

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION
OF THE MALDEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Monday, June 12, 2023

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

Mayor Christenson called the meeting to order at 6:01 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
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 adoption of minutes for the May 1st, 2023 Regular Session of the School Committee. Mr. McCarthy made the motion to adopt the minutes. 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.

Docket rules was suspended with no objections to include the Malden High School (MHS) Baseball Team's presentation. Coach Freker said that the team is pleased with the season they have had and that

this is the first year he has coached the baseball team since 1985. Coach Freker said that the team is the youngest team in Massachusetts and that last year, they were the youngest team in the USA. The team presented Malden High School Baseball Team jackets to Mayor Christenson and Superintendent Noriega-Murphy as a token of their appreciation.

A brief recess was called at 6:14 p.m. The School Committee meeting resumed at 6:16 p.m.

Public Comment

Ms. Deb Gesualdo, Malden Education Association (MEA) President

Ms. Gesualdo announced that starting July 1st, she will also be a member of the National Education Association Board of Directors. Ms. Gesualdo said that in the wake of a strike in October 2022, 65 grievances were filed this school year with more than 30 grievances forwarded to arbitration. The grievances were filed for prohibited labor practices charges as well as increasingly unsafe working and learning conditions. Ms. Gesualdo commented that staff continue to exit the school district in a general experience of lack of respect for workers. MEA representatives sought follow-up for last year's last year's resolution of no confidence. Ms. Gesualdo said that some students as well as caregivers have approached them seeking follow-up. Through a combination of 1:1 conversation and a google form sent to members, the MEA did their own evaluation of the Superintendent and received responses from more than 60% of the members. The Superintendent and principals were rated using the same categories in the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary (DESE) rubric. Ms. Gesualdo continued that 86.4% of respondents which is 52% of the membership gave an overall rating of unsatisfactory or needs improvement; 2.4% of the respondents gave an overall rating of proficient; and 0.2% of the respondents gave an overall rating of exemplary. For comparison purposes, 13.4% of the membership provided an overall rating of unsatisfactory or needs improvement for principals. About 35% provided a rating of proficient or exemplary, 5% didn't respond for fear of retaliation among other reasons and 49 members didn't respond because they have not yet had a full year of experience with the principal. Ms. Gesualdo asked the School Committee to hold their top administrator accountable in the same manner any principal, teacher, education support professional, etc. would be because students and educators alike deserve better conditions.

Ms. Fern Remedi-Brown, 21 Ivy Road, Malden

Ms. Remedi-Brown spoke in favor of Superintendent Noriega-Murphy. Ms. Remedi-Brown said that Superintendent Noriega-Murphy addressed the license lapse in the district that existed during the tenure of the previous superintendent. Ms. Remedi-Brown continued that Superintendent Noriega-Murphy worked closely with the union to put forward initiatives to protect students with zero tolerance for bias, discrimination and bullying. Ms. Remedi-Brown said that Superintendent Noriega-Murphy is focused on progress which involves accountability and despite having to clean up a systemically and financially mess that she inherited, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy has had significant success in several areas. Ms. Remedi-Brown added that the School Committee members had received a list of Superintendent Noriega-Murphy's achievements at Malden Public Schools. Ms. Remedi-Brown continued that the union wants to have a vote of no confidence but initially they only had 40% of support and therefore they set up individual sessions with teachers, when a blind vote is protocol in unions. Ms. Remedi-Brown thanked the School Committee members for their efforts and all that was accomplished in the past 2 years with Superintendent Noriega-Murphy.

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

Ms. Eden Garhart-Smith said that there are issues at every meeting lately that is not healthy and makes her worried. Ms. Eden Garhart-Smith continued that there is a disconnect between teachers communicating about what is going on at the school and she brought up the example of birds in the Linden STEAM Academy that no one knew about. Ms. Eden Garhart-Smith added that she appreciates the Superintendent's School Committee Report slides with all the information available.

Superintendent's Report

1. Immigration Learning Center's Immigration Essay Contest Winner – Makeila Scott, MHS Junior

Ms. Spadafora said that Makeila Scott, a Malden High School (MHS) student who won the Immigration Learning Center Essay Contest could not be present at the meeting due to another engagement. Ms. Spadafora asked that her essay be put up on the website.

2. District Updates and Highlights

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy thanked everyone for their feedback and said that she is always open to constructive feedback in order to collaborate to improve the schools as well as relationships. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy provided updates on celebrations across the schools; acknowledgement of Principal Concannon's 10 years of service at Forestdale School as he is retiring in the summer, acknowledgement of Principal Macero's work at the Ferryway School for the last few months; acknowledgement of Assistant Superintendent Dr. Doherty's contributions for the past one year in this role; mission and vision; 409 graduates from the Class of 2023; school mascots; district-wide instructional focus and goals; Pilot Honors Pathways; achievement data for Kindergarten, i-Ready data, IXL data; continuing work on equity; licensure support for staff; billboard advertisements and emailing flyers for recruitment; district enrollment; last day of school is June 16; summer reading information; summer programs; credit recovery programs; superintendent's offices; new organization chart; and multi-tiered system of support (MTSS).

In response to Ms. Spadafora, Director of Literacy and Title I, Ms. Mulkern said the i-Ready data was for K-8 students in the same cohort from fall to spring. Ms. Spadafora inquired about the enrollment data which showed 1 PreK student at Beebe School. Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said that she would look into the matter. Ms. Spadafora mentioned that some parents were asking for updated calendars to indicate the snow days that have been taken and the last day of school. In response to Mayor Christenson, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said the students who did not participate in the IXL and i-Ready assessments were noted in the charts provided.

Subcommittee Reports

1. Budget Subcommittee – Mr. Weldai

Mr. Weldai said that the budget process involved multiple meetings and the public forum. Mr. Weldai thanked Director of Finance and Operations, Ms. Toni Mertz, Superintendent Noriega-Murphy and her team for working collaboratively on the budget. A balanced budget with a significant increase both from the City of Malden and the state through the Chapter 70 and Student Opportunity Act funding. Mr. Weldai said that there is direct investment in the

classroom, all full-time positions have been taken off from the grants and supported by the general fund.

2. Policy and Procedures Subcommittee – Ms. Spadafora

Ms. Spadafora said that the Policy and Procedures Subcommittee met on May 24 to review the 2023-2024 Harassment Policy, Student and Family Handbook PreK-12 and the Program of Studies PreK-12. Ms. Spadafora briefly explained what these documents address.

Motions and Resolutions

1. Malden Public Schools Budget 2023-2024 – Mr. Weldai

Mr. Bernard made a motion to adopt the 2023-2024 Malden Public Schools budget. Ms. Macklin 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.

Mayor Christenson mentioned that upon advice from the Attorney Greenspan, the vote for the budget needs to be taken up separately because some School Committee members have relatives in Units A, B and C.

Mr. Weldai made a motion to reconsider. 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.

Mr. Weldai made a motion to approve all Unit A line items in the 2023-2024 MPS Budget. Ms. Spadafora 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 ABSTAINED
Motion passed with 8 votes in favor and 1 abstention.

Mr. Weldai made a motion to approve all Unit C line items in the 2023-2024 MPS Budget. Ms. Spadafora seconded. A roll call vote was taken.
Mr. Drummey ABSTAINED
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 ABSTAINED
Motion passed with 8 votes in favor and 1 abstention.

Mr. Weldai made a motion to approve the rest of the line items in the 2023-2024 MPS Budget. Ms. Spadafora 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. Donations – Mr. Weldai

Mr. Weldai said that the School Committee voted on a \$500 donation from the Stoneham Bank to defray prom expenses for the Class of 2023 a few months ago. Mr. Weldai said that the check that they provided is for \$1,200 and therefore requires a vote to accept.

Ms. Spadafora made a motion to accept the donation of \$1,200. 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.

3. Harassment Policy – Ms. Spadafora

Ms. Spadafora asked if the Harassment Policy, Student and Family Handbook PreK-12 and the Program of Studies PreK-12 can be voted on together since they were taken up together for a vote at the subcommittee level. There were no objections to the request.

Mr. Bernard made a motion to approve the Harassment Policy, Student and Family Handbook PreK-12 and the Program of Studies PreK-12. 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.

4. Student and Family Handbook PreK-12 – Ms. Spadafora

This matter was already addressed.

5. Program of Studies PreK-12 – Ms. Spadafora

This matter was already addressed.

6. School Improvement Plans – Ms. Spadafora

Ms. Spadafora said that the school improvement plans require School Committee approval so that they can be implemented.

Mr. Weldai made a motion to adopt the school improvement plans. 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.

7. Student Enrollment of School Department Personnel – Ms. Spadafora

Ms. Spadafora said that Ms. Bragger, an Occupational Therapy Assistant who has been working for the Malden Public Schools (MPS) since 2019 has requested that her child be enrolled in Kindergarten at Forestdale next year. Ms. Spadafora continued that enrollment in a particular

school is based on seat availability. Ms. Spadafora added that the current policy allows up to 5 students to be enrolled and at the moment, there is 1 available space.

Ms. Spadafora made a motion to approve the request from Ms. Bragger to enroll her child in Kindergarten at the Malden Public Schools starting in the 2023-2024 school year. 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.

8. Substitute Nurses Compensation – Ms. Spadafora

Ms. Spadafora said that Director of Nursing, Ms. Patti Tramondozzi, requested that the compensation for substitute nurses be increased. The current rate is \$140/day which is 21/hour. Ms. Spadafora said that it is difficult to hire experienced staff with this rate. Staffing agencies charge upwards of \$455/day or \$65/hour. Surrounding school districts offer a higher rate compared to Malden.

Ms. Spadafora made a motion to refer this matter to the Budget Subcommittee. 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.

9. Calendar Review Ad-Hoc Subcommittee – Mr. Bernard

Mr. Bernard said that members of the community have expressed interest in having non-federal or state recognized holidays brought to the School Committee such as lunar new year and eid. Mr. Bernard said the matter needs to be reviewed.

Mr. Bernard made a motion to form a Calendar Review Ad-Hoc Subcommittee to look into this matter. 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.

Personal Privilege

Mr. Weldai announced that this was his final School Committee meeting as a School Committee elected member. Mr. Weldai added that earlier this year he had announced that he will not be seeking re-election for School Committee knowing he had given his all to the role and it was time to elevate a new voice into the conversation for the community's future. Mr. Weldai said that on a personal note, he was excited to see Elizabeth Hortie, an educator, throw her hat into the ring for Ward 5. Mr. Weldai continued that during the time he announced that he will not be seeking re-election, he mentioned that he will be looking into new ways to get involved and give back to the students. Mr. Weldai said that in May, after the School Committee meeting, he had submitted a letter of resignation to the City Clerk effective June 30, 2023, and after which he applied for a principal position at MPS for which he is going through the process. Mr. Weldai said that he is looking forward to seeing the school district becoming stronger and being a part of it. Mr. Weldai thanked everyone in Ward 5, the School Committee members and audience.

Executive Session

Mr. McCarthy made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 7:24 p.m. Ms. Spadafora 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 8:16 p.m.

Ms. Spadafora made a motion to approve the hiring of Ms. M. Ellen Kelleher-Rojas as Assistant Superintendent of English Learner Education contingent upon successful negotiations. 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.

Ms. Spadafora made a motion to increase Superintendent Noriega-Murphy's salary by 3% effective July 1, 2022. 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

Ms. Spadafora made a motion to adjourn at 8:19 p.m. in honor of Ward 5 School Committee Member, Mr. Weldai. Mr. Bernard 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