

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION  
OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Monday, November 8, 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 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 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	Absent
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
Student Representative Jean	Present
Clerk	Present

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy introduced Student Representative, Christelle Jean to the School Committee. Student Representative Jean is a senior at Malden High School. Mr. Weldai provided details about joining the language access channels for the meeting.

**Approval of Minutes**

Mayor Christenson brought forth the matter of the approval of minutes for the October 4<sup>th</sup>, 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**

Mr. Glenn Koocher, Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC)

Mr. Koocher said that every year, MASC recognizes a member of the legislature who has been outstanding in the field of advocacy for public education and so many other issues that involve students in schools. Mr. Koocher added that this year's legislator of the year, State Representative Steven Ultrino has been a leader in the fight for legislation to combat hate, has been a very strong advocate of public education legislation and a good friend of school committees across the state. Mr. Koocher presented the award to State Representative Steven Ultrino who began his career as a member of the Malden School Committee. State Representative Steven Ultrino expressed his thanks and mentioned that the work is always about the children and making sure that they have the tools they need to succeed. Mayor Christenson presented a citation to State Representative Steven Ultrino on behalf of the School Committee. Mr. Weldai spoke about State Representative Steven Ultrino's background and work as a legislator.

Ms. Jenelle Devits and Ms. Kimberly Gillette, 3 Sheridan Street #2, Malden and Beebe School Parents  
Ms. Devits and Ms. Gillette thanked Ms. Spadafora for making healthier and better school lunches a priority. Brennan O'Shaughnessy from the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade said that there are students who rather not eat than eat the school lunch. Another student commented that older and bigger students such as 8<sup>th</sup> graders need more servings for lunch than kindergarteners. Mayor Christenson said that the timing is right because the current food service contract ends on June 30, 2022 and work is underway to set to go out to bid in the coming months for this service. Mayor Christenson added that Ms. Spadafora will be taking the lead with this effort.

Mr. Patrick Fitzgerald, President of the Malden Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)

Mr. Fitzgerald spoke about special education teachers having had to fill general education substitution roles in at least one of the schools. Mr. Fitzgerald said that these situations could be interpreted as an illegal withholding of special education services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Mr. Fitzgerald thanked Assistant Superintendent MacDonald for addressing the matter quickly. Mr. Fitzgerald highlighted the lack of resources for building administrators and emphasized that this has to be a priority along with investing in paraprofessional positions.

Ward 3 City Councillor Amanda Linehan, 83 Blomerth St, Malden and Beebe School Parent

Councillor Linehan said that the reliability and quality of the school lunch menu has been deteriorating but appreciated Ms. Spadafora's effort in looking into this matter. Councillor Linehan continued that with the diversity in Malden, it would be good to have more culturally competent options available such as vegetarian and vegan food.

Ms. Cary Lalonde, 23 Winter, Ave, Malden and Forestdale School Parent

Ms. Lalonde said that her two children are very unhappy with the school lunches provided by Whitsons. As a Health Coach, Ms. Lalonde has been looking into the access to water and school food nutrition. Ms. Lalonde was concerned about the sugar levels in the food and the lack of nutrition. Ms. Lalonde hoped that the district will find a food services provider who will be able to serve better food to the students. Mayor Christenson said that this is one of the reasons why the work to find healthier food options for students is starting next month instead of February or March of the following year.

Ms. Deborah Gesualdo, President of the Malden Education Association (MEA)

Ms. Gesualdo said that the new MEA office address is 77 Exchange Street, Malden. Ms. Gesualdo spoke about the difficulties of staff who are regularly pulled from their assigned positions to substitute where there is no coverage. Ms. Gesualdo continued that educators are working really hard to effectively understand and work to address the ways that the pandemic has disrupted students' academic and developmental experiences. They are trying to figure out what post-lockdown teaching looks like. Ms. Gesualdo added that students, educators and school staff need more social and emotional support now.

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

Ms. Garhart-Smith said that the MHS meetings for prospective and incoming 8<sup>th</sup> graders should also be opened up to 7<sup>th</sup> graders. Ms. Garhart-Smith spoke about incorporating more after-school programming and summer activities in their education so that more students would want to attend school in Malden rather than enroll in the vocational schools. Mr. Weldai said that MHS Principal Mastrangelo informed him that 7<sup>th</sup> graders can also attend the high school meetings being held for incoming 8th graders.

## **Superintendent's Report**

### **1. Enrollment**

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy invited Mr. Iovino to provide enrollment details. Mr. Iovino said that the enrollment number was 6,313 as of last Friday, and this is an increase of 543 students since August 2021. Mr. Iovino continued that this is about 110 students more than the numbers during the month of November last year. The largest increase was 82 students in PreK and 169 students in Kindergarten. In response to Mayor Christenson, Mr. Iovino said the enrollment figure is still lower than pre-pandemic times but not by a lot.

### **2. District Updates and Highlights**

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy proceeded to provide updates and highlights about enrollment, conducting an analysis of building capacity in schools, attendance, implementation of progressive restorative practices for students, safety plans, support for staff members including crisis prevention intervention for adults, vaccination for younger students, code of conduct, and other matters from the Superintendent's Report slide presentation.

Superintendent called on Salemwood Principal Huynh, who has been working for 22 years in the Malden Public School (MPS) to present Salemwood highlights including PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support) initiative, school mascot, and Grades 6-8 Student Government Board. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy called upon Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Pam MacDonald; Nursing Director, Ms. Patricia Tramondozzi; Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Toni Mertz; Director of School Counseling, Testing, and Academic Support, Ms. Erin Craven; Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Emily Peña; English Learner Education and Title III Director, Ms. Jennifer McCabe; Literacy and Title I Director, Ms. Victoria Mulkern; and Athletics, Health and Wellness Director, Mr. Charlie Conefrey to provide further updates in other areas.

In response to Ms. Spadafora, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that staff COVID-19 numbers can also be included in the dashboard. When asked how the district can increase participation in pool testing, Ms. Tramondozzi and Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said

that the principals could send emails to the caregivers to encourage more to sign up. Mr. Weldai asked for a presentation about the curriculum selection committee's vision and process at the next School Committee meeting.

In response to Student Representative Jean's question about uAspire, Ms. Craven said that uAspire has partnered with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and they have a person who will be at MHS two days of the week starting next week.

Mayor Christenson informed Salemwood Principal Van Hyunh that he would like to meet with the Grades 6-8 Student Government Board. In response to Mayor Christenson, Ms. McCabe said that the protocols that the district is looking to change with DESE is in order to have more teachers to be dual certified as there is a shortage of ESL certified teachers in neighborhood schools. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy added that MTEL workshops will also be provided to encourage more teachers to be dual certified. In response to Mayor Christenson, Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said that the district was only recently able to find and hire a 504 Coordinator position. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy added that this position will ensure that there is consistency in the 504 process. With regards to the pre-school collaborative, Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said that they meet once a month and they are arranging a playdate as well as workshops that will be offered to families. In January, there will be a job fair and a pre-school fair.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

### **Motions and Resolutions**

### **Personal Privilege**

### **Executive Session**

Mr. Iovino made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 7:34 p.m. Mr. Froio seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey ABSENT

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 absent.

The committee reconvened to the Regular Session at 8:00 p.m.

Mr. Iovino made a motion to approve to approve the 3% pay increase for the 2020-2021 school year for 6 paraprofessionals from Unit C who retired this school year. Mr. McCarthy seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey ABSENT

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 absent.

**Adjournment**

Ms. Spadafora made a motion to adjourn at 8:01 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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Shirley Dorai, Clerk