

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION  
OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Monday, November 13, 2017  
Malden Senior Center, 7 Washington Street

Mayor Christenson called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

Mayor Christenson announced that the next School Committee meeting will be Monday, December 4, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. in the Malden Senior Center, 7 Washington Street.

Mayor Christenson led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence for those who have served our country and for those who continue to do so.

**Roll Call**

The following attendance was taken:

Mayor Christenson	Present
Ms. Beardsley	Present
Ms. Bordonaro	Present
Mr. Drummey	Present
Mr. Froio	Present
Mr. Iovino	Present
Mr. Leone	Present
Mr. Marsh	Present
Mr. Silverman	Present
Superintendent Oteri	Present
Student Representative Tsige	Present
Clerk	Present

**Approval of Minutes**

Mayor Christenson brought forth the matter of the approval of minutes for the October 2<sup>nd</sup> Regular Session of the School Committee. Mr. Marsh made the motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Iovino seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Christenson brought forth the matter of the approval of minutes for the October 2<sup>nd</sup> Executive Session of the School Committee. Mr. Leone made the motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Marsh seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment**

Ms. Sarah Strayer, 43 Havelock Street, Malden and 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher at Salemwood School  
Ms. Strayer said that for several years, families could choose a K-8 school based on its themes until the policy changed several years ago. The enrollment policy for students new to Malden Public Schools (MPS) as stated on the website has three criteria; first is programmatic priority placements (for example, special education children are placed into special classes at schools with those respective programs); second is siblings with proximity placement and; third is proximity placement. Ms. Strayer continued that recently several new students have been enrolled at the Salemwood School who live closer to other schools. These new students do not require a special program such as an SEI classroom, and neither do their siblings. One student lives within a block of the Ferryway School and the other student lives within a block of

the Linden School. The student who lives near the Ferryway School has been tardy many times. Ms. Strayer was informed that the reason for this placement is because the Salemwood School was the nearest school with open seats available. Ms. Strayer said that nothing about open seats or classrooms caps for size is mentioned in the enrollment policy online. If these additional factors affect a student's placement or are a part of an official policy, Ms. Strayer suggested the website be updated so that the placement policy is completely transparent for schools and families.

Mr. Ross Bowdridge, 67 Cedar Street, Malden and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies Teacher at Salemwood School  
Mr. Bowdridge spoke about the number of students attending the Salemwood middle school and the size of their classes. There are more than 27 students each in 4 out of 5 Social Studies blocks and this is without any of the beginning ELL students that Science and Math teachers also see daily. Mr. Bowdridge said that although Salemwood has the most classroom space, he requested the School Committee to consider a multi-school solution for the beginning ELL students, for next year.

Ms. Penny Kalman, 194 Bainbridge Street, Malden and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher at Salemwood School  
Ms. Kalman thanked the School Committee for hiring some SEI support staff for the teachers. Ms. Kalman asked for some consensus on how the schools can celebrate the upcoming holidays.

### **Donations**

Ms. Nichole Mossalam of the Outreach Community and Reform Center said that during Ramadan, a Fast-a-thon was organized to raise funds to be donated to the schools to pay off outstanding student lunch balances. Ms. Mossalam hopes that this would be the first annual Fast-a-Thon with many more to come to benefit various charities throughout Malden. Ms. Mossalam said that members of the community were asked to sign a pledge to fast in solidarity with the community during Ramadan and in return, other individuals were asked to sponsor them to help raise fund for charitable causes. This year, the school lunch program for MPS was selected. Based on the information provided, the money raised in the amount of \$6,332 was able to pay off the full balances for Ferryway, Linden STEAM Academy, Forestdale and the Early Learning Center. Mayor Christenson thanked Ms. Mossalam.

### **Superintendent's Report**

#### **1. Nature's Classroom Field Trip for Salemwood**

Principal Gordon and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA teacher and Team Leader, Ms. Jane Wright of Salemwood School were called upon to present details of the field trip. Ms. Wright said that this is the 14<sup>th</sup> year that this trip has been organized. Ms. Wright continued that this trip is planned for the end of March 2018 and the location this time will be Charlton, Massachusetts instead of Old Orchard Beach, Maine. Ms. Wright answered Mr. Iovino's question about scholarship programs being organized for students who cannot afford it and that there will be 24 hours medical service at the location. The cost of the trip is \$283 per student. Superintendent Oteri said that he recommends the trip and that the participation rate at the school despite the economic challenges is commendable. Mr. Iovino made the motion to approve the Nature's Classroom field trip for Salemwood. Mr. Leone seconded it and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **2. Norwich University Field Trip for MHS**

Principal Lombardi of MHS said that Norwich University will be awarding ten scholarships to qualified students who are going to major in STEM subjects such as math, science and engineering. The scholarships will range from \$25,000 - \$30,000 for each of the 4 years of study at Norwich University. Principal Lombardi said that part of the eligibility requirement is a day visit to Norwich which is being funded by Norwich University. Norwich University is also supplying a bus for the trip but staffing will be provided by MHS. A few guidance counselors and student teachers will be going on the trip with the students. Principal Lombardi continued that the turn-around is tight as

the trip is on November 16<sup>th</sup> and that they received notice of the trip right after the previous School Committee meeting had taken place. Principal Lombardi added that there are already 40 seniors who are targeted to go on the field trip. In answer to Mr. Iovino's question, Principal Lombardi said that normally they would find out about a trip like this toward the beginning of the school year. Mr. Leone made a motion to approve the Norwich University field trip for MHS. Mr. Marsh seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

### **3. Tornado Travelers Club**

Ms. Shauna Campbell, science teacher at MHS and one of the advisors of the Tornado Travelers Club said that the club has already successfully gone on 5 tours with the students in past years. Ms. Campbell continued that they have already received permission to go on two tours this year and are now seeking approval for the location of two tours next year, to Costa Rica and Spain. Mr. Iovino expressed his concerns about any trips to locations outside the United States because of recent events and asked that pending approval of the trips, a letter be sent to parents about potential risks. Ms. Campbell responded that prior to their trip to Greece, there were conversations with parents and letters sent to them. Ms. Campbell said that will continue to be done for all future trips. Superintendent Oteri commented that the trips to Costa Rica and Spain offer inter-disciplinary opportunities to students and recommends it but he requested the Tornado Travelers Club advisors to keep him informed every step of the way as everyone is concerned when students visit places outside the United States. Ms. Beardsley voiced her support for the trip and asked about whether there is a blog with updates. Ms. Campbell answered that there is a Facebook page where updates are provided and as soon as they reach the destination, emails are sent to all parents. In answer to Ms. Bordonaro question about the number of chaperones, Ms. Campbell said the ratio is 10:1 for students to teachers. Ms. Campbell added that at the moment, there are about 10 students for each trip. The Costa Rica trip can accommodate 30 and the Spain trip can accommodate 40. Mr. Drummey made the motion to approve the Costa Rica and Spain trip for the 2018-2019 school year. Mr. Leone seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

### **4. District Updates and Highlights**

Superintendent Oteri informed that the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Pledge of Allegiance was celebrated recently at the gravesite of James Bailey Upham at the Forestdale Cemetery. On November 11<sup>th</sup>, all the schools did the pledge of allegiance in unison at 9:00 a.m.

Superintendent Oteri said that seven teachers and three administrators attended the 3-day Undoing Racism workshop organized by the city and that it was terrific to see the energy and commitment of the community to address racism.

The Forestdale School participated in a book fundraiser which was attended by Councilor Murphy, Mayor Christenson and Superintendent Oteri. A 6 year-old girl from New Hampshire began collecting donated books for hurricane victims in Texas and it went viral. The Forestdale School collected many books for this fundraiser and they were shipped to students and families in hurricane ravaged areas of the country.

Superintendent Oteri recognized the Footsteps2Brilliance program and the work done by Ms. McBride's class at the Salemwood School to reach the 1 million word mark in October. Superintendent Oteri said that this is a wonderful way to get our youngest students, our Kindergarten students educated and excited about reading because readers become leaders.

On October 21st, an educational camp led by peers was held at the Linden School. MPS hosted this event in collaboration with several districts around the commonwealth and dozens of educators attended.

Superintendent Oteri mentioned that a number of fall celebrations were held at the schools recently and that there was a district-wide professional development day on November 7<sup>th</sup> throughout the district ranging in topics

and discipline from legal training to peer-led training. Superintendent Oteri added that the results of the professional development day survey showed that it provided what the educators need for their work because about three quarters of the participants thought the trainings were very beneficial, 24% said that they were really good and 2% were either indecisive or didn't care for it. Superintendent Oteri added that having professional development days earlier in the year is much more effective because educators are able to employ some of the strategies for at least three quarters of the school year before the year end, compared to having the professional development days at the end of the year where there is no attention span and not enough time to implement the strategies.

In order to provide communication that is transparent, collaborative, supportive and informative, Superintendent Oteri said that he will be providing updates through phone calls, twitter, and having information posted to the website in a timely manner. Superintendent Oteri is committed to better communication that is more direct and helpful for parents. Superintendent Oteri also said that the first newsletter just came out and commended Mr. Stephen Freker for helping with the newsletter. Superintendent Oteri said that what is being done in the schools needs to be seen and heard by the community at large and families need to know about the great things that are going on and celebrate the success of our students. Superintendent Oteri added that he will provide updates and notices of events through his twitter account @MaldenPublic. Superintendent Oteri then handed out the new MPS bumper stickers to the School Committee members.

Mayor Christenson asked whether there were any previous professional development day surveys done for comparison purposes. Superintendent Oteri responded that there were previous surveys and that there is certainly a marked improvement on how it was received and the usefulness of it this time. Superintendent Oteri added that anything above 60% is considered good and therefore 74% is terrific.

#### **5. Next Generation MCAS Presentation**

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Superintendent Oteri spoke about the Next Generation MCAS and 2017 Accountability Results. The difference between the Legacy MCAS and the Next Generation MCAS was also explained. The Next Generation MCAS was rolled out last year and it was given to students in Grades 3-8. The scores for last year's test will be used as a baseline for next year's test scores. Last year's scores will not count towards accountability. The high school students will be doing the Next Generation MCAS in 2019. Superintendent Oteri said that the PowerPoint presentation will be put on the website. Superintendent Oteri also said that a letter which will explain this information in a narrative format will be put on the website.

Ms. Bordonaro asked what can be done to make students more confident and comfortable about taking the test on a computer. Superintendent Oteri responded that the students are already taking other tests in class on computers and are digitally literate. Superintendent Oteri also said that since it is not a timed test, students will be coached not to rush through the test. In response to Ms. Bordonaro's question on whether the students can use paper during the test, Superintendent Oteri said that they can and that all the 504 and IEP accommodations will still be provided.

Mayor Christenson asked if the participation rate is still important and Superintendent Oteri said that it will be relevant and is a part of the accountability rating. Superintendent Oteri added that one of the reasons that the K-8 schools stayed at Level 2 is because they achieved a participation rate of over 90%. Mayor Christenson asked if the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) will change the baseline year from 2017 to some other year in the future. Superintendent Oteri said that the baseline year is probably not going to change but that this is subject to the deliberations of DESE. In response to Mayor Christenson's next question, Superintendent Oteri said that the individual school data has been received and that a summary will be presented at the next meeting.

Mr. Marsh asked if the 2017 test scores can still be used to see if a student is at grade level or not. Superintendent Oteri responded that the test is a measure of grade level readiness. Student Representative Tsige asked if the changes in the testing were made in an effort to improve the U.S. student scores on international tests. Superintendent Oteri answered that Massachusetts is at the forefront and that they are trying to raise the level of expectation and the level of performance and achievement. Superintendent Oteri said that caution needs to be exercised when looking at scores of other countries because education is not necessarily compulsory or mandatory in some countries and the scores reported may not be representative of the entire student population. Superintendent Oteri added that DESE is also interested in raising the level of education and since Massachusetts is the hub of many colleges, the college readiness of students exiting the school system is important.

Mayor Christenson asked if DESE addressed any of the student tracking issues. Superintendent Oteri said that this is not tied to MCAS test scores but it impacts accountability. Superintendent Oteri added that this aspect needs to be monitored and systems need to be put in place to better track students.

### **Subcommittee Reports/Discussions**

1. **Space and Enrollment Ad-Hoc Subcommittee – Mr. Iovino**

Mr. Iovino said that the recent enrollment figure is 6,706 students and that there is an additional 58 students since early September.

2. **Agenda Free Lunch Program – Ms. Bordonaro, Ms. Beardsley and Mr. Marsh**

Ms. Bordonaro asked Superintendent Oteri to comment on this matter. Superintendent Oteri said that the school district will automatically qualify for a universal free lunch program if the district is at 80% for free and reduced lunch. Superintendent Oteri added that this might not be something that we would want to pursue because there might be an associated cost with it. It is a federal program and it may affect some of the federal reimbursements that we receive. Superintendent Oteri said we are at the information gathering phase where we are looking into the feasibility of implementing it in Malden and the associated cost. This includes identifying the number of students who do not get lunch at the schools and see if they would qualify. Superintendent Oteri continued that only one school in the district meets the 80% free and reduced lunch criteria.

Superintendent Oteri said that the district is looking into a free breakfast program through a grant program. The school district is going to request the parents of students who have negative lunch balances to resubmit the free and reduced lunch forms to see if they would qualify. Even if the student does not qualify, the school district gets some reimbursement based on the number of participants and families who completed the form. Ms. Beardsley asked if there is a reason that families should fill out the free and reduced lunch forms even if they do not qualify. Superintendent Oteri said that it is important because of the formula that the government uses for reimbursements and other assistance.

In response to Ms. Bordonaro query about whether an ad-hoc subcommittee is needed for this matter, Superintendent Oteri said it would be best if it resided with the Budget Subcommittee because it could have a budgetary impact. Mr. Iovino asked whether this issue is impacted negatively by the new definition from DESE about determining poverty and income levels. Superintendent Oteri answered that this matter is not impacted as what they are using for poverty is different.

Ms. Bordonaro made a motion to refer the agenda free lunch program to the Budget Subcommittee. Mr. Marsh seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

3. **Baystate Textile Donation Boxes – Mr. Marsh**

Mr. Marsh said that the donation boxes outside the schools generate revenue for the schools' PTOs. Mr. Marsh continued that every year, \$21 billion pounds of textiles are thrown away in the United States. In any condition, 95% of the textiles can be recycled or reused, 45% of textiles can be reused, 30% can be turned into wiping cloths and 20% can be recycled into new products. Mr. Marsh encouraged everyone to support the schools by donating unwanted clothes as each month, the school PTOs will receive a rebate based on the weight of the donations. Acceptable items include clothing, footwear, linens, accessories and stuffed animals. Superintendent Oteri informed that this is a great fundraiser for the PTOs as they received about \$6,000 from this program last year, which in turn goes directly to helping the students. Superintendent Oteri continued that even bedding, pillows and stuffed animals can be recycled this way.

**Motions and Resolutions**

1. **School Council Member Appointments – Mr. Iovino**

Mr. Iovino said that pursuant to the requirements of DESE, each school is required to have a school council. Mr. Iovino made a motion to approve the School Councils. Mr. Leone seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

2. **Roseann McEvoy Dedication – Ms. Beardsley**

Ms. Beardsley read out the following letter that was written by Ms. Kathy LeBlanc, Ms. Kathy Sullivan along with present and past Salemwood staff to have the children's playground in Salemwood named for Roseann McEvoy:

*On October 20, 2016, the Salemwood School lost a very special educator, Roseann McEvoy, Rosie to her closest acquaintances. Roseann passed away from breast cancer after a courageous fight leaving a major void in the lives of those who loved her.*

*Anyone who knew Roseann, knew someone who filled the hallways with robust laughter that would bring a smile to anyone she encountered. In her classroom, she brought a passion for education by teaching kindergarten children with special needs in a full inclusion setting. Roseann loved her kids. The kids with extra challenges were Roseann's specialty. She had an ability to make every one of her students feel successful and important. She met them where they were at socially, physically, medically and academically and she lovingly encouraged and pushed them every day to make gains, and more importantly, to know they were her number one priority.*

*Because of Roseann's fun loving and compassionate devotion to Salemwood's students, we are requesting to have the children's playground named for Roseann McEvoy. Her spirit will forever linger on the kindergarten floor of the Salemwood School. Rosie's contagious laughter can be heard through the children playing in the playground which makes this the perfect place to remember Rosie and her dedication to so many children who benefited from this special educator.*

In answer to Mayor Christenson's question about a timeline, Ms. Beardsley said that the specifics of the dedication can be planned with the input of many people. Ms. Beardsley made the motion have the children's playground in Salemwood named for Roseann McEvoy. Ms. Bordonaro seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

**Personal Privilege**

**Executive Session**

Mr. Iovino made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 8:01 p.m. Mr. Froio seconded. A roll call vote was taken.  
Ms. Beardsley voted YES  
Ms. Bordonaro voted YES  
Mr. Drummey voted YES  
Mr. Froio voted YES  
Mr. Iovino voted YES  
Mr. Leone voted YES  
Mr. Marsh voted YES  
Mr. Silverman voted YES  
Mayor Christenson voted YES  
Motion passed unanimously.

The committee reconvened to the Regular Session at 8:10 p.m.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Silverman made a motion to adjourn at 8:12 p.m. Mr. Marsh seconded and it was so VOTED.

I certify that a notice of this meeting was filed with the Clerk of the City of Malden in the manner provided under Chapter 39, Section 23A of the General Laws.



---

Shirley Dorai, Clerk