

APPROVED



Salem Academy Charter School

Minutes

Governance Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Friday January 9, 2026 at 8:00 AM

The Salem Academy Charter School Governance Committee will via Zoom.

Zoom Link: <https://salemacademy.cs.zoom.us/join/91234567890>

Committee Members Present

Beth O'Donnell (remote), Jeff Whitmore (remote), Rich Cowdell (remote), Stephanie Callahan (remote), Steve Palmer (remote)

Committee Members Absent

None

Guests Present

Fallon Burke (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Jeff Whitmore called a meeting of the Governance Committee of Salem Academy Charter School to order on Friday Jan 9, 2026 at 8:03 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

Rich Cowdell made a motion to approve the minutes from Governance Committee Meeting on 10-10-25.

Jeff Whitmore seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Stephanie Callahan	Aye
Rich Cowdell	Aye
Jeff Whitmore	Aye
Steve Palmer	Aye
Beth O'Donnell	Abstain

D. Approve Minutes

Rich Cowdell made a motion to approve the minutes from Governance Committee Meeting on 12-12-25.

Jeff Whitmore seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Stephanie Callahan	Aye
Rich Cowdell	Aye
Jeff Whitmore	Aye
Steve Palmer	Aye
Beth O'Donnell	Abstain

II. Governance

A. New Trustee Onboarding

The committee discussed plans for the New Trustee Onboarding Session scheduled for January 28, 2026. Mike Mizzoni, a representative from BoardOnTrack, will facilitate the session using the orientation slide deck from last year. The committee expressed a preference to hold the session in person, contingent on participant availability. Fallon will confirm attendance and provide an update to the committee next week.

The committee also reviewed proposed mentor assignments for new trustees. Jeff will reach out to prospective mentors to confirm their willingness to serve. The proposed pairings are as follows: Nohara will mentor Giselle, Robert will mentor Ilene, Chris will mentor Blake, Domina will mentor Beth, and Jeff will mentor Imelda. The committee will review the draft mentorship description in advance of the February meeting, with the intent to approve it at that time.

B.

2026 Goal Setting

The committee reviewed progress toward the 2025 goals and discussed several proposed goals for 2026. One key goal is to grow the Board of Trustees to 15 members by December 31, 2026. The committee also reflected on the implementation of BoardOnTrack in 2025 and identified opportunities to make better use of the platform in 2026. While meeting management features are now well established at the board-wide level, the committee noted that committee chairs could more fully utilize additional tools, such as goal tracking and other governance features.

Another proposed goal is to complete a board self-assessment by April 30, 2026. Based on the results, the board would offer two or more professional development or capacity-building sessions, with each trustee participating in at least one. The committee also discussed planning a board retreat between April and September 2026 in collaboration with the Executive Committee and the Executive Director. Finally, the committee reaffirmed the goal of maintaining ongoing communication with DESE regarding bylaws until formal approval is received. The remaining goals will be taken up for discussion at the next meeting.

C. Trustee Recruitment

D. Public Comment Policy

The committee will discuss the policy in depth at next month's meeting.

III. Other Business

A. Development Update

Fallon shared a Development update. We are kicking off 2026 by preparing for the REACH for College Gala on May 1, 2026. We need the Board's help. Stay tuned for ways to get involved.

IV. 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 9:03 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Fallon Burke

Documents used during the meeting

- New Trustee Orientation Agenda 1.28.26 DRAFT.pdf
- Salem Academy New Member Orientation 2025.pdf
- New Trustee Orientation 2026 (1).pdf
- SACS Public Comment Policy DRAFT.pdf