

**Salem Academy Charter School
Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Wednesday, April 27, 2016 at 6:00 pm, Room 124**

Members Present: Peter Copelas, Steve Palmer, Thomas Monroe, Paige Nalipinski, Nina Cohen, Karen Cady

Members Absent: Ana Nuncio, Rick Jones, Leslie Tuttle, Josh Biber, David Pabich, Amy Slate

Guests: Sean O'Neil, Stephanie Callahan, Sean Gass, Fawaz Abusharkh, Karen Corbett, Pam Rochna

I. Call to Order

The monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Salem Academy Charter School, 45 Congress Street, Salem, Massachusetts was called to order on Wednesday, April 27, 2016 at 6:28 pm, in Room 124 by Chair, Peter Copelas.

II. Approval of the Minutes

MOTION: The minutes of the March 23, 2016 meeting were presented for review. Thomas Monroe made a motion to accept the minutes. With the motion seconded by Nina Cohen, it was

RESOLVED: to accept the March 23, 2016 monthly meeting minutes as written. The motion carried unanimously.

III. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

IV. SFC Report

Pam Rochna, Pam Boardway, Lisa King

At the last meeting, the SFC finalized the budget and expenses and there is a balance of \$2,800 in the SFC account.

The Yankee Candle fundraiser was a huge success at \$14,000 (the SFC had set a goal of \$10,000). Pam Rochna explained that a few things were done differently this year, which helped to contribute to the success of the fundraiser. Pam Rochna presented at all community meetings and to each connections. They shortened the time of the fundraiser. In addition, top student sellers of items and dollar prizes were offered prizes, and two connections classes won prizes for most students participating. Overall, the participation rate was 31%, which is growth from last year.

Also at the last SFC meeting, Sean O'Neil spoke about the Emergency Lock Down procedures at Salem Academy, including an explanation of the new changes with the Alice Training procedures.

Upcoming events include the teacher appreciation lunch on May 20th. Parents will make food, and they are trying to get more parent involvement. Students will be waiters.

The Family Picnic is scheduled for June 9th.

The SFC also discussed adding a new position of a secretary to take notes going forward. The next meeting is scheduled for May 11th.

V. New Business

DESE Site Visit

On Tuesday May 3rd at 8:45, the Board of Trustees will meet with the DESE visiting committee during their site visit. So far, the following Trustees have agreed to attend: Peter Copelas, Leslie Tuttle, Karen Cady, Nina Cohen, and Steve Palmer will attend.

On June 3rd, Sean O'Neil is requesting Trustee attendance for the Read visit from 9-10:30. Peter Copelas, Steve Palmer, Paige Nalipinski, Karen Cady, Nina Cohen, and Thomas Monroe are planning to attend.

The next Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Wednesday May 25th.

VI. Heads of School

Stephanie Callahan and Sean Gass

Quarter 3

Stephanie Callahan shared that PTS conferences would begin next week. Quarter 3 has ended.

School Safety

Stephanie Callahan spoke about school safety. At this time, our biggest concern is moving this process along. We are working to secure more involvement with the Salem Police soon.

We are also looking at radio communication with walkie-talkies. Salem Public has purchased them. It would cost SACS between \$10-12,000 if we were to purchase the devices, and we would then have a direct line to police. We are looking more closely at this or other options and how to improve our communication overall.

Steve Palmer suggested that we invite Chief Butler to SACS. All Trustees agreed that this would be a sound next step.

College

May 1st is college decision day. 100% of students have been admitted to colleges and are now looking at financial aid packages. Next week we will know more and will have a complete report in June.

Staffing

We hired a computer science and technology teacher, Megan Bowen. She is currently teaching 2 choice block classes and is planning her curriculum for next year.

Our Grade 7 ELA teacher left recently because her husband was transferred to California. Benjamin Petrides has taken over the position. He received his BA in

English from Endicott College and has been a Para Professional at SACS and our Cross Country, Boys Varsity Basketball and Baseball Coach for 3 years. He is using our former grade 7th ELA teacher's curriculum and the transition is going very well.

For next year, we have hired Shannon Griffin for the 9th grade math teacher position. Shannon was a Para Professional with us this year and has a tremendous background in mathematics.

Currently, we have the following openings for next year: 2 Spanish teachers, Grade 7 and 8 ELA, Grade 8 Science and Upper and Lower School Paraprofessionals.

Testing

PARCC, MCAS and AP exams are all taking place in May.

VII. Executive Director Report

Sean O'Neil

Lottery

We held a successful lottery. Most of those students selected are accepting their spaces, however, we are seeing the most fluctuation in the 9th grade.

Staffing

As the Board is aware, a 5% raise was offered to our staff. This raise is a major step forward in the total compensation package, especially since this is a 5% increase for the second year in a row. We also increased the stipends for teacher leader positions and honored the longevity program for 4th, 8th, and 12th year of service at SACS.

Contracts for the 2016-2017 year are due on Friday.

Statehouse

The Massachusetts Senate President and Speaker of House have agreed that the bill regarding charter school funding will die in committee. The vote to raise the enrollment cap will still occur, and the initiative could still make it onto the ballot in the fall. There is currently heavy lobbying on both sides of the issue.

US News and World Report Rankings.

SACS was ranked 14th in state out of 350 schools, which puts us in the top 4%. We ranked 364 out of 21,000 schools in the nation. We received a Gold ranking in national state and charter school categories, which puts us in the top 2% nationally.

Thomas Monroe asked how we will publicize this huge accomplishment. He suggested a banner outside of Shetland Park. The Trustees discussed a number of ideas and will plan to create more buzz around this ranking.

Family Satisfaction Survey

We have the early summary results and will explain the results in more detail after the Administrative Team has had an opportunity to look at the results in detail. 43% of parents responded. We sent families an email with the survey in Survey Monkey. We also sent home hard copies in English and Spanish. The responses are mostly positive, with extracurricular programs mentioned as an area that is still lacking. We are aware of this gap and are working towards building up our arts and athletic programs even more next year.

VIII. Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee
Thomas Monroe, Chair

Thomas Monroe reported that there are not many changes this month, and that the balance sheet remains almost the same.

In the Profit and Loss budget performance, the tuition figure dropped because of decreased enrollment to 419 from 423 students.

We are continuing to adjust the contingency number each month. The rental allowance reserved still remains untouched.

B. Facilities Committee
Leslie Tuttle, Chair

1. Status regarding the Building Two Arts Complex

Sean O'Neil reported that we have signed a lease with Shetland Park. He then distributed a copy of the floor plans. The demolition process has already begun and is almost complete. The design plan has been passed on to an architect for construction documents, and we are planning for a ribbon cutting in the fall.

Nina Cohen asked how we can announce this news to parents and students, and to the community. She added that we could offer walkthroughs to build excitement about. The Development Committee will discuss how to capitalize on this excitement, including taking pictures along the process to share with families and the community.

2. Status regarding the Norman H. Read Gymnasium

Leslie Tuttle

Leslie Tuttle reported that we signed a lease. Sean O'Neil distributed a vision of the gymnasium, which includes locker rooms, a lobby, storage spaces, and a gym. The precise timing of the completion is still to be determined, but construction will begin this summer.

C. Development Committee
Nina Cohen, Chair

The Development Committee met twice since the last Board of Trustee's meeting. Currently, they are focusing most of their efforts on the Peabody grant match. The new tagline has become - "we can't do it without you." The Committee is planning to offer naming options, possibly in chairs, bricks, or other permanent equipment in the new buildings.

The committee is looking for wider participation, so that families share in contributing to the growth of this school. We are close to the match now, and will add a rising thermometer to the website to show progress. The SFC donated \$2,000 to this effort and we also received 100% board participation.

We are waiting to hear from other Foundation where we submitted applications including a \$100,000 grant from Cummings, \$10,000 from the Sprague Foundation, and \$36,000 from Mifflin.

The Committee is meeting again next week, and we will talk about a ribbon cutting event, and banner promotions.

D. Search Committee
Steve Palmer, Chair

The Search Committee now has 11 members including Stephanie Callahan, Peter Copelas, Steve Palmer, Rachel Hunt, Sarah Morrill, Kara McLaughlin, Marina Guzman, Alyce Davis, Ana Brea, Drew Betts, and Ivan Pena. Leni De los Santos is the administrative assistant. We are looking at search firms. The fees vary but tend to be around 25% of the salary. With this new information, Steve Palmer recommends allocating \$60,000 for search committee costs so that we can engage a firm, or an individual, in next 2 months.

MOTION: Steve Palmer made an motion to adjust the budget to include a \$60,000 allocation toward the search for a new Executive Director. With the motion seconded by Nina Cohen, it was:

RESOLVED: to allocate \$60,000 towards the search for an Executive Director. The motion carried unanimously.

Thomas Monroe added that this allocation will be an adjustment to the rental allowance contingency, and that there will be a new line item as a restricted fund.

IX. Adjourn

Steve Palmer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. With the motion duly seconded by Thomas Monroe and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.