

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION
OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Monday, October 4, 2021

Herbert L. Jackson Council Chamber Room #106 - 215 Pleasant Street
And Virtual Meeting

Mayor Christenson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Christenson read the docket items for the meeting.

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 read the agenda for the meeting and informed the attendees that translation services will not be available for the meeting because of being in the midst of changing service providers.

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

Approval of Minutes

Mayor Christenson brought forth the matter of the approval of minutes for the September 13th, 2021 Regular Session of the School Committee. Mr. Iovino made the motion to approve the minutes. Mr. McCarthy seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Christelle Jean, Senior at MHS

Christelle spoke about a public comment that a few schoolmates and herself gave about their experiences of racism at the Malden Public Schools (MPS) at the April 2, 2018 School Committee meeting. Christelle said that they were met with praise for their courage and eloquence but the educators of MPS, particularly the educators at the Salemwood School displayed passive aggressive behavior, denial, calling the students liars, and whispering behind their backs for years after that meeting. Christelle added that groups were formed on social media specifically to make the students feel like a group of disgruntled teens looking for attention. There were also teachers who approached them to let them know how disgusted they felt with them. Following the School Committee meeting, they were berated by a Salemwood School staff member. Christelle said that this made her feel the power of white fragility. Christelle wondered if she did the right thing by speaking the truth because of all the hatred she has experienced since then. Christelle continued that the educators who felt called out, chose to protect their white fragility over her humanity. Even when things died down, it was never for long. Christelle appealed to the teachers who supported her to shield and guide BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) students and build safe havens for them.

Ms. Lillian Sterenberg, Part-Time Math Assistant at Linden S.T.E.A.M.

Ms. Sterenberg requested that the COVID-19 sick leave policy for part-time workers be changed because the current policy states that part-time workers would not be paid for COVID-19 sick leave but the Governor extended the Emergency Sick Leave law a few days ago. Ms. Sterenberg said that she spoke with the Mayor earlier regarding this matter. Ms. Sterenberg said that she had not heard from the school human resource department regarding the extension since the Governor's announcement.

Superintendent's Report

1. Partnership with Malden Reads

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy had a joint presentation with Ms. Linda Zalk and Ms. Jodie Zalk from Malden Reads about the plans for the 2021-2022 school year. For many years, Malden Reads gave books to all Malden Public Schools students. Together with Malden Public Schools Literacy coaches, high school Interact Club, and English Learner (EL) parents, Malden Reads invited authors to share their experiences with students and hosted movie nights that embraced the themes of the books that were read.

Every year, Malden Reads selects a main book for the community to read. In schools, the same reading took place but in an appropriate grade level version. Malden Reads will continue providing books including poetry books to the Malden High School (MHS). Malden Reads also hosted a Mini Writers' Den for middle school students in efforts to support their writing skills and transition to MHS.

The upcoming projects for the 2021-2022 school year involves establishing a Youth Poet Laureate program, partner with the business and faith-based community organizations, showcase students artwork and poetry as well as collaborate with the Literacy and EL directors to work with 4th graders for the "M&M" pilot program. Projects will also include providing

sample curriculum and space for broader cultural enrichment for students, building skills in problem solving, using the mentor/mentee model to support the 4th graders and working with the Literacy and EL directors as well as with the MHS Alumni Association to mentor MHS seniors.

Malden Public School's Literacy and Fine Arts Departments along with Malden Reads are going to align resources to integrate visual and performing arts in literacy where a book will be selected for middle school students who will also create ceramic tiles that can bring the reading to life. These student-created tiles will be displayed at the Early Learning Center. Poetry will be made to come alive by students creating artistic displays of their interpretation of the poem and integrating music to poetry.

2. Enrollment

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy invited Mr. Iovino to provide enrollment details. Mr. Iovino said that the enrollment number was 6,141 as of last Friday. There was an increase of 79 students in the last few weeks and an increase of over 300 students since the beginning of the year. Mr. Iovino added that there is a potential to add another 196 students in the next few days. In response to Mayor Christenson, Mr. Iovino said that the current enrollment numbers is only less by 52 compared to the pre-pandemic numbers.

3. Updated Calendar and Indigenous Peoples Day Proclamation

Mr. Weldai read the proclamation about the Indigenous Peoples Day signed by Mayor Christenson. Mr. Weldai continued that the proclamation was presented to the City Council last week and it was unanimously endorsed.

Mr. Weldai made the motion to endorse the Indigenous Peoples Day proclamation. Ms. Luong seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy thanked Mayor Christenson for the proclamation as it reflects the diversity of MPS. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy also highlighted that October is the National Hispanic Heritage Month, Bullying Prevention Month, and acknowledged Christelle's words of encouragement. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy stressed on the work of focusing on equity, approach to humanity and moral obligation to ensure students do not suffer.

The new version of the calendar was presented to the School Committee. Indigenous Peoples Day was added to the calendar as well as changing the look of the calendar.

4. District Updates and Highlights

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy proceeded to provide updates and highlights about enrollment, off-track students and other matters from the Superintendent's Report slide presentation. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy called upon Assistant Superintendents, Ms. Pam MacDonald, Ms. Laryssa Doherty, Ms. Emilys Peña, and Ms. Toni Mertz to provide further updates. MHS Principal Mastrangelo provided data regarding the diversification of staff, different structures to get more voices heard, student achievement and FLEX block. Directors, Ms. Patricia Tramondozzi, Ms. Erin Craven, Ms. Jennifer McCabe, Ms. Victoria Mulkern and Mr. Charlie Conefrey provided updates for various other areas.

In response to Ms. Luong, Ms. Craven responded that there will be a virtual family post-secondary planning night on tentatively October 27th for families of 12th graders and anyone interested from the 11th and 10th grades. The district has a partnership with uAspire which specializes in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). uAspire is hiring a person who will be available two days a week to meet with families or individual students to provide help in completing the FAFSA. Due to some grant funding that the district received, the counselors will be available in the late afternoons for after-school workshops in completing the FAFSA.

Mr. Weldai wanted to see the staffing changes particularly for the EL Department for the past 2 or 3 years, at the next School Committee meeting as there have been student changes in the schools. Mr. Weldai said that this was more so to see what supports might be needed. Mr. Weldai also requested for more information regarding the district-wide writing prompt at the next School Committee meeting.

In response to Ms. Spadafora, Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said that the COVID-19 cases provided in the DESE report might differ from the school report because of when the reports are uploaded to the website. In response to another question from Ms. Spadafora, Assistant Superintendent Mertz said that the water supply to the schools have been increased from 50 cases to 80 cases per week until the work on the water bottle filling stations which has been stalled can begin. Once the materials is received, work will first start at the Beebe cafeteria and gym. Each school will have at least two water bottle filling stations. On another topic, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that the computer labs being changed to classrooms in some of the schools was a decision that was made prior to July 1st and is not because of anticipated increase of student enrollment. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy continued that student projections will be done in the next few months so that caps can be placed on classroom sizes. The capacity of each school and classroom will be part of the projections.

Subcommittee Reports

Motions and Resolutions

1. Residency Policy – Mr. Weldai

Mr. Weldai made the motion to refer the Residency Policy to the Policies and Procedures Subcommittee for review. Mr. Iovino seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Personal Privilege

Executive Session

Ms. Spadafora made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 7:54 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 8:17 p.m.


Mr. Iovino made a motion to ratify the Memorandum of Agreement for Unit C for the period of September 1, 2020 - August 31, 2022. Ms. Luong seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey RECUSED
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 with 8 votes in favor and 1 recusal.

Adjournment

Mr. Drummey made a motion to adjourn at 8:20 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