

**Minutes of the Regular Session
of the Salem School Committee
Tuesday, May 26, 2026
Hybrid Meeting**

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

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

Members Absent: None

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 Hoffman seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Vice Chair Cornell voted YES

Member Byas voted YES

Member Hoffman voted YES

Member Manning voted YES

Member Miranda voted YES

Member Stott voted YES

Mayor Pangallo voted YES

Motion passed unanimously.

Member Miranda made a motion to take out of order the student presentation. Member Hoffman seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Vice Chair Cornell voted YES

Member Byas voted YES

Member Hoffman voted YES

Member Manning voted YES

Member Miranda voted YES

Member Stott voted YES

Mayor Pangallo voted YES

Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Kara Bixby - Carlton Innovation School Caregiver

Ms. Bixby said that she was part of the Innovation Committee as a caregiver representative. Ms. Bixby continued that there was disappointment from the Carlton families around some of the changes related to the innovation plan. However, by working together, they received a lot of positive feedback. Ms. Bixby added that knowing the staffing situation, capacity and the future financial outlook, it is a strong plan and it adds exciting new things. Ms. Bixby requested the School Committee to consider these points as they review the plan and vote on it.

Approval of Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes of the Regular School Committee Meeting held on May 11, 2026
2. Approval of Field Trip to Providence, RI for Salem High School students on August 28-31, 2026
3. Donations
4. Approval of FY26 Warrants:
 1. 4/30/2026 - \$641,093.61 (Corrected)
 2. 5/7/2026 - \$405,053.84
 3. 5/14/2026 - \$384,440.18

Vice Chair Cornell made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Member Hoffman seconded.

A roll call vote was taken.

Vice Chair Cornell voted YES

Member Byas voted YES

Member Hoffman voted YES

Member Manning voted YES

Member Miranda voted YES

Member Stott voted YES

Mayor Pangallo voted YES

Motion passed unanimously.

Student Representative Report

Student Representative Sula said that senior celebrations were held last week along with the Student Advisory Committee elections. The election results will be coming out soon. Student Representative Sula continued that at the last Student Advisory Committee meeting, the students met with Member Hoffman to discuss the superintendent search and the ideal qualities that students tend to look for in a superintendent. Other items that were mentioned included the upcoming MCAS test as well as the last academic week for seniors.

Superintendent's Report

Interim Superintendent Carbone recapped the good news shared by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) last week when they released charter school cap rankings. Interim Superintendent Carbone highlighted that annually DESE ranks districts based on a metric of two years of combined Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) data. This list is used to authorize charter school seat expansions in districts that fall in the lowest 10%. This year, Salem Public Schools (SPS) ranking improved from 47 to 84 out of 287 districts, which means the district moved from the 16th percentile to the

29th percentile. Salem's ranking, in context to other gateway cities, was the highest except for three other gateway cities which were Malden, Attleboro and Quincy. For MCAS growth, Salem ranked the highest out of all of the gateway cities, jumping from 31st to 216th, meaning Salem outperformed 215 school districts in the Commonwealth. Interim Superintendent Carbone said that this is another strong indicator that the district is moving in the right direction and it's really a reflection of the impactful work that educators do every day from PreK to Grade 12.

Interim Superintendent Carbone mentioned she was away from the office the previous week and commended Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley's, principals' and Central Office administrators for their leadership during that time. Interim Superintendent Carbone noted the Student Voice Project and Future Educator Signing Day which took place the previous week. Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley provided more information regarding these two events as well as Unified Sports Day. Interim Superintendent Carbone said that the rolling rally would be taking place on May 30th to recognize student athletes, marching and jazz bands. Interim Superintendent added that the high school graduations will be taking place the following week.

1. Student Presentation on Sarah Parker Remond

Interim Superintendent Carbone introduced Carlton Innovation School educator, Kate Bouffard and students who provided a presentation on their research presentation.

Members of the School Committee commended the students on their research and presentation. When asked, the students provided their thoughts on naming the school, the Sarah Parker Remond School.

Member Miranda made a motion to take a 3-minute recess. Member Hoffman seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Innovation Plan Presentation for Sarah Parker Remond School

Principals Jellison and Weaver presented the innovation plan for the Sarah Parker Remond School. Caregivers Liz Urena and Meghan Stasio shared their experience being on the Innovation Committee.

In response to Member Miranda, Principal Jellison said that the trimester enrollment is not practiced anymore and that with the new plan, families missed the trimester transitions mostly. Principal Jellison added that there is a plan for the impacted students. In response to Vice Chair Cornell, Principal Jellison said that individual student data is monitored every day and that it drives instruction in order to be successful in the classroom. Principal Weaver added that there are plans for transition students and one-to-one conversations with caregivers.

In response to Member Stott, Principals Jellison and Weaver indicated that special education would not just be provided during the "Core + More" Block. Member Hoffman said that the outside learning immersion is exciting and looked forward to having students speak about their experience at the School Committee meeting. Principal Jellison provided an example of teachers and students who are already practicing

learning walks. Member Hoffman commended the use of the word inclusion because everyone's voices need to be heard. Vice Chair Cornell said that this is a nice transition for students going to Collins Middle School. Vice Chair Cornell added that Carlton has had the innovation status for about 16 years and that it is easy to lose sight that the status exists in order to create innovative programming that can then be adopted by other elementary schools. Vice Chair Cornell commended the Innovation Committee for taking a hard look at aspects that worked or needed to be changed or dropped from the plan. Vice Chair Cornell appreciated seeing the evolution in the innovation program for the new merged school.

Member Byas and Mayor Pangallo thanked the innovation team for their work. Mayor Pangallo added that it is challenging to take on an innovation plan while also planning for the new school, and dealing with the day-to-day operations of school heading towards the end of the school year. Mayor Pangallo asked if the community learning experiences were measured in terms of participation metrics or the quality of the outcomes. Principal Weaver responded that student participation and outcomes connected to the learning in the classroom after having hands-on experience outside the classroom are both important. Interim Superintendent Carbone thanked the team for being open to feedback and incorporating revisions. A 3-day retreat is being planned for August for the faculty team building and planning. Interim Superintendent Carbone said that a public hearing for the innovation plan is scheduled for June 1st and the vote will be on June 8th.

3. Rescheduling the May 13th Professional Development Half Day at Collins in June

Interim Superintendent Carbone made a proposal on behalf of the Collins Middle School Principal, Gavin Softic, to reschedule the professional development (PD) half day for the Collins Middle School only. The half day PD was cancelled and the school day was extended to a full day on Wednesday, May 13 for the Massachusetts State Trooper Kevin Trainor's funeral procession services. An expert who had worked with the Bentley Academy Innovation School's dual language program extensively was coming to work with the Collins Middle School team around the launch of the dual language program and this was not just for the 6th grade teachers but the whole school. Interim Superintendent Carbone continued that this would be launched in the summer and that a retreat in the summer was also being planned. The half day PD would entail some pre-work needed for the launch. The survey done by Principal Softic had 148 responses, where there were 9 no responses and 139 yes responses, which showed the overwhelming support from families for rescheduling the half day PD. So the proposal is for the committee to consider and vote on an adjustment to the Collins calendar which would make a half day PD for students and a full day for staff on June 11th.

4. Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Update

Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley said the Salem High School Building Committee met on May 12th and discussed the design development phase which is on track with the process laid out by the MSBA. The local funding authorization which passed on May 5th and an update from the finance working group with regard to approving the project invoices were noted along with future meeting dates. The summer meetings will be held

via Zoom and in-person meetings will resume in September. Member Stott mentioned that various committees are being formed to work on the different design elements including branding of a witch logo to use at high school.

5. Finance and Operations Report

1. Budget Transfer Requests

Interim Deputy Superintendent Pauley explained the budget transfer requests from personnel to non-personnel expenses.

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.

6. Superintendent Screening Committee

Member Hoffman said that the last meeting for the Superintendent Screening Committee was held on May 22nd where there was deliberation and recommendations were made for candidates who would move to the next phase. Once there is confirmation from the recommended candidates, the next step would be to bring the matter to the School Committee.

Motions and Resolutions

1. Rescheduling the May 13th Professional Development Half Day at Collins in June

Vice Chair Cornell made a motion to approve the rescheduling of the May 13th professional development half day at Collins Middle School to June 11th. Member Miranda seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Vice Chair Cornell voted YES

Member Byas voted YES

Member Hoffman voted YES

Member Manning voted YES

Member Miranda voted YES

Member Stott voted YES
Mayor Pangallo voted YES
Motion passed unanimously.

2. Approval of Budget Transfer Requests

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

Vice Chair Cornell voted YES
Member Byas voted YES
Member Hoffman voted YES
Member Manning voted YES
Member Miranda voted YES
Member Stott voted YES
Mayor Pangallo voted YES
Motion passed unanimously.

3. Dissolving Superintendent Screening Committee

Member Byas made a motion to approve the dissolving of the Superintendent Screening Committee. Member Miranda seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Vice Chair Cornell voted YES
Member Byas voted YES
Member Hoffman voted YES
Member Manning voted YES
Member Miranda voted YES
Member Stott voted YES
Mayor Pangallo voted YES
Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Pangallo thanked everyone who served the Superintendent Screening Committee. Member Miranda expressed gratitude to colleagues on the School Committee but also everyone in the Superintendent Screening Committee for making hard decisions in the best interest of the students and educators. Member Hoffman said that it was a great learning experience for all of us and that it was a challenging process. Member Hoffman thanked everyone who stepped up and had their voices heard. Member Hoffman added that members of the community had also sent questions and that it was very supportive too.

Newsletter Items

Vice Chair Cornell noted the district rankings based on MCAS data, highlights of the Sarah Parker Remond innovation plan and dissolution of the Superintendent Screening Committee. For upcoming items, Vice Chair Cornell highlighted the pathways and pipeline to teaching, superintendent candidate finalists, and technology in schools with a specific focus on the elementary grades. Interim Superintendent Carbone added that the New Liberty innovation plan renewal would also be brought to the School Committee. Member Miranda said that the college

and career counseling presentation from the last meeting could be mentioned as well. Member Stott mentioned the student presentations.

Announcements

Member Hoffman said that NAGLY (the North Shore Alliance for GLBTQ+ Youth) will be having their Queer Prom on June 6th at Ames Hall, Salem YMCA and it is open to youth ages 14-23. Member Hoffman also had an announcement from NAGLY regarding a bill passed by Congress which is going forward to the Senate which is harmful to non-binary and trans students. Member Hoffman supports these students and read aloud the announcement, "Forcing schools to out students who wish to use different names or pronouns does nothing but harm children. Most trans kids tell their parents that they are trans, but some keep it a secret out of fear for how their families will react. Seventy percent of trans youth who experience homelessness do so because they have been thrown out onto the street by their families. When schools are forced to out kids to their families, trans kids do not stop being trans. They just remain silent. The presence of supportive adults in the lives of trans kids is literally lifesaving. Youth who are supported are 40% less likely to make suicide attempts. The answer to kids being afraid to tell their parents who they are, is not to take away their school support. The answer is to create homes that feel safe".

In response to Member Miranda's question regarding crosswalks in conjunction Pride Month, Member Hoffman said that updates regarding the crosswalks will be sent out as soon as details are confirmed.

Adjournment

Vice Chair Cornell made a motion to adjourn at 8:27 pm. Member Hoffman seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Vice Chair Cornell voted YES

Member Byas voted YES

Member Hoffman voted YES

Member Manning voted YES

Member Miranda voted YES

Member Stott voted YES

Mayor Pangallo voted YES

Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,

Shirley Dorai

Executive Assistant to the School Committee & Superintendent