APPROVED

Salem Academy Charter School

Minutes

HR Committee Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday July 14, 2026 at 8:00 AM

Location
Zoom: https://salemacademycs.zoom.us/meeting/register/2txiGeW2S2uRpPCclsJh3g

The Salem Academy Charter School Human Resources Committee will meet via Zoom.

Committee Members Present
Beth O'Donnell (remote), Domina DiBiase (remote), Rick Winter (remote)

Committee Members Absent
Edward Aroko

Ex Officio Members Present
Kara McLaughlin (remote)

Guests Present
Fallon Burke (remote), Krissy Sgambellone (remote), Stephanie Callahan (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. **Record Attendance**

B.

Call the Meeting to Order

Domina DiBiase called a meeting of the Human Resources Committee of Salem Academy Charter School to order on Tuesday Jul 14, 2026 at 8:05 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

Rick Winter made a motion to approve the minutes from HR Committee Meeting on 06-02-26.
Beth O'Donnell seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Human Resources

A. HR Updates from School Leadership

Krissy Sgambellone provided the committee with updates on human resources, staffing, and employee compensation initiatives. The discussion provided committee members with an opportunity to ask clarifying questions and offer feedback. No action was taken.

Krissy reported that the school is completing the offboarding process for departing employees and onboarding new staff for the 2026–2027 school year. She noted that most departing employees completed exit interviews.

Stephanie Callahan shared that the school is also conducting an annual pay equity audit using the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office pay equity tool. She explained that Salem Academy intends to complete this review annually to ensure equitable compensation practices. The review includes base salary, annual hours worked, stipends, and additional compensation.

Stephanie noted that the school's previous compensation study conducted by Edgility found no significant pay equity concerns. Domina DiBiase asked how the current review differs from the Edgility study. Stephanie explained that while Edgility provided recommendations related to compensation structure, the Attorney General's Office tool includes additional data fields and calculations that provide a more comprehensive review of employee compensation. She noted that the tool has also helped identify additional compensation associated with vacancies, such as Special Education staff covering additional teaching responsibilities. Once completed, the audit will also be reviewed by the school's legal counsel.

Krissy added that the analysis will provide additional insight into opportunities for employees to increase earnings through stipends, coaching positions, and other supplemental assignments.
Kara McLaughlin shared that she, as the Board Chair, has also been working with Edgility to review Executive Director compensation and suggested adding that discussion to a future HR Committee agenda.

Domina also asked whether any unexpected themes emerged from the exit interviews. Krissy reported that no significant surprises or new trends had been identified.

Krissy and Stephanie provided an update on hiring for the upcoming school year, including ongoing recruitment for:

- Lower School Science Teacher
- AP Government Teacher
- Dean of Students
- Director of Special Education

Stephanie shared that the new Upper School Principal has officially started and has quickly integrated into the leadership team. She noted that Meghan Blume has brought valuable experience and has already identified opportunities to strengthen existing systems while building on current practices.

The committee also discussed changes to the Dean model for the upcoming school year. Rather than having two assistant deans serving across the school, Salem Academy will transition to a dedicated Lower School Dean and Upper School Dean. Each dean will work closely with the building principal and Form Team Leaders to strengthen school culture and student support. Stephanie noted that the change also creates clearer career growth opportunities for staff, consistent with recommendations from the Edgility compensation study.

The committee also received updates on additional staffing initiatives. Stephanie shared that Salem Academy has resumed its partnership with Teach For America and is exploring opportunities to hire additional teachers through the program.

Finally, Krissy described changes to the Substitute Coordinator position. The role will transition from regularly serving as a classroom substitute to a year-round, 12-month operations position with increased responsibility for facilities, operations, maintenance, and repairs. Previously, many of these duties were completed through timesheet assignments; the new structure formalizes those responsibilities within the position.

B. Employee Handbook

The committee continued its discussion of the Employee Handbook and related employment policies. The purpose of the discussion was to review progress on handbook revisions, identify topics requiring further development, and provide committee members with an opportunity to ask questions and offer feedback.

Krissy Sgambellone reported that no committee members had submitted additional feedback following the previous month's meeting. She shared that the next step is to review the school's supplemental employment policies.

Stephanie Callahan explained that the school first needs to identify which employment practices are addressed in the Employee Handbook and which should instead exist as standalone policies. She recommended creating a comprehensive inventory of supplemental policies that can be maintained separately from the handbook.

The committee discussed several examples of practices that may be better suited as standalone policies rather than handbook provisions, including:

- The proposed two-hour flexibility rule for occasional appointments.
- Expectations regarding flexible start and end times for different employee groups.
- The employee dress code.

Stephanie noted that employee work schedules vary depending on role, including exempt, non-exempt, and executive employees, each with different legal requirements. She explained that the school's current scheduling flexibility functions more as a grace period than a formal policy and that Salem Academy is not yet in a position to adopt a single, organization-wide policy covering all employee groups.

Rick Winter suggested that standard work hours could be addressed in employee offer letters based on role, rather than through the Employee Handbook. He also distinguished between approved workplace accommodations and misuse of workplace flexibility, noting that employees with approved accommodations should be managed differently from employees who repeatedly abuse scheduling expectations. Stephanie agreed, explaining that occasional flexibility, such as attending a medical appointment without using paid time off, differs from repeated or habitual absences, which should be addressed through individual performance conversations rather than handbook language.

Stephanie also emphasized that any significant changes to employee scheduling expectations would require a thoughtful implementation process, including stakeholder communication. She recommended completing this work by February to allow sufficient time for review and communication before implementation.

Domina DiBiase suggested that the committee continue these discussions at future meetings as policies are further developed. School leadership will develop an inventory of supplemental policies and continue bringing draft policies to the committee for review.

C. 2026 Committee Goals

Domina DiBiase presented draft FY27 HR Committee goals that were developed following the committee's June meeting. The proposed goals are:

- Support the creation and finalization of a formal Salem Academy Compensation Philosophy by January 30, 2027.

- Complete a regular review of the Employee Handbook and review HR-related policies and procedures as needed.
- Identify at least one potential trustee and/or HR Committee volunteer each calendar year.

The committee discussed the proposed goals and provided feedback.

Beth O'Donnell commented that the proposed goals are appropriate for a relatively new committee and align with the committee's discussions and priorities to date. Rick agreed that the goals reflected the committee's intended work, and Stephanie noted that they align with school leadership's vision for the committee.

Kara suggested incorporating recurring governance activities into the committee's annual work plan by establishing a regular review cycle. She recommended identifying which HR activities should occur annually, such as the pay equity review, and when those items should be presented to the Board. Kara also noted that the Compensation Philosophy should be reviewed periodically rather than annually.

Fallon Burke reminded the committee of a discussion from the June meeting regarding the distinction between items requiring annual review and those that should follow a longer review cycle. As an example, she noted that the Employee Handbook may warrant a comprehensive review every two years, while supplemental HR policies could be reviewed on an annual basis.

Domina DiBiase will revise the draft goals based on the committee's discussion and present an updated version at a future meeting.

III. Other Business

A. Development Update

The committee received the development update from Fallon Burke. Fallon reported that Salem Academy met and exceeded its FY26 Annual Fund goal, raising more than $136,000.

She also shared updates on recent foundation awards:

- Norman H. Read Trust: Salem Academy received its FY27 grant award, including additional funding beyond the original request to support instructional priorities.
- Mifflin Memorial Fund: Continued funding was awarded to support the school's College & Career Readiness and College Success programs.
- Van Otterloo Foundation: Funding was awarded to support the College Success Program.

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 9:02 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Fallon Burke

Documents used during the meeting

- Salem_Academy_-_2025-2026_Employee_Handbook.pdf
- HR Committee Goals 2026 (DRAFT).pdf