

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION  
OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Monday, September 12, 2022

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 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. Mr. Drummey requested a moment of silence for former School Committee Vice-Chair, Mr. Iovino's sister who was also a teacher at the Malden High School.

**Roll Call**

The following attendance was taken:

Mayor Christenson	Present
Mr. Drummey	Present
Mr. McCarthy	Present
Ms. Spadafora	Present
Ms. Macklin	Present
Mr. Weldai	Present
Mr. Gray	Present
Mr. Bernard	Present
Ms. Rose-Zeiberg	Present
Superintendent Noriega-Murphy	Present
Clerk	Present

Mayor Christenson invited Mr. Danyal Najmi from Rosetta Languages to provide 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 June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Regular Session of the School Committee. Ms. Spadafora made the motion to approve the minutes. Mr. McCarthy seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment**

Ms. Amy Friedman, 8 Marvin Street, Malden

Ms. Friedman said that NRT Transportation are sending students late to school because of a shortage of drivers. Ms. Friedman continued that this adds to a long list of NRT's failures and urged the School Committee to move expeditiously in reviewing the transportation contract in order to find other providers. Ms. Friedman also questioned the Superintendent's academic credentials about her doctorate and asked for it to be made public. Ms. Friedman said that at least two of the Negotiations

Subcommittee meetings were not posted publicly and one of the meetings was held without a quorum. Ms. Friedman added that without a teacher's contract, there will be fewer candidates interested in filling the shortages experienced. Ms. Friedman said that the School Committee should provide information to parents about all these matters.

Ms. Stacey Gilchrist, 30 Parkside Place, Malden

Ms. Gilchrist asked that the School Committee communicate with the parents regarding the teacher, paraprofessionals and the support staff shortage. Ms. Gilchrist specifically asked for the status as well as the plan for filling all the vacant positions.

Ms. Imene Saidi, 30 Parkside Place, Malden

Ms. Saidi said that the disruption in transportation has disrupted her child's school day and is also a safety issue. Ms. Saidi said that it is an urgent issue that needs to have short-term resolutions while waiting for a new contract.

Mayor Christenson suggested having the Vice-Chair and Budget Subcommittee Chairs look into the matter and find some means to address the issue as soon as possible. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy was in agreement.

## **Superintendent's Report**

### **1. District Updates and Highlights**

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy provided a staffing update, steps taken to fill the vacant positions and supports for new educators. In response to Mr. McCarthy, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that the district is on track to fill all vacancies. In the interim, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that subcontractors and administrators are in the classrooms to ensure that every classroom has an adult. In response to Ms. Macklin, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy explained the waiver process as well as the steps taken by the district to help paraprofessionals to obtain waivers as they work towards obtaining licensure. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said the focus is also on retention of staff. Mr. Weldai emphasized that the postings may not reflect an accurate picture of staffing levels as the hiring status changes daily.

In response to Ms. Spadafora, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that all the nurses are district-wide staff and that as for special education evaluations, the work remains uninterrupted as the work is being subcontracted. In response to Mr. Gray, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy clarified that the RBT position is one of the special education positions. In response to Mayor Christenson, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that some of the positions in the report with asterisks beside them have already been filled as the report was created a few days ago.

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy continued to present the district updates and highlights by thanking everyone for a smooth start of the school year. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy proceeded to provide updates and highlights which included the introduction of new administrators, recognition of Malden High School's work with Special Olympics, MHS graduation, enrollment which saw an increase of 701 students since the beginning of the year, attendance, Theory of Change, instructional focus, training for staff, transportation for special education students, special education programs, adoption of new curriculum for literacy,

Superintendent's entry plan and findings, next steps for 2022-2023, Accelerated and Enriched Academic Program (AEAP) update, a recommendation regarding the AEAP will be presented to the School Committee in January 2023, and honors program for middle school grades.

In response to Ms. Spadafora, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that last year, some schools were at over-capacity in terms of enrollment. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy continued that this year, the cap for the classrooms are at 25 students and the K8 buildings at 930 students. In response to another question, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that the district goals will be aligned to her personal goals for her evaluation. With regards to the handbooks and other information for families and caregivers, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that for those without computers at home, the information will be sent using paper copies in students backpacks. Ms. Spadafora suggested that it should be indicated in a student's profile if the parents need paper copies of everything in case they do not have a computer at home to view documents. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that this is a very good suggestion and she was going to see how it can be incorporated. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy also explained that the assessment centers will be used to evaluate students before they are sent for out-of-district placements and that the assessment centers will be opened to other districts to send their student for assessment on a fee-for-service basis. Ms. Spadafora said that there are students who are not getting to school because of NRT. Ms. Spadafora said that something needs to be done immediately to ensure that students are able to get to school and be on time. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that she is working on a recommendation to resolve this issue.

Ms. Weldai said that if NRT is violating the terms of the contract, the school district might be able to look for other ways to get students to school even if it goes against the contract. Ms. Macklin asked if there are penalties for NRT for violating the contract. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that the legal advisor will be consulted to look into this matter. In response to Ms. Rose-Zeiberg, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that the middle school honors pilot program is in all the K-8 schools. Mr. Bernard echoed the sentiment that students must get to school on time. In response to a question from Mr. Bernard, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that for the students on waitlist for their neighborhood schools, they will be placed at Linden and Salemwood. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy answered another question from Mr. Bernard stating that Linden S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) Academy Principal Garcia has been creating a welcoming and safe environment for new students who are entering the AEAP program. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy added that the social emotional supports for these students will be explored.

Mayor Christenson asked for the enrollment numbers for September 2019 and September 2022. Mayor Christenson also inquired about the service from Aramark. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy responded that early in the school year, there was a bit of a challenge during the Professional Development for all the teachers but since then, their service has been good. As for the air quality, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that some work was done in the summer to ensure that the air quality in all the buildings were good.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

**1. Superintendent Evaluation Ad-Hoc Subcommittee – Mr. McCarthy**

Mr. McCarthy presented the Superintendent Evaluation Report. After the presentation, Mr. McCarthy explained that one the School Committee as a whole takes a vote on the evaluation, the results can be then sent to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Ms. Spadafora said that based on the scores for Standard 4, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy should receive an overall rating of proficient instead of needs improvement because she received one exemplary and four proficient ratings. Mr. McCarthy said that he felt it was safe to say that needs improvement is the overall rating based on feedback from School Committee members and recent events. Ms. Spadafora clarified that the data shows proficient and that it was Mr. McCarthy’s personal opinion that the rating should be needs improvement.

Ms. Macklin echoed Ms. Spadafora and said that she cannot support a rating of needs improvement on Standard 4. Ms. Macklin said that she had assigned an exemplary rating for one of the categories but did not see it reflected in the presentation. Ms. Macklin asked if it was just the Chair of Superintendent Evaluation Ad-Hoc Subcommittee or all three members on the subcommittee who reviewed the ratings presented by all nine members of the School Committee. Mr. McCarthy responded that the evaluations were all sent to him and only he reviewed them. In response to Mayor Christenson, Mr. McCarthy said that the subcommittee did meet in the summer. Mayor Christenson suggested that this matter be tabled so that Ms. Macklin’s exemplary rating for one of the standards can be included in the final report. Ms. Rose-Zeiberg said that personal opinions need to be set aside and only the data that was collected should be reviewed.

Mr. Bernard made the motion to table the Superintendent Evaluation Report. Mr. Drummey seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

**Motions and Resolutions**

**1. Superintendent Evaluation – Mr. McCarthy**

This matter was already voted to be tabled as indicated in the preceding section of the meeting.

**Personal Privilege**

**Executive Session**

Mr. Drummey made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 7:55 p.m. Mr. Bernard seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

- Mr. Drummey voted YES
- Mr. McCarthy voted YES
- Ms. Spadafora voted YES
- Ms. Macklin voted YES
- Mr. Weldai voted YES
- Mr. Gray voted YES
- Mr. Bernard voted YES
- Ms. Rose-Zeiberg voted YES


Mayor Christenson voted YES  
Motion passed unanimously.

The committee reconvened to the Regular Session at 9:42 p.m.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Drummey made a motion to adjourn at 9:42 p.m. Mr. McCarthy 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