MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE Monday, April 5, 2021 Online Meeting

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 12th, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c. 30A, § 18, as well as the Governor's August 23rd and December 8th, 2020 revised guidance 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 if available, public broadcast by MATV/Urban Media Arts 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 this 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
Superintendent Oteri	Present
Student Representative Davidson	Present
Clerk	Present

Mayor Christenson announced that live interpretation services will be available for the rest of the School Committee meetings this year. Mayor Christenson introduced Mr. Danyal Najmi of Rossetta Languages to explain the interpretation services available and how to access them on the Zoom channels. 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.

Approval of Minutes

Since there was no objection by any of the School Committee members, all the meeting minutes were grouped together for approval. Mayor Christenson said the minutes of the March 1st Regular Session, March 1st Executive Session, March 8th Special Session, March 10th Special Session, March 11th Special

Session, March 15th Special Session and the March 15th Executive Session minutes of the School Committee needed approval.

Mr. McCarthy made the motion to approve all the minutes specified above. Mr. Iovino seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Ms. Amy Friedman, 8 Marvin Street

Ms. Friedman said that she had sent an email to the School Committee members for public comment. Ms. Friedman said that both her husband and herself want to comment about the NRT transportation contract as their child receives transportation services. Ms. Friedman said that NRT is not retaining video surveillance for the amount of time required under the contract. Ms. Friedman also said that there have been incidents where NRT was not adhering to stop signs and speed limits. Ms. Friedman asked that all this be taken into account when deciding on extending or renewing the contract.

Superintendent's Report

1. Grow Your Own Pilot Program at Malden High School (MHS)

Superintendent Oteri invited Director of Humanities Greg Hurley as well as Special Education MHS Team Chair, Dana Marie Brown. Mr. Hurley said this program is an aspect of the Teacher Diversification Grant. Ms. Brown who is the Lead Instructor for this program which is in year 3 provided more information through a slide presentation. Mr. Hurley said that the goal is to have Malden Public Schools (MPS) students come back to become teachers at MPS. The focus is on encouraging more students of color to become teachers and teach in Malden. Ms. Spadafora and Mr. Weldai said that it is great that this program is included in the MHS Program of Studies. In response to Mayor Christenson, Mr. Hurley said that the grant was a 3 year grant and that this is the third year. Superintendent Oteri added just a few months ago, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) partnered with the MassHire Workforce Development Board, to offer a unique opportunity for MassHire partner schools related to students pursuing teaching careers. Current 12th grade students interested in pursuing education as a career, have the opportunity this spring to complete a paid internship in the elementary schools in their own city. They named this program, High School Senior Education Internship Program (HSSEIP). Over the past few weeks, the guidance department worked alongside the Grow Your Own team, to dovetail both initiatives, thus providing our student education interns a holistic experience of learning and applying their knowledge, all while getting paid. To our knowledge, we are the only program in the state utilizing these two funded opportunities alongside one another. Superintendent Oteri said there are about 8 seniors who will be paid \$13.50/hour, who could work up to 100 hours each.

2. Employee Leave of Absence Request

Superintendent Oteri informed the School Committee about the leave of absence request from MHS Spanish teacher, Mr. Robert Grinnell who was offered a position to serve as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant (ETA) grant in Colombia from August 2021 - June 2022.

Mr. Weldai made the motion to refer the employee leave of absence request to the Policy and Procedures Subcommittee. Mr. McCarthy seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Special Education Update

Assistant Superintendent MacDonald provided a presentation on special education which focused on the continuing work on the audit. In response to Ms. Luong, Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said that for families that do not have phone numbers, emails are used to contact them. Assistant Superintendent MacDonald added that families that do not have phones or frequently changing phone numbers who are difficult to engage, will be the focus going forward to see how wrap-around services and support can be provided to them. Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said that the few families who indicated that the service received this spring is worse than the fall is mainly because of fatigue of being online instead of the classroom. In response to Ms. Luong about continuing the audit in the future, Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said that maybe a questionnaire can be given to parents during IEP re-evaluations. In response to Mayor Christenson, Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said that the spring of every year would be a better time to see the audit results as well as the results of the tiered focused monitoring. Ms. Spadafora suggested for separate questions on the survey for Out-Of-District families.

4. Transportation Contract

Attorney Greenspan said that this is a one year agreement for this 2020-2021 year, similar with what was done with NRT last school year when the pandemic began. Attorney Greenspan said that the previous year and this year's agreement would allow for a certain percentage to be paid to NRT even when their services are not being used so that the company can keep going and be ready when transportation services would be required again. Mr. Weldai said that last year, NRT was paid about 78% of the contract. Mr. Weldai and Attorney Greenspan clarified that this is just an amendment to the existing contract. Business Manager, Ms. Mertz said that NRT was not paid for the periods when the students were not in school towards the beginning of the year as well as the remote day during the middle of each week prior to students returning to school for 5 days a week. Attorney Greenspan and Ms. Mertz said that they can pay this percentage to NRT because of the legislation that was passed to address this matter during the pandemic.

Ms. Spadafora made the motion to refer the amendment of the contract to the Budget Subcommittee. Mr. Iovino seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

5. District Updates and Highlights

Superintendent Oteri said that Grades K-5 began in-person full-time five days a week on April 5th. Grades 10 and 11 began hybrid mode of learning on April 5th as well. Grades 6 and 7 will begin hybrid mode of learning on April 12th. Grades 6-8 will return for full, five day in-person instruction on April 28th.

Superintendent Oteri invited the City of Malden Director of Information Technology, Anthony Rodrigues to provide an update regarding the technology issues that the district experienced the previous week. Mr. Rodrigues said that the issue was with some of the content filters and

domain controllers. Some adjustments have already been done to help resolve this matter but further adjustments and upgrades will be done in the summer. Mr. Gray requested Mr. Rodrigues to provide the School Committee with a brief update in the fall after completing work during the summer.

Superintendent Oteri said that the School Committee directed the school district to apply for the return to school waiver on March 15th. On March 17th, the district submitted the waiver. On March 22nd, DESE sent a team of five to MPS for a site visit. Assistant Superintendent MacDonald and Superintendent Oteri met with the DESE officials and brought them to the Salemwood School and Beebe School. They observed the lunch process, toured classrooms, gyms, hallways and common spaces. They were very impressed with the way MPS has set up the schools and felt they were safe and efficient. They suggested desks could be set-up in hallways to help facilitate feeding students but the school administration felt it created too many issues that the school really could not address. DESE officially informed the district that the waiver to delay the re-entry of grades K-5 to April 26th and of grades 6-8 to May 10th was officially denied. DESE spoke to the fact that grades K-2 being in hybrid learning since February 4th and grades 3 and 4 since March 15th provided "a sufficient runway" towards a re-entry and denied the waiver. Two parent forums were held on March 9th and March 30th regarding reentry. The March 9th forum had over 600 participants and the March 30th had over 250. Hundreds of questions and feedback from families were received and answered.

MPS staff received opportunities to be vaccinated on March 15th when they were invited to a clinic in Somerville. Superintendent Oteri said that all the 150 available slots for staff for the Johnson & Johnson, one dose vaccine, was filled. Again, on March 26th, staff received the opportunity to go to Chelsea for a clinic in concert with the Chelsea Public Schools and Chelsea Health Department. There were 250 slots offered to MPS staff for the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and a little over 100 slots were filled. Most of MPS staff are either fully vaccinated or have had their first dose.

MPS was approved for the pooled testing program through DESE and matched with Concentric by Ginkgo as the medical partner. Director of Nursing, Ms. Patti Tramondozzi is working collaboratively with Concentric by Ginkgo. MPS received the test kits, support from a testing service provider, and the testing software to track results. Superintendent Oteri said that this has been highly successful across the state. Here in Malden, it was rolled out to the sports teams. Last week the Commissioner announced that the state will pay for this program for the rest of the school year.

Pooled testing involves mixing several test samples together in a "batch" or "pool" and then testing the pooled sample with a PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test for the detection of COVID-19. This approach increases the number of individuals that can be tested at one time and allows regular testing of the school community for COVID-19. MPS will provide the Abbott

BinaxNOW Rapid Antigen Diagnostic Tests for follow-up testing, so that students or staff in a positive pool can be tested as soon as possible and receive individual results in 15 minutes.

Students and staff will be notified by email with consent forms for participation. Students and staff are required to register with Project Beacon along with a consent form for Concentric by Ginko in order to participate in pooled testing, before pooled testing begins. This is strictly voluntary and not required to attend in person learning, however the district strongly encourages as many people to participate as the more who participate the more valid the testing becomes.

Superintendent Oteri said that MPS was awarded the full \$803,000 for the Extended Learning Time (ELT) grant for the Ferryway School. This is the opportunity that was explained in February as the district was approached by DESE informing the district about the eligibility for the 2019-20 school year because the Ferryway School was an ELT school. This is only for the Ferryway School and only for those students. There will be a combination of professional development at Ferryway which will be open to all staff as well as a combination of academic and enrichment programming through the vacation and summer. The grant must be expended by August 31st.

Beginning in 2016, students in grades K-5 were learning math using curricular materials called MyMath, published by McGraw-Hill. Knowing that the contract was in a yearly renewal stage, Director of STEM, Dr. Dias worked with coaches to examine MyMath in relation to other, more current materials that are more rigorous and closely aligned to the state standards. In 2019-2020, as the MyMath contract was coming to a close, 22 teachers piloted Eureka Math in all schools and grades K-5. During that time, math coaches were in communication with pilot teachers and building leadership. The overwhelming feedback from pilot teachers, coaches, and principals is that Eureka would be an excellent choice for students beginning the start of the 2020-2021 school year.

With the multiple layers of impact created by the pandemic, the district moved forward with a pilot at the grade 3-5 level and for those K-2 teachers already using Eureka. As stated last year, a pilot focused on the 3-5 level would be more accessible to older students who would be more able to access the material in the remote setting; the 3-5 span also aligned with MCAS years and would allow for a more focused implementation that was sensitive to teacher and student needs as they implemented during challenging times. The district's intention would be to expand the pilot even further to K-2 during the 2021-2022 school year. It was recognized that there would be challenges in implementation during a pandemic and this slower rollout allowed for the work to begin towards more rigorous instruction while being sensitive to the needs of teachers and students as they navigated this new model of school.

Teachers have provided feedback throughout the year on their implementation of Eureka Math, and the district continued to address the expected challenges associated with implementation. The district remains committed to continued training and support, knowing that the growing

pains of implementing any new program are outweighed by the benefits of more rigorous instruction that is better aligned to state and national standards. This past month the Director of STEM and building math coaches have been presenting information about the K-5 math program to parents and caregivers. Feedback on these presentations has been universally positive, and the district is looking to expand the Eureka Math Pilot program to include all grade K-2 teachers next year. Teachers will be trained this spring on the new material, with a follow-up training in the fall. Eureka math provides a Massachusetts curriculum frameworks-aligned set of materials that is rigorous and appropriate for MPS students. It provides support for not only teachers, but parents as well. As the district moves toward the more traditional model of school, additional support for families and teachers will be provided so that they will be equipped with the knowledge necessary to support their learners.

The district is working with the Malden Education Association (MEA) to find ways to help make this transition to in-person learning as smooth as possible. MPS is in the process of hiring multiple Learning Support Assistants. The Learning Support Assistant will support students who access simultaneous learning through remote medium. Learning Support Assistants will report in person to their assigned classroom and help the classroom teacher implement concurrent teaching, both remote and in-person instruction. Other duties may be assigned by building administration. These are part-time, up to 19 hours per week and pay \$26 per hour. These positions are temporary and will expire at the end of the school year.

Superintendent Oteri addressed a question raised at the last meeting regarding transportation to and from the games. The policy during the pandemic is that student athletes must take transportation provided by MHS. Extenuating circumstances will be looked at on a case by case basis.

Superintendent Oteri said that food truck grant that was received enabled the purchase of a food tuck. The truck is currently with the vendor being customized for warming, cooling and freezing capabilities in Buffalo, New York. The district hopes to take actual delivery on the truck in June. It will be wrapped in a Malden Logo/Design and will be used this summer distributing food throughout Malden to young people in the parks and schools.

Pending the Malden Board of Health approval, Superintendent Oteri said tentative 2021 senior end-of-year activities dates have been set:

Tuesday, May 25th - National Honor Society Induction Ceremony

Wednesday, May 26th - Senior Awards Night
Thursday, May 27th - Senior Prom Assembly

Friday, May 28th - Prom

Sunday, June 6th - Graduation

Monday, June 7th - Graduation Rain Date

Superintendent Oteri reminded everyone that April vacation begins on April 16th and school will resume on April 26th. Superintendent Oteri said the district is glad to welcome more and more students into the buildings. Superintendent Oteri thanked staff, parents and students for being patient and supportive during this entire process as well as following safety mandates.

Mr. Weldai asked for an update in May about the high school senior activities that have been tentatively scheduled for May. In response to Ms. Spadafora, Superintendent Oteri confirmed that only district issued devices can be brought into the classroom by students. Ms. Spadafora asked whether students who are sent home because of showing signs of having an allergy or cold, would be required to have a doctor's note to return to school. Superintendent Oteri said that families will be directed to the school nurse who would probably advise them to follow-up with a physician or get a COVID-19 test. In response to Student Representative Davidson, Principal Mastrangelo said MHS is already planning on having the Junior Varieties. Both Superintendent Oteri and City of Malden Director of Information Technology, Anthony Rodrigues answered another question stating that high school students should not be bringing their own devices when they return for in-person learning because it will make updating the devices or troubleshooting more difficult. Mr. lovino requested more information at the May or June School Committee meetings about how the ELT funds will be used to address the learning gaps. Mayor Christenson requested Ms. Spadafora to review the budget to provide more assistance to schools for lunch duties as many school administrators are doing lunch duties because of insufficient staff

Subcommittee Reports

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

Mr. Iovino said that student enrollment was 6,189 as of April 2nd. Kindergarten enrollment is 412 which is higher than normal at this time because placements are only done in July. Mr. Iovino added that he is working on organizing a meeting for the Space and Enrollment Ad-Hoc Subcommittee and the Budget Subcommittee along with members of the school administration to discuss the Early Learning Center.

2. Policy and Procedures Subcommittee – Mr. Weldai

Mr. Weldai said the subcommittee met on March 22nd and will be meeting again on April 12th to further discuss the school handbooks.

3. Equity and Opportunity Ad-Hoc Subcommittee – Mr. Weldai

Mr. Weldai said the subcommittee met to discuss the MHS Program of Studies and the Linden Accelerated and Enrichment Program (AEAP).

4. Budget Subcommittee – Ms. Spadafora

Ms. Spadafora said the subcommittee met on March 29th and the budget is still in the early stages. Ms. Mertz had provided updates to the subcommittee about the current FY 2021 budget where 75% of the allocated funding has already been utilized. Ms. Spadafora added that

for the FY 2022 budget, the district is asking state legislators to advocate for using the FY 2019 enrollment figures to fund schools because the enrollment figures during the pandemic was very low. Last year, the Budget Subcommittee hosted a meeting with state legislators and hope to do the same this year as well. Ms. Spadafora mentioned that summer and after school programs will be offered.

Motions and Resolutions

1. Malden Seventh Day Adventist Church Donation - Mr. Froio

Mr. Froio read the letter from the Malden Seventh Day Adventist Church that accompanied the donation, stating "Malden has been home for the Malden Seventh Day Adventist Church for almost 10 years and we came to love this city. Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, our church is closing its doors and we would like to give a little back to the school for all that you've done for the kids and families during this pandemic. We look fondly on your work feeding so many kids during this tough time, and we would like to contribute \$3,800 to help in whatever way you see necessary."

Mr. Froio made the motion to accept the donation. Mr. McCarthy seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Employee Child Enrollment Request – Mr. Weldai

Mr. Weldai said that request submitted by Certified Medical Assistant, Tracey Mahoney who lives in Woburn and works at the Parent Information Center, to have her daughter, Harley Mahoney enrolled in Kindergarten at MPS beginning at the 2021-2022 school year was accepted by the Policies and Procedures Subcommittee with a unanimous vote. In response to Mr. Drummey, Mr. Weldai said that this approval will bring the district to the cap that was set.

Mr. Iovino made the motion to approve the enrollment of Ms. Tracey Mahoney's daughter, Harley Mahoney in Kindergarten beginning at the 2021-2022 school year subject to Ms. Mahoney being continuously employed by the Malden Public Schools. Mr. Drummey seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Linden Accelerated and Enrichment Program (AEAP) 2021-2022 – Mr. Weldai

Mr. Weldai said the Equity and Opportunity Ad-Hoc Subcommittee met to discuss the AEAP program enrollment as was done last spring. Last year, the School Committee voted to place a one year pause on the 2020-2021 Grade 1 enrollment for the AEAP program.

For the 2021-2022 year, Mr. Weldai said the subcommittee considered the two options presented by Assistant Superintendent Kelly Chase. Option 1 was to start enrollment for both Grades 1 and 2 for the 2021-2022 year. Option 2 was to pause the enrollment for Grades 1 and 2 again for the 2021-2022 school year. Mr. Weldai said Option 2 was voted unanimously by the subcommittee. Mr. Weldai continued that Option 2 would allow more time to review and provide a recommendation in January 2022 for the future of the program. Another reason Option 2 was recommended was because the pandemic makes it difficult to successfully and equitably assess students for enrollment into the program. In response to Student Representative Davidson, Mr. Weldai said enrollment into Grades 3-8 of the AEAP program will

only happen with students who are already enrolled at Linden STEAM Academy in order to manage class sizes.

Ms. Spadafora made the motion to pause the enrollment of grades 1 and 2 of the AEAP program for the 2021-2022 school year. Ms. Luong seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed with 8 votes in favor and 1 vote against from Mr. Gray.

4. Malden High School Program of Studies – Mr. Weldai

Mr. Weldai said that the Equity and Opportunity Ad-Hoc Subcommittee met a few weeks ago with MHS Principal Mastrangelo and unanimously approved the MHS Program of Studies. Principal Mastrangelo thanked all the staff and parent volunteer for helping with the Program of Studies. Principal Mastrangelo added that among the changes is the addition of American sign language and a shift to looking at world languages offerings through a cultural lens instead of just focusing on grammar and writing. Principal Mastrangelo said that the committee is already working on the MHS Program of Studies for the year after next, aligning with MassCore which is a state-recommended program of study intended to align high school coursework with college and workforce expectations. New electives for English Learners (EL) students were also created. Another new offering stems from the "Grow Your Own" program. In order to make it more equitable, Math 1 which was only offered at the Honors level will also be offered at the CP level. Computational science was added as a course to help students with the mathematics aspects of many science courses.

In response to Student Representative Davidson, Principal Mastrangelo responded that the committee worked with the Student Voice project to get a student lens on the program of studies. In response to Mayor Christenson, Ms. Spadafora said that the program of studies can be supported by the budget. Business Manager, Ms. Mertz said that ideally, it would be good to get MHS MassCore certified and the changes in the program of studies is a step in the right direction. Ms. Mertz said that she would be working with Principal Mastrangelo on the feasibility of the offerings but that this would not impact the vote on the MHS Program of Studies. Mayor Christenson suggested that perhaps the Business Manager should weigh in on the program of studies to ensure that the proposed changes or new course can be funded. Mr. Weldai added that the MHS Program of Studies is not a budgetary document. Superintendent Oteri emphasized that the program of studies is a curriculum document and once students have chosen their courses, some courses will be offered and others might not be offered due to under-enrollment. However, all these courses would still reside in the program of studies. Ms. Spadafora highlighted that the timing of the program of studies and budget do not sync because the program of studies needs to be prepared ahead of the budget timeline. Mr. Weldai said that he would advocate for an extra person in the Business Department to help the Business Manager with the increased number of grants and budget needs.

Mr. Weldai made a motion to approve the Program of Studies. Ms. Spadafora seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

5. MPS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan 2020-2021 – Ms. Luong

Ms. Luong said that the MPS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan 2020-2021 needs to be reviewed based on new legislation as well as with parent and student input. Ms. Luong suggested that this matter be referred to the task force first before going to the Policy and Procedures Subcommittee and eventually the School Committee.

Mr. Weldai made the motion to refer the MPS Bullying and Prevention Plan to the task force. Ms. Luong seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Task Force to Study the Possibility of Offering Both In-Person and Remote Learning in the Future – Mayor Christenson

Co-sponsored by Mr. McCarthy, Ms. Luong, Mr. Gray, Mr. Weldai and Mr. Iovino

Mayor Christenson said many students have suggested that even after the pandemic is over, the option of in-person and remote learning should be offered to students. Mayor Christenson said that a task force to study this matter is needed before any decision is made. Student Representative Davidson and Mr. Weldai supported this suggestion. Ms. Spadafora supported establishing a task force but was hesitant about whether having these two options would create inequity in the district.

Mr. Weldai made the motion to establish a task force to study the possibility of offering both inperson and remote learning in the future. Mr. McCarthy seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Personal Privilege

Executive Session

Mr. Iovino made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 8:27 p.m. Mr. McCarthy seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey YES

Mr. Froio voted YES

Mr. Gray voted YES

Mr. Iovino voted YES

Ms. Luong voted YES

Mr. McCarthy voted YES

Ms. Spadafora voted YES

Mr. Weldai voted YES

Mayor Christenson voted YES

Motion passed unanimously.

The committee reconvened to the Regular Session at 9:29 p.m.

Mr. Iovino made the motion to ratify the amended MOA with the Malden Education Association (MEA) for lunch stipends. Ms. Luong seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey YES

Mr. Froio voted YES

Mr. Gray voted YES

Mr. Iovino voted YES

Ms. Luong voted YES

Mr. McCarthy voted YES

Ms. Spadafora voted YES

Mr. Weldai voted YES

Mayor Christenson voted YES

Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Iovino made a motion to accept the contract for Superintendent-Elect Ms. Ligia Noriega-Murphy.

Ms. Spadafora seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey YES

Mr. Froio voted YES

Mr. Gray voted YES

Mr. Iovino voted YES

Ms. Luong voted YES

Mr. McCarthy voted YES

Ms. Spadafora voted YES

Mr. Weldai voted YES

Mayor Christenson voted YES

Motion passed unanimously.

<u>Adjournment</u>

Mr. Iovino made a motion to adjourn at 9:31 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.

Shirley Dorai, Clerk