

**Minutes of the Special Session  
of the Salem School Committee  
Monday, April 13, 2026  
Rm. 227, 29 Highland Ave.**

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

**Others in Attendance:** Interim Superintendent Carbone and Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley

**Members Absent:** Mary Manning

**Call of Meeting to Order**

Mayor Pangallo called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

**Discussion of FY27 Budget Public Hearing**

Interim Superintendent Carbone provided a slide presentation. Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley continued the slide presentation.

In response to Vice Chair Cornell, Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley said that personnel spending varies depending on the programs in the school and although the personnel figures could be provided, it might not be very useful because some schools may have more senior staff members who have a different salary. Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley continued that the non-personnel spending across schools was provided because that has felt particularly inequitable and the district wants to ensure that schools had the resources they needed.

Member Miranda queried about the reduction of the multilingual learners budget from the FY26 adopted budget of about \$700,000 to about \$348,000 in the FY27 recommended budget. Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley said that is the result of the four multilingual coaches coming off the budget because three positions were cut and one is being moved onto a grant. There was clarification that the reduction of multilingual students is greater than 5% because the figures provided previously were based on the October numbers and not March. Member Miranda suggested not taking so much from the cost center. Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley said that since it is a very small cost center, removing four salaries is significant.

Vice Chair Cornell asked about the decrease in special education positions when the number of special education students is on the rise. Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley said that in the overall budget, there was a reduction of 5.5 special education positions including 2.5 at the merged school. Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley noted that 9 positions were added to special education this year and therefore the district has more positions than those that were cut. Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley acknowledged that every cut especially in a population that is growing, is a serious one. Executive Director of Special Education, Jennifer Doucette-Ly commented that 1.5 Special Education teachers positions were cut from the

merged school based on the number of students of each school. Carlton Innovation School had lower numbers of case loads than Saltonstall School. So with the merger, the case loads for teachers will be in line with the rest of the district. Ms. Doucette-Ly continued that the reduction of the paraprofessional is due to the merged school needing only two paraprofessionals as the students do not need the paraprofessional support for the entire day. Ms. Doucette-Ly added that the change from needing a social skills teacher to a behavior specialist is due to the changing needs of students. The reduction of the 1:1 nurse was because one of the medically fragile student's circumstances changed to not needing a nurse on a daily basis and therefore, the position could be a contract position. Ms. Doucette-Ly said that through efficiencies realized in the workflow at Central Office, one clerk position was not needed anymore.

Member Miranda asked about engagement with the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) about the budget. Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley said that they met with SEPAC in February and the conversation focused on the district's practice of shifting positions based on student needs. Ms. Doucette-Ly commented that SEPAC has been more vocal and participated more in the process this year as they did send emails as well as ask questions. Ms. Doucette-Ly added that they understood that the population needs is changing and supports have been shifted accordingly. Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley commented that the Parent Advisory Group had raised their concerns for special education services. Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley said that the response provided was that positions or classrooms would be added following student needs while maintaining equitability across the district.

In response to Mayor Pangallo, Interim Superintendent Carbone said that one multilingual coach will be at SHS and another at the Bentley Academy Innovation School.

#### **Surplus Curriculum Items from Schools**

Interim Superintendent Carbone said that typically, this matter would be brought to the Curriculum Subcommittee but in the interest of time so that the facilities personnel can work on removing these items during the upcoming break, this matter is being brought to the School Committee. Interim Superintendent Carbone provided a brief description of the items to be discarded as listed in the supporting document provided in the packet. Much of the items are from the libraries, outdated materials, as well as broken and damaged supplies. Interim Superintendent Carbone continued that the district has been investing in the libraries with some rollover title one money.

Member Hoffman made a motion to approve the declaration of surplus curriculum items from the schools. Member Miranda seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **Superintendent Screening Committee Charge**

Member Hoffman said that there were over 90 applicants for the Superintendent Screening Committee and that the Ad-Hoc Superintendent Search Subcommittee took a lot of time looking through the applications to make thoughtful, inclusive choices that reflect the community. Mayor Pangallo added that the charge of the Superintendent Screening Committee was provided in the packet.

Vice Chair Cornell made a motion to approve the Superintendent Screening Committee Charge. Member Miranda seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Superintendent Screening Committee Membership Approval**

Mayor Pangallo said there was an incredible volume of interest in serving on this important committee from across the district and the community. Mayor Pangallo thanked the Ad -Hoc Superintendent Search Subcommittee for putting together the recommended Superintendent Screening Committee member list that was presented.

Member Miranda expressed gratitude to be able to work on the Ad -Hoc Superintendent Search Subcommittee. Member Miranda appreciated Mayor Pangallo's trust in the subcommittee to create an initial list of the Superintendent Screening Committee members. The Ad -Hoc Superintendent Search Subcommittee members combed through approximately 95 applications and made a collaborative effort to determine a membership list that reflected the values of the school community with special emphasis on voices that are often left out of such important decisions. Member Miranda continued that there was a need to prioritize scheduling availability because of the tight timeline for this process. Member Miranda said that the Ad -Hoc Superintendent Search Subcommittee members prioritized staff working most closely with multilingual students, students with higher needs and disabilities. The focus was on those whose voices are often missing from these decisions and whose voices often go unheard. Caregivers and community members who wrote thoughtfully about why they wanted to be a part of the committee were also prioritized. Member Miranda added that it is appropriate to have the teachers union president on the committee as they work extremely closely with the superintendent and is an invaluable leader in the district for all educators whether they are in the union or not. Member Miranda was in favor of adding the Salem Teachers Union (STU) President, Ann Berman, to the list.

Vice Chair Cornell thanked the members of the Ad -Hoc Superintendent Search Subcommittee. Vice Chair Cornell was impressed with the process to choose members who are really reflective of the student population, particularly the most vulnerable and those who are often not heard. Vice Chair Cornell made a recommendation to add Yamilis Cruz, Assistant Principal at the Bentley Academy Innovation School, who is also a member of the Salem Administrators Association.

Member Miranda inquired that going forward if a member or officer of the Salem Administrators Association should also be on the committee as set by the precedent in 2019 where the STU President was part of the committee. Mayor Pangallo was in favor of preserving some degree of flexibility as the circumstances warrant with each occasion. Mayor Pangallo continued that it is important that educators, administrators and the workforce of the district have some important voice to share on this process as do the caregivers. Member Miranda said that the question raised was more about the process. Mayor Pangallo said that in terms of process, a different approach that could be taken is to identify certain categories of stakeholder groups that should be represented. Mayor Pangallo said it could be discussed and it might be helpful to have something in writing. Vice Chair Cornell said she was uncertain whether she

would be in favor of setting up particular policies around hiring because this is the most important thing that a School Committee does and each individual member has to set their own priorities in the same way that this School Committee did. Vice Chair Cornell did not want to get in the way of the priorities of any given committee at any given time. Member Miranda agreed and appreciated the freedom to carry out the responsibility.

Vice Chair Cornell made a motion to accept the recommended Superintendent Screening Committee membership list with the addition of Ann Berman and Yamilis Cruz. Member Byas seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **Appointment of Superintendent Screening Committee Chair**

Vice Chair Cornell made a motion to appoint Member Hoffman as the Superintendent Screening Committee Chair. Member Stott seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

In response to Member Stott, Mayor Pangallo said that the next step is the first meeting of the Superintendent Screening Committee on April 15th. The job application closes on April 16th.

#### **Dissolving Ad-Hoc Superintendent Search Subcommittee**

Member Miranda made a motion to dissolve the Ad-Hoc Superintendent Search Subcommittee. Vice Chair Cornell seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **Adjournment**

Member Miranda made a motion to adjourn at 8:35 pm. Member Cornell seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,

***Shirley Dorai***

Executive Assistant to the School Committee & Superintendent