

Salem School Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, December 4, 2017

A regular meeting of the Salem School Committee was held on Monday, December 4, 2017 at 7:05 p.m. in the School Committee Chambers at Collins Middle School, 29 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA.

Members Present: Mayor Kimberley Driscoll, Mr. Patrick Schultz, Dr. Brendan Walsh, Ms. Mary Manning, Ms. Kristine Wilson, and Ms. Deborah Amaral

Members Absent: Mr. James Fleming

Others Present: Margarita Ruiz, Superintendent, Kate Carbone, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Margaret Marotta, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services, Kristin Shaver, Business Manager, Jill Conrad, Chief of Systems Strategy, and Kelley Rice, Chief of Communications

Call to Order

Mr. Patrick Schultz called the regular meeting of the Salem School Committee to order at 7:05 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

Dr. Walsh moved to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Amaral seconded the motion. The Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Deliberation and Vote on the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting held November 20, 2017

Dr. Walsh motioned to approve the Minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting held on November 20, 2017. Ms. Amaral seconded the Motion. The Motion carried.

Questions and Comments From the Audience

There were no questions or comments from the audience.

Superintendent Report – Margarita Ruiz

Superintendent Ruiz congratulated the 20 Salem High School Scholars who were inducted into the Tri-M Music Honor Society last week. Ms. Ruiz also congratulated Geoffrey Raywood, Collins Middle School Band Director, for being presented with a lifetime honorary membership for his dedication to music and music education. Superintendent Ruiz announced that Salem High School marks its first year that families with students in the 9th grade will be receiving a Standards Based report card. Superintendent Ruiz continued that School Committee might recall that the District implemented the Standards Based Report Card for all students in grades K-8 last year. Their plan was to begin rolling this out with the 9th Grade at Salem High School. The format may seem familiar to Salem's 8th Grade students and their families. They will be posting updated information of how to read and interpret Standards Based report cards, along with a Questions and Answers (Q&A) document on the School's website, in both English and Spanish.

Superintendent Ruiz reported that Senator Joan Lovely, Representatives Paul Tucker and Thomas P. Walsh, along with members of Greater Boston Food Bank and Project Bread, visited the Carlton Innovation School for a special observation of the *Breakfast After the Bell* program last week. The program allows all students to eat breakfast in their classrooms, after the morning bell, regardless of their family income levels. This ensures that all students are fed and ready to learn. A growing number of schools have implemented this program. It has shown significant impact on school attendance, test

scores, and health. There has been a reduction in number of visits to the nurse. Superintendent Ruiz informed the invitation of the Food and Nutrition Services Director Deborah Jeffers to provide School Committee members with an update on this program and other innovations.

While Ms. Jeffers prepared, Ms. Ruiz continued that School Committee members and the public might have noticed the new Bay State recycling white boxes located outside of each of their school buildings. Salem residents may place their unwanted textiles into the boxes. This includes clothing, shoes, handbags, stuffed animals, and household items. The boxes help reduce 520 million pounds of unwanted textiles. Bay State Textile sends a monthly rebate based on the weight of the donations. It is a way of raising funds. It is also a feel-good program to support their school Certification of Early Intervention Specialists (CEIS) programs with unwanted clutter. Superintendent Ruiz ended her report.

Presentations and Reports

Strategic Plans: Conditions for Success

Superintendent Ruiz said they have aligned presentations this year with the Strategic Plan. They have a series of operational updates this evening. One of the areas they have identified as part of the plan that sustains the 4 pillars is *Infrastructure*. Ms. Ruiz asked Ms. Jeffers to begin the presentation.

Operations Update: Food Services

Deborah Jeffers, Food and Nutrition Services Director, introduced Patrice Toomey, her Assistant Food Service Director, who takes care of the breakfast in the classroom. Ms. Jeffers continued with an update of their Food and Nutrition Services Department and walked members through the presentation slides. The presentation detailed breakfast and lunch menu items and mentioned the positive energy from students as a result. Ms. Jeffers continued that there have been 6 new hires with 2 of them being fulltime positions. They do professional development for all of their staff. They provide training for all throughout the year that involves student safety and scratch cooking. They do a School Nutrition Association (SNA) Certificate and have 32 people this year who were certified. Ms. Jeffers talked about the farms and mentioned the local Salem Company they purchase from when they cannot get through the farm. They have money that comes from the Department of Defense (DOD). DOD comes through the Department of Education's Department. Ms. Jeffers continued walking the members through the slides on student taste testing and their refrigerated truck that keeps produce fresh as it is delivered to all Salem schools.

Ms. Toomey introduced the new brand rollup process. They have developed 3 pillars, which are *High Quality Food, Honesty, and Nourishing the Whole Child Through Mind, Body, and Spirit*.

Discussion on Scratch Cooking

Ms. Manning asked for clarification on the '*scratch cooking*,' if meals are literally prepared from scratch; she asked which specific menu items are made from scratch. Ms. Jeffers responded that they are not able to do some preparations due to time constraint. The bread is not made from scratch. They make their own sauces such as pineapple salsa, which is completely scratch-cooked. They would make their own meatloaf when it is on the menu. Ms. Jeffers explained process of preparation in detail. Fish is seasoned and baked at the school. Potatoes are farm fresh or from the local distributor and are not processed. They aim for less processed foods.

Discussion on Funding

Dr. Walsh inquired about the funding of this program. The program is funded through the Department of Education and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). It is state and federal funding.

Discussion on *Breakfast in the Classroom* Percentage Drop

Mr. Schultz asked for a follow-up on the 15% drop of *Breakfast in the Classroom* at the Bowditch School.

Kristin Shaver provided a quick update on transportation and Buildings and Grounds. They would be providing a more complete presentation to School Committee members but wanted to fill them in on a couple of things. The Transportation office is now fully staffed. All 3 members of the office are bilingual in English and Spanish, a need that was highlighted at the beginning of the school year. All 8 Monitor positions have been filled. In terms of the Buildings and Grounds, Ms. Shaver continued that they received funds through the Green Communities Division Grant program to update lighting at 5 of their schools. It would be happening at the beginning of year 2018. Their website request for proposals (RFP) is published and out, and the deadline is Wednesday. They will hopefully receive proposals for redesigning their website and getting it to move forward.

Action Item

Deliberation and Vote on the Ratings for the Superintendent's Evaluation for the SY2016-2017

Ms. Amaral motioned to review and vote on the ratings for the Superintendent's evaluation for the SY2016-2017 as per that explained by Mr. Schultz. Ms. Manning seconded the motion. The Motion carried.

Discussion

Mr. Schultz provided the School Committee members with a handout of 2 documents. One is a summary of their ratings on the Superintendent's evaluation that are broken up into 3 general categories: Professional Practice Goals, Student Learning and District Improvement Goals. There is also a Summary document, a compilation document of all School Committee members' specific comments on the Standards and final ratings. He did not see questions on his email today and expect all is clear. Mr. Schultz informed members of the audience that there are a few printouts of the Excel sheet on the table for members of the audience.

Mr. Schultz went over a summary scoring on each of the categories. The first category is the *Professional Practice Goals*. Mr. Schultz briefly explained that every Superintendent submits goals for a particular school year. Superintendent Ruiz proposed goals for the 2016 and 2017 school year that are then negotiated with her by School Committee members and finalized. She then works throughout the year to achieve those goals. School Committee members then rate the Superintendent on those goals at time of evaluation, and these are the first categories. The Professional Practice Goals are broken up into 5 benchmarks. Mr. Schultz continued explaining that he averaged those benchmarks into ratings per goal whether Professional Practice Learning or District Improvement, for example. Mr. Schultz walked everyone through the goals, benchmarks, and ratings category details of the evaluation as well as the states' Standards expectations.

Ms. Amaral motioned to accept and approve the report produced by Mr. Schultz for review and vote on the ratings for the Superintendent's evaluation for the SY2016-2017. Dr. Walsh seconded the motion. The Motion carried.

Deliberation and Vote on the Memorandum of Agreement Between the Salem Administrators Association and the Salem School Committee, 2016-2019

Discussion

Dr. Walsh motioned to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the Salem Administrators Association and the Salem School Committee. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. Dr. Walsh called for a Roll-Call Vote.

School Committee Secretary Roll Call:

Ms. Deborah Amaral	Yes
Ms. Mary Manning	Yes
Mr. Patrick Schultz	Yes
Dr. Brendan Walsh	Yes
Ms. Kristin Wilson	Yes
Mayor Kimberley Driscoll	Yes

6 Members voted, 6 in the *affirmative*. The Motion carried.

Deliberation and Vote on the Carlton Innovation School Request for the 5th Grade Overnight Field Trip to the Farm School in Athol, MA on February 26-28, 2018

Dr. Walsh motioned to approve the Carlton Innovation School request for the 5th Grade overnight field trip to the farm school in Athol, MA on February 26-28, 2018. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The Motion carried.

Deliberation and Vote on the Recommendation for the MCJROTC Student Permissions to Travel to Reading, PA From December 15-16, 2017 for the Purpose of Attending and Participating in Physical Training and Marksmanship Competition

Ms. Amaral motioned to approve the MCJROTC permission to travel to Reading, PA from December 15 to December 16, 2017 for the purpose of attending and participating in physical training and marksmanship competition. Ms. Manning and Mr. Walsh voted '*Negative*.' Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The Motion carried.

Finance Report

a. Approval of Warrants

October 26, 2017 in the amount of \$163,597.74
November 30, 2017 in the amount of \$378,614.71
December 7, 2017 in the amount of \$405,125.96

Dr. Walsh motioned to approve the three warrants in the amounts listed on the Agenda. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The Motion was approved.

b. Budget Transfer Requests

There were no budget transfer requests

Subcommittee Reports

Policy Subcommittee

Deliberation and Vote on the Third Reading of Policy 6406 Voting Method

Discussion

Ms. Amaral informed members that the only thing added since the last meeting was that Dr. Walsh pointed out that the words “*majority of the quorum*“ needed to be added and all else would stay the same as was at the 2nd meeting. Some of the compromise came from an example of what 4 votes affirmative means and the fact that anyone can ask for a roll call at any time. That is when they would actually record the votes.

Ms. Amaral motioned to approve the third reading of Policy 6406 Voting Method. Dr. Walsh seconded the motion. The Motion for Third reading of Policy 6406 Voting Method was approved.

Deliberation and Vote on the Second Reading of Policy 5103 Controlled Choice Student Assignment

Discussion

Ms. Amaral reported that there have been many changes. Some changes had come from the Committee of the Whole (COW). Ms. Amaral informed everyone that if anyone has any questions or need for discussion to please reach out to Superintendent Ruiz or Ms. Jill Conrad. Mayor Driscoll was concerned on whether the policy is clear in its explanation to parents and family members of their school choices. Their options are still unclear under the current policy. Mayor Driscoll continued that if this policy does not clarify the options for parents and families then they still have work to do. Parents and families should be able to read the policy and know what their likelihood of being accepted or assigned is. Dr. Walsh feels the policy is very long and also understands there is no other way around it. He does not know how many people have the endurance to get through the policy but he thinks it has to be the way it is. It is possible that they can have bullets for simplification. Ms. Amaral stated that the positive of the policy is that it provides everyone with clear information that there is a truly weighted average to each school. One of the suggestions Policy Subcommittee had for implementation was that a letter would be sent to the homes before with some information on the two schools closest to them along with their addresses.

Mayor Driscoll asked if they ever closed the loop, or have additional thoughts, on transportation and the impact the Student Assignment policy has on it relative to parents who chooses a school further away from their home. Dr. Walsh stated that it is a different policy. Mr. Schultz said that they had agreed that there would not be a charge for transportation if parents or families were to be beyond a certain distance to a school they may want to go to, because that would become a negative policy against those in need. Mr. Schultz recommended that it is strongly important to emphasize to parents the difference between the needs; that in order to equalize the demographics to the extent that they can, parents need to understand that if they do not qualify for the economically disadvantaged – that they may not get into another school of their choice if in fact disadvantaged students have filled the seats. It is important to make it clear that they are going to stand firm on this policy and that Kindergarten seats from the other category may not be made available despite empty seats (except as a last resort) to their children if they are not economically disadvantaged.

Ms. Ruiz talked of the emphasis on outreach. Dr. Walsh commented that the biggest stumbling block in the current policy to making the school more balanced is the sibling provision and provided an example. Ms. Manning explained that School Committee members had agreed with the Superintendent, when

discussing the policy, of the responsibility of creating a simplified sheet. Another topic that was also previously discussed and agreed upon was that there would be more training of current workers in each building to better explain the policy to families and help them understand it. Ms. Manning continued that there is a specific provision in the policy that states that a specific situation could go to the Superintendent. Ms. Manning wanted to make clear that when she is voting for this, she would be voting under the assumption that out of category assignments would be a very rare specific situation. She is voting for this policy with that understanding. Mayor Driscoll stated she feels it is very important to have a flow chart, with some scenarios, and review before they vote on the policy. The policy is still unclear and would need simplification for parents, families, and readers to better understand how the policy works and how it applies to them. Everyone agreed that it would be worked on and provided before the policy's 3rd and final reading at the next Regular School Committee meeting on December 18, 2017.

Members discussed further concerns, insight, and feedback. Mayor Driscoll requested a copy of the Transportation policy that was circulated.

Mayor Driscoll said it is only the 2nd reading of the policy. They will be looking for that flow chart of information that would give some examples of what would happen to hypothetical families living across the district and an understanding what happens when you apply; an implementation guide.

Ms. Amaral motioned to approve the Second Reading of Policy 5103 Student Assignment. Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion for Second reading of Policy 5103 Student Assignment was approved.

School Committee Concerns and Resolutions

Mayor Driscoll announced that they are looking to schedule a full School Committee Retreat meeting for 2018 with the new School Committee incoming members to bring them up to speed. Superintendent explained that the circulation would be a form with proposed dates and times with simple 'Yes' and 'No' formatting.

Dr. Walsh reminded the audience, School Committee members, and everyone of the 24th annual Salem Children's Christmas Party at Victoria Station on Tuesday night, December 12, 2017. Sheila Billings, a great artist, would provide a couple of paintings available for auction. There will be several stay and dine options. There will be a popular Breakfast with the Mayor auction!

Ms. Manning said that she was coming down Lafayette Street at 20 minutes to 4pm. She was at a red light stop at about 3 cars behind the bus. A student exited the bus and crossed the street. Ms. Manning was concerned of students who might cross the street after school hours (3pm). She asked Superintendent Ruiz to please check on the Lafayette Street bus schedule for accuracy. Ms. Manning also asked Ms. Ruiz to be included in the circulation about events such as the Geoffrey Raywood celebration.

Questions and Comments From the Audience

There were no questions or

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the School Committee this evening, Ms. Amaral entertained the motion to adjourn. Mr. Schultz seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Angelica Alayon, Secretary
Salem School Committee

Meeting Materials and Reports
School Committee Agenda December 4, 2017
Minutes of the November 20, 2017 Regular School Committee Meeting
Carlton Innovation 5th Grade Overnight Field Trip School Request
MCJROTC Permission Request to Travel to Reading, PA
Policy 6406 Voting Method
Policy 5103 Controlled Choice Student Assignment Policy