

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION
OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Monday, January 9, 2023

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

Mayor Christenson called the meeting to order at 6:03 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:

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 invited Mr. Weldai 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 December 5th, 2022 Regular Session of the School Committee. Ms. Spadafora made the motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Bernard seconded and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Ms. Emmy Cerra, 39 Bowman Street, Malden

Ms. Cerra said that early last year when people heard that the Accelerated and Enriched Academic Program (AEAP) might be ending, parents, teachers and students banded together to find out why and how the program can be improved. Ms. Cerra said that it was a great moment when the School Committee were willing to pause and rescind the decision to end the program. Ms. Cerra continued that much was learned and many conversations around this matter took place since that time. Although Ms. Cerra said she would like to hear more about the proposed Honors program for middle school grades, it does not address the needs of the younger grades. Ms. Cerra said that the research study on improving acceleration conducted by the National Center for Research on Gifted Education last year provides an

opportunity to receive resources, policies and facilitators for the 2023-2024 school year. Ms. Cerra said that although she heard that the participation for the AEAP working group is waning, the people who were present last year at the School Committee meetings in support of the AEAP program are still around and willing to engage in this matter. Ms. Cerra said she is waiting to hear some solid recommendations as next year is approaching fast.

Mayor Christenson commented that no votes are anticipated at this meeting with regards to the program as it is more for informational purposes.

Mr. Isaac Slavitt, 14 Gellineau Street, Malden

Mr. Slavitt looked to explore some of the questions that the parents had regarding the AEAP program which includes draft plans for the fall prior to meetings, preparations made regardless of outcome, the format for the working group's final deliverables, to whom as well as when it will be presented, public involvement, past as well as future trainings for teachers, enrollment of lower grades, best practices, administrative responsibilities placed on parents for enrollment, and the general vision for meeting equity needs. Mr. Slavitt added that the School Committee had acknowledged that the needs exist and have to be served.

Superintendent's Report

1. Faces of Recovery

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy invited Malden Overcoming Addiction (MOA) President, Mr. Dana Brown to speak about a grant funded "Faces of Recovery" project. Mr. Brown said that the project was led by the Malden YWCA TASK group supported by MOA. TASK stands for "Teen Advocates Sharing Knowledge". "Faces of Recovery" are accounts of local residents who are in recovery from substance abuse disorder, who chose to tell their stories with the hope these accounts of their lives could help others. The Malden High School (MHS) students who participated in the project helped to tell these stories as well as create awareness and where youth can find help. Mr. McCarthy, Mr. Weldai, Ms. Spadafora, Mr. Gray, Mr. Bernard and Student Representative Hakkaoui commended the students for their work.

2. Malden High School Teen Health Center

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that this project has been in the works for many years and thanked Ms. Maria Luise from the Mayor's Office for making this a reality. Director of Athletics, Physical Education / Health, Mr. Charlie Conefrey, and Deputy Chief Community Officer at Cambridge Health Alliance, Ms. Roberta Turri Vise, provided more details about the Teen Health Center at MHS and the services offered free of charge to students.

In response to Mr. Weldai, Mr. Conefrey said that what would help is to make students aware about the center and the services provided. Ms. Turri Vise said feedback from the school about how things are going would be helpful as well. In response to Ms. Spadafora, Ms. Turri Vise said that the hours of operation are based on the other teen centers and the volume they see. Ms. Turri Vise added that the center can be especially helpful for new families that do not have a pediatrician yet. For students who need other evaluations, the Center refer them to outside experts.

In response to Mayor Christenson, Ms. Turri Vise said that the number of students served so far closely match the projections. Ms. Turri Vise said that students need to have a level of trust and comfort to utilize the services. As for the social worker and psychiatrist hours allocated, Ms. Turri Vise said that more hours would help as there is a high demand for these services from students. Ms. Turri Vise added that they have interpretation services for students who need it. Mayor Christenson said that there is a grant to help fund the Health Center but it did not cover mental health and oral health services. Mayor Christenson noted that since these services are so important for students, the district decided to fund this by themselves.

In response to Ms. Spadafora, Ms. Turri Vise said that vision services was not discussed previously but it is something that they can look explore. In response to Student Representative Hakkaoui, Ms. Vice Turrie said that the Health Center does provide free menstrual as well as contraceptive products. Ms. Turri Vise added that womens and sexual reproductive health education is provided through the community health educator who works with them. Mayor Christenson thanked the Cambridge Health Alliance for working together with the district.

3. District Updates and Highlights

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy provided updates about the district including the newsletter; the accreditation agency (New England Association of Schools and Colleges - NEASC) visit to MHS; Martin Luther King Jr. Day; Lunar New Year; Poetry Out Loud; and the District Restorative Practice and Equity Team.

Mayor Christenson called for a brief recess at 6:56 p.m. due to technical difficulties. The meeting resumed at 7:00 p.m.

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy continued to provide updates on district enrollment which was 6,435; staff licensure status updates as well as reminders and support; staff diversity; Malden Out of School Time (MOST) program enrollment; and vacant positions across the district.

Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Ms. Pam MacDonald provided a presentation on Special Education which included data for special needs and 504 enrollment over the last three years, MCAS Alt, graduation rate, Problem Resolution System (PRS) letters of finding from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and corrective action, in-house programs, staffing, preschool and the Assessment Center. Director of Literacy and Title I, Ms. Victoria Mulkern, Director of STEM K-5, Ms. Cara Hovhanessian, and Data Analyst, Dr. Pam Stazesky provided a summary of i-Ready and IXL.

4. Accelerated and Enriched Academic Program (AEAP) Update

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy provided the AEAP update. Assistant Superintendent for Diversity, Equity and Engagement, Ms. Laryssa Doherty, AEAP Coordinator, Ms. Erica Burrión, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Ms. Emilys Peña and Dr. Stazesky provided enrollment and performance data for the AEAP program.

In response to Mr. Gray, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that the data presented for the AEAP program was comparing the performance of each AEAP classroom with the students in the same grade level across the district. In response to Ms. Spadafora, Superintendent Noriega-

Murphy said that if a student misses school because of holidays that is not observed by the district, it is not an excused absence and that if they miss more than 10 days, they will be withdrawn from school. Ms. Spadafora said that she would discuss further with the Superintendent regarding religious or cultural observances.

In response to another question from Ms. Spadafora, Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said some students with special needs can be placed in a few different programs and proceeded to explain the different programs available. Ms. Spadafora commented that Malden Public Schools (MPS) has 21% of the student population on IEPs and asked about the state average. Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said the figure is about 18%. Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said the numbers have increased since the pandemic.

Ms. Rose-Zeiberg said she is a member of the AEAP working group and thanked everyone who spoke about the AEAP program. Ms. Rose-Zeiberg asked Mr. Slavitt to send the questions that was referenced earlier in the meeting to her.

In response to Mr. Bernard, Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said that although the number of out-of-district students fluctuate, the number has been holding steady around 70. Mr. Bernard also voiced that the performance of the AEAP students in Grade 7 was a little concerning.

In response to Mr. Weldai, Assistant Superintendent MacDonald explained the difference between sub-separate and partial inclusion. In response to another question, Assistant Superintendent MacDonald said that rebuilding the RISE and Autism programs at MHS as well as the language based program is the first step towards being able to provide services to other communities and generate income through tuition to help subsidize the cost of these programs for the district. In response to Mr. Gray, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that the AEAP data and recommendation will be presented at the next School Committee meeting.

Mayor Christenson commended all those involved with helping around 700 students at MHS who made the honor roll. Principal Mastrangelo said it was exceptional and it was a lot of hard work from students and support from staff as well as caregivers.

Subcommittee Reports

Motions and Resolutions

- 1. Superintendent's Evaluation – Ms. Macklin**

Ms. Macklin said that there has not been a vote for this matter. Ms. Macklin added that the subcommittee was supposed to meet to address the concerns raised during the September 2022 School Committee meeting but the subcommittee has not yet met. Mr. McCarthy said that the subcommittee has not yet met due to scheduling conflicts and that this matter should be tabled pending a review by the subcommittee. Mayor Christenson asked Mr. McCarthy to ensure that the matter will be ready for a vote during the February School Committee meeting. Ms. Spadafora commented that the delay was not caused by scheduling conflicts and subcommittee members should not be blamed.

Personal Privilege

Executive Session

Mr. Bernard made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 8:26 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 8:57 p.m.

Ms. Spadafora made the motion to extend the contract of the Supervisor of Attendance, Mr. John Parcellin from January 31, 2023 to February 24, 2023. Mr. Weldai 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. Drummey made a motion to adjourn at 8:58 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.



Shirley Dorai, Clerk