



Malden Public Schools

INITIAL DISTRICT RESPONSES

**Successor Contract Negotiations with the
Malden Education Association
Units A, B and C**

March 26, 2025

Agenda

School Committee Responses
to MEA Proposals/Responses



Recognition and Incentives for Educator Attendance

Units A & C

- **WITHDRAW Proposal Q:** Sick Leave – *Unit A*
- **WITHDRAW Proposal R:** Sick Leave – *Unit C*
- **WITHDRAW Proposal S:** Retirement – *Unit A*
- **WITHDRAW Proposal T:** Retirement – *Unit C*

Proposal
Group #6

Proposal
Group #15

Proposal
Group #16

Proposal
Group #19

Proposal
Group #26

MEA Proposals

Hold for further legal review

Extensive work underway and continuing:

- Review of Massachusetts General Law
- Review of current School Committee Policies
- Review of City of Malden HR procedures
- Review of City of Malden insurance policies
- Review of student privacy requirements

Proposal
Group #7

Proposal
Group #9

Proposal
Group #10

Proposal
Group #18

Proposal
Group #22

Proposal
Group #24


MEA Proposals

Hold for budgetary review

Extensive work underway and continuing:

- Analyze financial cost of each proposal
- Review budgetary impact of proposals in aggregate
 - Full budgetary impact analysis cannot be completed until all proposals have been put forth (including today's session, March 26)

Reponses to MEA Proposals

- Proposal Group #4
 - Proposal Group #5
 - Proposal Group #8
 - Proposal Group #11
 - Proposal Group #12
 - Proposal Group #13
 - Proposal Group #14
 - Proposal Group #17
 - Proposal Group #20
 - Proposal Group #21
 - Proposal Group #22
 - Proposal Group #23
 - Proposal Group #25
 - Proposal Group #27
- 

Part a

Part b

Section i

Subsection 1

Subpart a

Subpart b

Subpart c

Subsection 2

Part c

Part d

Part e

Part f

Section i

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Subsection 3

Section ii

Subsection 1

Subsection 2

Subsection 3

MEA Proposal Summary

Add a new article titled “Academic Opportunity”

Response

Reject Part a of Proposal Group #4

Rationale

- “Academic Opportunity” is the exclusive purview of the School Committee under M.G.L. Chapter 71 § 37
- Malden School Committee is committed to providing “Access to Equal Academic Opportunity”
- Proposals in this section can be placed under existing articles in the contract

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MEA Proposal Summary

Pursuant to academic opportunity at Malden High School

Response

Hold Part b of Proposal Group #4 pending outcome of High School Schedule design process

Rationale

A design team (with school, district, and union representatives) is currently leading a schedule review and design process centered on ensuring equitable and excellent experiences for all students at Malden High. This process has been underway since December of 2024.

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MEA Proposal Summary

Implement program from Human Rights Campaign (HRC)

Response

Reject Part c of Proposal Group #4 as there is an established process for adopting new programming and partnerships.

Rationale

- We agree that “addressing the diverse needs of all students” is critical and are committed to doing our best to meet these needs
- The HRC website describes the program as a “package of professional development, training, lesson plans, booklists and resources”
- Adoption of items of this nature is a District responsibility and must follow the established process for vetting, community engagement, and selection, per School Committee policy.

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MEA Proposal Summary

Involve educator voice in administrative decisions

Response

Counter Part d of Proposal Group #4 with the following language in Article 17 of Unit A: *“The Committee recognizes the importance of educator voice and will involve at least one bargaining unit representative in the hiring process of Principals and Assistant Superintendents.”*

Rationale

Malden School Committee welcomes and respects educator voice in decisions that affect them and encourages participation in our existing deliberative processes with the School Committee and ad hoc committees established by the Superintendent.

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MEA Proposal Summary

Involve family and community voice in school planning

Response

Reject Part e of Proposal Group #4 as these protections are already afforded under state law and district policy.

Rationale

- Malden School Committee deeply values family and community voice in school planning.
- School Committee Policy KBA already states: “It is the general goal of the District to foster relationships with parents, which encourage cooperation between the home and school in establishing and achieving common educational goals for students”
- In addition, School Councils are required under M.G.L. Chapter 71 § 59C and School Committee policies to contribute to school planning

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MEA Proposal Summary

Regarding staffing needs analysis in current contract

Response

Accept Part f of Proposal Group #4 in concept

Counter to revise “...will continue to honor the promise in the 22-25 agreements to...”

Rationale

Malden School Committee will continue to honor the commitment to fully-staffed and fully-funded schools

MEA Proposal Summary

Include safe zone policy in CBA

Response

Reject Proposal Group #5; many of these protections are already afforded under state law and district policy. There is an established process for amending existing policy.

Rationale

- Malden School Committee is resolved to safe school zones:
 - SC Policy JA-G: Access to education, student privacy and immigration enforcement
 - Safe School Zones Resolution 2019
 - The School Committee has an established process for amending district policy including community engagement.
- Malden School Committee is committed to ensuring access to schools and the safety and success of all our students, regardless of immigration status
 - Supt. Message Jan. 23, 2025
 - Supt. Message Feb. 6, 2025
- M.G.L. Chapter 76 § 5

Part a
Part b
Part c
Part d

MEA Proposal Summary

Tuition Reimbursement

Response

Counter Proposal Group #8 with the following language added to the Professional Development Articles all three units: *“The School Committee shall fund an annual tuition reimbursement account of \$50,000 to include units A, B, & C. Upon the successful completion of district approved course(s), a bargaining unit member will receive tuition reimbursement of up to \$750 within a school year.”* Hold School Committee Proposal O for additional language edits.

Rationale

- The MEA proposal would allow Unit B, and to a lesser extent Unit C, disproportionate access to professional development funds compared to Unit A
 - Under the MEA proposal, Unit B (31 members) is allocated access to the same amount of money as Unit A (605 members)
 - If every Unit B member used the proposed \$1,000 maximum reimbursement, they would never need the \$40,000 total proposed for Unit B
- In year 24-25 to date (2/3 of the way through the year), \$20,000* of the \$30,000 allocated in the current contract has been used so far across all 3 units

*approximate as of March 24, 2025

Part a

Section i

Section ii

Part b

MEA Proposal Summary

Diverse Workforce

Response

Reject part a of Proposal Group #11 as these protections are already afforded under state law and district policy.

Rationale

Malden School Committee values a diverse workforce and already states a commitment to a diverse workforce in Policy GCE: "The search for good teachers and other professional employees will extend to a wide variety of educational institutions and geographical areas. It will take into consideration the characteristics of the city and the need for a heterogeneous staff from various cultural backgrounds."

MEA Proposal Summary

Bilingual/Biliterate Stipend

Response

Counter Part b of Proposal Group #11 to add the following language to current Article 10 for Unit A, Article 7 for Unit B, and Article 6 for Unit C: *“Active employees and new employees who are certified or deemed to be bilingual/biliterate in English and in at least one other language by an employer-approved certification process and/or test shall receive an annual stipend of One Thousand (\$1,000) Dollars”*

Rationale

Malden School Committee agrees that bilingualism is an important skill

MEA Proposal Summary

Workplace Bullying

Response

Reject Proposal Group #12 as these protections are already afforded under state law and district policy.

Rationale

- Workplace bullying prevention and training are covered by City of Malden policy, current labor laws, and regulations which are available to district employees
- In addition, Malden School Committee Policy JICFB addresses administrators' role in ensuring that harassment and bullying are not tolerated among staff and that incidents are investigated quickly and appropriately

Part a

Section i

Section ii

Part b

Section i

Section ii

Section iii

Section iv

Part a

Part b

Part c

Section i

Section ii

MEA Proposal Summary

Unit Members' Private Lives

Response

Reject Part a of Proposal Group #13

Rationale

Proposal language in Part a is overly vague and unenforceable

Part a

Part b

Part c

Section i

Section ii

MEA Proposal Summary

Citizen Rights

Response

Reject Part b of Proposal Group #13 as these protections are already afforded under state law and district policy.

Rationale

- Malden School Committee already recognizes employees citizenship rights in School Committee Policy GBI: "The School Committee recognizes that employees of the school system have the same fundamental civic responsibilities and privileges as other citizens. Among these are campaigning for an elective public office and holding an elective or appointive office."
- M.G.L Chapter 71 § 39
 - "No public school committee or official shall inquire concerning, or require or solicit from an applicant for a position in the public schools any information as to, his religious belief, creed or practice, or his political opinions or affiliations; and no appointment to such a position shall be in any manner affected thereby."

Part a

Part b

Part c

Section i

Section ii

MEA Proposal Summary

Pertains to educators expressing personal opinions on controversial topics in the classroom

Response

Reject Part c of Proposal Group #13

Rationale

Malden School Committee has established Policy IMB regarding the teaching about controversial Issues

- “Controversial issues selected by teachers for classroom discussion must relate directly to the objectives and content of courses approved by the School Committee for inclusion in the curriculum.”
- “The teachers' right to introduce controversial issues in classroom presentations does not include the right of advocacy. Teachers must refrain from using their positions to express partisan points of view.”
- “The approach to discussion of these issues in the classroom must be objective and scholarly with minimum emphasis on opinion and maximum emphasis on intelligent analysis.”
- “Teachers must ensure that the reasoned arguments of all sides of an issue are given equal presentation and emphasis in classroom discussions.”

MEA Proposal Summary

Preparation Time

Response

Hold on Parts a, b, b.i, and c of Proposal Group #14 pending the outcome of the ongoing High School Schedule Design Process

Rationale

A design team (with school, district, and union representatives) is currently leading a schedule review and design process centered on ensuring equitable and excellent experiences for all students at Malden High. This process has been underway since December of 2024.

Part a

Part b

Section i

Section ii

Part c

Part a

Part b

Section i

Section ii

Part c

MEA Proposal Summary

Preparation Time

Response

Hold and clarify application of Proposal Group #14 Part b
Section ii

Clarification Requested

“In the event that a **worker** misses a scheduled preparation period due to staffing shortages or excessive workload demands, the Committee shall ensure that the missed time is made up before the end of the work week. If the time cannot be made up by the District, the **special education worker** shall be compensated on a pro rata basis for the missed preparation time.”

MEA Proposals: Pursuant to Structured Learning Time (SLT)

Proposal
Group #21:
Morning Supervision

Proposal
Group #25
Duty Free Recess for
30 Minutes

Proposal
Group #27
Daily Common
Planning Time

Counter to
School
Committee
Proposal D
Additional Early
Release Days

Structured Learning Time	Not Structured Learning Time
Math class	Morning Homeroom
Exploratory	Lunch
Phonics Intervention Block	Transition Time

MEA Proposals: Pursuant to Structured Learning Time (SLT)

Current State

Gradespan	Dese Required Hours per Year of SLT	DESE Required Hours per Day of SLT	Remaining Time in the School Day (Transitions/Homeroom/etc.)	
1-6	900 Hours per Year	5 Hours per Day (300 Minutes)	1 Hour per Day (60 Minutes) <i>Based on 6 Hour School Day</i>	With Lunch + Recess (45 min) there are 15 min of transition/homeroom/etc left
7-8	990 Hours per Year	5.5 Hours per Day (330 Minutes)	50 Minutes per Day <i>Based on 6 Hour 20 Minute School Day</i>	With Lunch + Recess (45 min) there are 15 min of transition/homeroom/etc left. (+7:45-8:00)

*This assumes 180 full school days, with no early release

Proposal
Group #21:
Morning Supervision

Proposal
Group #25
Duty Free Recess for
30 Minutes

Proposal
Group #27
Daily Common
Planning Time

Counter to
School
Committee
Proposal D
Additional Early
Release Days

Calculator

Proposal
Group #21:
Morning Supervision

Proposal
Group #25
Duty Free Recess for
30 Minutes

Proposal
Group #27
Daily Common
Planning Time

Counter to
School
Committee
Proposal D
Additional Early
Release Days



Grades 1-6 Structured Learning Time Calculator

Student start time	8:15		
Student dismissal time (regular school day)	2:35	Student dismissal time (early release days)	11:00
Number of full school days in the year	180	Number of early release days in the year	0
FULL DAYS		EARLY RELEASE DAYS	
Lunch length (full day)	30	Lunch length (early day)	0
Recess length (full day)	15	Recess length (early day)	0
Other items that don't count for SLT #1 (full day) - homeroom, arrival, dismissal, transitions	15	Other items that don't count for SLT #1 (early release day) - homeroom, arrival, dismissal, transitions	0
Other items that don't count for SLT #2 (full day) - homeroom, arrival, dismissal, transitions	0	Other items that don't count for SLT #2 (early release day) - homeroom, arrival, dismissal, transitions	0
Other items that don't count for SLT #3 (full day) - homeroom, arrival, dismissal, transitions	0	Other items that don't count for SLT #3 (early release day) - homeroom, arrival, dismissal, transitions	0

SUMMARY

This proposal has 20 minutes left to use per day.

Does this proposal meet Structured LearningTime requirements?

Yes

How many total hours of Structured Learning Time would this proposal allow? (Required is 900)

960

Minutes by Proposal

Proposal
Group #21:
Morning Supervision

Proposal
Group #25
Duty Free Recess for
30 Minutes

Proposal
Group #27
Daily Common
Planning Time

Counter to
School
Committee
Proposal D
Additional Early
Release Days

Gradespan	Dese Required Hours per Year of SLT	DESE Required Hours per Day of SLT	Remaining Time in the School Day (Transitions/Homeroom/etc.)	
1-6	900 Hours per Year	5 Hours per Day (300 Minutes)	1 Hour per Day (60 Minutes) <i>Based on 6 Hour School Day</i>	With Lunch + Recess (45 min) there are 15 min of transition/homeroom/etc left
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*This assumes 180 full school days

- Part a
- Part b

MEA Proposal Summary

Work within contractual hours, outside of student day

Response

Reject Part a of Proposal Group #21

Rationale

- With the current length of school day and DESE requirements for Structured Learning Time, students in grades 7-8 have a total of 5 minutes for arrival, transitions between classes and pack-up/dismissal between the student day hours of 8 am and 2:20 pm*. Students in grades 1-6 have a total of 15 minutes. Student supervision before school (currently occurring from 7:45-8:00 am at all schools grades 7 & 8 is a necessity to allow for learning time required by law.
- The ability to supervise students while they are entering the building is a safety issue.

Gradespan	Dese Required Hours per Year of SLT	DESE Required Hours per Day of SLT	Remaining Time in the School Day (Transitions/Homeroom/etc.)	
1-6	900 Hours per Year	5 Hours per Day (300 Minutes)	1 Hour per Day (60 Minutes) <i>Based on 6 Hour School Day</i>	With Lunch + Recess (45 min) there are 15 min of transition/homeroom/etc left
7-8	990 Hours per Year	5.5 Hours per Day (330 Minutes)	50 Minutes per Day <i>Based on 6 Hour 20 Minute School Day</i>	With Lunch + Recess (45 min) there are 15 min of transition/homeroom/etc left. (+7:45-8:00)

*This assumes 180 full school days

“All workers shall be dismissed at 11am on the day before the December break, Good Friday, and the last day for students in June”

MEA Proposal Summary

Early Release Days with 11:00 a.m. dismissal

Response

Hold on MEA counter to School Committee Proposal D

Rationale

Three early release days would result in the loss of 585 minutes of structured learning time (SLT) per school year at the elementary level and 600 minutes of SLT per school year at the middle school level. This would prevent Malden from meeting DESE's SLT requirements.

MEA Proposal Summary

30-minute duty-free Recess

Response

Reject Parts a and b of Proposal Group #25

Hold on first sentence of Part c of Proposal Group #25

Reject second sentence of Part c of Proposal Group #25

Rationale

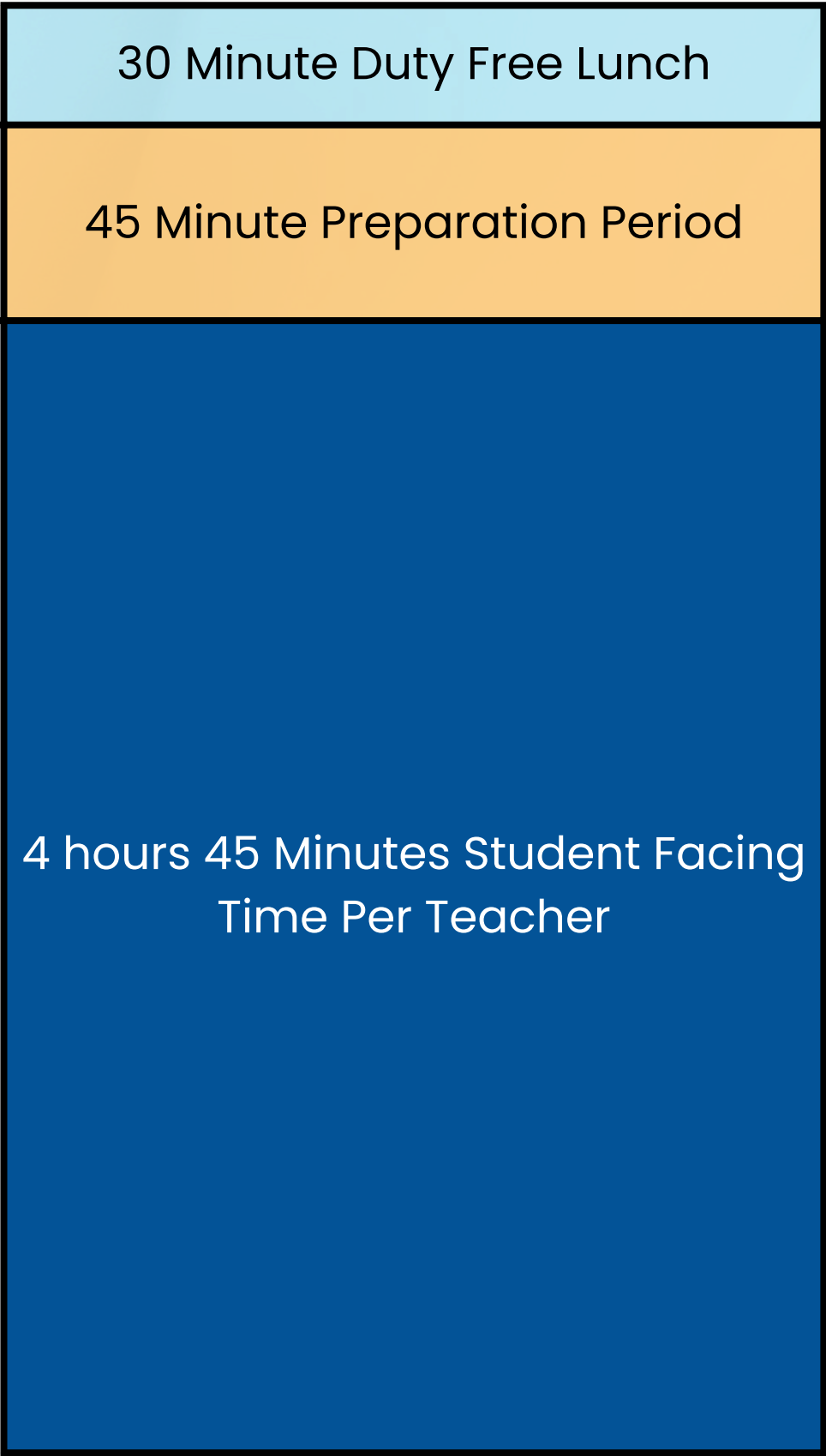
- With the current length of the school day and DESE’s requirements for Structured Learning Time, students in grades K-6 **only** have 15 minutes available for activities such as arrival, dismissal, transitions through the building and additional recess. Increasing recess to thirty minutes would require the elimination of arrival/breakfast, dismissal time, and any transition time in the day.
- The Committee has agreed to a duty-free 30 minute lunch for Unit A workers; an additional 15-30 minutes of duty-free time during the school day would not be feasible to allow for student safety and supervision.

*This assumes 180 full school days

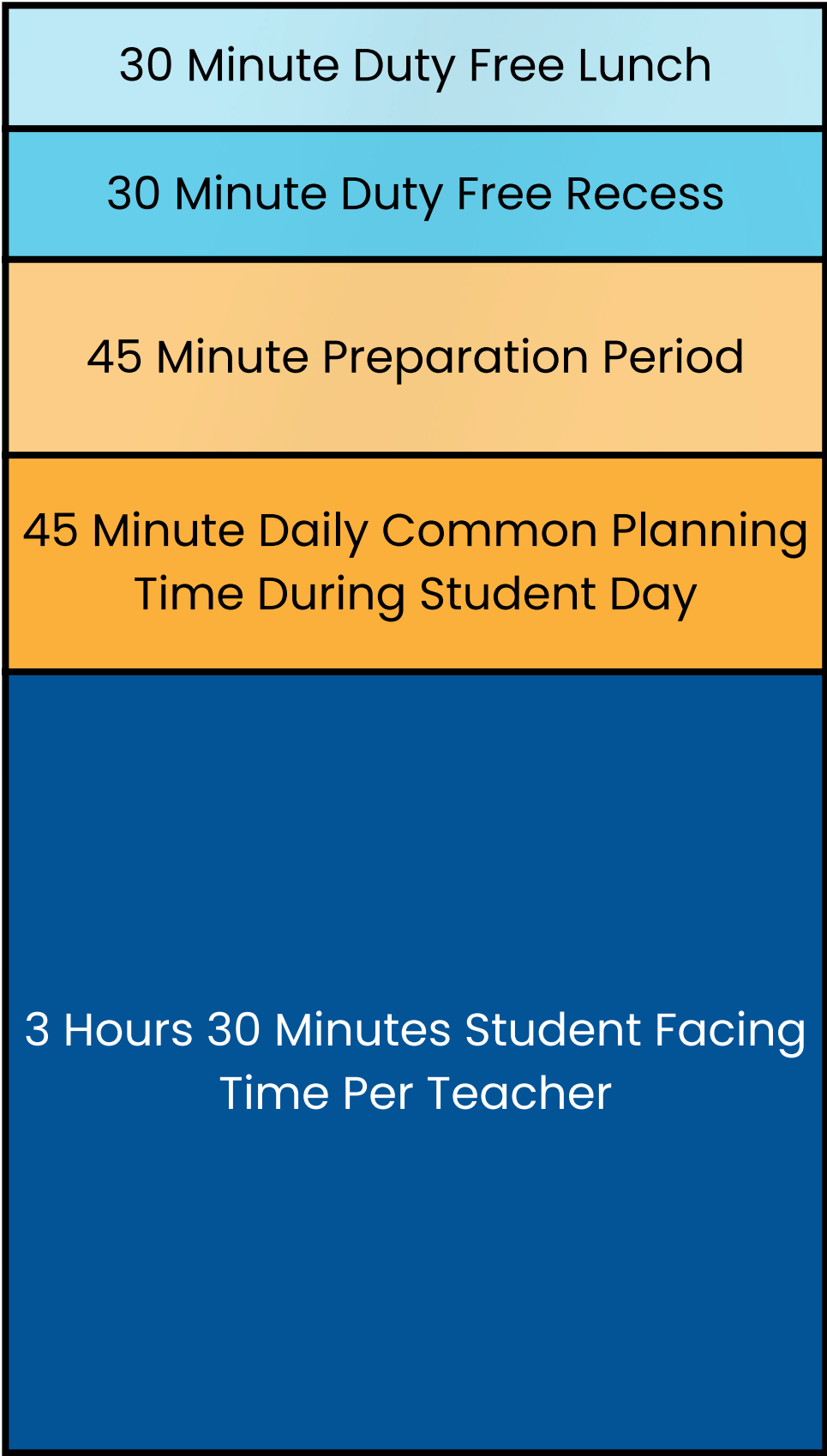
Gradespan	Dese Required Hours per Year of SLT	DESE Required Hours per Day of SLT	Remaining Time in the School Day (Transitions/Homeroom/etc.)	
1-6	900 Hours per Year	5 Hours per Day (300 Minutes)	1 Hour per Day (60 Minutes) <i>Based on 6 Hour School Day</i>	With Lunch + Recess (45 min) there are 15 min of transition/homeroom/etc left
7-8	990 Hours per Year	5.5 Hours per Day (330 Minutes)	50 Minutes per Day <i>Based on 6 Hour 20 Minute School Day</i>	With Lunch + Recess (45 min) there are 15 min of transition/homeroom/etc left. (+7:45-8:00)

Student-Facing Time Available

Current State



MEA Proposals



Time available in a 6 hour, K-6, student day

Proposal
Group #21:
Morning Supervision

Proposal
Group #25
Duty Free Recess for
30 Minutes

Proposal
Group #27
Daily Common
Planning Time

Counter to
School
Committee
Proposal D
Additional Early
Release Days

- Part c
 - Section i
 - Subsection 1
 - Subsection 2

MEA Proposal Summary

Common Planning Time

Response

Counter Part c of Proposal Group #27 with the following language added to Article 5 of Unit A: *“To the greatest extent possible, after ensuring student instructional needs are met, the Committee shall work towards providing educators with an administratively-guided common planning time period, separate from the classroom-based educators’ preparation periods.*

The agenda for Common Planning and/or grade-level meetings shall be developed with input from classroom-based educators.”

Rationale

The MEA proposal for daily common planning time during the student day in addition to a prep period reduces educator teaching time from 4 hours and 45 minutes each day (within a 6 hour day student) to 4 hours each day. It will not be feasible to provide students with the legally required structured learning time if educators are only available to teach classes for 4 hours a day.

The Committee recognizes the value of common planning time, particularly when administrators are able to guide the time for job-embedded professional learning and collaborate with educators on the agendas for this time. While this is not feasible daily, the Committee agrees to work towards the goal of embedding these opportunity in the schedule wherever possible.

Proposal A: leveling
workdays across sites for
Unit A and leveling
student hours across
sites

Proposal B: leveling
workdays across sites for
Unit C and leveling
student hours across
sites

School Committee Proposal Summary

Extend length of student day in grades K-8 within existing
Unit A & C contractual hours

Response

Withdraw proposed changes to Unit A & C workday in School Committee Proposals A & B.

Revise School Committee Proposals A & B with the following language to be changed in Article 5 Section 1 of Units A & C: *“The starting and dismissal times for students will be as follows, except in cases of emergency:*

Early Learning Center

- *AM Preschool: 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.*
- *PM Preschool: 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.*
- *Full-Day Preschool: 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.*

K-8 Schools

- *Kindergarten & Grades 1 – 6: 8:15 a.m. – 2:35 p.m.*
- *Grades 7 & 8: 8:00 a.m. – 2:35 p.m.*

High School: 7:45 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.”

Rationale

Extending the student day in grades K-8 without changing the educator workday will allow for the possible acceptance of MEA Proposal 25 (increased recess) and MEA counter to School Committee Proposal D (additional early release days) in some combination that does not prevent Malden from meeting SLT requirements.

Proposal Group #17

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Part b

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Subsection 6

Section vi

Part c

Section i

Section ii

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Subsection 1

MEA Proposal Summary

Class size caps

Response

- Accept first sentence of Part a of Proposal Group #17
- Counter second sentence of Part a of Proposal Group #17 with: *“As facilities and staff become available, the Committee and the Union will work toward the following enrollment ratios...”*
- Reject preschool class sizes
- Accept Kindergarten, 1-4, and 5-8 class sizes as goals -- *not maximums*
- Counter Grades 9-12 with 25 students per class as a goal -- *not maximum*

Rationale

In Malden we are lucky to welcome students from around the world throughout the year. We are in the process of establishing School Committee policies to more effectively enable students to attend their neighborhood schools. Our counters acknowledge class size, while also recognizing our need to provide a welcoming environment for our newly arrived students. Physical space in buildings is a variable that limits the availability of opening additional homerooms. Class sizes for pre-school students with disabilities follow DESE regulations; additional class size limits may make classes more restrictive, when we are required by law to place students in their least restrictive environment.

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MEA Proposal Summary

Class size caps – preschool

Response

Reject Part b.i and subsections 1–3 of Proposal Group #17

Rationale

Class sizes for pre-school students with disabilities follow DESE regulations; additional class size limits may make classes more restrictive, when we are required by law to place students in their least restrictive environment.

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MEA Proposal Summary

Class size caps

Response

Reject Part b.ii of Proposal Group #17 for redundancy

Rationale

Already governed by state law

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MEA Proposal Summary

Compensation for exceeding class size caps

Response

Reject Section iii of Part b of Proposal Group #17

Rationale

Our counter proposal indicates that we shall make a good faith effort to achieve the counter-proposed class size goals as facilities and space become available, but will not set maximum class sizes.

We will not establish class sizes that run counter to DESE regulations.

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MEA Proposal Summary

Universally implement a co-teaching model in all classes with a certain percentage of students with disabilities

Response

Reject Section iv of Part b of Proposal Group #17

Rationale

The foundation of Special Education is the principle that services and supports should be tailored to the individual needs of each student in the least restrictive environment, as outlined in their IEP. The co-teaching model is not always the most effective or appropriate instructional approach for every student, and decisions regarding services should be based on individualized determinations rather than a universal policy.

Part a

Part b

Section i

Subsection 1

Subsection 2

Subsection 3

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Subsection 1

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Subsection 6

Section vi

Part c

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Section v

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Subsection 1

MEA Proposal Summary

Institute a caseload maximum of 125 students for a variety of positions

Response

Reject section v, and all of its subsections, and section vi of Proposal Group # 17

Rationale

A RISE teacher is very different from a counselor, and a guidance counselor is very different from a Dean of Students; caseloads should vary dependent on the role and industry guidance.

- For example: American School Counselor Association recommends a counselor to student ratio of 250:1, and national average is 385.
- ASHA, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, does not recommend a specific caseload number for school-based speech-language pathologists (SLPs), but instead advocates for a workload analysis approach to ensure SLPs have sufficient time to provide effective services and meet student needs.

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MEA Proposal Summary

ESP Staffing Ratios

Response

Hold due to financial implications

Rationale

The variability of staffing needs based on number of classrooms needs to be studied more closely.

High school schedule work may affect the high school staffing needs.

MEA Proposal Summary

Facility Concerns

Response

Counter section i of part a of Proposal Group #20 with the following language added to Health and Safety Articles for all units: *"The Committee shall make its best efforts to keep the facilities free of pests; facilities management shall respond promptly to any reports of pests in the buildings."*

Rationale

"The Malden Public Schools are committed to providing a safe and properly maintained environment... To achieve this end, the School District will implement integrated pest management procedures for its buildings and grounds...[MPS] shall develop and implement an integrated pest management program." – School Committee Policy EBAB

MEA Proposal Summary

Facility Concerns

Response

Counter section ii of part a of Proposal Group #20 with the following language added to Health and Safety Articles for all units: *"The Committee shall respond to any reports of classrooms with temperatures above 90 degrees immediately and change locations until temperature can be stabilized; for widespread issues, the Superintendent shall be consulted to discuss dismissing school. In the event of a school dismissal, the Committee shall dismiss school without penalty/loss of pay to workers. Bargaining unit workers shall have no loss of pay."*

Rationale

If classroom temperatures across a building are above 90 degrees without a remedy, the Committee understands the request to dismiss school. Our counter-proposals acknowledge a protocol to investigate whether issues are isolated to one classroom or more widespread, to prevent disruption in learning.

MEA Proposal Summary

Work beyond day/year for Unit B

Response

Accept deletion of current language in Unit B 5.07 in Part b of Proposal Group #21

Accept first sentence of proposed language in Part b of Proposal Group #21 "If, in the judgement..."

Reject second sentence of proposed language in Part b of Proposal Group #21 "Similarly, if a ..."

Rationale

Hold School Committee Proposal C as it applies to the schedules of Unit B workers

Part a
Part b
Part c

MEA Proposal Summary

Substitutes

Response

Reject Proposal Group #23

Rationale

Substitutes are not members of any unit. The hiring and pay for substitute teachers is the sole purview of the School Committee.

MEA Proposal Summary

Guidance and Nurse Work Beyond Work Year

Response

Hold and clarify status of Part d of Proposal Group #27 after MEA counter of School Committee Proposal I

Rationale

Competing proposals; MEA counter to School Committee Proposal I is the most recent proposal on this topic

Thank you!

