



# From the Desk of the Superintendent

Volume IV No.8 FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 28, 2021

For timely updates and information... Twitter: @MaldenPublic Website: [maldenps.org](http://maldenps.org)

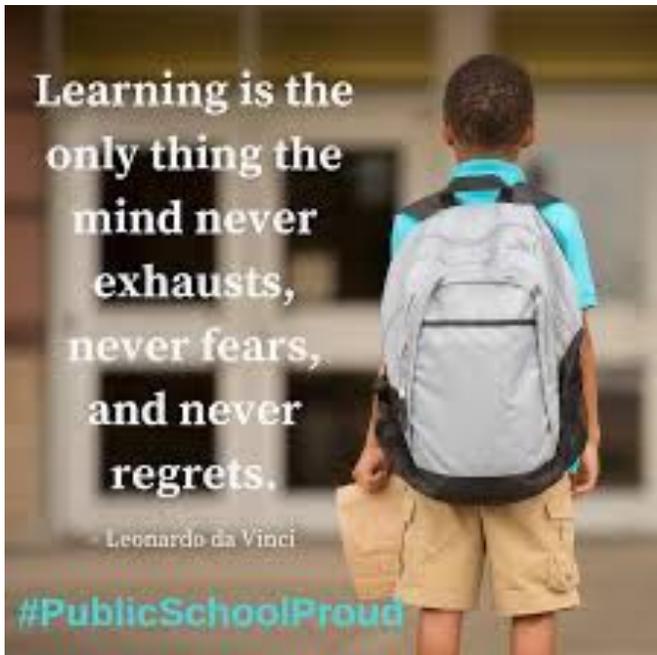


## Malden 7th Grader wins Mass. Statewide Poster Contest

Forestdale 7th grader Tenzian Wang's poster, shown above, was declared the winner in the Mass. Partnership for Youth Middle School Class in its Poster Project.



**Good news has come to us on several fronts: Return to Classrooms Timeline is set; Vaccine line moved up for teachers!**



## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

**Greetings to all in the Malden Public Schools Community,**

We have a lot to be thankful for in the past month and plenty to look forward to in the weeks and months ahead. For quite some time now, we have all been faced with the stark challenge of having to navigate our way through completely uncharted waters, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the middle of March, we will mark one full year since we became one of the first districts in the state of Massachusetts to close our schools in consideration of the health and safety of our students, staff and their families. **Page 6**



Superintendent John Oteri

# Malden Public Schools has launched over 30 initiatives and used over \$700,000 in grants addressing racial, social equity this school year

*District strives to be a regional leader in its mission*

**By Steve Freker**  
**For the Malden Public Schools**

In the midst of a worldwide pandemic, a light has shown through in a key focal point as the Malden Public Schools nears completion of the district's strategic plan. When Superintendent John Oteri took the reins of the district just about four years ago in 2017, he pledged to guide the Malden Public Schools along the path of establishing a vision of racial and social equity in examining and formulating its districtwide practices.

An intensive, detailed presentation of the district's progress in that work in the areas of diversity, inclusion and equity (DEI) was delivered at Monday's Malden School Committee meeting by Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Curriculum Dr. Kelly Chase.

Dr. Chase described an expansive list of some 30 separate programs and initiatives Malden Public Schools staff, students and administrators have participated in just this year. In addition, the district has received and in is the process of spending over \$700,000 in complementary grants earmarked for district DEI work.

**A full listing appears next page**

Over the past three years, Malden Public Schools has taken part in over 60 programs related to racial and social equity, as the Malden district appears as a regional leader in the field of addressing and training in these issues.

a "Curriculum Hub" for educators, who are trained to use a "checklist" in their class coursework to detect bias. "In Malden we have gotten out of just basking in our diversity," Superintendent Oteri said. "It has taken a great deal of work by



The programs range from student and staff training in anti-racism and dismantling systemic racism to a new program akin to "Future Teachers of America," whereby Malden Public Schools students who aspire to a potential field of education are advised, "taught the ropes" and mentored by current MPS teachers. There are also programs designed to train current administrators of color on a path pursuing a future Superintendent's position (Influence 100) as well as another examining establishing

a lot of people in our district to make progress on these issues." "One of the most important parts of this entire process was identifying our 'why.'" Dr. Chase explained. "We have worked to try and create bridges to equity and inclusion, centering on marginalized groups within our district, whether they are students or staff. "To establish equity it requires an understanding of the structures in place and the acknowledgement of the need to work on systemic changes to ultimately achieve that goal," Dr. Chase added. *Continued on Page 8*

# Grades 3-12 timeline for 'Return to Classrooms' is set for Malden Public Schools

**By Steve Freker**

**For the Malden Public Schools**

Malden Public Schools Superintendent John Oteri and Mayor Gary Christenson, who serves as chair of the Malden School Committee, told the community on Feb. 12 that a timeline has been established to return all students and staff in all grades remaining, from Grade 3 through Grade 12, to in-person learning for the first time in nearly a year. In a letter to parents that he released in conjunction with his announcement, Supt. Oteri said the return to the school building includes the use of a hybrid plan, meaning students would essentially be in classrooms for two days a week "live" and in a remote learning setting for the other three days.

A key facet of the Malden plan is that technology will be in place as such so that all students, those in the classroom and those online in the remote setting, would be receiving the same "real time" instruction from the same educator, as the instruction would be "livestreamed" from the physical classroom. Supt. Oteri noted the same operation has been in place in a hybrid learning model for students in grades PreK, Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2, many of whom returned to their school buildings on Feb. 4, along with educators and staff.

The Superintendent said the breakthrough and progress was made possible due to an agreement between the Malden Public Schools and the teachers' union, the Malden Education Association (MEA). The Joint Labor Management Committee (JLMC) has been meeting since May 2020 to regularly discuss planning and strategy regarding a variety of topics, as of late the priority being students' return to in-person learning. Though the in-person hybrid model will be offered to all of the approximately 4,500-5,000 students in Grades 3-12, it is also allowed for students to remain in remote learning if they and their parents/caregivers choose that option.

## TIMELINE FOR 'RETURN-to-CLASSROOMS ANNOUNCED

*Below is the timeline for Grades 3-8 students and staff:*

**March 8:** Staff for grades 3-4 return to our buildings

**March 15:** Students in grades 3-4 begin hybrid learning

**March 22:** Staff for grades 5 and 8 return (including grades 5-8 exploratory teachers)

**March 29:** Students in grades 5 and 8 begin hybrid learning

**April 5:** Staff for grades 6-7 begin hybrid learning

**April 12:** Students in grades 6-7 begin hybrid learning

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*Below is the timeline for Malden High School students:*

March 15: All high school staff return to the building

March 22: Students in grades 9 and 12 begin hybrid learning

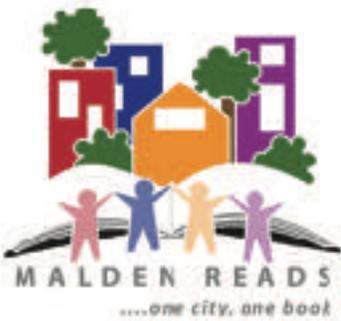
April 5: Students in grades 10 and 11 begin hybrid learning

**Some informative graphics outlining the 'Return-to-Classrooms' timeline are on Page 5**

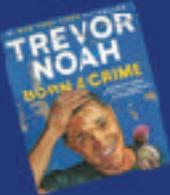
# NATIONAL SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK WEEK

MARCH 7 - 13, 2021

## MALDEN READS extends invitation (and deadline) for its 2021 'Door Decorating Contest' in conjunction with book selection 'Born a Crime'



We invite you to read the Malden Reads 2021 pick



"Born a Crime" by Trevor Noah, the popular comedian's memoir about growing up biracial in apartheid-era South Africa.

Stop by the library to pick it up!

#### Contest Co-Sponsors

- Malden City Council
- Malden Arts
- North Shore Black Women's Association, Inc.



**Door Decorating Contest**

deadline extended  
March 31

**Contest Themes:**

- Community
- Racial equity and social justice
- Cross-cultural friendships
- Humor and its healing powers
- Global Awareness
- Global Hip-Hop

**Judging Categories:**

- Best overall
- Most creative
- Most humorous

**For Kids:**

- PreK and younger
- K-grade 3
- Grades 4-6
- Grades 7-9
- Grades 10-12

**TO ENTER:**  
Email a photo of your finished, designed door to [maldenreads@gmail.com](mailto:maldenreads@gmail.com) with your name and address. If you are entering the kids categories, also tell us your children's grade level.

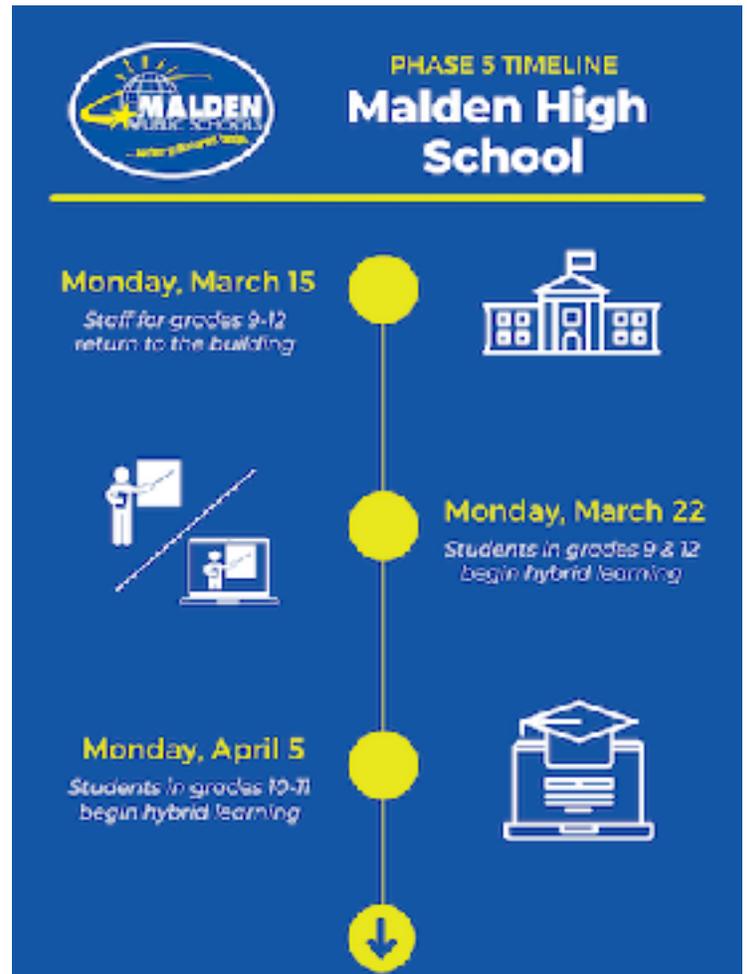
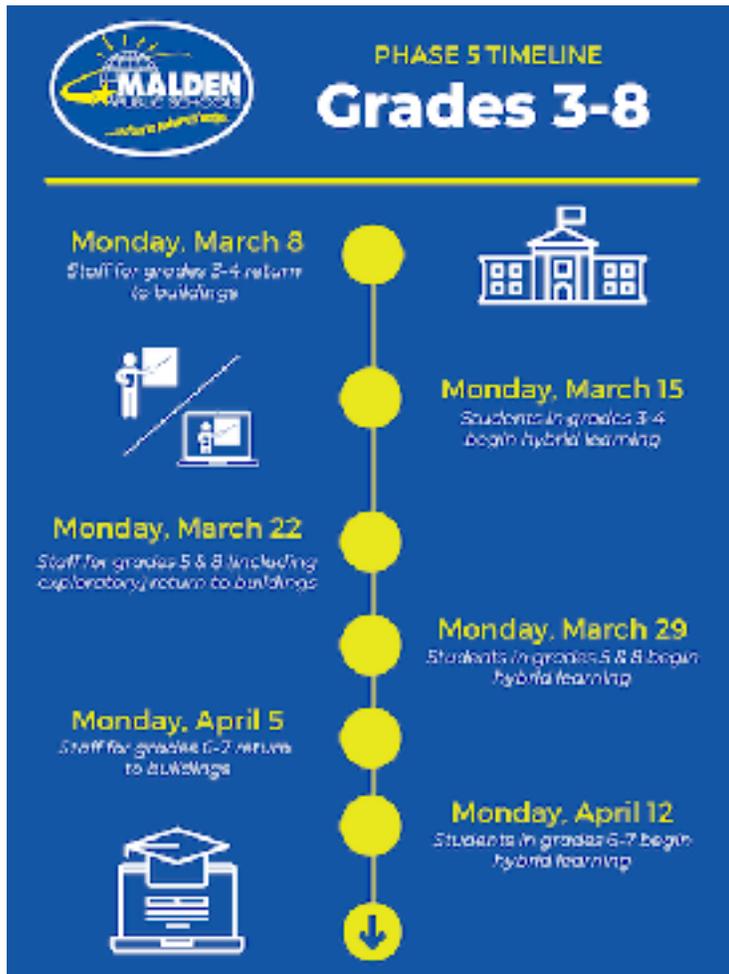
Supplies are available free of charge if needed. Email [maldenreads@gmail.com](mailto:maldenreads@gmail.com) or call 781-321-6400.

[www.maldenreads.org](http://www.maldenreads.org)

Every year the National Association of Social Workers celebrates the contributions of all social workers during the Month of March. This includes School Social Workers which will be celebrated the week of March 7-12, 2021. Social workers are the largest group of mental health care providers in the United States, helping people overcome depression, anxiety, substance abuse and other disorders. They confront some of the most challenging issues facing individuals, families, communities and society and forge solutions that help people reach their full potential and make our nation a better place to live. *Continued on Page 6*

*Thank You  
Malden Public  
Schools Social  
Workers for  
all that you  
do for our  
students!*

# Another look at the timelines for Malden Public Schools Return-to-Classrooms timeline



A special salute to all of our educators for continuing to create and nurture positive relationships with our students in spite of the many obstacles that the pandemic has put on our paths. Everyday our administrators and Central office hear from families and staff, from ELC to MHS, about the importance and impact that these relationships have had on students and adults alike. This is evident in the percentages of families that have chosen to participate in hybrid learning as we welcome students back into the building. The district's overall K-4 hybrid participation is an amazing 67%. This is all because of you. You have made this possible with your dedication, commitment, and love to every MPS student. I cannot thank you enough! Way to go!—**SUPT. JOHN OTERI**

## Malden Public Schools Mission Statement

We believe all children can meet challenging expectations through a partnership among home, school and 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:** *The #1 priority of our response to the crisis caused by the pandemic has been the safety & well-being of our students, families & our staff,*

### **Continued from Page One**

When we closed our school buildings on March 13, 2020, our future was murky, at best. Throughout the nearly full year we have since experienced together, the picture has gotten a bit clearer and the goal has essentially stayed the same: Return our students to their classrooms as soon as possible in a safe way. As February concluded and March began, more good news was shared when first President Biden and then Governor Baker announced that educators and all other school staff would be moved up the line on the vaccination priority list. Word of many of our Malden Public Schools teachers already obtaining vaccination appointments has been so welcome to hear. The work goes on and it will take continual monitoring and of course, adjustments, additions and subtractions as we progress. For everyone involved in this progress, our central office staff and cabinet, our Joint Labor Management and Planning Committee, our administrators, educators, staff and students, please accept my full gratitude for your efforts, actions and support for and on our epic task. No one predicted what learning would look like in the midst of a worldwide pandemic, but everyone has clearly shown they are up to the task as our journey goes on to provide the best we can offer for students and their families. **Superintendent of Schools John Oteri**

**Please take advantage of updates and other information related to Re-Entry to the new school year and other plans for the Malden Public Schools during the COVID-19 crisis, detailed on Twitter (@MaldenPublic), and on our website (maldenps.org).**

**Also, take advantage of these other valuable websites which offer access to many valuable resources both locally and nationwide: [www.cityofmalden.org](http://www.cityofmalden.org) [www.maldenneighbors.org](http://www.maldenneighbors.org) [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)**

# **We recognize our Malden Public Schools Social Workers in the month of March**

**Continued from Page 4** School social workers are part of a multidisciplinary educational team that helps address the needs of students and their families. Students receive assistance to help them overcome issues with self-esteem, social skills, depression, anxiety, anger management, and much more. Because of their specialized training, they are adept to address the social and psychological issues that can block academic progress. Through student screening, individual and group counseling, crisis intervention and prevention programs, they help young people overcome

the difficulties in their lives, and as a result, give them a better chance to reach their full academic and personal potential.



The School Social Workers in the Malden Public

Schools are licensed mental health professionals who are trained in many different areas and therapeutic approaches including play therapy, cognitive behavioral and brief solution focused therapy, trauma informed care, family counseling, Therapeutic Crisis Intervention, and crisis management.

In the midst of this once in 100 years novel coronavirus pandemic our School Social Workers have been essential, front-line personnel who have been called on to provide much-needed support to our students in need of an ear to listen and a shoulder to lean on in these hard times. They will also be called on to provide essential services both the remainder of this school year and also in the fall when our students return from summer break. Hats off to our Malden Public Schools Social Workers when we celebrate National School Workers Week March 7-12, 2021!

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

The Malden school district is ranked #1 as the most culturally diverse by *niche.com* 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.



**Welcome Back to In-Person School on February 4 was a big success for our Pre-K to Grade 2 students & staff!**

# Malden Public Schools has become a leader in district initiatives for Diversity, Inclusion & Equity

*Continued from Page 3*

"The work is long and difficult and it requires a 'no shame and no blame' approach to enable it to progress and have a chance to be successful, Dr. Chase said. "It's work that takes years and it's work that takes patience." The degree of difficulty was certainly increased by the existence of the novel coronavirus pandemic. "This past year

fast enough. What is important is we are doing this work as a district and doing it as a community." Ward 3 School Committee member Jennifer Spadafora echoed this sentiment. "It's so remarkable to see what is out there and what is being done in our district," she said, "to see that change can happen. We have to keep on working on these



The Barr Foundation has provided some extensive grant funds to Malden Public Schools, close to \$1 million, 2019-present.

we made some great strides even in COVID times," the Assistant Superintendent noted. "Some of the social-emotional work we did related to DEI is just very difficult to do during these times, but we did get a lot accomplished during the pandemic. We did make progress." Ward 5 School Committee member Adam Weldai said he understood the difficulty the district faces in working on DEI issues in the midst of the once in a 100 years pandemic and that he was impressed with the presentation as well as the degree of focus being spent on DEI work by the central administration. "We talk about diversity, equity and inclusion in our schools and now see our district walking the walk," said Weldai, noting he was encouraged by the concerted efforts being undertaken by the Malden Public Schools to address racial and social equity issues. "It takes a lot of time." Weldai said of the DEI work, "despite when some say the work is not being done

issues." Both also expressed strong support on two specific initiatives Dr. Chase proposed, a(DEI) audit by an outside consultant would give a definitive baseline to where the district stood in DEI progress. A DEI Coordinator as part of the Supt.'s staff. who would be tasked with overseeing a number of grant- and district-funded projects, initiatives as well assisting in developing strategies related to equity issues. Included would be examining and refining or reformulating the district's curriculum as it pertains to DEI issues, as well as working on strategies related to diversification and retention of the MPS staff, issues consistently mentioned by students, families and staff alike. "We still have work to do," Superintendent Oteri said, "and we will do it with authenticity. We will do this work with family and community engagement, but we do need time and assistance, resource-wise."

## MALDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### **2020-21 Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Work (all Programs are Full Year unless specified)**

- August-September Professional Development (PD)— Required training before instruction begins for All Staff, All Unit A, B & C members
- UnBoundedEd Leadership PD- Full Year Grant Commitment
- Hate Crime Prevention Grant- Full Year
- Educator Diversification (Year #3)- Pilot Course
- Barr Foundation work continued (PLCs focus on Equity, Youth Truth)
- Continued Coaching for staff by nationally-known anti-racism expert Dr. Darnisa Amante Jackson
- Influence 100- MPS Principals train as potential Superintendents
- Diversity Network
- Curriculum Revision Grant Work
- Middle School Math Study and Realignment with WestEd
- Curriculum realignment with Dr. Darnisa Amante Jackson for Equity lens
- Meetings with Malden High School Students for Racial Equity group
- Building 'Curriculum Hub" for educators that includes checklist for bias
- Zaretta Hammond book study 2021 "Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain"
- November 'Equity for ALL' PD
- February 2021 PD- Mandatory training in Title IX
- March 2021 PD- Mandatory re-training on bias with added resources from DESE

*Continued Next Page*

**Free meals (breakfast & lunch)  
are now available at ALL FIVE  
K-8 Schools and @ Malden HS,  
from 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m.**

The Malden Public Schools continues to provide free meals, every weekday, Monday through Friday, from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Beebe School,, Forestdale School, Linden School, Salemwood School and Malden High School. Meals can be picked up at the Ferryway School from 10-45 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at the Cross St. door. At this time, two meals may be picked up at one stop for each student in a household. Also, on Fridays, free meals for the weekend days (Saturday and Sunday) are available for pickup. More information is available at: [www.maldenps.org](http://www.maldenps.org).



**Grab & Go... PLUS Weekend  
Meals are available on Fridays  
for any Malden student!**

## **Malden Public Schools is participating in over 30 initiatives/programs this school year with DEI themes**

—MLK Jr., Day and Black History Month Expanded Celebration and new Website created- Website and Resources will be expanded into year-round existence for use by students and staff

—Collaboration with Malden Reads to ensure that each 8th grade student receives a copy of Kendi's "Stamped" to be incorporated into this year's curriculum

—Continued Work with Restorative Practices (smaller scaler this year due to pandemic, but new teachers received two hours of training to start).

—Doubled our Primary Source membership through grant funding. Sample courses: Primary Source Coursework.

—Ribas Course related to better serving the English Learners (EL) students and families

—GLEAM (Growing Literacy Equity Across Massachusetts) Grant- Awarded February 2021

—Early Adopter Work/ IEP Process- How to improve process and serve all students equitably

—Removing Barriers - Live Remote Learning Tech Assistance (Help Desk) in multiple languages

—Providing Chromebooks to all students in District and also providing WiFi Hotspots, all through grant funding, to ensure access to Internet in equitable manner for all students in district

—Food Truck Grant to ensure our food insecure students have access to 3 meals per day without the burden of having to travel to building

—P-EBT- Work done to assist students in getting universal access to free meals, 7 days per week

—Created tech training videos for families with captions that allow for translations

# Take a look at the 2021-2022 SCHOOL CALENDAR approved at the February Malden School Committee Meeting

## MALDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2021-2022 SCHOOL CALENDAR

AUGUST 2021				
(0 Day)				
M	T	W	T	F
30*	31*			

8/30\* First Day for All Staff  
8/31\* Prof Dev Day - All Grds

SEPTEMBER 2021				
(20 Days)				
M	T	W	T	F
		1*	2	X
X	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

9/1\* First Day of School for Grades PreK, 1-12  
9/1-9/7 Kindergarten Orientation/Screening  
9/3 No School  
9/6 Labor Day  
9/8 First Day of School for Kindergarten

OCTOBER 2021				
(20 Days)				
M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
X	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

10/8 PD Early Dismissal PreK-12  
10/11 Columbus Day  
10/18 Late Entry Day MHS

NOVEMBER 2021				
(18 Days)				
M	T	W	T	F
1	2*	3	4	5
8	9	10	X	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	X	X
29	30			

11/1 Late Day Entry MHS  
11/2\* Prof Dev Day-All Grds  
11/11 Veterans Day  
11/24 11:00 Dismissal - Thanksgiving  
11/25-26 Thanksgiving

DECEMBER 2021				
(17 Days)				
M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	X
X	X	X	X	

12/6 Late Entry MHS  
12/23 11:00 Dismissal  
12/24-1/1 Winter Vacation

JANUARY 2022				
(20 Days)				
M	T	W	T	F
				X
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
X	18	19	20	21
24 31	25	26	27	28

1/3 School Resumes  
1/10 Late Entry MHS  
1/14 PD Early Dismissal PreK-12  
1/17 Martin Luther King Day

FEBRUARY 2022				
(15 Days)				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
X	X	X	X	X
28				

2/4 PD Early Dismissal PreK-12  
2/7 Late Entry MHS  
2/21-25 February Vacation

MARCH 2022				
(22 Days)				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11*
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

3/7 Late Entry MHS  
3/11 \* Prof Dev Day-All Grds

APRIL 2022				
(16 Days)				
M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
X	X	X	X	X
25	26	27	28	29

4/4 Late Entry MHS  
4/15 11:00 Dismissal - Good Friday  
4/18-22 Spring Vacation

MAY 2022				
(21 Days)				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
X	31			

5/6 PD Early Dismissal PreK-12  
5/9 Late Entry MHS  
5/30 Memorial Day

JUNE 2022				
(11 Days)				
M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
X	21	22	23	24

6/3 PD Early Dismissal PreK-12  
6/15 Last day w/o snow days (180 Days) - 11:00 Dismissal  
6/20 Juneteenth  
6/23 Last day w/five snow days -11:00 Dismissal

**First Day for All Staff – Monday, August 30, 2021**

**Please note that five (5) additional days are built into the calendar in case of inclement weather**

- Early Release PreK-12
- Late Entry Dates for High School