



From the Desk of the Superintendent

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Wishing her well after 31 years of Malden Public Schools service

Ms. Joanne D'Orlando, center, receives a formal citation from Mayor Gary Christenson, left, and Supt. John Oteri from the City of Malden on her retirement after 32 years in the Malden Public Schools.

Courtesy Photo

Mass. Senate passes \$1.5 billion 'Student Opportunity Act'

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Senate last week passed a major overhaul of the education funding formula, which would require the state to spend another \$1.5 billion on public education by the time it is fully implemented.

The bill, dubbed the Student Opportunity Act, is the most significant update to the funding formula since it was established in 1993. It passed the Senate unanimously, 39-0. "This additional

bill...will help every single school district in Massachusetts," said Senate Education Chairman Jason Lewis, D-Malden, 5th Middlesex District. The bill still has to pass the Mass. House and be signed by the Governor. *See P.4*



Supporting their team!

Some Malden High School ladies, from left, MHS House Principal Ms. Sibley, Nour, Sara & Batoul were on hand to root for the Tornado football team at the season opener. *Courtesy Photo/Mr. Mastrangelo*



U.S. Citizenship Ceremony held in Malden High School's Jenkins Auditorium, *Inside, P.10*

Malden Public Schools Mission Statement

Malden Public Schools is a place where students are encouraged to follow their dreams and become well rounded members of our community.

The Malden Public Schools prepare students to be independent thinkers and enthusiastic learners who: Work hard; Respect others; Cherish our diversity; Seek challenges; Discover and Develop their individual talents; Strive for academic excellence; and look to Demonstrate personal and social responsibility. Malden Public Schools graduates are prepared to be active participants in our economy and democracy.

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to all,

We are not really sure about the atmosphere in other school districts when students and staff return to classes from the summer. It is readily apparent in the Malden Public Schools that "back to school" is a time of excitement and celebration. This past month each one of our seven schools hosted their own form of welcoming day or night with many of our students, parents and staff all coming together to embrace the start of the new school year. A wide range of activities included food, music, dance, games and many others. The smiles on everyone's faces really told the story: School is back, and everyone's really glad to be here! With many exciting and challenging goals ahead of us this school year, let's continue to work together to achieve them.



Superintendent John Oteri

Cultural proficiency and equity objectives, goals have been in place in Malden Public Schools; Strides are made in hiring, training & educating

Supt. Oteri tells School Committee Malden Public Schools continuing to educate, train staff in addressing issues of diversity, proficiency & equity

By STEVE FREKER
For the Malden Public Schools

Superintendent John Oteri has been continuously addressing the challenging issues of cultural equity and cultural proficiency with the assistance of his executive and administrative staff since he first assumed his post in the summer of 2017.

The Superintendent confirmed this fact at the first Malden School Committee meeting of the new school year on September 9, pledging he would continue to embrace and fortify this stance on behalf of all students and educators in the Malden Public Schools.

“We all have a stake in these issues and we must work collaboratively to address them as a district,” Superintendent Oteri has stated publicly.

“I have been working on this since I got here,” he told the members of the School Committee in his official report, before he proceeded to outline a multi-tiered strategy which included both real time and future plans. Superintendent Oteri also noted specific achievements already attained, as well as goals, particularly as they related to the Malden Public Schools’ ardent focus of diversifying the cultural demographics of the district’s staff of educators and administrators.

“We have made remarkable progress,” Superintendent told the School Committee, referring to specific new hire numbers for persons of color for the Malden Public Schools for the 2019-2020 academic year. He noted that nearly 25 percent of the 84 total new hires for the new school year (19) were persons of color. “That’s unheard of and it speaks to the commitment we’ve made as a district.”



The Superintendent also pointed to the fact that as his third year at the helm begins, “(Malden Public Schools) have gone from three to nine administrators of color.” This represents an increase of over 65 percent in just the past two hiring cycles.

Not resting on the strides made in new hiring, Superintendent Oteri stressed that efforts are continuing and increasing toward the established objective of diversification among staff, a theme that has been discussed both publicly and privately across the district and the community at large.

He told the School Committee that Malden has been awarded grants from the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to assist the district as it pursues the state goal to hire and retain teachers and administrators of color. The DESE’s Teacher Diversification Program helps districts develop recruitment strategies to increase the diversity of its classroom teachers. The program also includes training on identifying bias for new teachers and administrators. Another grant, DESE’s Influence 100 helps districts retain administrators of color.



Forestdale School's 'Rock the Walk'

Many students and parents joined with Forestdale School principal Don Concannon and other educators and administrators in a school wide fundraising event — "Rock the Walk" — which raised money for the Forestdale's Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO). *Courtesy/Forestdale School*



Rockets Ready to launch!

At Ferryway School

Students in Mr. Fitzpatrick's class in at the Ferryway School used their ingenuity and skill to make paper rockets. Once they completed this task, they used an air compressor to launch their rockets some 300 feet.

Malden state Sen. Lewis leads passage of his wide-ranging \$1.5 billion 'Student Opportunity Act' in Mass. State Senate

Bill now moves on the Mass. House for further consideration

Malden state Sen. Jason Lewis, D-5th Middlesex, has been an ardent supporter of public education and the Malden Public Schools for many years. He is the lead sponsor of the wide-ranging, ambitious \$1.5 billion "Student Opportunity Act" which proposes a massive, directed influx of state education spending which would affect every student in our Commonwealth facing opportunity gaps. The bill was passed unanimously by the Mass. State Senate last week.

BOSTON – The Massachusetts Senate, by a 39-0 vote, unanimously passed the Student Opportunity Act, an unprecedented \$1.5 billion new investment in Massachusetts K-12 public education, spearheaded by Malden state Sen. Jason Lewis, D-5th Middlesex. This legislation ensures public schools have adequate resources to provide high-quality education to students across the state, regardless of zip code or income level. Assuming inflation, over time the bill could provide an estimated \$2.2 billion.

Senator Jason Lewis, D-Malden, 5th Middlesex District, has long advocated for adequate and equitable funding for our public schools, and as Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Education, led the efforts this year to draft the Student Opportunity Act.

The Student Opportunity Act significantly helps school districts that serve high concentrations of low-income students. At the same time, school districts across the Commonwealth will benefit from updates to the existing funding formula, along with increased state investment in other vital education aid programs such as transportation, school construction and renovation and special education. The bill passed 39-0.

"Access to a high-quality public education is a fundamental right for every child, and



State Sen. Jason Lewis, D-5th Middlesex, left, speaks at Senate hearing held recently, prior to the passage of the \$1.5 billion Student Opportunity Act. *Courtesy Photo*

that's why the Student Opportunity Act will make an unprecedented \$1.5 billion investment in our public schools, ensuring that school districts across the Commonwealth have adequate and equitable resources to provide all students, especially those facing adversity, with a high-quality public education," said Sen. Lewis, Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Education "The passage of the Student Opportunity Act today marks a bold step into the 21st century for our public schools in Massachusetts and for all future generations of students."

"With the passage of the Student Opportunity Act, the Senate is reaffirming its commitment to the idea that providing a quality public education is not a luxury—it is both our greatest responsibility and our greatest opportunity as a state," said

Senate President Karen E. Spilka. "I am proud of the diligent and thoughtful work done by Senator Jason Lewis, the education committee and the Senate, as well as the tireless work and advocacy done by students, parents, teachers, administrators, advocates and others to bring this bill to fruition. Massachusetts made a commitment to public education in the 18th century, and today we are much closer to bringing that commitment into the 21st century to meet the needs of students today. I look forward to this bill passing the House and becoming law."

Taking into account these new investments, policy updates and the needs of all types of districts, the Student Opportunity Act creates new ways to monitor and measure progress, support effective approaches to closing opportunity gaps, and deliver results for all students. *See Sen. Lewis, P.10*

Annual Hispanic Festival draws enthusiastic crowd



The North Shore Hispanic Association (NSHA) hosting the Annual Hispanic Heritage Celebration on September 20 at the Malden High School Courtyard. The event celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with a tribute to Latin culture featuring a night out with dancing, traditional cuisine, and local community groups. *Courtesy Photos/Salemwood PTO*

Ms. Robey, a Salemwood School staff member, was on hand with a big smile, enjoying the festivities at the Hispanic Festival.

An Act of Kindness from Class of 2020



The members of the Malden High School Class of 2020 recently held a car wash to benefit their fundraising efforts and in act of kindness to their younger classmates, pledged to donate a portion of their proceeds to the Class of 2022, which has been unable to start its own fundraising efforts since it has not yet appointed an advisor for the class. *Courtesy Photo/City of Malden*

Linden S.T.E.A.M. Academy Ice Cream Social was very 'cool'

The Linden S.T.E.A.M. Academy PTO hosted a very well-attended Ice Cream Social at the end of the month and one of the guest "scooper" was Malden School Committee Chairman and Mayor Gary Christenson, third from right.

Courtesy/ City of Malden



"Education is not only a ladder of opportunity, but it is also an investment in our future."

- Ed Markey



Asian CDC Youth Group assists in park planning

Malden High School junior Wilson Chau, left is shown with MRA (Malden Redevelopment Authority) Board member Amanda Linehan at the Fitzgerald Park dedication ceremony. Chau is a member of the Malden-based Asian Community Development Corporation (ACDC) youth group, which assisted in the park planning.

SUPERINTENDENT UPDATES SCHOOL COMMITTEE on STRIDES TOWARD MORE DIVERSIFICATION in HIRING, TRAINING

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The grant provides funding to support those who are interested in pursuing positions in school districts' higher administration posts. Also Superintendent Oteri noted that MPS principals and administrators will be taking part in DESE's Diversity Network which offers workshops on recruiting candidates of a diverse background and bias-free hiring. As it has in the past 18 months, this school year Malden Public Schools will both take part in and host recruiting fairs specifically designed to attract and hire those of diverse backgrounds.

Malden Public Schools is also continuing its participation in several programs such as Harvard RIDES, which trains and educates its teachers, administrators and students to first evaluate school culture, then work toward creating a sense of inclusion that will serve as a foundation to establish cultural proficiency and equity. Later this fall, Dr. Darnisa Amante, a nationally-recognized leader on cultural equity in education and how to establish it, will lead a town hall open to the community.

The Malden Public Schools: 'Our Diversity is Our Strength'

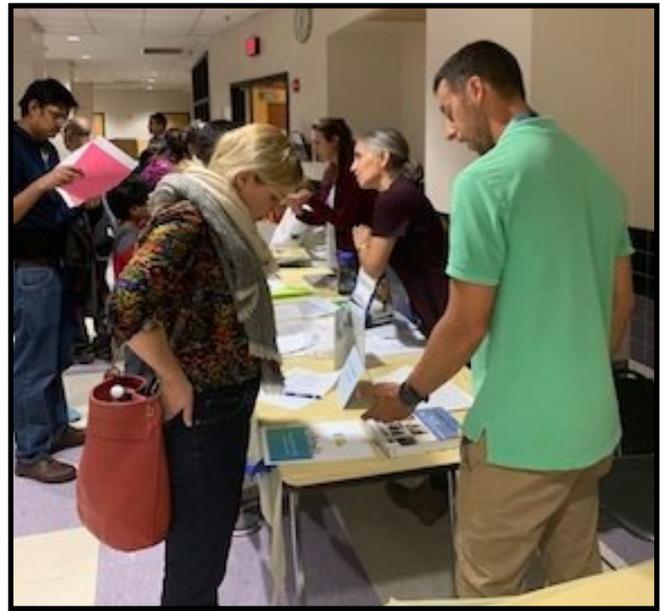
The Malden district is near the top as one of the most culturally diverse in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with Malden High School rated the #1 most culturally diverse secondary education school overall. Throughout the district, all educators, administrators and students are unified in our stated mission to cherish and embrace our diversity, striving for excellence in the classroom and beyond.



Ms. Leggett's physical education class at the Linden S.T.E.A.M. Academy used some new methods to boost endurance training motivation.

A POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE

IS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMMON LANGUAGE
USED, EXEMPLIFYING THE BELIEFS, VALUES,
STRENGTH IN RELATIONSHIPS AND RESPECT FOR
DIVERSITY IN THE COMMUNITY.



Beebe School Bulldogs 'Back to School Night'

What a turnout for the Beebe School 'Bulldogs' Back to School Night! Beebe educators and staff of administrators joined members of the PTO to welcome back students and parents to the new school year as well as introducing those new to Beebe, "The Bulldog Way"! *Courtesy/Beebe School*



EARLY LEARNING CENTER 'BACK to SCHOOL'

Good times and a LOT of Slush was on the menu for parents, students and staff at the Early Learning Center (ELC) for its Annual Back to School Night. *Courtesy Photos/MPS*

U.S. CITIZENSHIP SWEARING-IN CEREMONY AT MALDEN HIGH

Supt. Oteri (Below, left), Mayor Christenson (at right, center) and other dignitaries were on hand in September for a U.S. Citizenship ceremony where over 200 new citizens were officially sworn in.

Steve Freker Photos/Malden Publix Schools



Mass. Senate passes new Student Opportunity Act with \$1.5 billion of funding

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The Student Opportunity Act fully implements the recommendations of the 2015 Foundation Budget Review Commission (FBRC) ensuring that the school funding formula provides adequate and equitable funding to all districts across the state. The bill provides an estimated \$1.5 billion in new Chapter 70 aid over and above inflation when fully implemented over the next seven years. The bill modernizes the K-12 education funding and policy landscape in four areas:

- Estimates school districts' employee and retiree health care costs using up to date health insurance trend data collected by the state's Group Insurance Commission (GIC).
- Increases special education enrollment and cost assumptions to more accurately reflect district enrollment.
- Increases funding for English Language learners (ELL) that is differentiated by grade level to reflect the greater resources required to educate our older ELL students.
- Addresses the needs of districts educating high concentrations of students from low-income households by:
 - Providing additional funding based on the share of low-income students in each district; districts educating the largest percentage of low-income students will receive an additional increment equal to 100% of the base foundation;
 - Returning the definition of low-income to 185% of the Federal Poverty Level, as opposed to the 133% level that has been used in recent years.

In addition to implementing the FBRC's recommended formula changes, the Student Opportunity Act provides additional state financial support in several categories to help public schools and communities deliver a



Sen. Lewis recently hosted a roundtable discussion in Melrose on the Student Opportunity Act which was attended by Superintendent Oteri, other local superintendents, administrators, educators and city and town officials. *Courtesy/ Office of Senator Jason Lewis*

high-quality education to every student. Those fiscal supports include:

- Increasing foundation rates for guidance and psychological services in recognition of the growing need for expanded social-emotional support and mental health services.
- A commitment to fully funding charter school tuition reimbursement, which provide transitional aid to help districts when students leave to attend charter schools, within a three-year timetable.
- Expanding over four years the special education circuit breaker, which reimburses districts for extraordinary special education costs, to include transportation costs in addition to instructional cost.
- Raising, as the result of a further amendment, the annual cap on Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) spending, for construction and renovation by \$200 million (from \$600 million to 800 million) , enabling more projects across the state to be accepted into the MSBA funding pipeline, which reimburses towns and cities for a portion of school building costs.

In addition to new funding and other support, the Student Opportunity Act establishes the 21st Century Education

access to flexible funding to pursuing creative approaches to student learning and district improvement. In order to track and reproduce successful school and district-level innovations and policies, the legislation calls on school districts to develop and make publicly available plans for closing opportunity gaps. These plans will include specific goals and metrics to track success. In addition, the Secretary of Education will collect and publish data on student preparedness in each district for post-graduate success in college and the workforce.

Moreover, the Student Opportunity Act establishes a Data Advisory Commission to help improve the use of data at the state, district, and school levels to inform strategies that strengthen teaching, learning and resource allocation. Following robust debate on the floor, the Senate also adopted several amendments to the Student Opportunity Act related to recovery high schools, the Massachusetts School Building Authority and municipal fiscal challenges related to Ch70.

—State House News Service