

**Minutes of the Regular Session
of the Salem School Committee
Monday, October 6, 2025
Rm. 227, 29 Highland Ave.
Hybrid Meeting**

Members Present: Mayor Pangallo, Vice Chair Cruz, AJ Hoffman, Beth Anne Cornell, Mary Manning and Veronica Miranda

Others in Attendance: Superintendent Stephen Zrike, Deputy Superintendent Carbone and Assistant Superintendent Pauley

Members Absent: Amanda Campbell

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 Miranda made a motion to approve the agenda. Member Cornell seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Member Campbell ABSENT

Member Cornell voted YES

Vice Chair Cruz voted YES

Member Hoffman voted YES

Member Manning ABSENT

Member Miranda voted YES

Mayor Pangallo voted YES

Motion passed with 5 votes in favor and 2 absent.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes of Regular School Committee Meeting held on September 24, 2025
2. Approval of Field Trip to Hershey and Philadelphia, PA for Salem High School Music students on May 15-18, 2026
3. Approval of Field Trip to Cape Cod Fairgrounds for Salem High School Varsity Boys Cross Country Team on October 12-13, 2025
4. Approval of FY26 Warrants:
 1. 09/25/2025 - \$732,520.30

Member Cornell made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Member Miranda seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Member Campbell ABSENT

Member Cornell voted YES

Vice Chair Cruz voted YES

Member Hoffman voted YES

Member Manning ABSENT

Member Miranda voted YES

Mayor Pangallo voted YES

Motion passed with 5 votes in favor and 2 absent.

Student Representative Report

Student Representative Sula mentioned some of the SAT and Preliminary SAT dates at the Salem High School. Student Representative Sula informed the School Committee that she joined the State Student Advisory Council to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). Student Representative Sula said that the Advisory Council heard about projects for seniors, assessments and tests that might be implemented, portfolios for work, competency determinations in high schools as well as classes, internships and activities that neighboring school districts are conducting.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Zrike spoke about the MCAS achievement and accountability which was divided into two parts. The first part for Grades 3-8 was presented at the meeting and the second part for high school grades will be presented at the next meeting.

1. Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) Update

Superintendent Zrike presented the update. In response to Member Miranda, Superintendent Zrike said dual language schools are not compared to other dual language schools but rather, they are compared to all other schools.

Deputy Superintendent Carbone and Executive Director of Academics, Sonia Lowe, continued the presentation. Member Cornell asked to compare the district's disproportionality with other gateway cities.

In response to Member Cornell, Deputy Superintendent Carbone said that the schools are using the same materials except for some schools such as the innovation schools. Deputy Superintendent Carbone continued that there are probably differences as to the degree in which these materials are used in different classrooms. In response to Vice Chair Cruz, Superintendent Zrike said that the district is looking to learn from other schools who have the same demographics and good results.

In response to Member Hoffman, Deputy Superintendent Carbone said civics is being taught in schools from elementary to middle school. In response to Member Miranda, Deputy Superintendent Carbone said that all MCAS assessments are computer based.

Superintendent Zrike announced that there are two consultants working on the elementary school reconfiguration to gather data from stakeholders. They will present their findings to the School Committee in November. Superintendent Zrike also said that this is the last year of the strategic plan as it ends in 2026. There are funds to work on a new strategic plan with the same consultant who helped with the current plan. There are also stipends available for those who engage in this effort with the goal of delivering an updated strategic plan by the end of this school year for the start of the 2026-2027 school year. Superintendent Zrike added that a safety webinar was scheduled for the community on the following day in collaboration with the Salem Police Department.

Another matter highlighted by Superintendent Zrike is that the district is in preliminary discussions with Salem State College about potentially relocating the New Liberty Innovation School to the Salem State campus. Mayor Pangallo added that it would be a great opportunity for the students. Member Cornell suggested that the November School Committee meeting should be advertised so that the community is aware.

Member Manning joined the meeting at 7:40 pm.

2. Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Update

Superintendent Zrike provided the update. Superintendent Zrike added that the design for the new high school building is on display at the schools and Central Office.

In response to Member Hoffman, Mayor Pangallo said that the High School Building Committee is currently discussing the types of fields, turf, grass, lights, scoreboard, bleacher storage as well as bathroom access.

3. Finance and Operations Report

Assistant Superintendent Pauley presented an update on operations.

1. Budget Transfer Request

Assistant Superintendent Pauley explained that the transfer is from a personnel line to a non-personnel line for \$6,000.

Superintendent Zrike announced that Operations Hero, the facilities application, is going to be made available for high school students through the ClassLink site so that they can report on anything that might need to be fixed. Assistant Superintendent Pauley added that this initiative will be rolled out in October once the guidance for the high school students is finalized.

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

Member Cornell reminded everyone that the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) is working with the subcommittee to review the policy manual. The liaison from MASC provided the subcommittee with the first update at the most recent meeting. MASC is working on reconfiguring the numbering system as well as suggestions to adopt Massachusetts General Law language. Member Cornell added that the MASC liaison will be at a future School Committee meeting to explain a new approach to reviewing and updating policies because it will not happen one policy at a time but rather in sections unless there are policies which are of particular concern or interest to the School Committee or the public.

Motions and Resolutions

1. Budget Transfer Request

Member Cornell made a motion to approve the budget transfer request. Member Miranda seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Member Campbell ABSENT

Member Cornell voted YES

Vice Chair Cruz voted YES

Member Hoffman voted YES

Member Manning voted YES

Member Miranda voted YES

Mayor Pangallo voted YES

Motion passed with 6 votes in favor and 1 absent.

Announcements

Mayor Pangallo said that the City Council had approved the bond order of \$3.6 million for the Bates Elementary School's roof repair project and it now awaits a second vote which is scheduled to take place later in the week. This project is in the accelerated repair program with the MSBA. Mayor Pangallo also thanked everyone who participated in the recent haunted happenings parade. Member Cornell said that the air conditioning is always on in the Bertram locker room and bathrooms.

Adjournment

Member Miranda made a motion to adjourn at 8:09 pm. Member Cornell seconded. A roll call vote was taken. A roll call vote was taken.

Member Campbell ABSENT

Member Cornell voted YES

Vice Chair Cruz voted YES

Member Hoffman voted YES

Member Manning voted YES

Member Miranda voted YES

Mayor Pangallo voted YES

Motion passed with 6 votes in favor and 1 absent.

Respectfully submitted by,

Shirley Dorai

Executive Assistant to the School Committee & Superintendent