

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL SESSION  
OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Monday, August 19, 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: Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 18, this meeting of the Malden School Committee is being conducted via remote participation. All effort will be made to permit public attendance of this meeting, in the manner specified below, via remote access by internet, telephone, and via public broadcast of the meeting by Urban Media Arts (UMA)/MATV on public access television channels. Public access will also be provided by posting draft minutes, and/or a 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
Superintendent Noriega-Murphy	Present
Clerk	Present

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.

Mayor Christenson said that at the last meeting on August 9, the School Committee voted to release executive session minutes from February 8, 9, 10 and 11, 2021 as well as June 7, 2021, July 1, 2021 and July 29, 2021 with redactions. The School Committee also voted to withhold the January 27, 2021 executive session minutes.

**Public Comment**

Mayor Christenson deferred to the attendees for anyone who may have any comments. There were no comments. Mayor Christenson closed this portion of the meeting.

**Employee’s Request for Non-Resident Student Enrollment**

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that one of the staff has requested that her child be allowed to attend the Beebe School. Ms. Spadafora said that this matter will be reviewed by the Policy and Procedures Subcommittee before it is brought to the School Committee for a vote.

In response to Mr. Drummey, Ms. Spadafora said that there are still openings for the enrollment of non-resident employee’s children. In response to Mayor Christenson, Ms. Spadafora said that there is a cap of 5 students as well as other criteria that need to be met in order to enroll.

Mr. Weldai made a motion to refer this matter to the Policy and Procedures Subcommittee. Mr. Iovino and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

**Face Coverings Policy Update**

Mayor Christenson explained that the matter to be discussed is whether to continue with the face coverings policy which is currently in place since last year. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that it is urgent to revise and update the face coverings policy following safety procedures and guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) so that caregivers/parents can be informed before the school year begins.

In response to Mr. Iovino, Mayor Christenson said that Malden Board of Health Director, Mr. Chris Webb recommended that in order to protect the school-aged children not eligible for vaccination and the unvaccinated students, all students, staff and administrators should always be masked inside the public school buildings and on school buses with the exception when students are outside or eating.

Ms. Spadafora commented that the difference between last year and this year is that last year, there was a mask mandate by the Governor. However, this year, there is no mask mandate and the decision has been left to the school districts. Mayor Christenson further clarified that the city has been in communication with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) as well as state officials in the Governor’s Executive Branch and although they highly recommend masks, there is no indication of a mask mandate.

Mr. Weldai recommended that the policy be amended to include PreK students. Ms. Luong, Mr. Drummey and Mr. McCarthy supported the recommendation. Mr. McCarthy also mentioned about looking at the figures for transmission again in a month or so. Mr. Froio, Mr. Weldai and Ms. Spadafora agreed with Mr. McCarthy. Ms. Spadafora said that from some caregivers’ feedback, wearing masks increases social emotional issues because children cannot read the facial expressions of teachers. Mr. Weldai mentioned that clear masks is an option that would allow students to see their teachers facial expressions. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy mentioned that the district is looking into getting clear masks for teachers. Mayor Christenson thanked everyone who called and commented as well as participated in the survey to provide feedback to the district. Mayor Christenson also said that for the maintenance and cleanliness of the school buildings, the American Rescue Plan Program funding will be used to replace all of the air filtration systems in all the schools. Schools will also be deep cleaned every Friday. Mayor Christenson continued that vaccinations clinics will be held at schools as well. In collaboration with DESE, COVID-19 testing will also be done at schools similar to last year.

Mayor Christenson referred to the suggestion from Mr. McCarthy to look at COVID-19 numbers and requested Superintendent-Noriega-Murphy to update the School Committee when new information is

received. Ms. Spadafora asked that this topic be a standing agenda item at the School Committee meetings.

Mr. Weldai made the motion to amend the last two sentences in paragraph two of the current policy into one sentence that reads, "The District shall require this for all students in grades PreK - 12." Mr. Drummey seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey voted YES

Mr. Froio voted YES

Mr. Gray voted YES

Mr. Iovino voted YES

Ms. Luong voted YES

Mr. McCarthy voted YES

Ms. Spadafora voted NO

Mr. Weldai voted YES

Mayor Christenson voted YES

Motion passed with 8 votes in favor and 1 against.

Mr. McCarthy made the motion to add the word "outside" after the third bulleted point "during physical education classes". Mr. Weldai seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey voted YES

Mr. Froio voted YES

Mr. Gray voted YES

Mr. Iovino voted YES

Ms. Luong voted YES

Mr. McCarthy voted YES

Ms. Spadafora voted NO

Mr. Weldai voted YES

Mayor Christenson voted YES

Motion passed with 8 votes in favor and 1 against.

Mr. Weldai made the motion to affirm the amended policy. Mr. Iovino seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey voted YES

Mr. Froio voted YES

Mr. Gray voted YES

Mr. Iovino voted YES

Ms. Luong voted YES

Mr. McCarthy voted YES

Ms. Spadafora voted NO

Mr. Weldai voted YES

Mayor Christenson voted YES


Motion passed with 8 votes in favor and 1 against.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Drummey made a motion to adjourn at 6:53 p.m. Mr. Iovino 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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Gary Christenson, Clerk