

Student Opportunity Act Overview
Malden School Committee
March 10, 2020

Prior Work

Presentation from March 2, 2020 Malden School Committee Meeting, including overview of DESE-approved priority areas:

- Expanding Early Childhood Programming
- Expand Pathways to Strengthen Career and College Readiness
- Professional Development
- Expanded Learning Time
- Increased Opportunity for Common Planning
- Social Services to Support Emotional Health
- Hiring School Personnel to Support Student Performance
- Purchase of Curriculum Materials and Equipment
- Diversifying Educator and Administrator Workforce

District Priorities (indicated by surveys, public meeting in February, administrator input)

The input from the stakeholder groups (public meeting, online survey, and forums) yielded four categories that are in line with the goals and priorities that Central Office has identified as ways to restore and rebuild Malden Public Schools as a result of significant budget cuts in the past.

The four categories are:

Priority Area	Rationale
Class Size Reduction through Additional Hires Hire additional teachers to allow for smaller class sizes.	A focus on the classroom is central to our mission. As we have done in the past, we will continue to focus on decreasing class sizes whenever possible. As we work through the budget season, we will collaborate with the Parent Information Center (PIC) and principals to identify areas where class size exceeds recommended guidelines and will use SOA funds to add teachers to schools and classrooms most affected by large class size.

<p>Social Emotional and Physical Health Use funds for social services to support students' social emotional and physical health.</p>	<p>As funds allow, we will look to identify areas where we can augment support for students' social emotional and physical health. Once we have a strategic examination of current staffing and critical needs in this area, we can carve out a plan to augment existing resources in a way that is equitable across the district.</p>
<p>Professional Development Increase professional development funding to ensure teachers have the training they need to deliver the best instruction and services possible to our students.</p>	<p>We currently rely on a modest operating budget line for professional development, along with funding from “entitlement grants.” A significant portion of the grants funds mentors for new staff, curriculum leaders, and several smaller professional learning initiatives. These grants have seen small decreases over the years; at the same time, a portion of each grant needs to be set aside for private schools. The set aside is based on the number of students at each private school, so if numbers at local private schools increase, the amount of funding for MPS decreases. An increase in the budget for professional learning will ensure that teachers have access to current training and remain up to date in the latest, research-based practices. Access to a robust array of training opportunities has a direct impact on the students our educators serve.</p>
<p>College and Career Readiness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use funds to buy additional curriculum materials. ➤ Use funds to increase students’ access to post-secondary planning. 	<p>We currently lack a cycle for regular curriculum review and renewal of materials. This puts us in a position where we are reactive instead of proactive when it comes to securing materials that are aligned to state standards. Establishing a curriculum review cycle would allow us to constantly review and renew materials so that educators and students have access to high quality resources that are aligned with state standards, culturally responsive, and rigorous in content that is accessible to all.</p> <p>Example: In the area of math, we are working beyond our initial contract, which means we must fund each additional year we use the materials (materials include online</p>

	<p>access and resources, which is why current models use contracts for a particular time period). This provides an opportune time to examine the latest curricula that is more strongly aligned to state standards and can help move the district to the next level. Currently, STEM Director, Dr. Doug Dias is working with teachers to pilot Eureka Math, with positive reviews for the resources among the 20+ teachers using them. We would like to expand this pilot next year, with the hope that if the expanded pilot yields similar results and feedback, we can move toward this resource.</p> <p>The second area for this priority has to do with increasing access to Naviance, an online platform that assists with students' understanding of and planning for life after high school. This tool has been used regularly at MHS, and given our focus on helping students transition from middle school to high school and beyond, this is an area that requires a small amount of funding but will have a significant impact that will help students think about their trajectory. In turn, we believe that when students are able to create a vision for their future, they will be more focused on how to stay the course to get there.</p>
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Next Steps

- Pending approval for moving forward with these priorities, central office will complete the required DESE template. This template is a simple overview of how the funding will be spent on various budget items.
- The template will identify which students, in particular subgroups, are impacted.
- The template will also address and support which evidence-based programs are used to close gaps.
- The monitoring of success with outcomes and targets is also something that the plan will incorporate.

- Engaging all families is an ongoing part of the plan for DESE.
- Completion of the online template due to DESE Commissioner Riley on April 1.
- Update in Superintendent's Report at April 2020 Malden School Committee Meeting