

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION
OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Monday, March 6, 2017
Malden Senior Center 7 Washington Street

Mayor Christenson called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

Mayor Christenson announced that the next School Committee meeting will be Monday, April 3, 2017 at 6:30 pm 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 Grandson	Present
Asst. Superintendent Keenan	Present
Asst. Superintendent Johnson	Present
Student Representative James Mac	Absent
Clerk	Present

Superintendent's Report

1. Early Learning Center Student Presentation

Superintendent Grandson welcomed Ms. Gordon, Principal of the Early Learning Center (ELC), to introduce the students from ELC. Principal Gordon said that the presentation showcases PDIS which stands for "Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports", an approach to improve the school climate and culture. Over the past year, core values were created and the "Bee" was chosen as the school mascot. The students presented a poster about the core values of being safe and being a friend and recited the "Friends at School" poem.

2. Nature's Classroom in Ocean Park, Maine

Dr. Grandson invited Mr. Abdel Sepulveda, Principal of Salemwood School to provide more information on this program. Students from Salemwood have participated in this program for over thirteen years. Students hope to attend for five days, March 27-31, 2017. Students must have good attendance and grades in order to attend. Superintendent Grandson recommended the program. Mr. Iovino echoed the sentiments of Dr. Grandson. Ms. Beardsley and Mr. Drummey also recommended the program. Mr. Marsh suggested that the students could present some

highlights of their experience once the program is completed. The motion to approve the program was made by Mr. Iovino. Mr. Marsh seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Mayor Christenson brought forth the matter of the approval of minutes for the Regular Session minutes of February 6, 2017. Mr. Iovino made a motion to approve the Regular Session minutes of February 6, 2017. Mr. Marsh seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Leone made a motion to approve the Executive Session minutes of February 6, 2017. Ms. Bordonaro seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Mayor Christenson deferred to the audience for anyone who may have any comments. There was no response. Mayor Christenson closed this portion of the meeting.

Superintendent's Report

3. District Updates and Highlights

Superintendent Grandson informed that the Malden Public Schools has a partnership with the Harvard Graduate School of Education called the Reimagining Diverse and Equitable Schools. In October 2016, Principal Bransfield and Principal Sepulveda joined Superintendent Grandson at the Harvard campus to look into diversity at schools. Somerville Public Schools and other public schools also attended this event. One of the focus areas was to look at teacher and staff diversity. Courageous conversations is another focus area and teachers have to be prepared to facilitate such conversations around transgender, immigration and other matters that affect students and families. Social emotional learning curriculum was also reviewed in terms of how to incorporate the issue of diversity into approaches such as Open Circle. Teacher, principals and district administrators are on the teams working on the various focus areas.

Another partnership with Harvard University which recently began, has enabled forty to fifty ELL (English Language Learners) students from the Malden High School to receive tutoring in English, Math and Science from students studying at Harvard University, who were former ELL students themselves. This has proven to be a resource to the district with no monetary costs.

Superintendent Grandson congratulated Assistant Superintendent Johnson who received the Federation for Children with Special Needs Community Partnership award for school administration recently. Parents who are part of the Malden Special Education Parent Advisory Council nominated her for this award for her dedication to special needs communities in Malden and beyond.

The Instructional Focus Walks will be held at the Early Learning Center on March 8th at 9:00 am and at the Malden High School on March 16th at 9:00 am.

Salemwood School had their ELT (Extended Learning Time) grant site-visit which was conducted by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) last week. It was very successful. The school was cited for promoting higher order thinking across all classrooms, fostering a safe and supportive learning environment, and having a well-defined school-wide instructional practices led by the school leadership.

4. **DESE Comprehensive District Review (CDR) Results**
Superintendent Grandson presented the School Committee members with an overview of the Comprehensive District Review report provided by DESE based on the review they conducted in Malden Public Schools in October 2016.

Superintendent Grandson said that these are only highlights as the full report is very long and needs to be considered more closely. The strengths and growth areas for six categories were identified. The areas include leadership and governance; curriculum and instruction; assessment; human resources and professional development; student support; and financial and asset management.

For leadership and governance, the report noted that the strength is that the district is in the beginning stages of articulating a district vision and plan for improvement in aligning the district and school planning so that there is a greater focus on teaching and learning. The instructional focus walks which were implemented received commendation. For the growth areas, the report mentioned that there was evidence of implementation for only 2 of the 24 initiatives listed in the District Improvement Plan which was approved in 2015. Also noted was that the district does not have adequate capacity to develop and implement structures and processes required to insure effective and equitable approaches to improvement. Superintendent Grandson said that this has to do with our ability as the central office to support schools and develop the work that is happening there.

The report indicated that for curriculum and instruction strengths, the district fostered the use of the 5 District Partnership's Year Long Plans, curriculum maps that are aligned with the state curriculum frameworks. Another strength identified is that the district has established focused curricular and instructional leadership in its K-12 ELL program and its K-5 literacy program. This is because we have district directors who have these areas under their specific purview. The weakness mentioned is that the responsibilities assigned to curriculum content area directors are too diffuse to allow sufficient attention to individual content areas district-wide. Superintendent said that this is due to the fact that over the years, there has been some consolidation in district director positions. Some directors have over ninety teachers under their purview. This presents a challenge in terms of making sure there is quality in curriculum development and sufficient teacher support in those particular content areas. The report also mentioned that in observed classrooms, the quality and rigor of instruction was inconsistent from class to class within schools and from school to school, and from level to level, and instruction often did not sufficiently challenge students. Superintendent Grandson said that although this may seem very negative, it shows that we have some great pockets of excellence, people who are doing great work in the classrooms. Superintendent Grandson said that the area of focus is to spread this kind of great work across the district, in every classroom, everyday. The District Instructional Leadership Team (DILT) and Instructional Focus Walks (IFW) efforts are aimed towards this direction and it supports this goal.

In terms of assessment, the strength is that the K-5 literacy program and the K-12 ELL have developed well-organized data structures to drive instructional decision making based on student performance data. A challenge in the assessment area is that the district does not have a comprehensive system of formative and benchmark assessment, sufficient leadership, staff training and supports to use achievement data and other relevant data to guide improvement decisions. Superintendent Grandson said that this is about having the capacity to develop and

organize a seamless system, to make sure school leaders and teachers have the required data, and to have key assessments that are strong, reliable and valid to make instructional decisions, and for teachers to make adjustments to practice as they go about their daily work. Superintendent Grandson believes that as a team, this is achievable.

There were no strengths found in the area of human resources and professional development. In terms of challenges and growth areas, the report noted that the district has not achieved consistency in implementing its educator evaluation system. The absence of a human resources director was also noted. Superintendent Grandson commented that in terms of teacher evaluation, there were some gaps in certain areas where teachers were not evaluated and in other areas, the evaluations lacked in quality. Superintendent Grandson said that we need to develop as evaluators and ensure there are supports for those who are doing the evaluations, especially since the process is very rigorous with the new teacher evaluation system. Superintendent Grandson continued that a more comprehensive system and trainings such as the summer leadership development and the on-going leadership development with the district instructional leadership team to provide individuals with greater capacity to evaluate is needed. Superintendent Grandson also spoke about the absence of a human resource director in the district, saying that in districts with a workforce of over 800 employees, there is a human resource director and even smaller districts have a human resource director. This position will need to be considered.

Student support strength mentioned in the report focused on the district having made a commitment through its staffing, support, programs and culture to address the social-emotional and behavioral needs of all students. Superintendent Grandson said that we are developing our social emotional learning framework. The growth area for student support is that although the district has developed a multi-tiered system of support, resources and practices vary from school to school. Superintendent Grandson said that the district is working on getting these aligned across schools.

The strength in the category of financial and asset management is that the district and city administrators have strong working relationships. In the growth area section, the report pointed out that the district's improvement plan does not inform resource allocation decisions in the district. Superintendent Grandson said that when the governance team updates the district improvement plan, it will be easier to reference the plan whenever other meetings and initiatives are undertaken so that it aligns with the plan.

Mayor Christenson asked whether the report will be posted soon for the district. Superintendent Grandson answered that it has been sent out to all the Malden Public Schools community by email and it will be put up on the website. Mayor Christenson said that the report should also be made available to the district-wide PTO.

In answer to Mr. Marsh's question about what else is being done so that the instruction and resources is consistent throughout the district, Superintendent Grandson said that he sees this as setting up an instructional model or system that has a multi-faceted approach to a number of things that are very fluid and complicated. One example is the instructional focus walks at the district level, one-to-one meetings with principals as well as instructional focus walks with curriculum directors and principals. It is also about making sure that the conversations on a daily basis are focused on how to improve rigor and higher order thinking in classrooms. This was

started in the summer at the 3-day retreat for the school district leaders where they looked at all the things that they expect to see happening well in every classroom, no new items were added. At the instructional focus walks, the conversation is about how leaders are supporting teachers. This is done by developing capacity internally and changing our outlook, and the way we prioritize. Appropriate interventions must also be in place and the budget subcommittee will vet and choose interventions that will make sure that we are on the right track for next year. In summary, it is about professional development, curriculum development and ensuring leaders have the training they need to do evaluation and focus on instruction. Having feedback from teachers as well as documentation of evidence that principals have been visiting classrooms also helps in this regard. When Mr. Marsh asked about the time frame to achieve this result, Superintendent Grandson said that there is a 3-5 year process in changing culture, providing adequate resources, and ensuring smooth functioning of the instructional leadership. There are short-term goals as well as long-term goals.

Mr. Iovino asked if the state can simplify the very lengthy and wordy system for evaluating teachers so that it can be done more easily. Superintendent Grandson responded that although the paperwork and effort required is substantial, it has helped us to think differently about evaluation, and provided some levers and flexibilities. The key piece is to make sure leaders are well-equipped and prepared. Superintendent Grandson said that it will get better as we go along and become more familiar with it. In response to Mr. Iovino's question about whether the Assistant Principals can help in this regard, Superintendent Grandson said that the Assistant Principals, House Principals, Directors and Managers are also doing evaluations.

Mr. Silverman said that this report must be considered when deciding on the budget to ensure that the personnel needed to meet the challenges and growth areas are not sacrificed in order to cut costs. In response to Ms. Bordonaro's question on the time frame for the evaluations, Superintendent Grandson said that it done during the academic area, beginning in September. All the evaluations have to be completed by May 15th.

When questioned by Mayor Christenson about whether a response to DESE is needed with regards to the report, Superintendent Grandson said that a response is not needed as this report is given as a resource. Superintendent Grandson added that DESE offered to come and work with the district team around prioritizing the document. DESE will bring an outside facilitator from the department and work with the district instructional team. DESE will perform these comprehensive district reviews once every five or ten years depending on their funding.

Mayor Christenson asked whether the 5 District Partnership should be continued. Superintendent Grandson commented that the partnership was in existence for the last five years and that the benefits received from this partnership outweighs the cost. The membership cost is about \$9,000 or \$10,000 a year.

Mayor Christenson commented that DESE found Malden to be a welcoming and safe environment, and that the teachers were eager to teach. Mayor Christenson added that Malden is about \$2.5 million above net school spending which is an improvement from past years. Mayor Christenson said that we need to look closely at the DESE requirements and how the budget can support it as the budget is also affected by other expenses such as health insurance. The 1.8% in state aid is not sufficient to cover gaps. Mayor Christenson wants the community to provide feedback on the report and asked for the report to be also on the docket for the next meeting.

Subcommittee Reports/Discussions

1. Families Against Drugs (FAD) Ad-Hoc Subcommittee – Ms. Bordonaro
Ms. Bordonaro informed that the first FAD meeting was held on February 28, 2017 during the February vacation week and although there was a good turnout, Ms. Bordonaro would like more parents to attend. Among those in attendance at the meeting were State Representative Steven Ultrino, City Councilor Peg Crowe, Everett City Councilor Leo McKinnon, Superintendent Grandson, former Malden High School Principal Dana Brown, Malden Overcoming Addiction President Paul Hammersley, Dr. Masucci from the Melrose-Wakefield Hospital who presented some expert testimony regarding some of the things he has seen in the hospitals, Mr. Leone and Mr. Drummey. Ms. Bordonaro will be visiting some PTOs to raise awareness about drugs and help parents educate their children so that ultimately it will work towards bringing the relationship between the parent and child closer. This in turn will make the child feel comfortable to talk about any kind of situation or circumstance with the parent.
2. Social, Emotional and Physical Well-Being Ad-Hoc Subcommittee – Mr. Marsh
Mr. Marsh said that due to the snowstorm, no meeting was held in February. The next meeting will be held later this week and one of the items on the agenda will be the update from Superintendent Grandson and Mr. Marsh about their visit to the Boston Public Schools. Mr. Marsh hoped that the Open Circle program that they witnessed over there can be adopted in Malden. Last week, Mr. Marsh and Superintendent Grandson met with a few 11th and 12th grade students around the topic of restorative justice. The feedback received from the students was very informative. Superintendent Grandson said that it was powerful to witness this model in action with our own students. The students liked the opportunity to sit down and talk about issues that concern them. Mr. Marsh added that some of the students said that they did not feel close to their teachers. Mr. Marsh hopes that through Open Circle and Restorative Justice, the students can interact and build the relationship with their teachers.
3. Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Task Force – Mr. Marsh
Mr. Marsh informed that there was a meeting last month and that the sub-committees within the task force are working on various projects. Mr. Marsh looks forward to provide updates as the work progresses.
4. Policy and Procedures Subcommittee Update – Mr. Leone/Mr. Silverman
Mr. Leone commented that the subcommittee had a meeting a few weeks ago and among the topics discussed was the need to revise and update the student handbook. The other issue discussed was about the groups that are not paying for hall rentals. Superintendent Grandson said that Ms. Bordonaro has also been working on the handbook since the fall. Superintendent Grandson added that some outside sources are going to be brought in to help review and update the student handbook. Mr. Silverman informed that the subcommittee also received an update from the Substance Abuse Policy Working Group led by Ms. Ashley Wright from the Department of Health. The group is working on areas such as how we support students and how we react when there are violations of the substance abuse policy. A draft of the policy will be available in a month or so. Mr. Silverman also said that the student enrollment process was discussed at the last subcommittee meeting.

5. Space and Enrollment Ad-Hoc Subcommittee – Mr. Iovino
Mr. Iovino informed that the current enrollment figure for grades K-12 is 6,781 which is a slight decrease from the previous month. Mr. Iovino said that as part of our membership benefits from NESDEC, we received an updated enrollment report from NESDEC dated March 2, 2017. Mr. Iovino requested Superintendent Grandson to ask Dr. Donald Kennedy, Demographic Specialist for NESDEC to present an executive summary of the NESDEC report at the April School Committee meeting. Mr. Iovino brought attention to the fact that while the report is comprehensive, it does not take into account specific trends in real estate development in Malden; upcoming plans by the Malden Redevelopment Authority and demographic impacts; and it does not take into account an analysis of current space and operational usage across the Malden Public Schools. Mr. Iovino said that NESDEC could do a further in-depth study which takes into account all these factors. Touching on the matter of resources for immigrant children, Mr. Iovino had contacted Mr. Glenn Koocher, Executive Director of Massachusetts Association of School Committees, to put together some resources for students born out of the USA, who are studying here on visas. When questioned by Ms. Bordonaro, Mr. Iovino said that NESDEC could do the further in-depth study that takes into account all the other factors mentioned earlier for a sum of about \$7,000 which can be funded by the school budget.

6. Resources for Immigrant Families – Ms. Beardsley
Ms. Beardsley mentioned that many groups of people may feel anxious with the changes in immigration that have been made at the federal level and other changes that may come in the future. Ms. Beardsley provided some facts such as that all undocumented students are entitled to free and equitable K-12 education as per Supreme Court decision. There are no federal laws that prohibit the admission of undocumented immigrants to U.S. colleges, public or private. So, upon graduation, Massachusetts provides opportunities for undocumented students. Deferred Action to Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is a two-year renewable program that grants eligible undocumented youth a temporary work permit, social security number and protection from deportation. In Massachusetts, those who have completed the process can also apply for a driver's license. Ms. Beardsley contacted Ms. Karen Colon-Hayes, the Community Outreach Manager from the Mayor's Office and received information that Malden's Promise Coalition is hosting a Youth and Family Immigration Discussion Panel on Thursday, March 9th at 4:00pm at the Malden High School library. It is for anyone who is interested or who works with youth or families and deals with immigration issues. Ms. Beardsley said that she will also be attempting to put resources and links on the website as well as provide updates. The other available resources for any legal issues are the Boston Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement as well as the Irish International Immigrant Center in Boston. The Malden Mayor's Office has also been very supportive of anyone dealing with this issue right now.

Mayor Christenson said that the Malden's Promise event on March 9th that Ms. Karen Colon-Hayes organized is comprised of a panel that includes Action for Boston Community Development Inc.(ABCD), Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), The Welcome Project and the Children's Law Center of Massachusetts. Mayor Christenson invited Ms. Karen Colon-Hayes to speak about the event as she has expanded her job duties to include the issue of immigration. Ms. Karen Colon-Hayes commented that she has been making partnerships with local organizations such as ABCD and that

she welcomes any questions or inquiries. The best way to reach her is by emailing her at khayes@cityofmalden.org. Ms. Bordonaro commented that there is a National Immigration Legal Services directory online.

Motions and Resolutions

1. School Registration Policy Change (Registration to Begin in July Instead of August) – Mr. Leone/Mr. Silverman

Mr. Silverman said that at the last Policy and Procedures Subcommittee meeting, Superintendent Grandson and Assistant Superintendent Keenan had requested that the motion be taken up to move the August 15th date by which the Parent Information Center can begin assigning students to schools and informing parents of those assignments. Parents struggle with getting the information so late and having to make last-minute arrangements before the start of school. Mr. Silverman mentioned that the Parent Information Center manager had some reservations about how the transition will happen but the subcommittee decided to try it out this year. Mr. Silverman continued that the subcommittee comprised of Mr. Leone, Mr. Marsh and himself voted 3-0 to pass the motion to have the August 15th date moved up to July 5th. This will allow the Parent Information Center to begin the process of assigning schools much earlier. Mr. Silverman made a motion to discuss this matter with the School Committee and Mr. Marsh seconded.

Superintendent Grandson said that based on the parents comments and the experience last year when there was a barrage of phone calls and emails about a number of challenges at the Parent Information Center, the families need to be notified earlier. Last year, the Parent Information Center had to cope with the move from school choice to neighborhood schools, as well as incoming students and their families from other districts who expected the same experience in Malden in terms of early school assignment notification. Superintendent Grandson added that we can only grow and get better if we take risks and try different things. If this approach does not work as expected, it will need to be revised. In response to Mayor Christenson's question, Superintendent Grandson said that this will align us better with other districts in terms of notification. Ms. Bordonaro said that it is more practical to start earlier. Ms. Beardsley commented that there might be a test that did not allow earlier placement. Ms. Beardsley agreed though that it needs to be sooner. Superintendent Grandson said that especially with ELL, this was the case as the students needed to be tested for language, but now the need to add language support to the Parent Information Center is being considered in the budget process.

A roll call vote was taken to pass the motion of bringing forward the August 15th date to July 5th for the Parent Information Center to begin assigning students to schools.

Mayor Christenson voted YES

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

Motion passed unanimously.

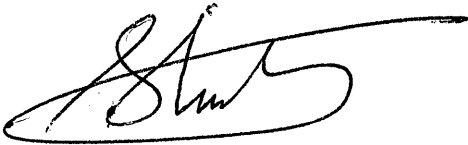
Consent

Personal Privilege

Adjournment

Mr. Iovino made a motion to adjourn at 8:14 pm. Mr. Froio 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shirley Dorai', written over a horizontal line.

Shirley Dorai, Clerk