

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION
OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Monday, February 6, 2023
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.

Roll Call

The following attendance was taken:

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|---------------------------------|---------|
| 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 |
| Student Representative Hakkaoui | Present |
| Clerk | Present |

Mayor Christenson said that due to technical difficulties, there will be no live Zoom session for the meeting due to the incursion at municipal buildings last week. Mayor Christenson added that the meeting is being recorded by Urban Media Arts (UMA) and it will be aired after the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Mayor Christenson brought forth the matter of the approval of minutes for the January 9th, 2023 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. Dawn O’Toole, 130 Adams Street, Malden

Ms. O’Toole said that as of January 5th, 110 students were enrolled in the Accelerated and Enriched Academic Program (AEAP). There were 2,274 other students enrolled in the same grade levels. Ms. O’Toole said that offering an honors program for middle school grade level students across the district would promote equity and liberation.

Hayam Ougarri, 3rd Grade AEAP Student at Linden STEAM Academy

Hayam spoke about the smiles on students faces who are enrolled in the AEAP program and requested that the School Committee do not take away the joy that they have by taking away the program. Hayam recited a poem in honor of the AEAP program.

Mr. Isaac Slavitt, 14 Gellineau Street, Malden

Mr. Slavitt said that any change in policy must be posted publicly in writing in advance of the meeting to allow the public to react. Mr. Slavitt continued that the data for this program is a reflection of past policies. Mr. Slavitt added that sensible acceleration policies can be put forward. Equity is about customization.

Keith Page, 32 Concord Street, Malden

Mr. Page requested that anything new brought forward regarding the AEAP program should allow public review before any decision is made.

Superintendent's Report

1. Chapter 70 School Funding Formula, Student Opportunity Act, and the Impact on Malden – presented by Senator Jason Lewis

Mayor Christenson invited State Senator Jason Lewis to speak on the Chapter 70 funding. Senator Lewis proceeded with the presentation.

At the conclusion of the presentation, School Committee members were provided with an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments. Mr. Weldai asked how the Municipal Revenue Growth Factor is calculated. Senator Lewis said a formula is used for the calculation. In response to Mr. Bernard, Senator Lewis said that further conversation is needed to address the matter of the enrollment numbers currently being taken on October 1st not accurately reflecting enrollment throughout the year. Mr. Weldai echoed the need to count enrollment differently. Mayor Christenson said property taxes are capped at 2.5% but the local required contribution has gone up by 4%. Mayor Christenson continued that this matter needs to be addressed.

2. District Updates and Highlights

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy provided updates about the activities in schools; Black History Month; enrollment is 6,464; last day of school is June 15 so far; new calendar for 2023-2024; open positions; staff licensure status updates as well as reminders and support; and Malden Out of School Time (MOST) program enrollment.

Assistant Superintendent Ms. Peña and Ms. MacDonald as well as Data Analyst Dr. Stazesky spoke about the AEAP program data. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy provided the two proposals as provided in the report. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy recommended to close the program.

Ms. Rose-Zeiberg said students should get what they need at their level and wanted to see a revision of the program to serve all the students in every school. Ms. Rose-Zeiberg continued that even in a centralized school, it would still be difficult for some to attend. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said students who score above grade level will be given curriculum extensions and that the differentiation is happening right now.

Ms. Spadafora questioned the equity aspect of the program and requested more data. Mayor Christenson said that Ms. Spadafora could follow-up on this matter with the administration after the meeting.

Mr. Gray commented that any decision made now would be on a program that has been in decline, neglected and underfunded for years. It is not what some people expect for the program. Mr. Gray added that for certain immigration populations, this program helps their children get ahead. Mr. Gray said he would whatever he can to keep the program.

In response to Mr. Bernard, Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said the emails and notifications about the program was sent to everyone but not all read the information. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said the application materials were translated and a tri-lingual coordinator was available to answer questions from parents and help them through the application process. In response to another question from Mr. Bernard, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said teachers are assigned to a specific school and therefore if the program is moved to another school, and if there is a vacancy in the school, there could be discussions with the Malden Education Association (MEA) and teachers can apply.

Student Representative Hakkaoui questioned about the accessibility of the AEAP program. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said the goal is to have a program in every single school and classroom. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy continued to speak about the Honors program at the middle school grade levels. Mr. Weldai commented that the public reversal about the AEAP program allowed the opportunity for further review. Mr. Weldai expressed interest to know why the data is not showing what is expected from the program because at the moment, perception and reality do not match.

Mr. Gray volunteered to be a spokesman if there is a decision to keep and maintain the AEAP program. Ms. Rose-Zeiberg expressed concern that if the program was to be discontinued, some parents may enroll their children in other schools. Mayor Christenson expressed concerns over the data presented as well as constraints for expansion without knowing the financial implications. Mayor Christenson said that the honors program provides an option. Mayor Christenson requested the School Committee members take a closer look at this matter in anticipation of a decision being made at the March meeting.

Subcommittee Reports

1. Policy and Procedures Subcommittee – Ms. Spadafora

Ms. Spadafora said the subcommittee started the review of the transfer policy from school to school internally and tabled the matter to collect more information for the March meeting.

2. Superintendent Evaluation Ad-Hoc Subcommittee – Mr. McCarthy

Mr. McCarthy provided a slides presentation on the Superintendent evaluation. Mr. McCarthy said that the overall rating was proficient.

Motions and Resolutions

1. Superintendent Evaluation – Mr. McCarthy

Mr. McCarthy made a motion to approve the Superintendent evaluation. Ms. Rose-Zeiberg 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.

2. Accelerated and Enriched Academic Program (AEAP) – Ms. Spadafora

Ms. Spadafora made a motion to table this matter until the March meeting. Mr. Weldai seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Malden Public Schools Calendar 2023-2024 – Mr. Weldai

Mr. Weldai made a motion to approve the 2023-2024 calendar. Mr. Drummey seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Donation from Giannattasio Family Fund – Mr. Weldai

Mr. Weldai made a motion to approve the donation of \$500. Mr. McCarthy seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Resolution to Make Lunch and Breakfast Meals Free Permanently for Students – Mr. Bernard

Mr. Bernard explained the importance of this potential legislation. Ms. Spadafora requested the resolve for this matter. In response to Mr. Gray, Mr. Bernard said that there will be a cost to the taxpayer in the long-term but is hoping that there will be federal money in support of the matter. Mayor Christenson requested Mr. Bernard to find out how this initiative would be financed. Mr. Weldai voiced his support.

Mr. Bernard made the motion to table the matter to the next meeting. Mr. Drummey seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Personal Privilege

Executive Session

Mr. Bernard made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 8:48 p.m. Mr. McCarthy 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 9:25 p.m.

Ms. Spadafora made a motion to approve the SEIU Local 888 Clerical Unit contract for SY 2023, 2024 and 2025. 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.

Adjournment

Mr. Bernard made a motion to adjourn at 9:27 p.m. Mr. Drummey 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