

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION
OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Monday, February 5, 2018
Malden Senior Center, 7 Washington Street

Mayor Christenson called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Mayor Christenson announced that the next School Committee meeting will be on Monday, March 5, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the Malden Senior Center, 7 Washington Street, Malden.

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	Absent
Mr. Drummey	Present
Mr. Froio	Present
Mr. Iovino	Present
Ms. Leon	Present
Ms. McCarthy	Present
Ms. Spadafora	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 January 2nd Regular Session of the School Committee. Mr. Iovino made the motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Drummey seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Christenson brought forth the matter of the approval of minutes for the January 8th Regular Session of the School Committee. Mr. Iovino made the motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Drummey seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Ms. Gladys Rivera Rogers, North Shore Hispanic Association, President

Ms. Gladys informed the School Committee that on February 22, from 6:00 pm -8:00 pm, the North Shore Hispanic Association is holding its first annual fundraising event recognizing Outstanding Hispanic Americans in the community. The North Shore Hispanic Association is a 501.c3 organization.

Superintendent's Report

1. Malden Reads

Superintendent Oteri invited Ms. Jodie Zalk, the co-facilitator of Malden Reads to the podium. Ms. Zalk said that Malden Reads is in their 8th year and she shared some information about the Malden Reads 2018 Companion Books. This year, the main book selection is "The Hate U Give" by Angie Thomas which focuses on the world of youth. Ms. Zalk continued that Malden Reads is partnering with the Black Culture Club at the Malden High School (MHS) to host a showcase related to the themes of "The Hate U Give" as well as black culture and in celebration of February being Black History Month. Malden Reads is a community reading program run by dedicated volunteers who work in collaboration with the Malden Public Library and MATV. Each year, Malden Reads invited the community to read the same book and participate in a series of events related to the books' themes. The goals of the program are to promote literacy, love of reading, appreciation of city resources and to build community in the city of Malden. Ms. Zalk said that Malden Reads has received unprecedented level of support from MHS for the book selection. Malden Reads is collaborating with MHS in more ways such as the showcase with the Black Culture Club and providing MHS with 200 free copies of the book "The Hate U Give". Ms. Zalk added that the students from MHS will be skyping with the students from Charlottesville High School in Virginia because they are also reading the same book this year. Ms. Zalk said that with the support of the principals, teachers and staff at all the K-8 schools in Malden, the students will have an opportunity to use resources from the Teaching Tolerance Curriculum from the Southern Poverty Law Center. The students will also have the opportunity to skype with authors of the companion books, watch a children's movie and participate in a craft activity. Middle school students will be participating in a mini writers den program. Christina Charles, MHS senior and Vice-president of MHS Black Culture Club said that the after-school club was formed to inform and educate students about black history, black culture and heritage at MHS. In collaboration with Malden Reads, they will be putting up a show in order to commemorate black history and black culture in Malden. Christina hopes that this first event will start a tradition at MHS and become an annual event.

Superintendent Oteri is proud of our students who are embarking on creating a new tradition and noted that it is a noble endeavor. Superintendent Oteri added that it is essential especially in these times we live and being the most diverse high school in Massachusetts, it would be another extension of our high school students leading the way in acceptance and tolerance in showing how people should be in harmony. Superintendent Oteri said that galvanizing a school community around a book, particularly around black history month is exceptional and wonderful. In response to Ms. Spadafora's question, Ms. Zalk said "The Hate U Give Showcase" will be held on February 15th at 6:30 p.m. at Malden High School.

2. District Updates and Highlights

Superintendent Oteri informed that the first Meet & Greet with the Superintendent was held on January 24, 2018 at MHS. Ms. Beardsley, Ms. Spadafora, Mr. Drummey and about 30 parents attended the event. The discussion was around areas where the district does well and areas that are a challenge. Superintendent Oteri said the findings were presented to the Principals at the Principals Professional Learning Community today. School staff was identified as one of the strengths. Things to work on was around the ability to communicate clearly and consistently at the building and district level, coordinating school calendars, as well as getting information on the website early.

On January 18th, Superintendent Oteri was part of the Mayor's panel with other department heads on "City of Malden Live" which was also a Facebook live event. The questions directed to the Superintendent were mainly about snow and school cancellation. Superintendent Oteri talked about the protocols involved, and that schools are cancelled in a very collaborative manner focused on student safety. Before schools are opened, the Superintendent checks the schools sites. On the days where the weather was messy in the mornings, the Superintendent requested the custodians to come in an hour or two earlier to make sure the school sidewalks were salted and sanded.

Some updates from the Urban Superintendents Network meetings were highlighted by Superintendent Oteri. At one of the meetings, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) gave a presentation. Among the items that DESE is currently working on is revising school accountability where at the moment, schools are ranked from Levels 1-5, Level 1 being the best and Level 5 for underperforming schools. DESE is gathering public feedback and comments about how school accountability should be revised so that a school district will no longer be rated according to the lowest performing school in the district. Superintendent Oteri said that the urban superintendents at the meeting felt that DESE really listened to their concerns, such as the dropout count. For example, right now a student who drops out and returns to school, only to dropout again is counted as a dropout twice. In the future, the student will only be counted once. DESE is also taking note to not hold the school district accountable for students who have been in the school district for less than a year. DESE was also made aware of the importance of continuing to keep the student growth percentile as one of the measurements. The urban superintendents were concerned that student growth percentile will be taken out of the equation because for urban districts, the student growth percentile and closing the gaps are viewed as a way to keep the playing field somewhat level. Superintendent Oteri said that DESE is considering a formula that is based on a school district student performance as a whole as well as the lowest quarter or 25% of the lowest performing students and grading the students achievements on a 1-4 level basis, where Level 4 is the best, exceeding targets. The goal for a school system is around 75%. Then, based on this information, DESE will determine the school district rating. Superintendent Oteri said that the Urban Superintendents Network is also building advocacy for the inequities among the urban districts and some of the rural districts around Chapter 70 funding. Malden being an urban city and a gateway city is vulnerable to much of that and therefore would want as much solidarity and advocacy as possible.

As a way of bringing more equity internally, Superintendent Oteri said that the administrative team and the English Language Learners Director are looking into redistribution of SEI students in the district as well as the budgetary impact. Superintendent Oteri said that more details will be provided once the analysis is completed.

On January 26th, 22MHS students who successfully completed their pre-apprenticeship program received their certificates. Malden High School has a Pre-Apprenticeship Agreement with the Division of Apprentice Standards. Malden High School is the first non-vocational technical high school to be able to grant pre-Apprentice hours to students. Some of the students received pre-apprentice hours through job training in HVAC, Laborer, Carpentry, Culinary, Mechanics as well as the Tiny House construction at Malden High School and through the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program for the City of Malden.

Mr. John Ronan, General Counsel, Department of Labor, Mr. Henry Mattuchio, Deputy Director of the Division of Apprentice Standards, Mayor Christenson, Ms. Karen Colon Hayes, Director of Human Services and Community Outreach in Malden, MHS Interim Principal Chris Mastrangelo, MHS PACE & Pathways Program Manager Mr. Ron Janowicz and the indomitable MHS Transition Coordinator Ms. Kelli Collomb were all present with the students during this ceremony along with Superintendent Oteri. The students who were present gave brief speeches about their learning experiences and plans for the future. Superintendent Oteri said that he is proud of the amazing team in the high school and city but most of all, he is incredibly proud of the students. Superintendent Oteri continued that it is a true inter-disciplinary learning, where the students are able to take and apply what they learn in the classroom, in real-life situations. This is also a way to make the students, college and career ready. Outside alliances are constantly being sought according to Superintendent Oteri, as the need increases for skilled labor.

On January 27th, the MHS Boys Basketball team played on the most prestigious court in the State, the TD Garden, and had access to behind the scenes places such as locker rooms, press conference room, The Legends Club, etc. To top it off, the team achieved a double overtime win against the Pembroke High School basketball team. Superintendent Oteri congratulated Coach Nally, Athletics Director, Charlie Conefrey and the entire MHS Boys basketball team.

Superintendent Oteri informed that this past weekend, MHS student Jenna Vanella represented MHS in the English Speaking Union Shakespeare Monologue competition. Jenna performed a monologue from the Two Gentlemen of Verona and Sonnet 29. Jenna did a good job but was not selected to go into the next round but getting to this round in itself was an accomplishment. Superintendent Oteri said that our students should be encouraged to have more experiences in taking part in competitions as it builds confidence and enhances the education they receive in school. Superintendent Oteri continued that it opens up many doors and opportunities for them and it is also a way to celebrate some of the great successes we have in the Malden Public Schools (MPS).

Superintendent Oteri had an opportunity to be on the Title I cable show with Title I Director, Ms. Janice Raymond who is the producer, Family Involvement Coordinator, Mr. Paul McCarthy who hosts the show and two MHS seniors who are members of the Key Club. The discussion was focused on the experiences in MPS and the impact of Title I. The students spoke about their future plans and they credited the opportunities they had at MHS.

Superintendent Oteri is part of the Malden Area Department of Children and Families (DCF) board and attended their bi-monthly meeting recently, looking to develop and strengthen the partnership with DCF. Superintendent Oteri said that he was a DCF worker for 9 years and feels that communicating with them and establishing a strong connection with them particularly in these times where resources are scarce is important. Superintendent Oteri continued that DCF can offer training around clarification of the rules and regulations around child welfare for the new staff at MPS.

According to Superintendent Oteri, there is good progress on repairs at the schools. Superintendent Oteri said that the repairs on the carport at Salemwood is close to being completed and thanked Public Facilities for making this happen as quickly as possible.

On January 25th, an item was brought by a resident to the Malden Fire Headquarters on Salem Street and the standard safety protocols that went into effect included blocking off the street. MHS had a delayed start time of 11:00 a.m. for students who were not taking the ACCESS test that day and the students found the street blocked off at 10:45 a.m. as they were getting into school. Superintendent Oteri was in immediate communication with public safety officials and it was determined that there was absolutely no safety risk to anyone in the area. There was no need to put any school in any kind of safety protocol. A connect ed message was sent to all parents in the district and a notice was placed on social media as well as the website.

The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) will be given to Grades 7 and 8 students on the week of March 12-16 and MHS students on the week of April 10-13. Superintendent Oteri will be having an open forum for parents and a pre-survey in early March as well as a post-survey in the fall. This is a required survey that is conducted by the school. It is especially important now due to the opioid crisis and other drugs, changes in marijuana laws as well as the proliferation of vaping. The information gathered will drive the schools' programmatic, instructional and social emotional efforts to ensure that students are safe.

Dentacare's dental screenings will begin in the coming weeks. Superintendent Oteri will send a connect ed call to parents informing them of the permission forms that will be sent home with students. Dentacare, funded by Mass Health, will be offering free dental screenings to all students, including visual dental screening, fluoride treatment and sealants on molars. Parents need to sign a permission form to enable their children to receive these benefits.

Superintendent Oteri said that Dentacare can also help families who do not have a dentist by getting them in touch with a dentist, or dentists who can speak the same language as the family. Superintendent Oteri added that Dentacare works with other surrounding communities as well as his previous school district. Superintendent Oteri is excited to bring the program to MPS as it is a good program and he believes it will be beneficial for students' health.

Superintendent Oteri informed that the committee that was convened at MHS to look into the possibility of changing the start time is comprised of Athletic Director, Mr. Charlie Conefrey, Malden Educators' Association (MEA) President, Ms. Deb Gesualdo, Student Representative Tsigas as well as two other high school students. Superintendent Oteri continued that an initial report is scheduled for March but this endeavor is only at the preliminary stages and there are many factors to consider.

The 78th Annual Junior Varieties Show at MHS is scheduled for March 9th and 10th. Superintendent Oteri said that anyone wanting to be a sponsor for this event can contact Junior Class Advisor, Ms. Rebecca Corcoran. MPS except for Linden STEAM Academy will not be in session on Friday, February 19, 2018 as it is a Professional Development Day. Connected messages will be sent to the schools and Linden STEAM Academy will be sending their own connected message to remind parents that school will be in session on that day at Linden.

Superintendent Oteri said that a meeting with consultants on the principal searches is being organized. The positions will be posted soon and focus groups will be established. The screening and interviewing processes will take place in March.

Superintendent Oteri announced that the Malden High School graduation date is Sunday, June 3rd at 2:00 p.m. at Macdonald Stadium. The MHS Senior Prom Night is May 18th. At the beginning of the school year, there was some discussion about changing the graduation day to Friday. The results of a survey conducted by MHS Interim Principal Mr. Mastrangelo showed that there is overwhelming support to keep the graduation date on Sunday.

In response to Ms. Beardsley question, Superintendent Oteri responded that in order to receive the Dentacare services, parents will have to opt in. The program is open to any student regardless of income status or whether they have a dentist or not. Mayor Christenson asked about frequency of the Superintendent Meet and Greet events and whether it will be rotated around the schools. Superintendent Oteri answered that the events are planned to take place at different schools every other month. Mayor Christenson announced that the next "City of Malden Live" event is scheduled for April 12th, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Mayor Christenson asked about the timeline on the Foundation Budget Review Commission (FBRC) recommendations. Superintendent Oteri said that along with superintendents from other school districts, they are building a coalition to look into strategies and various options such as litigation because it all stems on the Grand Bargain, Education Reform Act and the McDuffy case. One of the goals is to bring about equity especially for urban and rural school districts. Even school districts which are not considered urban are finding rising ELL and Special Education costs challenging. Superintendent Oteri continued that building a coalition which does not only include urban school districts, changing public opinion and gaining the help of influential legislators will bring more attention to the cause. Mayor Christenson said that the state delegation has indicated that if the Fair Share Amendment makes it to the ballot and is adopted, it could fund the recommendations from the FBRC because over a billion dollars would be pumped into the system to address some of the inequities that arose since the adoption of education reform. Mayor Christenson informed the School Committee members to look into this matter because the state delegation may reach out to elected officials at some point to ask for support.

In response to Mayor Christenson's question, Superintendent Oteri said that there is an opt out for parents who do not want their children to participate in the YRBS. Superintendent Oteri also said that the results will be ready in the summer and there will be a presentation in the fall.

Mayor Christenson recognized Mr. Stephen Freker's work with "Nedlam News" and "From the Desk of the Superintendent" newsletters as it provides a snapshot about news from MHS and the school district. Superintendent Oteri said that this helps with communication.

Subcommittee Reports/Discussions

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

Mr. Iovino said that as of last Friday, the enrollment at MPS is 6,742 which is an increase of 94 students since the start of the school year. There were no changes since last month.

Motions and Resolutions

1. **Dr. Susan Vatalaro Dedication – Mr. McCarthy, Ms. Spadafora and Ms. Bordonaro**

Mr. McCarthy said that he was thrilled when the request from the Beebe School community was brought to his attention to name the Beebe School Courtyard after Dr. Susan Vatalaro who served MPS for a total of 45 years, 18 of those years was as Principal at the Beebe School. Ms. Spadafora said that Dr. Vatalaro embodies the true Maldonian spirit, not only because she graduated from MHS but because she came back to serve the community. Mr. Iovino said that it was an honor and pleasure to work with Dr. Vatalaro. Superintendent Oteri said that Dr. Vatalaro was selfless in her dedication to the students and this is a fitting tribute. Mayor Christenson clarified that it will be a spring dedication. Mr. McCarthy made the motion to name the Beebe School Courtyard after Dr. Susan Vatalaro. Ms. Spadafora seconded it and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

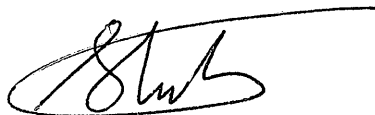
Personal Privilege

Ms. Beardsley mentioned that following her meeting with Senator Lewis recently, an event is being planned for parents and community members on how to understand Chapter 70 and how we can advocate for changes.

Adjournment

Mr. Drummey made a motion to adjourn at 7:03 p.m. Ms. Spadafora 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