

## MEETING NOTES

### Board of Trustees Meeting Wednesday, March 28, 2018 6:00 pm, Room 114

Members Present: Nina Cohen, Steve Palmer, Bill Henning, David Pabich, Alfonso Perillo, Daniel McCaughey, Rick Jones, Michelle Aroko, Josh Biber.

Members Absent: Christine Wynne

Staff: Kathy Egmont, Diego Fellows, Sean Gass, Jennifer Lebzelter, Stephanie Callahan,

SFC Representatives: Pam Rochna, Fawaz Abusharkh

Guests: Mekka Smith, Lori Buodo

#### I. Call to Order:

Nina Cohen called the meeting at 6:13PM  
Nina introduced Lori Buodo, a parent, and current Development Committee Member. In addition, she introduced Mekka Smith who is visiting and considering joining our Board of Trustees. Nina announced that Janine Matho has submitted her resignation to the Board effective immediately.

#### II. Public Comment

Fawaz Abusharkh began by welcoming everyone to the Open Mosque Day on Sunday, April 8th from 1 pm to 5 pm at the Islamic Society of the North Shore at [35 Lynnfield St. Lynn, MA](#). All are welcome. He continued to provide an update on the Seal Of Bi-literacy. It was approved by a unanimous vote by the Salem School Committee members and will be implemented partially this school year at Salem High School and in full, next school year. There will be an introduction and information session open to the public on Thursday, April 5th at 5:30pm at [135 Lafayette St. Salem MA](#) to explain and answer questions and concerns.

#### III. Minutes of the Meeting of February 28, 2018(Vote) Attachment A

The minutes of the January 24 Meeting were approved with corrections. The corrections appeared in the report of Community Circles to mention that they happen in grades 9-12. Rick Jones requested a motion to approve as amended. The motion was made by David Pabich and seconded by Alfonso Perillo. The Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes with corrections.

#### IV. Committee Reports

A. Finance Alfonso Perillo Attachment D

Alfonso Perillo began by explaining that not a lot has changed from the month to month.  
Main Takeaways:

- When we look at our current ratio of assets to liabilities, we are currently 3-1 respectively.

- Using a new metric we have calculated the cash on hand, which, based on projections is about 2.5 months.
- We have begun a cash flow analysis with help from Central Source.
- We are still looking at finding a way to best present our financial reports and the committee will continue to work with Central Source to get this done.

Kathy Egmont presented a proposal for staff salary increases. Working off of preliminary budget information, it is clear that it will be a very tight year. We are hoping to reduce our health insurance costs and are currently planning on a flat tuition level for revenue. The salary increases will be in line with the guidelines used last year, per experience and education. There is one percent included in the proposal which allows for some adjustments that are needed. The budget will be presented in May. She indicated that we would be more conservative with our spending but that we did want to ensure that we are able to retain and acquire talented staff. In order to do this she has asked the board for a 3% raise for all returning staff. She explained that she would work hard to bring the healthcare costs down and bring in a breakeven budget. There was serious discussion on the pros and cons of giving a raise in light of the per pupil reduction this year. We will continue to try to fundraise and will look at areas to cut in the current budget.

Motion: Steve Palmer called a motion to approve the proposed salary increase as presented. Alfonso Perillo seconded this motion. Nina called the board to vote which was unanimous in favor of the motion.

#### B. Development Committee Report

Kathy reported that we have raised \$12,000 so far for the Annual Fund. The anonymous donor will match approximately \$6,000 to date. We have collected donations from a variety of individuals noted Kathy. Stephanie has said that she will email the staff and parents with a reminder to donate. We are hosting Arts Alive on April 4, 2018. The evening event will last from 5:30-8PM hosted in the Albright Center for the Arts. At this event we will have a Square© credit card reader. Nina added that we are reaching out to get support from local businesses. As part of the agreement, we will be putting a “Sponsors” graphic on the website to show our thanks for all the support we have received. Deadline for annual fund donations is June 30<sup>th</sup>. Kathy commented that if Christine were present, she would be talking about raising the goal to \$30,000 as it appears we will meet the challenge.

#### C. Governance Rick Jones

Update on Proposed By Law Revisions:

Rick Jones explained that we have submitted the proposed bylaw revisions to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for approval.

Update on Potential Board Candidates:

Nina Cohen began by explaining that Janine Matho has tendered her resignation, effective immediately. Nina continued by saying that we are happy to have Lori and Mekka here to observe. Rick followed by giving us a report on his time at the Institute for Trustees. He explained that the institute gave him some great ideas on how to evaluate the depth and breadth of our board and how we can be more effective in utilizing the resources we have. He continued by explaining that several of our board members are at or nearing the end of their terms. Preparing a strong succession plan will be important as we go forward. He asks that if anyone knows individuals who may be interested in supporting our board to let him know but adds that he has had some third party conversations with individuals to gain interest. Nina reported that most of our committees are fully staffed and that we look forward to events that we can bring potential friends or supports to. Lastly, she mentioned that Stephanie and Kathy went to Brookline to meet with Dr.

Albright and that he is excited with the development of the strategic plan and the annual visit on June 5<sup>th</sup>, a Tuesday at 9AM.

V. Strategic Planning Committee Report Steve Palmer

Steve Palmer explained that things are progressing slightly slower than expected due to the challenges weather has presented. We have received significant feedback from a variety of constituencies that are summarized in the documents provided. He reports that Strategy Matters hosted another retreat with staff and it was well structured. The biggest takeaway is that staff needs to continue to be involved with the process. He announced that we have created a steering committee that is charged with tracking the data that is collected and making sure that we are interpreting it properly. Steve adds that if you are interested in serving that you should contact him. Stephanie added that staff was happy to have a second meeting to discuss the issues they felt were important to the school. Mekka asked about the timeline for implementation of any outcomes from the Strategic Plan. Steve responded by explaining that there are some things we will work on right away but others that might take longer to address due to challenges beyond our control.

VI. SFC report Pam Rochna

Pam Rochna reported for the SFC announcing that the group had raised over \$12,000 from the Yankee Candle Fundraiser. She mentioned that the next meeting would be April 2<sup>nd</sup> with a focus on events occurring in April and early May such as the teacher luncheon. Nina asked what day that would be for scheduling with other events occurring around that time such as the Senior Service Learning presentations. Pam announced that the Luncheon would be May 4<sup>th</sup> at noon. Sean added that the Service Learning presentations will be June 8<sup>th</sup> during the whole day.

VII. Head of School Report Stephanie Callahan & Sean Gass  
Stephanie Callahan & Sean Gass provided a written report.

Sean began by explaining the state of the Upper School. He mentioned that we are wrapping up the end of the quarter so we do not have sufficient data to talk about since there are three weeks left. By the next meeting, he hoped to have more information on the results of interventions. He transitioned to Service Learning and informed the board that the Seniors Projects are going well and that he will be able to bring some students in to present to the Board. Following this conversation Sean informed the board on the college process noting that 100% of our students have been accepted to college. Melissa has met with each student to discuss the financial aid process and discuss options. The Juniors went on college tours the other day and we had some alumni meet with the students at their respective universities. He mentioned that May 1<sup>st</sup> is the decision day for most institutions and once this has passed Melissa will be able to come and talk to the board. A discussion followed about how many students participate in taking SATs and engage with the school following their matriculation. Kathy mentioned that Diego and Melissa have begun the process of meeting with alumni to discuss the formation of an alumni association. The hope is that we will have more data to review that will better inform our practices going forward.

Stephanie discussed the staffing situation for the next year. The discussion that followed included the reasons some individuals might choose to leave Salem Academy and how we might work with the openings available and the budget that is in place for next year. There is a position open, Dance, that might be reconfigured as the demand from students has not been as high as expected. Additionally, we are in search of a Health teacher and possibly a 6<sup>th</sup> grade special education position.

The discussion moved on to give an overview of end of the year activities that are coming up and important dates for the board to be aware of including Arts Alive and the One Act Plays at the end of May.

VIII. Executive Director Report

Kathy Egmont provided a written report.

Kathy began by discussing a phone call she had with the State about snow dates and the fact we won't be making them up. To do this however, we need to submit an amendment to the state and she needs a motion from the Board to do this.

Motion: The motion will allow Kathy Egmont to submit to the DESE an amendment explaining the decision to not make up snow days due to our extended year schedule.

Bill Henning moved to approve the amendment request. Michelle Aroko seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Update on Cap:

Kathy explained to the Board that she has been assured by DESE that Salem Academy will not hit the cap this year however, that we should not be accepting students that are from Lynn. She explained the Cap situation again to those who were not present previously. In sum, since Salem Public is not a level 4 district we cannot continue to expand over 480. At the same time, Lynn is approaching the cap and we have been asked not to accept any students from districts approaching the cap. We will not hit the 9% of Salem's tuition cap in 2019 but are at risk in 2020. If the city hits that 9% our tuition will be pro-rated. We are working with DESE to try to prevent that. There are several cities approaching the near cap, and a few that have already been pro-rated. We will need to continue monitoring the situation. Nina suggested that we begin to think about how to interact with other schools in this situation to put legislative pressure on the situation and show that we care.

Update on Enrollment:

Michelle asked why the 9<sup>th</sup> grade grades size is lower than preferable. The eighth grade has the highest attrition, as students may have legacy spots at independent schools, some return to Salem Public High for sports that we do not have. We are hoping to have less attrition this year. We take in a high number of grade 9 students due to attrition by upper grades since we do not take in students in grades above 9. We had a plan to increase less dramatically, but with construction down the pipeline we jumped ahead several years ago, in order to put us in a good financial footing for the construction costs.

IX. Vote to Adjourn entertained by Nina Cohen.

Bill Henning moved to adjourn which Steve Palmer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Concluded at 7:59PM.