

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION
OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Monday, September 9, 2024
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:

Mayor Christenson	Present
Mr. Drummey	Present
Mr. McCarthy	Present
Ms. Spadafora	Present
Ms. Macklin	Present
Ms. Hortie	Present
Mr. Gray	Present
Mr. Bernard	Present
Ms. Rose-Zeiberg	Present
Superintendent Sippel	Present

Approval of Minutes

Mayor Christenson brought forth the matter of the adoption of minutes for the August 12th, 2024, Special Session of the School Committee. Mr. McCarthy made the motion to adopt the minutes. Ms. Rose-Zeiberg seconded, and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Elizabeth Tonogbanua, 33 Grace Street

Ms. Tonogbanua is a Beebe parent to two children, a 3rd grader, and a 6th grader. Ms. Tonogbanua said her children were excited to one day be able to take band class. Ms. Tonogbanua is also a part of the Beebe Site Council and was troubled that the Band class and Spanish Class were eliminated during the budget process. Ms. Tonogbanua, along with the Beebe Site Council members, requested the Spanish language class be converted to another language due to issues hiring a Spanish language teacher however, the position was eliminated after the previous superintendent made the agreement. Ms. Tonogbanua's hope is for the Spanish language class to be reinstated and follow the Ed Reform guidelines, to be provided data supporting the elimination of band, and for better communication when it comes to the elimination of classroom instruction.

Milo Moore, Beebe School Student

Milo Moore is a 5th grade student at the Beebe school. Milo believes the students at the Beebe school should vote on what world language should be provided at the Beebe school. Milo was looking forward to taking a language and is upset there are no longer exploratory options and that only theatre is provided.

Luciano Moore, Beebe School Student

Luciano is a 5th grade student at the Beebe school. Luciano was upset to hear there was no longer a Spanish language class and believes that the students at Beebe deserve to have a say in what language is taught at Beebe. Luciano also feels cornered to no longer have a choice to play an instrument due to the band class elimination. Luciano came to this meeting in the hopes that these classes would be reinstated.

Tiffany Ciccarelli-Moore, Beebe School Parent

Tiffani is a parent to two 5th graders and sits on the Beebe Site council. Tiffany is disappointed that both positions were eliminated especially, with lack of notification and transparency. Tiffany hopes that the new Superintendent will reconsider these decisions and bring band and Spanish language back to the Beebe school.

Deb Gesualdo, Malden Education Association President

Ms. Gesualdo was disappointed to hear of the elimination on band and Spanish language at the Beebe school. As a music educator Ms. Gesualdo believes all students should have the ability to take music, chorus, band, and foreign language as the younger our students have these opportunities, the more chance there is to obtain proficiency. Ms. Gesualdo also welcomed Superintendent Sippel on behalf of all rank-and-file MEA members and is excited to move the district forward for our students, community, and educators.

Amanda Linehan, 88 Blomerth Street

Ms. Linehan is the Ward 3 City Councilor as well as a parent to a Beebe school 6th grader. Ms. Linehan said she is attending tonight's meeting to amplify the voices of other Beebe parents, especially those that could not attend, in regard to the elimination of band and Spanish language at the Beebe school. Ms. Linehan is seeing answers as to why the eliminations were made and how can we rectify this issue to be able to bring back these classes. Ms. Linehan also acknowledges the hard work and dedication of our educators and principals during these difficult financial times. Ms. Linehan would like to hear a near term plan to bring band and Spanish back to Beebe and looks forward to working together to make that happen.

Lynn Walters Rekhi, 621 Highland Ave

Ms. Rekhi echoes everything said previously by the Beebe parents in regard to band and Spanish language classes. Ms. Rekhi is a parent of a 3rd grader at Beebe and would like to address the health curriculum in Malden. Ms. Rekhi believes the curriculum is outdated and is taught from an old perspective of the demonization of foods being good or bad rather, all foods have value. Ms. Rekhi hopes the new superintendent will take this to review and update the curriculum across all grades to we are teaching the most up to date curriculum.

Superintendent's Report

1. Introduction to New Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

Superintendent Sippel introduced and welcomed the new Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, Komal Bhasin, to the Malden Public Schools. Ms. Bhasin said she is honored and excited to be a part of this team and is deeply committed to the success of the students in Malden.

2. Opening of School Highlights

Superintendent Sippel began with highlights from the opening of schools in August. August 26th marked the first day of school for educators which was met with our MHS step team, the Chorus who sang the national anthem, along with other students a part of the welcome back celebration. Superintendent Sippel discussed the core values for the district which include “Include and Collaborate”, “Embrace Growth”, and “Do Right by All Kids”. August 28th was the first day of school for students in grades 1-12 were welcomed back to our schools. Superintendent Sippel was joined by Mayor Christensen, touring all the Malden Public Schools on the first day.

3. Entry Plan Update

Superintendent Sippel presented the entry plan he initially shared in July on the MPS website. Phase one has been completed and Superintendent Sippel has started phase two, which is “listening to learn” and phase three, “learning in action” and would like to visit all the classroom in Malden. Starting in November, phase four will begin where the Superintendent will analyze and share what he has learned thus far. Superintendent then presented a list of folks he has met with since he started on July 1st. Further, at his upcoming listening session as part of phase two, Superintendent Sippel will ask parents and caregivers to attend the Listening to Learn Town Hall meetings in September and October at each of our schools. In addition to the seven school meetings, there will also be a session with the Malden SEPAC and with educators. There may also be surveys to gather additional feedback.

4. Introduction of Superintendent Coach (Cynthia Paris)

Superintendent Sippel has the pleasure of being a part of a cohort of 21 new, first year superintendents in the New Superintendent Induction Program. Superintendent Sippel introduced Cynthia Paris, his coach in the program. Ms. Paris discussed the program and how it supports new superintendents over a three-year period. The program focuses on equity, community engagement, along with leadership feedback.

Mayor Christensen opened the floor to questions from the members. In response to Ms. Spadafora’s question regarding remote participation for the upcoming townhalls, Superintendent Sippel stated it may be possible and they would look into it. They are also working on offering in-person language translation.

Subcommittee Reports and Discussions

1. Policy and Procedure Subcommittee - Ms. Rose-Zeiberg

Ms. Rose-Zeiberg said there was a meeting on July 30th and August 29th to discuss changes that had been made in the Federal government to Title IX, along with looking at an enrollment policy for educators to enroll their children at the Early Learning Center. The Title IX discussion required 2 meetings as there were changes to the guidelines that were released on the same day as the initial, July 30th meeting that required Assistant Superintendent MacDonald and our legal counsel to review. The three policies reviewed and amended were the Title IX Grievance Procedures for Complaints and Sex Discrimination, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex, and Sexual and Sex Based Harassment and Retaliation. All three policies were voted out of the subcommittee favorably.

Motions and Resolutions

1. Title IX Policy Update - Ms. Rose-Zeiberg

Ms. Rose-Zeiberg made the motion to approve the 3 Title IX policies presented in the policy and procedure subcommittee report. Seconded by Ms. Macklin. Motion passed unanimously.

2. 2024/2025 School Year Calendar Amendment - Ms. Spadafora

Ms. Spadafora stated the graduation date for the class of 2025 was scheduled for the 2nd Sunday in June. Superintendent Sippel indicated this seems to be an error as traditionally, the graduation date is always the 1st Sunday in June. Ms. Spadafora made the motion to change the class of 2025 graduation date to June 1st, the 1st Sunday in June. Seconded by Mr. McCarthy. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Student Enrollment of School Department Personnel - Ms. Spadafora

Ms. Spadafora said the School Committee received a request from an educator who had recently moved out of Malden and was looking to keep their 2 children in the district as they had never gone to school anywhere else. Ms. Spadafora said there is a policy in place allowing educators to request their children attend Malden Public Schools if they do not live in Malden, as long as they meet all eligibility requirements of the policy. Further, Ms. Spadafora stated there is a hardship clause allowing the Superintendent to make the decision to allow for student transfers into the Malden Public Schools due to a substantial hardship. There was discussion surrounding the eligibility requirements and if this request met those, along with the nature of the request.

Ms. Hortie recommended that the Superintendent exercise the provision to interpret the request as falling under the substantial hardship clause. Mr. Gray seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey voted YES

Mr. McCarthy voted YES

Ms. Spadafora voted to ABSTAIN

Ms. Macklin voted YES

Ms. Hortie voted YES

Mr. Gray voted YES

Mr. Bernard voted YES

Ms. Rose-Zeiberg voted YES

Mayor Christenson voted YES

Motion passed 8 in favor; 1 abstain.

4. Donation from Malden Reads to Play Pro Production - Ms. Spadafora

Ms. Spadafora stated the Superintendent received a letter from Malden Reads stating during the 2023/2024 school year, Malden Reads hosted the "Mini Writers Den", a program for middle school students to hone their writing skills. Students are supervised by a Tufts University student and a Malden Reads educator and as part of the program, students met with experts in the genre they were exploring, and these experts were provided with a stipend for their time. The expert for the play writing session asked if they could forgo receiving a stipend and in turn, have Malden Reads donate it to the Malden High School Play Production.

Ms. Spadafora made the motion to accept a \$100 donation from Malden Reads to Malden High School Play Pro. Production. Seconded by Ms. Hortie. The motion passed unanimously.

Personal Privilege

Executive Session

Mr. Bernard made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 7:19 p.m. Mr. Drummey seconded. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey voted YES
Mr. McCarthy voted YES
Ms. Spadafora voted YES
Ms. Macklin voted YES
Ms. Hortie 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 8:14 p.m.

Mr. Drummey made a motion to appoint Ariana Langston as Clerk of the School Committee with a \$4,000 stipend effective September 9, 2024. Seconded by Mr. McCarthy. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey voted YES
Mr. McCarthy voted YES
Ms. Spadafora voted YES
Ms. Macklin voted YES
Ms. Hortie voted YES
Mr. Gray voted YES
Mr. Bernard voted YES
Ms. Rose-Zeiberg voted YES
Mayor Christenson voted YES
Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bernard made a motion to approve a 2% cost of living increase effective July 1, 2024 for the following non-union employees: Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Personnel Service; Business Manager; A/R Coordinator; Asst. Business Manager; Confidential HR Administration; Data Specialist; System Administrator/Manager; Admin Attendance Supervisor SYSWD; Communication Specialist/Building Monitor; Clerical PIC-Manager; Facilities Manager; Principal BE; Principal ELC; Principal; FE; Principal FO; Principal HS; Principal LI; Principal SA; Food service Operation Manager; After-school Coordinator; Asst. After-school Coordinator; Site Coordinators x3; CPPI Grant Administrator.

Seconded by Mr. Drummey. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey voted YES
Mr. McCarthy voted YES
Ms. Spadafora voted YES
Ms. Macklin voted YES
Ms. Hortie voted YES
Mr. Gray voted YES
Mr. Bernard voted YES
Ms. Rose-Zeiberg voted YES
Mayor Christenson voted YES
Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bernard made a motion to approve a onetime \$1,000 COVID stipend for the following non-union employees: Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Personnel Service; Business Manager; A/R Coordinator; Asst. Business Manager; Confidential HR Administration; Data Specialist; System Administrator/Manager; Admin Attendance Supervisor SYSWD; Communication Specialist/Building Monitor; Clerical PIC-Manager; Facilities Manager; Principal BE; Principal ELC; Principal; FE; Principal FO; Principal HS; Principal LI; Principal SA; Food service Operation Manager; After-school Coordinator; Asst. After-school Coordinator; Site Coordinators x3; CPPI Grant Administrator.

Seconded by Mr. Gray. A roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Drummey voted YES
Mr. McCarthy voted YES
Ms. Spadafora voted YES
Ms. Macklin voted YES
Ms. Hortie voted YES
Mr. Gray voted YES
Mr. Bernard voted YES
Ms. Rose-Zeiberg voted YES
Mayor Christenson voted YES
Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Ms. Spadafora made a motion to adjourn at 8:17. Ms. Macklin seconded, and it was so VOTED. Motion passed unanimously.