

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC INTERVIEWS FOR SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS  
Thursday, March 11, 2021  
Meeting Conducted Remotely**

Mayor Christenson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Christenson read the protocols in accordance with the format used for the meeting as follows: “In accordance with Governor Baker’s March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A, § 18, as well as the Governor’s August 23<sup>rd</sup> and December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 revised order prohibiting assemblage of more than 25 people, this meeting will be conducted via remote participation. In-person attendance by members of the public is prohibited, but all effort will be made to permit public attendance of this meeting via remote access by internet, telephone and public broadcast by Urban Media Arts (UMA) /MATV on public access television channels. Public access will also be provided by posting draft minutes and/or transcript recording or record of the meeting on the City of Malden website at cityofmalden.org as soon as practicable after the meeting.”

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
Mr. Drummey	Present
Mr. Froio	Present
Mr. Gray	Present
Mr. Iovino	Present
Ms. Luong	Present
Mr. McCarthy	Present
Ms. Spadafora	Present
Mr. Weldai	Present
Clerk	Present

Mayor Christenson introduced Mr. Danyal Najmi of Rossetta Languages to explain the translations services available and how to access them. There were 7 languages available and each translator gave a brief introduction in their language. The languages available were Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Vietnamese, Mandarin and Cantonese.

Each School Committee member introduced themselves to the candidate.

**Interview for the Position of Superintendent of Schools – Ms. Ligia Noriega-Murphy**

Mayor Christenson recognized Ms. Ligia Noriega-Murphy and offered her the opportunity to start with an opening statement addressing “why Malden, why now?” Ms. Noriega-Murphy gave an opening statement detailing her background, educational career and what she would bring to the role.

Mayor Christenson explained the process where each School Committee member would ask one question and then they would be given the opportunity to ask follow-up questions.

Mayor Christenson asked the first question which centered on diversity, equity and inclusion followed by each School Committee member asking Ms. Noriega-Murphy questions regarding the topics set forth in Attachment A to which she responded.

There were follow-up questions asked to which Ms. Noriega-Murphy responded.

Mr. Iovino asked what being on assignment from the Superintendent's Office to the Jackson Mann Middle School meant. Ms. Noriega-Murphy said that due to a family matter, she requested for the assignment at the school instead of the Central Office.

Ms. Spadafora asked what Ms. Noriega-Murphy would do as Superintendent of Schools to make students voices part of the decision making process. Ms. Noriega-Murphy said students should be engaged right from the beginning before decisions are made. Ms. Noriega-Murphy said there should be representatives from each school and that they should be a part of many of the processes such as the budget as well as the strategic plan for curriculum and instruction.

Mr. Weldai asked how MS. Noriega-Murphy would invest in social-emotional supports to see where gaps exist. Ms. Noriega-Murphy responded that investing need not be just monetary, it could be training guidance counsellors and nurses to form a strong student support teams. Ms. Noriega-Murphy said she had the opportunity to present "My Brother's Keeper" at the White House twice. It looks at school based data for early warning indicators. Ms. Noriega-Murphy continued that building capacity with wrap-around services and best practices can help ensure there is a multi-level tier system in place.

Mayor Christenson noted that the School Committee depends on the Superintendent for advice and guidance on different issues. Mayor Christenson asked Ms. Noriega-Murphy whether the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's decision to bring students back on April 5<sup>th</sup> is at the right time. Ms. Noriega-Murphy responded that in her present school, students were back in the building a few months ago and testing for students as well as staff is already taking place. Ms. Noriega-Murphy continued that staffing is important and whether the students are ready to come back. Ms. Noriega-Murphy said that there is not enough time.

Mr. McCarthy asked about the safety and security of school buildings and whether Ms. Noriega-Murphy was part of any school security plan or safety plan implementation. Ms. Noriega-Murphy said that she has experience working from every angle and participated in crafting safety plans.

Ms. Spadafora asked about Ms. Noriega-Murphy's experience in creating programs to bring out-of-district students back to in-district. Ms. Noriega-Murphy responded that she is familiar with this effort. Ms. Noriega-Murphy continued that she would need to engage in 2-3 years planning, gathering data, and meeting with families. Ms. Noriega-Murphy also spoke about commerce academies.

In response to Mr. Gray's comment, Ms. Noriega-Murphy said she welcomes anyone to meet with her.


This concluded the interview questions and Ms. Noriega-Murphy gave a brief closing statement.

Mayor Christenson said that this concludes all the interviews and that deliberations will commence next week. Mr. Weldai said the forums and interviews conducted as well as feedback forms are available on the website at [maldenps.org/maldensupersearch](http://maldenps.org/maldensupersearch). In response to Ms. Spadafora, Mayor Christenson said he will check to see if interpretation services will be available on Monday, March 15<sup>th</sup> for deliberation.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Iovino made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m. Ms. Spadafora seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

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.



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Shirley Dorai, Clerk

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**Malden School Committee**  
**Superintendent Finalist - Interview Questions**

**Christenson:**

What does meaningful Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work look like in a school system to you, and how have you undertaken this work in your previous roles? Where do you see yourself making an impact in Malden?

**Drummey:**

What do you expect your top priorities to be for the district for your first year? For 3-5 years down the line? How would you go about devising and implementing your objectives and how would you enlist your top staff to support this?

**McCarthy:**

How would you go about looking at a technology plan for our future, and who would you involve in that discussion?

**Spadafora:**

In this difficult fiscal climate, what process would you use to determine budgetary priorities? What are some of your priorities in a school budget?

**Iovino:**

As a result of the pandemic, and the number of days that our students have been in remote learning, there may be significant gaps in student achievement. What specific measures will you undertake as superintendent to assess and address that issue?

**Weldai:**

Could you describe some ways in which you have been an instructional leader in your previous roles, and share an initiative that you were responsible for implementing that significantly changed teacher practice, or student outcomes?

**Gray:**

Communication skills are instrumental to any leadership role and carry two key components: being a good listener as well as being a strong communicator. As superintendent, your communication varies with different groups of people: city leaders, school committee members, staff, and parents. How accessible will you be to these individuals welcoming ideas, thoughts, and concerns?

**Luong:**

What experience do you have working with students with varied abilities, and specifically what checks and balances will you put in place to ensure that special education, ELL and all students who need services are receiving those services appropriately?

**Froio:**

Malden High School is a comprehensive high school, If money were available would you consider adding a few more Technology Education shops, to make it a truly comprehensive high school? What experience do you have working with vocational, and college and career pathways?