

APPROVED



## Salem Academy Charter School

### Minutes

#### Education Committee Meeting

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##### **Date and Time**

Wednesday April 9, 2025 at 8:00 AM

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The Salem Academy Charter School Education Committee will meet at 8:00 a via Zoom.

Zoom Link: <https://salemacademy.cs.zoom.us/j/9876543210>

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##### **Committee Members Present**

Amy Stewart (remote), Domina DiBiase (remote), Drea Jacobs (remote), Megan Franco (remote), Rich Cowdell (remote), Sabrina Williams (remote), Stephanie Callahan (remote)

##### **Committee Members Absent**

*None*

##### **Guests Present**

Fallon Burke

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#### **I. Opening Items**

##### **A. Record Attendance**

##### **B. Call the Meeting to Order**

Stephanie Callahan called a meeting of the Education Committee of Salem Academy Charter School to order on Wednesday Apr 9, 2025 at 8:12 AM.

### **C. Approve Minutes**

Amy Stewart made a motion to approve the minutes from Education Committee Meeting on 03-12-25.

Domina DiBiase seconded the motion.

The committee **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

## **II. DESE Competency Determination Requirement**

### **A. DESE Competency Determination Requirement Overview**

Drea Jacobs updated the committee on DESE's Competency Determination (CD) Requirement. A proposal will be brought to the Board of Trustees in April. While MCAS testing will continue, schools must decide how to determine competency internally. At SACS, the recommendation is to use course grades — aligned with mastery of standards — and predetermined performance tasks completed throughout the year, allowing for revisions. The committee discussed the challenges of developing strong tasks and the need for additional time to create them. Drea emphasized that competency determination is separate from graduation requirements, and although SACS could create its own graduation criteria, MCAS results would still be part of state accountability rankings. Staff feedback will be gathered over the next two weeks.

## **III. Education Committee Goals**

### **A. Progress Toward DESE Accountability Measures**

Drea Jacobs shared that chronic absenteeism continues to trend down based on Q3 data. The Upper School is generally on track, but meeting the goal now heavily depends on senior attendance. Several new strategies implemented in January — including an updated response protocol, strong data coordination, bi-weekly attendance meetings, and the Lower School's new advisor/advisee system — have contributed to improving attendance.

Next steps include developing a clear incentive plan for seniors, sharing 12th grade attendance data with students and families, reinforcing messaging about the impact of absences, and continuing weekly data checks across all Upper School grades. There will also be a celebration for grade 10's improvements and ongoing conversations with seniors about the importance of attendance, particularly because college acceptances are conditional.

In response to a follow-up question, Drea noted that some absences are still tied to school breaks, and attendance patterns have shifted post-COVID.

### **B.**

## **Intervention Plans**

### **Lower School**

Sabrina Williams reported that math interventions are showing positive results across grades 6–8, with more students meeting needs in small pull-out groups.

- **6th Grade:** 16 students have participated. Next step: focus on targeted support based on math exit tickets.
- **7th Grade:** 54 out of 55 students have participated since starting in Q2. Next step: prioritize small group reteaching and 1:1 conferences.
- **8th Grade:** 29 students have participated. Next step: provide targeted small-group instruction for students with consistently low scores.

While the team is unsure if they will fully meet the 5% growth target, they are confident they will see measurable improvement.

### **Upper School**

Megan Franco shared that 9th and 10th-grade students in RTI groups have all shown growth.

- **9th Grade:** Students have grown by 182 and 120 points respectively (about 100 points equals one grade level band).
- **10th Grade:** Students have grown by 263 points in Geometry, though they remain below grade level.

Next steps for 9th and 10th grade include continuing interventions, transitioning to more focus on exit tickets, and building capacity among teachers through Accessible Education co-teaching. While the goal may not be fully met, efforts are trending toward growth. Currently, there are 20 students in the intervention groups across 9th and 10th grades.

#### **Next Steps:**

Reflect on these intervention practices in a future meeting to plan for next school year.

## **C. Trustee Recruitment**

## **IV. Other Business**

### **A. Multilingual Learner Program Review**

Stephanie updated the committee on the Multilingual Learners (ML) program review. Anna Kogos, the ML Program Coordinator, oversees the program and manages all submissions.

#### **Review Process:**

Submitted artifacts based on 15 required criteria.

Submitted 8 student files in December.

Staff interviews were conducted in March.

**Preliminary Findings:**

There are two findings from the draft review:

**1. Teacher SEI Endorsements**

1. Two teachers working with ML students did not initially have their SEI endorsements.
2. Since the review, both teachers have completed their SEI endorsements.
3. This finding is expected to be removed once all final documentation is submitted.

**2. Programming for Dually Identified Students (MLs and Students with Disabilities):**

**1. ELE Criterion 5 – Program Structure/Placement:**

1. Issue: 7th and 8th grade ML students were unable to access Spanish classes due to conflicts between Learning Center services and ELD classes.
2. **DESE Recommendation:** Students requiring Learning Center support should receive ESL instruction via co-taught ELA classes rather than separate ELD classes.
3. Although the current model has produced strong academic results, adjustments will need to be made for next year to comply with DESE's recommendation.
4. The service delivery model will shift next year to address this finding.

**B. Staffing Updates**

Stephanie informed the committee that the Upper School Principal search is underway. As the process moves into the finalist round, trustee input and participation will be critical. The committee is currently gathering Education Committee members' availability for next week to support the finalist interviews.

**C. 2025 REACH for College Gala Updates**

Stephanie recommended the committee to buy tickets, share the event, etc. to help make it successful.

**V. Closing Items**

**A. Adjourn Meeting**

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:13 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Fallon Burke

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**Documents used during the meeting**

*None*