

**Minutes of the Regular Session
of the Salem School Committee
Monday, June 2, 2025
Rm. 227, 29 Highland Ave.
Hybrid Meeting**

Members Present: Mayor Dominick Pangallo, Vice Chair Cruz, Amanda Campbell, Beth Anne Cornell, AJ Hoffman and Veronica Miranda

Others in Attendance: Superintendent Stephen Zrike and Assistant Superintendent Pauley

Members Absent: Mary Manning

Call of Meeting to Order

Mayor Pangallo called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and informed the public that the docket contains the public participation procedure and how to access Spanish interpretation.

Approval of Agenda

Member Campbell made a motion to approve the agenda. Member Miranda seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Ann Berman, Salem Teachers Union (STU) President

Ms. Berman announced the recipients of the STU scholarships for 2024-2025. Four \$1,000 scholarships were presented to four Salem High School students, Marangela Diaz, Linus Owen, Mark Qualkenbush and Isaiah Roger Romero. To qualify for the scholarship, the students had to take the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor - Congress of Industrial Organizations) labor exam and the top four scorers for Salem earned the scholarships from the STU. Nine students from Salem took the exam this year. Ms. Berman thanked the members of the public who purchased raffle tickets to support the fundraising for the program. Ms. Berman also thanked Ms. Lori Marenda, Salem High School (SHS) teacher for overseeing this process at the high school.

Pastor Richard Hyatt, House of Promise Church

Pastor Hyatt said that the church presents similar services to the students as the schools which includes having an opportunity or outlet to express themselves and looking for the best interest of the students. Pastor Hyatt said that when he found out that the church might not be able to rent spaces at the school in the future, he wanted to express that both parties are united in what they want to do for students, even if their beliefs are different.

Pastor Kendra Key, Calvary Christian Church

Pastor Key said she was a past Salem resident and that her church currently meets at the Salem High School. The Calvary Christian Church which is located in Lynnfield is hoping to launch a campus in Salem in the fall. Pastor Key said that they hope to be at the high school because although they looked at other rental places, this facility would present a good partnership. They are interested in buying a sound system and light system for the auditorium. Pastor Key hoped that the School Committee would reconsider before making the proposed change to the rental policy.

Pastor Alisia Depena, Salem Resident

Pastor Depena said that there is a common goal which is to serve the children and to give them other options. Pastor Depena requested the School Committee to reconsider their decision.

Approval of Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes of Regular School Committee meeting held on May 19, 2025
2. Approval of Music Department Field Trip to Canobie Lake Park, Salem, NH for Salem High School students on June 20, 2025
3. Approval of Field Trip to Walt Disney World, Orlando, Florida for Salem High School Golf Team from August 21-25, 2025
4. Approval of FY25 Warrants:
 1. 05/22/2025 - \$850,833.39
 2. 05/29/2025 - \$728,702.37

Vice Chair Cruz made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Member Campbell seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Student Representative Report

Student Representative Qualkenbush was not present at the meeting. Superintendent Zrike provided an update about the Student Advisory Group that held their last meeting at the New Liberty Innovation School (NLIS) earlier in the day. Superintendent Zrike said that the students at NLIS were excellent hosts. There were speeches from students who wanted to be considered for the position of Chair and Vice-Chair of the group for next year. Voting will take place in the next few weeks. The students selected an NLIS student, Nevin LeBron, to serve as the Vice-Chair. The group is still trying to get Salem Prep students to join. There are 15 returning students for next year and the group wants to open it up to incoming freshmen. They are very interested in supporting newcomer students, wanting more flexibility during lunch periods and discussions about yondr pouches. Superintendent Zrike added that the students wanted the opportunities that exist at each campus are available to all students.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Zrike announced that the baseball team won the playoff game 11 to 1 over Manchester Essex earlier in the day. On the next day, a few girls flag football games would be taking place. Graduations have been scheduled for the week as well. A forum on the new high school building will be held on Tuesday, June 3rd.

1. Civics Action Presentation from Saltonstall 8th Graders

Superintendent Zrike introduced Ms. Jahl and her 8th Grade students from Saltonstall to present their Civics Action Project. They had presented their project to Superintendent Zrike a week earlier. Superintendent Zrike continued that the School Committee should hear about the project and the proposed solution because it will take more than just the Superintendent to bring it to fruition. Ms. Jahl's students proceeded to give their presentation on how Career and Technical Education (CTE) can help with food insecurity in Salem.

Vice Chair Cruz commented that this is the largest student advocacy project to come before the School Committee. Vice Chair Cruz questioned why other community based organizations have not done hot meals for the unhoused population. The students replied that most of their kitchens are not health inspected and certified to provide hot meals. Member Campbell said that this is one of the more creative solutions that has been proposed. Member Cornell commented that next year when the students are in Salem High School, they would have a better opportunity to influence what is happening in the culinary spaces. Mayor Pangallo said that the need for meals is more significant now with the rising cost of housing and federal cuts that are beginning to impact food prices. Mayor Pangallo hoped that the students will continue with this idea in the high school and added that there is a Food Security Coordinator and a Housing Stability Coordinator in the city who can work with the students. Superintendent Zrike said that there are many opportunities for the students to get involved in youth leadership and wanted the students to get involved next year in the high schools.

2. Discussion of Current Leases

Assistant Superintendent Pauley provided more information about the current and expired leases in the Salem Public Schools for Angela's Daycare, Boys & Girls Club, YMCA, LEAP for Education and Pathways for Children.

Superintendent Zrike said that the School Committee has not previously been involved with lease approval but these will be going to the School Committee for approval in the future. Superintendent Zrike continued that the district controls a lot of the space utilization and is not bound to any long-term relationships. Superintendent Zrike mentioned that the lessees are valued partners and run important programming for the students.

In response to Vice Chair Cruz, Superintendent Zrike said that the lessees have been working with the various departments in the schools but that they could be monitored more closely. Superintendent Zrike added that the conversation about space utilization across the district needs to take place before leases are renewed. Assistant Superintendent Pauley commented that all the lessees make payments in a timely manner. Vice Chair Cruz inquired about the fair market value for leases and rentals. Mayor Pangallo agreed that the district needs to be more consistent with the rates and equitable between all the different partners. Mayor Pangallo said that if these partners are not in the schools anymore in the future because of space utilization needs, they

need support in finding the next step. Mayor Pangallo requested data on how many staff or students take advantage of the services provided by Angela's Daycare. Superintendent Zrike said that Angela's Daycare provides scholarships for Salem High School students. In response to Mayor Pangallo, Superintendent Zrike said that LEAP for Education would be interested in renewing their lease.

In response to Vice Chair Cruz about the lease process, Superintendent Zrike said that it should go through the Building and Grounds Subcommittee for a draft which would be brought to the School Committee. The lessees could be invited to the subcommittee meeting if the members had questions. Member Miranda who is the Chair of the Building and Grounds Subcommittee said she would be interested in hearing more about the information sought and would be happy to meet with partners.

Vice Chair Cruz made a motion to refer all matters related to long-term leases to the Building and Grounds Subcommittee. Member Campbell seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Member Cornell noted that Policy 3204 which is due for second reading states that the Superintendent in concert with the Building and Grounds Subcommittee would review any leases for durations of less than six months.

3. Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Update

Superintendent Zrike said that a forum on the new high school building design and timeline will be held on Tuesday, June 3rd. The Salem High School Building Committee will be having two more meetings on the 12th and 18th of June.

4. Finance and Operations Report

There was no report.

Subcommittee Reports

1. Finance Subcommittee

No report at this time.

2. Personnel Subcommittee

No report at this time.

3. Building and Grounds Subcommittee

No report at this time.

4. Curriculum Subcommittee

No report at this time.

5. Policy Subcommittee

No report at this time.

Motions and Resolutions

1. School Committee Regular Session Meeting Schedule for 2025-2026

Vice Chair Cruz made a motion to approve the School Committee Regular Session Meeting Schedule for 2025-2026 . Member Cornell seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Letter in Support of H. 3905 - An Act Authorizing the City of Salem to Employ Automated Enforcement of Speed Limit Violations in Designated School Zones within the City of Salem Transfer Request

Mayor Pangallo said that this was the home rule petition passed by the City Council earlier in the year. It is the fourth time that they passed it and sent it to legislature. It is going before the Joint Committee on Transportation on June 3rd. Mayor Pangallo continued that this is an authorization to submit a letter drafted by Member Cornell. Member Cornell said she used the Mayor's letter in support as a model and made it more specific to the work that has been done in the past year, particularly in regard to the cameras on buses.

Member Cornell made a motion to approve the letter. Member Miranda seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Vice Chair Cruz invited School Committee members who may want to testify in person in Boston.

3. Policy 3204: Lease and Rental of School Facilities - Second Reading

Member Cornell said that she appreciated the work of the pastors and churches. Member Cornell added that it is the responsibility of the School Committee to represent all public schools students and families who have the expectation that the work of churches remain separate from the work of Salem Public Schools. Even if the work is happening after school hours, the broader Salem Public Schools community is in the buildings after school and on weekends. Member Cornell said that the School Committee has tried to be really consistent with regard to not recognizing religious holidays or celebrations in school, and this brings it into alignment with a more consistent perspective with regard to policies around religious-based organizations, celebrations and holidays in the schools.

Member Cornell continued that this is a good opportunity for churches and pastors to get some guidance from the City around possible alternative venues because they do a lot of great work for the students in Salem. The Mayor's and the City's recommitment to the Children's Alliance underscores the fact that the City is invested in making sure that there are partnerships with all who are serving children.

Member Cornell made a motion to approve Policy 3204: Lease and Rental of School Facilities for second reading. Member Miranda seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

- 4. Policy 6402: Time and Location of School Committee Meetings - Second Reading**
Member Cornell made a motion to approve Policy 6402: Time and Location of School Committee Meetings for second reading. Member Miranda seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Announcements

Superintendent Zrike announced that there may be a change in the 2025-2026 School Committee meeting dates because of observances. Superintendent Zrike added that on Wednesday, June 11, the baseball team will be playing in Hyannis and New Liberty Innovation will be having their graduation. Member Miranda announced that June is PRIDE month and voiced her support for those who identify as LGBTQIA+ . Superintendent Zrike added that the next School Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 17 and with a reception for retirees which will begin at 6:15 pm. Salem Public Schools will be participating in the North Shore PRIDE parade on June 28th at 11:00 am. Superintendent Zrike also stated that he would be forwarding to the School Committee members a speech that was written by a student at the senior solstice last Friday about inclusivity.

Adjournment

Member Miranda made a motion to adjourn at 8:17 pm. Member Campbell seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,

Shirley Dorai

Executive Assistant to the School Committee & Superintendent