

APPROVED



Salem Academy Charter School

Minutes

Development Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday May 6, 2026 at 8:00 AM

Location

Zoom: https://salemacademy.cs.zoom.us/join/0SEL6L1OT2C6nQ-O8wh_pg

The Salem Academy Charter School Development Committee will meet at 8:00 AM.

Committee Members Present

Fallon Burke (remote), Giselle Ortega (remote), Laurie Kennedy (remote)

Committee Members Absent

Nohara Lopez-Okoli, Stephanie Callahan

Guests Present

Nina Cohen (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Laurie Kennedy called a meeting of the Development Committee of Salem Academy Charter School to order on Wednesday May 6, 2026 at 8:02 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

The committee will approve the minutes at next month's meeting.

II. Development

A. Development Report

Fallon Burke presented the Development Report as of May 5, 2026. Preliminary totals indicate that the Gala has raised over \$66,000, and the Annual Fund has reached \$133,000. The committee noted that the school has not only met its \$125,000 Annual Fund goal, but has exceeded it early in May.

B. RFC Gala 2026 Update + Debrief

The committee debriefed the REACH for College Gala, discussing what worked well and areas for growth. Laurie Kennedy and the committee congratulated Fallon Burke on the success of the event. Overall feedback was very positive. The ballroom was noted as more elegant than in previous years, with the addition of extra seating enhancing the overall experience. The atmosphere was lively and energized, guests arrived on time, and attendees were attentive during the speaking portion of the program.

The committee also identified areas for growth. Discussion included reconsidering the location and visibility of the Giving Wall, with a recommendation to place it more centrally, closer to the podium, and to make it more interactive and informative. Kara suggested exploring a virtual Giving Wall for future events. The committee noted that the Giving Wall may not have been as prominently promoted this year, including fewer reminders from the MC.

The group discussed opportunities to further elevate student and alumni voice, potentially through a featured speaker or by incorporating a student or alumnus as MC. There was also consideration of having a trustee or staff member serve as MC to strengthen audience connection and engagement.

Timing of the program was also discussed, with recognition that peak engagement occurs between 7:00–9:00 PM, after which many attendees begin to leave. The committee agreed on the importance of analyzing event data to better understand attendee composition (e.g., ticket purchasers, sponsors, guests, student families, trustees) and giving behavior. Laurie noted that a relatively small number of individuals often contribute during the event itself, and the committee discussed opportunities to encourage pre-event giving. If a virtual Giving Wall is implemented, it could include recognition of all contributors, including sponsors and early donors.

The committee agreed that the Gala was a strong success and expressed enthusiasm for building on these insights to further enhance next year's event.

C. Foundation Board Collaboration

The committee, in collaboration with Nina Cohen, decided to postpone the Lunch & Learn event to the fall, noting that the spring season is a particularly busy time of year. The group will revisit scheduling and identify a new date in July.

As a result, the related committee goal timeline has been updated, with a new target date of December 31.

D. Progress Toward 2026 Committee Goals

The committee reviewed progress toward its 2026 goals. The school has met and exceeded its Annual Fund goal, reaching \$133,000 against a \$125,000 target.

The committee also updated the timeline for the Lunch & Learn "friendraiser" goal, extending the target date to December 31 to align with the decision to host the event in the fall.

III. 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 8:57 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Fallon Burke

Documents used during the meeting

- Development Reports FY26 - 5.5.26.pdf