

**Salem Public Schools  
Salem School Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
October 4, 2021**

On October 4, 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, Glenn Burns, Cynthia Napierkowski, Mario Sousa, Monell Robinson, Scott Tombleson

**Call of Meeting to Order**

Ms. Manning called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m and requested a call of attendance. Ms. Manning mentions Mayor Driscoll will arrive shortly. She read the new Public Participation Policy 6409 and also explained the availability of Spanish interpretation.

**Attendance**

The school committee secretary called the attendance.

Ms. Manning	Present
Mr. Fleming	Present
Dr. Pangallo	Present
Ms. Nuncio	Present
Mr. Cruz	Absent (Enters at 7:06p)
Ms. Campbell	Present
Mayor Driscoll	Absent (Enters at 7:17p)

**Approval of Agenda**

Ms. Manning requested a motion to approve the Regular Agenda. Mr. Fleming motioned and Dr. Pangallo seconded. A roll call vote was taken as requested by the school committee secretary.

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

Motion carries 5-0

### **Approval of Consent Agenda**

Ms. Manning requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Fleming motioned and Dr. Pangallo seconded. Ms. Manning provides an overview of the consent agenda topics including an approval of minutes from the September 27, 2021 meeting, review of warrant, and SHS band field trips to out of state competitions . A roll call vote was taken.

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

Motion carries 6-0

### **Public Comments**

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

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

Hawa shares the Student Advisory Council (SAC) prepared for a meeting with Mr. Burns to discuss their intentions - hoping to have other meetings with leaders within the district to see how they can evaluate their intentions and goals in other schools and gauge what work needs to be done.

The next meeting will include the topic of approaching discipline, specifically detention. Future discussions will include transportation and systems of oppression in reference to racism. Also plan to meet with other leaders in the district about these topics to see how they are being discussed in other schools.

Would like to have in-school time at SHS to have the SAC meet to try to increase participation and representation in terms of equity because not all students can participate in the conversations after school as they're currently scheduled. Hoping to extend after school in-person options to SPHS and NLIS to have the council accessible to those students directly in their school versus needing to travel to SHS. She opens to questions.

Mr. Cruz mentions this meeting will include a discussion of student supports and calls upon Mr. Colantuoni and his approach to student supports. In reference to Hawa's hope of in-school meetings Mr. Cruz would like to know the disadvantages that after school meetings are causing. Hawa mentions students having jobs, joining athletics, caring for siblings, and regular care of home that can pose issues of conflict for disadvantaged students. Having in-person meetings can also provide more resources such as access to adults who are available during the day. The in-person meetings will drastically change the engagement. Hawa mentions the difference between Student Council (SHS) and Student Advisory Council (District) and seeing that Student Council ran a meeting in-person with great participation, the Student Advisory Council is wanting to make that transition for participation.

Dr. Zrike raises the question of how the district can assist in getting access to leaders at NLIS and SPHS. Hawa mentions that she is currently working to connect with the leaders and suggests helping to communicate with those leaders to find the best times to engage with their students would be helpful. Hawa notes using time that those students are already pursuing meetings as a way to transfer information from the SHS advisory to the other schools.

Mr. Cruz thanks Hawa for bringing color to the disadvantages she mentions and notes how there are so many folks within the community who want to support the student voice. He does note that within his work when adults want to engage with young people there are often barriers in engagement by ensuring they are not equal participants to the adults in the room. So it's important for us [the committee] to identify the ways in which we support our students and student leaders so they have the resources they need in order to advocate for change in the district. He suggests Hawa come to the committee to collaborate on finding solutions for equity gaps that exist to be effective leaders for the district.

Dr. Pangallo questions if Hawa has plans to connect with the elementary and middle schools noting the difference in ages. Hawa mentions they [SAC] have talked in the past and notes the work to connect on the middle school level has happened in an introductory mentor team at CMS and are hoping to use that connection to get student voices heard. Hawa mentions she doesn't know if there are ways to connect the council to the elementary level, perhaps working with the leaders of the school as a starting point to those connections. She builds on Mr. Cruz's point regarding student voice in non-student spaces and worries relying on elementary leaders would be ineffective for the student work intended. Dr. Pangallo raises appreciation for her work and notes the challenge of trying to connect student voices on all the different age levels.

Mr. Fleming mentions the student representatives of the past providing reports of the happenings at SHS and asks Hawa if she thinks that is not her role. Hawa notes based on her interpretation of the role she does not provide direct updates of the high school because she thought she represented the district and not SHS mentioning that being an issue of the past of the Student Advisory Council because former members that used to serve as the SR also served in SC and they would overlap updates of the high school to SC and would overlap council meetings to only speak of SHS topics. A goal of the current SAC is to deter from that process and notes that if the SC is interested, she can provide updates specific to SHS and notes that it isn't equitable being that those updates would not include SPHS and NLIS. She notes that the student representative could be a leader of any of the high schools in the future and therefore provides her reports as so.

Mr. Fleming asks how [the SC] would learn of the events happening at SHS, New Liberty, or the Prep if Hawa is not providing the updates. Hawa suggests going to the schools, being present in the schools, finding time within schedules to directly talk with students in schools. She notes that one student voice cannot fully represent all student voices in the district.

Mr. Fleming replies with the suggestion that Mr. Cruz and Ms. Campbell review the question with the student representative. He notes his time on the board and there being a void in terms

of events being reported by the student representative. He notes Mr. Cruz and Ms. Campbell review the student representative role and to broaden the role.

Mayor Driscoll identifies that she has entered the meeting and recognizes Mr. Fleming's concerns being brought to the meeting but notes that saying a person representing the district is wrong or an opinion is wrong. She mentions if change to prior traditions is needed, then consideration should be made as a body. Recognition and appreciation to Hawa's updates of information from a broad spectrum lens is provided.

Mr. Cruz calls to Mr. Fleming to review the law of the student representative as the law makes no mention the student provide event updates and announcements, the law is clear that responsibility the student has is to form a student advisory council and select a chair who serves as the student representative and that the student representative is entitled to follow all regulations and rules of the committee with the exception of attending executive session. It's up to the students to decide how they want to use their voice. Mr. Cruz suggests as a body there should be reflection on how dialogue occurs with students because the interaction this evening left him feeling not good. He notes Hawa is in line with her role per the laws and responsibilities. He speaks directly to Hawa regarding approach in conversation and suggests Mr. Fleming apologize. Ms. Campbell notes she is in full agreement with Mr. Cruz and mentions she receives the updates regarding events of the schools in the emails she receives from the superintendent and it is not necessary to receive those updates at school committee meetings and praises the work the student advisory board is doing.

Ms. Manning provides opinions on the interaction and the notion of apologizing. She mentions that while the role of student representative has changed, there wasn't a discussion that the updates regarding events and happenings at the high school level would no longer be announced at meetings. Ms. Manning recommends that a solution could be provided on how to pick up the slack of what the committee was used to regarding the information of events and happenings.

Dr. Pangallo mentions the importance of the information that Hawa has brought to the meetings and within her role. She mentions that there are ten schools in the district and isn't sure why there is a need for the flow of information to come from SHS alone. If looking for additional information, perhaps we want that for all schools versus just SHS.

Mr. Fleming notes the community would like to know what's going on in the three high schools regarding activities. He mentions Dr. Zrike's emails and lack of report to the school committee is wrong and the school committee should have information to what's going on in all three schools.

Mayor Driscoll notes the conversation can continue off line with respect to what the expectation is to information. She notes the schools have never been communicating more than they are now between social media, emails, Parentsquare. She states if school committee

members don't feel they have enough information a conversation should be had with the superintendent.

Hawa mentions that student voice is not reduced to reporting out of what is going on and there are other means to finding that information to be communicated. She notes she is willing to find an equitable way to share information regarding everything about the district, as that is what the role represents. She mentions the notion of following traditions and identifies that she does not hold the same identity as the former student representatives which may bring light to the way she is reporting out.

### **Educator's Showcase**

Dr. Zrike identifies this week there is no scheduled showcase.

Dr. Zrike shares that the police chief was scheduled to join tonight's meeting but will be attending the October 25, 2021 meeting. He mentions the first topic of the night: follow-up regarding academic support, part of that support including the social-emotional support provided during the school year. He notes a reorganization of the district last year which brought on the executive director of Student and Family Support Services and introduces the work of Mr. Adam Colantuoni and team as he will begin to share a presentation on the social-emotional support for our students.

Dr. Zrike notes the work of all staff this school year as educators and students are continuing to face struggles due to COVID-19, quarantining, staffing shortages, etc.

### **Initial Plans for Student Services and Family Supports**

Mr. Colantuoni echoes Dr. Zrike's note of the difficulty of this school year. He introduces his team members present tonight for the presentation, including; Molly Robinson and Scott Tomblason. Mr. Colantuoni shares the new structure of the reorganization of the department.

He presents increased and/or expansion of services that were built over the summer to provide to students this year, including: Behavior Specialists at each school, Nursing and Medical Assistants, Attendance Outreach and Intervention Specialist, Mental Health Community Partnerships, School Counseling, and a Family Engagement Manager. He shares there was family support and connection over the summer to prepare for student return along with many professional development opportunities for school based professionals to aid in the transition to start the 21-22SY.

Ms. Monell Robinson shares how the team helped schools re-establish community, routines, relationships, and social-emotional recovery upon student return for the new school year. She shares the voice of staff and students that she's heard and collected with being present in the schools. She notes the positive experiences she's hearing such as the engagement and excitement. Also notes the challenges including stamina for children and students returning to the length of day the school day poses and regression in social skills which has led to some behaviors that staff are working to approach and handle.

Mr. Colantuoni shares a summary of the responses from over 300 student voices, recognizes this isn't the full student body but notes the Panorama Survey is planned to go out next month which will gather more results. He notes the highlights of student responses and the challenges they face upon return. He shares slides with student voice highlights and encourages the meeting attendees to read the responses. He showcases the model of the department and the four elements of work within the department: Social-Emotional Learning, Social Emotional Support, Mental Health, and Wellness.

He notes Social Emotional Learning is the tier one universal support, which all students have access to SEL through a delivered curriculum, morning meeting, etc. He mentions the framework of CASEL and notes their biggest push right now is to make sure all the staff of the district understand the framework of CASEL when talking about SEL. He mentions five key components that all staff should model and practice: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.

When implemented as developed, the framework unfolds in the schools by providing SEL Instruction, creating specific classroom climates, and promoting schoolwide culture and practices that the district hopes for to support SEL teaching and learning.

Shifting to components of support available for students at Tier Two supports. He notes the support of City Connects for the K-8 level and turns over the presentation to Scott Tombleson for a review of the BARR Model (9-12). Mr. Tombleson shares that the BARR model was used formerly for ninth and tenth graders and in this year, has been expanded to the eleventh and twelfth. The BARR model allows a check-in with each student to assess each individual's needs. He notes the assessment can identify the tiered support needed for each student based on their individual levels.

Mr. Colantuoni continues the presentation recognizing Mental Health supports noting that a month into school, data collection among schools is still happening and the team is keeping aware of the mental health status of students within the schools. He mentions focus on the wellness program within the curriculum of the schools. The team is working with a DESE consultant to infuse wellness within the health curriculum.

The Strategic Plan mentions aligning the vision of SEL, developing a sense of mental health screening and response, and strengthening social emotional interventions. He concludes the presentation with the next steps including maintaining the welcoming environments, implementing the SEL actions, providing behavior intervention supports, envisioning a future health curriculum, supporting attendance, and engaging with families.

Mayor Driscoll shares appreciation for the student voice within his presentation and the overview of the team's work within the district. Mr. Cruz asks Mr. Tombleson about the alignment of City Connects and the BARR model and what the transition between the programs looks like. Mr. Tombleson states the team of counselors work closely with the folks of the

middle schools to gather information. There is a data aspect that comes with the City Connects program and though it doesn't directly translate into BARR, the work of the counselors fulfill that gap. Mr. Tombleson provides the example of forty struggling students in the eighth grade that were noted during the screening, and the SHS team was able to create a plan aligned to each of those student needs.

Dr. Pangallo mentions attendance as an issue and questions how the district is handling attendance. Mr. Colantuoni shares that the position of the Attendance Outreach Specialist (AOS) has transitioned to more of a reactive role to hopefully promote a more preventative approach. He notes a reflection of what barriers could affect attendance rather than casting blame on attendance issues. The AOS reviews data for attendance trends to note individual and collective attendance issues.

Dr. Pangallo mentions changing the school times and perhaps having this change take place could help support attendance. Specifically she notes the middle and high school start times. She mentions the committee helping to support the discussion surrounding school start times.

Ms. Nuncio references the mental health supports and asks if there has been any progress of Spanish-speaking and/or Portuguese-speaking counselors for students and families within the district. Mr. Colantuoni shares he would not have that data available tonight but would provide the information upon collecting it this week.

Ms. Campbell references the mention of Family Engagement Facilitators and asks if Mr. Colantuoni could provide an update on bilingual staff availability within the district. He notes the addition of the Family Engagement Manager, Laura Assade and how the school staff and district side can work together to ensure the resources are available at the school level as needed. He shares Laura has provided professional development opportunities with the FEFs to help support and promote their work within the district. He mentions working closely with the multilingual staff to help provide resources for them to support students and shares that the survey from his presentation was provided to students in Spanish and many of the responses were returned in Spanish.

Mayor Driscoll requests input from Dr. Zrike and/or Mr. Colantuoni regarding the insight of how other districts provide social support services. Dr. Zrike shares that he's never seen the support he sees in Salem in any other district he's worked in. He mentions that we have an abundance of tools and resources compared to other districts in the Commonwealth. Mr. Colantuoni notes he was impressed when joining the district to note the resources and systems in place to support students on all levels of social emotional needs.

Mayor Driscoll shares gratitude in the explanation of support for the district and notes the accountability and structure is key. Mr. Fleming asks if this structure reaches the students who are homeschooled. Ms. Carbone notes that we do not provide these services to students being homeschooled as families who apply for homeschooling are responsible for their own process

of curriculum and support to students. Mr. Fleming states he believes these services should be offered to the homeschool students.

Dr. Zrike notes the appreciation of the City Connects model and provides kudos to Ellen Wingard and the City Connects team and how this support is being used as a model for others across the country due to the success level within the district. Mayor Driscoll closes this session with no other questions or comments and a suggestion to see the team back in the future for reporting.

Dr. Zrike notes there is no other business on his report. He shares it's spirit week at the high school and haunted happenings in Salem are keeping the community busy. He also mentions Dr. Ruben Carmona announced he is leaving to transition into a new role and that Ms. Scarlett Grandt will take on the interim role of principal upon his departure. Mr. Cruz requests that Dr. Zrike provide updates regarding the search to fulfill the administrative positions at the Horace Mann Laboratory School.

**Partnership with Salem Police Department and Salem Public Schools - Chief Lucas J. Miller**

This presentation will be on the agenda for the October 25, 2021 meeting due to availability of Chief Miller.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

**a. Deliberation and vote on approval of CVT Admissions Policy**

Dr. Zrike notes that the state has challenged all districts to provide a more equitable process to enter in the CVT programs and notes that the district has taken the state's direction to be more equitable for how students are accepted and who is not. He states the reason to have this topic on the agenda is due to the state looking to review the policy. The last time the policy was reviewed in Salem was in 2014. He doesn't know if the committee was included in the process of creating the policy but both the old and new policies have been provided for consideration.

Dr. Zrike introduces Mr. Sousa and Mr. Burns to present to the committee. Mr. Sousa notes the review of the admissions policy and provides updates on CTE ahead of the policy presentation. He shares the programs that are undergoing full program reviews, those applying for Chapter 74 certification, space renovations and upgrades, and other program-specific happenings.

Mr. Sousa is hoping to build a professional development plan to improve the academics, IEP and 504 accommodations, and make CTE content more accessible for EL students. Also looking to provide OSHA 10 Certification where all CTE students will go through a course to provide OSHA 10 Certification tailored to the specific program. He notes that he is eager to bring back SkillsUSA Chapter as it's important to have partnership with programs that can continue to build on their CTE skills. Mentions creating a CTE club for all high school students where they can explore what a career in specific industries look like.

Mr. Sousa provides an overview of the CTE class enrollment by grade level. Noting who leads the course and mentions the need to strengthen the level three class numbers - hoping this happens beyond the pandemic to help aid in lining up work following graduation.

Mr. Sousa reviews the old DESE criteria for students entering a CTE program. He provides a breakdown of the current Salem Criteria used for placements in a permanent CTE program and then discusses the proposal for the new policy mentioning a lottery process for each CTE program. He shares the equitability feature behind the lottery process proposed.

Ms. Manning praises his presentation and questions the timing of the end of the first cycle, students make their first pick. Mr. Sousa explains that the exploratory program requires 198 hours which is the ninth grade year. The process noted is that ninth grade students would choose the primary focus by January and the students would then choose which program they would like to major in, and continue the remainder of their ninth grade year in that focus.

Mr. Cruz notes the advisory committees put together and questions if there is opportunity to connect with the Chamber of Commerce and other city-based community members to provide expertise or join a committee to support the programs. Mr. Sousa notes the Rotary and the Chamber of Commerce are his number one go-to's to discuss the process of partnering with Salem High School. He wants as many community members to partner with the programs as possible, noting the committees would be able to bring people in the day-to-day operations of the businesses and industries to help guide the ways to teach the students and assist students to follow the path for hiring following the programs. Mr. Cruz also mentions the program E-For-All and shares that he'll provide that information to Mr. Sousa to help build that connection. Mr. Sousa suggests any community member reach out to him.

Ms. Campbell is excited to see the changes in the enrollment process. She notes a barrier of students who enter the district beyond the exploratory year and having the programs closed due to enrollment. She wonders if there is consideration of saving seats to provide equal access. Mr. Sousa unravels the process for students who enter the program beyond the ninth grade year, allowing them to go through the process of exploratory and therefore entering the lottery and having the same access to the process.

Dr. Zrike notes that there are students from NLIS and SPHS who are being bussed to SHS to explore the CTE programs and he would like to see this process and the lottery open to all three high school campuses. There is an intro to medical assisting class at NLIS used as a gateway to get into the medical assisting CTE program.

Ms. Campbell notes leveraging the Early Education Program in conjunction with the seal of biliteracy testing to help identify potential early childhood educators. Which could help feed our own pipeline of dual language and world language programming. She notes the idea of growing our own educators via the program.

Dr. Pangallo is curious to see how the review of curriculum is going and the process for noting non-bias within the curriculum. Mr. Sousa mentions at the next advisory meeting, curriculum review will occur with review sheets by looking through the book and ensuring there is no gender stereotyping as noted in older curriculums. He doesn't see it as a current issue but wants to be sure there is no specific gender or minority group segregation outlined in the curriculum.

Mr. Cruz understands the material needed to be taken to a vote but it is not one of the listed policies and he looking for clarification that it's not a policy of the school committee but that of the school that requires a vote and in this case there isn't a need for three readings as the vote will satisfy the requirements of DESE.

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion on adopting the updated policy regarding CTE Enrollment to satisfy the state's needs as presented by Mr. Sousa. Mr. Fleming made the motion and Ms. Manning 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

**b. Deliberation and vote on the 2021-2022 School Calendar change for October 11, 2021 from Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day to be consistent with the City of Salem**

Mayor Driscoll reads the agenda item surrounding the change to the 21-22 calendar surrounding Indigneous Peoples' Day. Ms. Nuncio notes she is in favor of the change and moves to approve the calendar. Mr. Cruz seconded.

Dr. Pangallo notes a grammatical question and makes mention of the edit needed ahead of making the confirmed change, noting the apostrophe in the calendar title should reflect: Indigenous Peoples' Day.

A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Manning	Yes
Mr. Fleming	No
Mr. Cruz	Yes
Dr. Pangallo	Yes
Ms. Nuncio	Yes
Ms. Campbell	Yes
Mayor Driscoll	Yes

Motion carries 6-1

**Finance Report**

None

**Subcommittee Reports**

None were mentioned

**School Committee Concerns and Resolutions**

Dr. Pangallo brings attention to the Board of Health and other districts that are requiring a mandate for students to be vaccinated against COVID-19, conditionally, when the vaccine is given full FDA approval. She suggests it is something to be considered within the district and get the conversations started as a potential mandate upon full approval.

Ms. Manning wants to acknowledge Dave Russo, a longtime counselor in the district, who’s passed away. She notes he may have been the first counselor to work with bilingual students and acknowledges the work he did with families in the communities. She mentions his remembrance event was put together from former students. She mentions his life achievements and accomplishments and did them quietly with his best work being out in the community. She wanted to mention him and suggested a quick moment of silence as a tremendous loss. Mr. Cruz notes the support of the memorial service as well, noting that he was a Dave Russo student and notes that he was a champion for underdogs within the district. A moment of silence is had to honor Dave Russo

**Adjournment**

Mayor Driscoll requested a motion to adjourn. Mr. Fleming motioned and Ms. Manning 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 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Jensen Frost*

Executive Administrative Assistant to Assistant Superintendent