

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION
OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Monday, September 13, 2021
Virtual Meeting

Mayor Christenson called the meeting to order at 6:01 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 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 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 8 languages available and each translator gave a brief introduction in their language. The languages available were Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Cantonese and American Sign Language.

Approval of Minutes

Mayor Christenson brought forth the matter of the approval of minutes for the August 30th, 2021 Regular Session of the School Committee. Mr. Iovino made the motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Luong seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. McCarthy made the motion to approve the minutes of the September 8th, 2021 Special Session of the School Committee. Ms. Luong seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Ms. Amanda Maffeo, 81 Waite Street, Malden

Ms. Maffeo thanked Mr. Weldai and Ms. Spadafora. Ms. Maffeo who is a teacher at Salemwood, asked if the other School Committee members who do not have a school in their Ward, could represent the Salemwood School.

Mr. Mustapha Chawqui, 130 Granite Street, Malden

Mr. Chawqui thanked Mr. Gray for trying to assist him. Mr. Chawqui said that he had first registered his child for enrollment with the parent Information Center (PIC) in May 2021 but did not know that the physical report of the child was a condition for school entrance. Mr. Chawqui also mentioned the long lines outside PIC because parents were trying to enroll their children. Mr. Chawqui suggested that children should be allowed to go to school while their paperwork is completed.

Ms. Eden Garhart-Smith, 16 Corey Road, Malden

Ms. Garhart-Smith asked for information about having band at Linden STEAM Academy either this year or next year. Ms. Garhart-Smith asked for more communication as to why this decision was made. Ms. Garhart-Smith also spoke about the need to have after-school programs at Linden and COVID-19 testing.

Ms. Bonnie Littlejohn, 127 Emerald Street, Malden

Ms. Littlejohn spoke about a safety issue at Beebe School. Ms. Littlejohn said that there are no crossing guards at the corner of Elm and Hawthorne Streets as well as Highland Avenue and Elm Street near Beebe during drop-off and pick-up. The drop-off and pick-up area for the special education student buses are also near the crosswalk. Ms. Littlejohn asked for assistance with this matter.

Mr. Jason Giacoppo, 48 Bowman Street, Malden

Mr. Giacoppo asked about pool testing at the schools.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy thanked the parents for their patience with the Parent Information Center. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that systems are being put in place for better data Tracking and pre-registrations. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy apologized for the frustration experienced by caregivers with the registration process.

1. Enrollment

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy invited Mr. Iovino to provide enrollment details. Mr. Iovino said that the enrollment number is 5,939 students as of September 9th. This was an increase of 169 students since August 26th. Mr. Iovino continued that in looking at the numbers for the past three years, there was an increase of 17 students during the 2018-2019 school year and a decrease of 371 students in the 2020-2021 school year due to the pandemic. As of Thursday, there were 173 applicants pending but as of today, there are only 57 are pending. There are 207 applicants in the review process.

2. District Updates and Highlights

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy proceeded to provide updates and highlights about enrollment, dropout numbers and other matters in the Superintendent's Report slide

presentation. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy called upon Assistant Superintendents, Ms. Laryssa Doherty, Ms. Emilys Peña, Ms. Pam MacDonald and Ms. Toni Mertz to provide further updates. Directors, Ms. Jennifer McCabe, Ms. Victoria Mulkern, Ms. Patricia Tramondozzi, Ms. Erin Craven and Mr. Charlie Conefrey provided updates for various other areas.

In response to Ms. Spadafora, Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said that caregivers can sign forms online through the Frontline software and the IEP process will be more streamlined. IEPs will still be sent via paper as well as electronically through the parent portal in Frontline. In response to Ms. Spadafora's question on vaccinations, Ms. Tramondozzi said that Cambridge Health Alliance will be running the vaccination clinics at the schools with the collaboration of the Malden Board of Health. Although prior registration would be required, caregivers can still show up on that day and fill-up paperwork if they had not registered beforehand. For students who would like to get the vaccine, parental consent will be sought through the phone. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that principals have designated places in their buildings for the vaccination clinics and where possible, have designated doors for family members to enter buildings.

In response to Ms. Spadafora, Ms. Craven said there is no school counselor at the Early Learning Center (ELC) and there is one social worker. Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said that there is a staff member there who does family liaison type work. In response to Ms. Spadafora, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that she would provide actual enrollment numbers and capacity per school as well as attendance. In response to Mr. Gray, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that the vaccination clinics at the schools are only for students and their family members. The City of Malden has other vaccination clinics for everyone in the community.

In response to Mr. Gray, Assistant Superintendent Doherty said that the timeline for improvements at the Parent Information Center/Welcome Center will hopefully be seen by December 1st with the setup of an online registration portal for all new registrations. The ELC students will have a shorter enrollment process for Kindergarten. Assistant Superintendent Doherty responded to the next question stating that as of noon, there were 57 applications in the cue and there was a slowing down of new applications being received. There are also new family liaisons who will assist with the 276 incomplete applications by contacting the families. Assistant Superintendent Doherty will be recommending policy shifts for the 2022-2023 school year as they pose some barriers for caregivers.

In response to Mr. Weldai, Ms. Tramondozzi said that letters regarding information about pool testing will be sent home to families. Mayor Christenson requested that the item regarding school dropouts be a standing item at every School Committee meeting. Mayor Christenson also wanted to know how dropouts are defined, the reasons for students dropping out of school as well as the statewide average figures. In response to Mayor Christenson, Mr. Conefrey said that the 337 student athletes from grades 9 – 12 this year is much higher than previous years' numbers which typically are between 250 and 275 student athletes. Mr. Conefrey credited the

new football coach and freshmen for this significant increase. In response to Mayor Christenson, Ms. Tramondozi said that participants at the vaccinations clinic will be given dates for them to return to receive the second doses. Mayor Christenson informed the public that there will be another segment providing the city's COVID-19 updates on Tuesday, September 14th.

Subcommittee Reports

Motions and Resolutions

Personal Privilege

Executive Session

Mr. Iovino made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 7:52 p.m. Mr. Froio 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 8:31 p.m.

Adjournment

Mr. Drummey made a motion to adjourn at 8:32 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.



Shirley Dorai, Clerk