

**Minutes of the
Salem School Committee Retreat
Monday, February 2, 2026
Rm. 227, 29 Highland Ave.**

Members Present: Mayor Pangallo, Vice Chair Cornell, Yamily Byas, AJ Hoffman, Veronica Miranda and Megan Stott

Others in Attendance: Superintendent Stephen Zrike and Deputy Superintendent Carbone

Members Absent: Mary Manning

1. Call the Meeting to Order

Mayor Pangallo called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm.

2. Discussion of School Committee Norms

Member Miranda presented the slides on the School Committee norm themes. School Committee members worked in smaller groups to discuss the norms and then came together to voice their thoughts. Points raised included being respectful, hearing everyone's opinion, avoiding lobbying, impact of unwritten rules, number of times each member is allowed to talk, asking for information prior to the meeting so that the administration has time to prepare, informing the Superintendent about visits to schools, not belittling of staff or other members, importance of apologizing, transparency, communication, centering marginalized voices, not assuming what others may feel or think, equity and accountability.

3. Discussion and Planning of 2026 School Committee Schedule

The topic of having one meeting a month instead of two meetings was raised. Points about why this would be better in terms of time spent on preparing for meetings was highlighted. Reasons for having two meetings a month except for the summer or shorter months included better engagement with the community and a consistency as well as quicker facilitation of three readings for policies and other items which may require three readings.

Having an earlier meeting time of 6:00 pm instead of 7:00 pm was also discussed. There were also suggestions to have subcommittee meetings in the chambers and rotate the location of School Committee meetings.

4. Discussion and Planning of 2026 School Committee Agenda

There was a discussion about having regular meetings and special meetings where only specific items would be discussed. School Committee members engaged in an exercise to

identify topics that were top, medium and least priority.

The order of importance identified by School Committee members were as follows:

1. Dual language location and long-term planning
2. Community engagement
3. Essex North Shore Agricultural & Technical School contract and overlapping programs
4. Bentley building investment
5. Salem Prep High School and New Liberty Innovation School location and long term goals
6. Future planning for Salem Public Schools including mergers and changes
7. Updates on support for college application process, metrics, exit surveys and college acceptances
8. Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) and PreK partnerships in light of the strategic plan
9. New strategic plan and closeout of old strategic plan
10. Progress on discipline disparities, educator diversity and chronic absenteeism
11. Transportation contract

The subject of leases was also raised.

5. Discussion and Planning of School Committee Communication Practices

A suggestion was made for a communication chart so that School Committee members and families would know the process for raising matters to the relevant officials in order for it to be addressed.

The topics identified for the next meeting were School Committee norms, agenda items for the 2026 calendar year and newsletter.

6. Adjournment

Vice Chair Cornell made a motion to made a motion to adjourn at 8:48 pm. Member Miranda seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,

Shirley Dorai

Executive Assistant to the School Committee & Superintendent