

APPROVED



## Salem Academy Charter School

### Minutes

#### Education Committee Meeting

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

Tuesday November 18, 2025 at 8:00 AM

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The Salem Academy Charter School Education Committee will meet via Zoom.

Zoom Link: <https://salemacademy.zoom.us/j/9825468375>

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

Amy Stewart (remote), Domina DiBiase (remote), Drea Jacobs (remote), Melissa Lassen (remote), Rich Cowdell (remote), Stephanie Callahan (remote)

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

Sabrina Williams

##### **Guests Present**

Fallon Burke

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

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

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

Rich Cowdell called a meeting of the Education Committee of Salem Academy Charter School to order on Tuesday Nov 18, 2025 at 8:05 AM.

### **C. Approve Minutes**

Domina DiBiase made a motion to approve the minutes from Education Committee Meeting on 10-21-25.

Amy Stewart seconded the motion.

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

## **II. Education Committee Reports**

### **A. Q1 Academic Report**

Drea Jacobs presented the Q1 Academic Report and highlighted a key cohort shift in the 9th grade. Of the 72 current 9th-grade students, 32 are new to Salem Academy, representing a significantly larger incoming group than in prior years, which typically include approximately 20 new 9th-grade students. This cohort change was noted as an important contextual factor when reviewing academic performance and planning appropriate academic and social-emotional supports for the year.

The committee also discussed the implementation of the MTSS framework and whether sufficient time has been allocated for effective rollout. Rich asked if there is adequate time to support MTSS implementation. Drea confirmed that time has been intentionally reallocated to allow for greater focus during Friday IDP sessions, noting that this adjustment was made with advocacy from Melissa. Rich expressed support for dedicating approximately 30 minutes of that time specifically to data review to strengthen implementation and instructional decision-making.

Rich and Drea discussed an upcoming IDP session focused on sharing instructional best practices. The committee noted excitement around the use of IXL, a computer-based program aligned with MAP data, as a tool to support differentiated skill-based instruction and enhance teachers' ability to target individual student needs.

Lastly, the committee reviewed factors for contributing to 8th-to-9th grade attrition and related obstacles.

### **B. US Q1 Academic Report**

Melissa Lassen shared PSAT and SAT assessment data with the committee. SAT results are currently at an all-time low; however, junior-year performance shows a rebound compared to last year. Despite year-over-year declines, the SAT remains an important metric for reflection and measurement. Rich Cowdell acknowledged the significant drop from the previous year while noting the encouraging rebound trend. Melissa emphasized the cumulative academic and contextual challenges students face as they progress into their junior and senior years, which continue to impact assessment outcomes.

### **III. School Council**

#### **A. School Council Updates**

Drea provided an update on School Council membership. Student representatives will include one 12th-grade student and one 9th-grade student. Staff representatives have been confirmed as Kim Crossman and Ari Ferreras. Parent participation is pending final schedule confirmations, and the committee noted that recruitment of a community representative is still needed.

### **IV. Education Committee Goals**

#### **A. 2026 Goal Setting**

Rich proposed several draft goals for committee feedback. The committee agreed to continue an accountability-focused goal, with Stephanie suggesting maintaining similar language and setting a 10% target, which Domina supported. Drea noted that this goal already encompasses multiple priorities, with other focus areas serving as strategies beneath it.

The committee also discussed creating a goal centered on implementing a strong, functioning MTSS framework that addresses both academic and behavioral supports; it was acknowledged that the Lower School and Upper School are at different stages of implementation, which is acceptable. A proposed goal related to an impactful School Council was deemed unnecessary as a formal Board goal, as this work is already underway. Attendance and support for the lowest-performing student subgroup, covering achievement, growth, and attendance, will be incorporated into the primary accountability goal rather than stand-alone goals.

The committee aims to approve final goals at the December meeting. As a next step, Rich, Stephanie, and Drea will meet to finalize goal language.

### **V. Other Business**

#### **A. Development Update**

Stephanie shared a brief development update, including an overview of recent Emergency Fund activity. She also highlighted upcoming key fundraising dates, noting the Save the Date for GivingTuesday and the REACH for College Gala.

### **VI. 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 9:08 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Stephanie Callahan