace the evening's meeting. She mentions potentially pushing back the time a bit and the conversation could be had offline. She also provides her opinion on the presentation in regard to staff salaries.

Ms. Manning notes the hearing being after the presentation and she mentions she does not anticipate any new items being added to the budget at this point. She shares that more or less the committee will be working on the budget to fund as much as possible with what resources we have but nothing new will be presented to the public that evening. Dr. Zrike hopes that changes will be minimal.

Mr. Cruz notes the senate will be taking up the budget the week of May 23rd which could pan out for us to have more answers regarding shifts to SOA dollars but they may not have information based on their agenda and plans.

Ms. Campbell notes the importance of changes, shifts, or deletions may require people to have more time to ponder and take in the changes. Ms. Manning notes there may be hard decisions made surrounding the budget, she shares that folks wouldn't have an "out of the blue" realization of budget presentation changes.

Summer school programming update

Ms. Carbone shares a presentation surrounding the Summer Programming options. The presentation opens with an overview of the April Vacation Academies.

Ms. Campbell wonders if Ms. Carbone can speak to the delineation between the partnerships in terms of what they're owning versus what we're owning. Ms. Carbone notes it varies based on the partner and notes an example of the YMCA program where SPS builds the curriculum for the morning and Y takes over on the enrichment activities which is where expertise lies. She shares that LEAP for Education takes a bit more ownership of the content development for the curriculum in collaboration with the SPS leaders per school. The ELSA program is more homegrown and the partner provides support but the ELSA Program is led with more ownership of SPS. Finally, the tutoring program is led by Catapult Learning and they take the heavy lift and this year will include Shawna Erps as a lead. Ms. Campbell notes the importance of this background work which allows educators to just get the work down and not have to deal with the logistics and dealings of the program function. Ms. Campbell comments on the Career Mentor Piece mentions that they may be looking for more people and encourages any community members to reach out to LEAP.

Mayor Driscoll notes the program outlined this evening has shown growth over the years to meet student and family needs.

Dr. Zrike thanks Ms. Carbone and the leadership for coordinating the summer program. He notes the program with LEAP being a great program offering and mentions the meeting with Ms. Linda Saris in support. He also mentions WHES is closed this summer for some renovation.

Lastly, Dr. Zrike mentions a focus group with parents regarding diversification efforts when it comes to staffing that was held ahead of the school committee meeting tonight. He mentions TNTP being a lead in this meeting and they're collecting information to help lead diversification efforts for the district's hiring plan.

Report from the Student Representative - Hawa Hamidou Tabayi

There is no student representative report

Old Business

None

New Business

Finance Report

Mayor Driscoll requests a motion to approve the FY22 Budget Transfer Request for the Business Office. The Business Office requests the transfer be made from Res Fnd Collective Bargaining Reserve to Reg Day Pupil Transportation for Regular Ed transportation costs. Ms. Campbell makes the motion and Dr. Pangallo seconded. Dr. Pangallo requests clarification on the moving to- and from- transportation lines. Ms. Campbell asks a clarifying question surrounding the need to support transportation funding and if this is an issue that will continue or a one-time concern. Dr. Zrike shares that there was a need for more transportation than anticipated and with respect to start/end times and the need to add three additional buses to the fleet, funding needed to reflect that update.

Mayor Driscoll requests a motion to approve the FY22 Budget Transfer Request for The Teaching and Learning Department. The department requests the transfer be made from ELT/OST Pupil Transportation and ELT/OST Contracted Services to Regular Day Instructional Supplies to fund the purchase of core instructional materials. Ms. Manning makes a motion and Mr. Cruz seconded.

Subcommittee Reports

Policy Report:

- a. Policy 3601 for third reading.

Ms. Cornell makes a motion and Mr. Cruz seconded.

Mayor Driscoll asks: all those in favor, all those opposed, the "I's" have it. No opposition.

b. Policy 6502 for first reading.

Ms. Cornell passes it over to Mr. Cruz for some background context. He notes this is the policy to provide scholarships for the Student Advisory Committee. Mr. Cruz notes the legal language with respect to compensation for student representatives. He notes wanting to take up the policy for first reading and in the next policy subcommittee meeting will open the opportunity to update language congruent with the counsel's opinion with legal language. Ms. Manning disagrees on the recommendation to move this forward for first reading and would prefer to have the

Ms. Campbell notes this is the second request of legal counsel, noting Ms. Brunt vetted and clarified the original build of this policy when it sat in the Equity Subcommittee Meeting. Mr. Cruz discusses the opportunity to compare the previous legal suggestion versus the updated version. Ms. Campbell notes she does not have written language previously.

Mr. Cruz makes a motion for Policy 6205 to be moved for first read. Ms. Cornell seconded.

Mayor Driscoll asks for some background on where the policy originated to include a scholarship noting many other students and groups are active participants in various activities and programs. Ms. Campbell notes the Student Advisory Committee created this as a group to support the work for student voice and advocacy. The students noted many high schools providing a scholarship to support relatable work. She mentions the timeline that this policy was put forth in May 2021 and has continued to be in discussion within the Equity Subcommittee and Policy Subcommittee. Mayor Driscoll notes being cautious when it comes to compensation in the form of a scholarship and worries that other students may come forward and ask that there be compensation or scholarship for those in their roles. Ms. Campbell notes the requirement in having a Student Advisory Committee whereas other activities and programs are not required. Mayor Driscoll notes the concern isn't necessarily the amount of money but in regard to valuing other student roles in the district. Dr. Pangallo notes a consistent service from this group to the school committee versus other students participating in activities on a more individual basis.

Ms. Manning notes not having insight on the specifics of what this group has done, the committee hasn't met with the SAC, and Hawa has been to some meetings but not all. She maintains that this is something that's been bouncing around but it's because she doesn't feel she's received the information she's asked for. Mayor Driscoll notes ahead of COVID it was much easier to connect on this and with the group but there needs to be a

two-way communication between the committee and the SAC to connect.

Mr. Cruz notes that there is a meeting scheduled May 30th to connect with the students directly. He notes meeting regularly with the SAC is supposed to happen but with COVID concerns that just hasn't happened. He mentions different communication to be shared with the committee. He requests a roll call vote happen in regard to his motion made. Mayor Driscoll notes she will move her vote forward but there will be questions forthcoming on what this looks like between first and second read.

Mayor Driscoll calls the roll for approving Policy 6502 for first reading.

Ms. Campbell Yes

Ms. Cornell Yes

Mr. Cruz Yes

Ms. Manning No

Dr. Pangallo Yes

Mayor Driscoll Yes

Motion carries 5-1

Mayor Driscoll notes that the consent agenda was already approved but mentions the field trip requests from NLIS were out of state and just flags that for the committee members to be aware of as noted in the packet items.

School Committee Concerns and Resolutions

Mr. Cruz notes the fair share amendment providing a higher task rate on the wealthiest in the commonwealth. He notes it would be important as a committee to band together noting a sample to be sent along to be able to support the need for funding. He would like to put it up at the next meeting.

Dr. Zrike notes Carlton Innovation School is a finalist for the Pozen Award that recognizes schools with innovation models. He mentions a virtual event on Monday at 4pm to attend the recognition of this recognition. Ms. Campbell asks for clarification that they were one of the only public schools with an innovation plan. Dr. Zrike notes the award was originally for charter schools but the transition to public schools with innovative models is included.

Dr. Pangallo acknowledges the sister school SSU losing access to the Meier Hall and that SHS has graciously allowed them to use labs for their work for the remainder of the school year and she mentions the great partnership between the district and SSU.

Mr. Cruz asks for information from the CTE Advisory Board and Dr. Zrike notes it happened last week. He provides an overview of the growth and excitement of the expansion and demand. He notes Mr. Sousa and Mr. Burns for the work and how the program has evolved.

Ms. Carbone extends an invitation for the Student Voice Project - the partnership with The Equity Imperative. This event will be held on May 17th at CMS from 6pm-7:30pm.

Mayor Driscoll notes Marta Garcia spent time with President Biden in Washington DC, recognized as Teacher of the Year. She recognizes Mr. Brito, CMS teacher, will be recognized as most valuable educator at the Red Sox pregame later this week. She also shares gratitude for the businesses that generously donated to Teacher Appreciation Week.

Adjournment

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

Ms. Manning	Yes
Mr. Fleming	Yes
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Cornell	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 7-0. Meeting adjourned at TIME

Respectfully submitted by,

Jensen Frost

Executive Administrative Assistant to Assistant Superintendent

- **Legal Opinion Regarding Student Advisory Policy:** I was asked by Beth Anne to provide a legal opinion regarding providing student advisory committee officers with scholarships for their participation (M.G.L 71, sec. 38M). Colby asked her colleague Thomas Costello to review the law and to provide us counsel. Last week, he shared the following and I wanted to be sure that all Committee members had a copy of his response:
 - *I am writing in response to your question relative to awarding a scholarship to Student Advisory Committee ("SAC") officers. As you know, M.G.L. 71, sec. 38M, requires school committees to meet with a SAC, which is elected by the student body of the high schools in the district. The statute requires each SAC to elect a chairperson who serves a one year term and must serve without compensation. Providing a scholarship directly to the chairperson raises the potential of someone challenging it as compensation. Rather than doing this, I would suggest creating a scholarship targeting students who participate in school or district government. There would be an application process and no guarantee that the chairperson would be awarded the scholarship. However, in the event that a chairperson is*

awarded the scholarship, the application process would go against any claim that the scholarship is compensation for serving on the SAC.