



REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

**Regular Meeting of the
Malden School Committee**

Monday, May 4, 2026

**Timothy Sippel, Ed.L.D.
Superintendent**

Core Values



**Include and
Collaborate**



**Embrace
Growth**



**Do Right By
ALL Kids**

***Alone each of us is strong...
and together we are much stronger!***



Agenda

- Draft Strategic Plan and Next Steps
- Competency Determination: Mastery Assessments

Goal 1: Development of Five-Year Strategic Plan (*District Improvement Goal*)



- **Presentation of Draft Strategic Plan**
 - Strategic priorities
 - Proposed measures to monitor implementation and progress
 - Key strategies and activities
- **Preview of Next Steps**
 - Community and stakeholder engagement
 - Revision of plan for approval

Goal 2: Implement District Strategy for Improvement (*Student Learning Goal*)



- **Lead implementation of the District's Strategy for Improvement** in literacy, math and science achievement.
- **Identify K–12 student academic performance metrics** (using multiple sources of assessment) for literacy, math, and science that will frame progress monitoring for the District Strategic Plan.

Goal 3: Special Education Program Review (District Improvement Goal)

Selected Populations (2024-25)	% of District	% of State
English Learners	30.2	13.9
First Language Not English	60.5	27.2
Students with Disabilities	18.8	20.6
Low Income	61.2	42.1
High Needs	75.4	55.8

- **Prepare plans for 2026–2027 program adjustments with related staffing and professional development...** to be informed by updated enrollment projections and input from collaborative visioning and planning process.
- *By the end of June 2026, include explicit goals and strategies for longer-term improvement of the Special Education program within the District Strategic Plan.*

Priority 1:

High expectations with support to meet diverse needs

Five-Year Vision:

Every student, including students with disabilities (SWD) and multilingual learners (ML), receives rigorous and inclusive instruction in every classroom, preparing them to meet or exceed grade level expectations and succeed in a wide-variety of postsecondary options.



Proposed Metrics

- Increased MCAS achievement in ELA, Math, and Science across grade levels
- Significant MCAS growth in ELA and Math in benchmark grades: 5, 8, and 10
- Significant MCAS growth for Students with Disabilities in ELA and Math in grades 4, 8, and 10
- Increased % of Multilingual Learners meet individual targets on ACCESS tests
- Significant growth in Grade 1 DIBELS results



Proposed Strategies

- Provide all students with access to core instruction using high quality curriculum and resources
- Ensure instruction is effective for all students in all classrooms
- Confirm all students have access to intervention and supports that meet their diverse needs
- Ensure all students with disabilities receive high-quality instruction
- Establish high-quality interim assessments and assessment strategies that allow us to regularly monitor and improve student achievement

Priority 1:

High expectations with support to meet diverse needs

Examples of Year 1 Activities

- ★ ★ • Continue to design student schedules so that students with disabilities and multilingual learners receive needed services without missing core instruction
- ★ ★ • Use Professional Development (PD) days and job-embedded professional learning time (“PD blocks”) to provide educators with training on evidence-based instructional strategies
- ★ ★ • Expand focus of instructional coaching to support the effective inclusion of students with disabilities and multilingual learners
- ★ • Evaluate intervention strategies across schools to ensure all students benefit from the most effective approaches
- ★ • Review and improve multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) processes across all schools
- ★ • Develop a coherent professional learning plan to strengthen instructional practices for inclusion and substantially separate settings

Key

- ★ Related to SY27 District Strategy for Improvement
- ★ Related to SY27 Special Education Program Adjustments

Priority 2: Fair access to opportunity

Five-Year Vision:

All Malden Public Schools systems, structures, and programs ensure that rich and varied learning opportunities are accessible to every student, regardless of which school they attend, so that each of them is prepared to pursue the broadest possible range of postsecondary options.



Proposed Metrics

- Increased % of high school graduates across all student groups will meet MassCore requirements with a minimum 3.0 GPA
- A substantially higher % of graduates across all student groups will matriculate to a two- or four-year college or university within 16 months of graduation
- K-8 students will have comparable language, performing arts, and sports opportunities across schools and student groups
- Reduce the disproportionality of student groups in advanced coursework and middle school honors pathway
- Establishment of plans for effective use of educational technology informed by stakeholder input



Proposed Strategies

- Continue to ensure that student advising processes for student course selection and post-secondary planning are equitable, consistent, and effective
- Create broader, equitable K-8 exploratory access to arts and languages
- Ensure that K-8 programming offers meaningful opportunities across content areas for students ready for more challenge
- Strengthen implementation of educational technology to ensure effective use across classrooms and grade levels
- Ensure grading and assessment practices support fair access to opportunity

Priority 2: Fair access to opportunity

Examples of Year 1 Activities

- Review engagement with families regarding course recommendation and selection processes across subject areas in middle school and high school
- Complete a review of current performing arts and world language offerings at each K-8 school, including staffing, frequency, duration, and student participation
- ★ • Research participation criteria and programming models from peer districts, with attention to equitable access (*related to providing challenging opportunities for all students*)
- Develop coherent guidance for the use of technology, including screen time, across grade levels
- Revise district policies and regulations to adequately address new technologies and respond to the recommendations of the 2025–2026 Artificial Intelligence (AI) & Learning Working Group

Key



Related to SY27 District Strategy for Improvement



Related to SY27 Special Education Program Adjustments

Priority 3: Deep Partnerships

Five-Year Vision:

Families, caregivers, and the community receive consistent, transparent communication, participate in authentic engagement opportunities, develop meaningful partnerships with schools, and ultimately feel increased levels of trust towards Malden Public Schools.



Proposed Metrics

- Increase % of caregivers who are satisfied with their student's school and the district as measured through caregiver surveys
- Increase % of students who self-report a sense of belonging at school
- Make progress towards chronic absenteeism targets established by DESE
- Increase % of students transitioning from grade 8 to grade 9 who remain in the Malden Public Schools
- Increase community understanding of preschool access options, including all CPPI partner schools in Malden



Proposed Strategies

- Ensure caregivers receive the information they need in ways that are predictable, effective, and understandable
- Build durable structures for authentic family engagement and two-way input in decision-making
- Engage families across schools to ensure students' successful transition to Malden High School
- Ensure school attendance teams use a targeted attendance strategy that includes educators and families
- Increase access to quality preschool education for all children in Malden while ensuring that district programs are both strong and sustainable

Priority 3: Deep Partnerships

Examples of Year 1 Activities

- ★• Develop standard post-engagement feedback surveys to capture how participants experienced events including IEP team meetings, educator/caregiver conferences, and other district events
- ★• Continue engagement with School Councils, District PTO, SEPAC, ELPAC, and other existing advisory bodies, and assess what additional structures might elevate voices not currently being heard
- ★• Partner with SEPAC and community members to strengthen parent leadership and support the achievement of students with disabilities
 - Identify more opportunities to welcome elementary and middle school students and families to events at Malden High
- ★• Review attendance improvement strategies from SY26 and update existing playbook to reflect these most effective strategies
 - Expand impact of Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) and identify opportunities to expand or deepen partnerships with community-based early learning providers

Key



Related to SY27 District Strategy for Improvement



Related to SY27 Special Education Program Adjustments

Priority 4: Strong, well-supported workforce

Five-Year Vision:

Malden Public Schools recruits, develops, and retains a diverse and talented team of educators and staff committed to a professional culture of growth, collaboration, and respect.



Proposed Metrics

- Improve teacher retention rates, including those for educators of color.
- Increase the percentage of teachers reporting that they receive valuable feedback on their practice.
- Increase the percentage of teachers reporting that professional development is helpful in improving their instructional practice.



Proposed Strategies

- Maintain competitive compensation and benefits
- Continue early, proactive recruitment and hiring each year, with a focus on hard-to-fill positions
- Provide high-quality, aligned professional learning tied to instructional priorities
- Strengthen routines related to non-evaluative and evaluative observations
- Strengthen induction and mentoring for new educators

Priority 4: Strong, well-supported workforce

Examples of Year 1 Activities

- Review recently negotiated contracts for peer districts to ensure compensation remains competitive and compelling
- Sustain the early recruitment timeline established in SY25, with initial postings being advertised no later than early March
- ★ • Continue developing professional development calendars at the district and school level aligned to district instructional priorities and school improvement plans
- ★ ★ • Continue the lesson study protocol with a focus on supporting diverse learners
- ★ • Identify gaps in current mentoring supports, particularly for teachers in hard-to-staff positions and for teachers from backgrounds historically underrepresented in the profession

Key



Related to SY27 District Strategy for Improvement



Related to SY27 Special Education Program Adjustments

Priority 5: Financial and Operational Sustainability

Five-Year Vision:

Malden Public Schools manages its resources strategically and transparently, invests in the infrastructure that supports high-quality teaching and learning, and builds the partnerships and revenue streams needed to sustain and strengthen the district over time.



Proposed Metrics

- Annual budgets have clear alignment with district priorities and meet state net school spending requirements.
- Decrease instances of unexpected facility issues requiring costly repairs.
- Increase effective use of available facility space.
- Development of additional revenue sources that strategically support district priorities



Proposed Strategies

- Align fiscally responsible budget decisions to strategic plan priorities
- Strengthen infrastructure related to educational technology including investment in hardware and software
- Align investments in facilities and infrastructure with strategic priorities
- Strengthen operational systems and efficiency
- Expand and diversify revenue opportunities through partnerships with the city, state, and philanthropic entities

Priority 5: Financial and Operational Sustainability

Examples of Year 1 Activities

- Publish an annual budget summary accessible to caregivers and community members in multiple languages
- Complete an assessment of staff and student devices and classroom technology needs
- ★ • Review strategic priorities to identify potential future facility and infrastructure investment needs
- Assess current allocations and identify opportunities for strategic shifting of funds in alignment with grant requirements
- ★ • Identify opportunities for additional grant funds aligned with strategic priorities
- Cultivate relationships with regional philanthropic organizations and identify one to two initial philanthropic partnership opportunities

Key



Related to SY27 District Strategy for Improvement



Related to SY27 Special Education Program Adjustments

Next Steps

Phase A: Internal and School Committee Feedback

Timing: Early–Mid May

Internal stakeholders including educators, administrators, and School Committee members, reviews and provides input on strategies relevant to their role.

Phase B: Community Gathering

Timing: Tuesday, May 19 6:00–7:30 p.m., Location to be announced soon!

All community members including caregivers, staff, and all other stakeholders, may jointly review and provide input on each of the strategic priorities described in the plan.

Phase C: Draft Refinement

Timing: Late May

The internal team will revise the strategic plan based on stakeholder feedback, prepare the final plan for School Committee presentation, and develop accompanying materials including a one-page summary and presentation materials. This phase aligns with the existing timeline in the district's strategic planning document.

Competency Determination: *Mastery*

- Definition of “Demonstrate Mastery”
- Assessment Development Process
- Timeline for Implementation
- Content Area Recommendations
- Accommodations
- Next Steps

Competency Determination

Definition of “Demonstrate Mastery”

Graduating Class	Demonstrate Mastery
Classes of 2026, 2027, 2028, and 2029	Passing score in coursework as defined for “Satisfactorily Complete Coursework”
Classes of 2030 and Beyond	Passing score on one of the following per previously identified course: • the final assessment for the course; or • a capstone or portfolio project; or • an equivalent measure identified in the district’s Competency Determination policy for each of the courses listed above (or equivalent coursework, the definition of which is described in subsequent sections of this policy).

Competency Determination

Key Milestones & Graduation Classes

	SY25-26	SY26-27	SY27-28
Key Milestones	Course passing = mastery	Course passing = mastery Pilot Assessments in Grade 10	Mastery Assessments Fully Operational for Grade 10

Grade*	SY25-26	SY26-27	SY27-28
Grade 12	Class of 2026	Class of 2027	Class of 2028
Grade 11	Class of 2027	Class of 2028	Class of 2029
Grade 10	Class of 2028	Class of 2029	Class of 2030

*Science Mastery Assessments may be given in a different grade depending on student course selection

Assessment Development Process

Educators Developed Criteria for Success

Criteria For Success	
Must Have	Nice to Have
• Alignment to the required skills, competencies, and knowledge by content area, as specified in DESE guidelines. • Learning & Assessment alignment: The assessment is closely aligned to the curricular activities and tasks that students experience in learning • Scoring system that is consistent across educators for the same course • Include at least some educator scored component (i.e. a constructed response, an essay, a performative component, a lab) • Implementable (i.e. not overly cumbersome) • Accommodated versions available	• Ideally includes <u>more than one</u> measure (avoid high stakes and single test determination) • Assesses more than one domain (Reading, Writing, Speaking, and/or Listening) • Designed for 60-90 minutes

Revision Opportunities

Consideration of options

- Consider Pros, Cons, Mitigation Options for possible assessment types

Department input

- Garnered input and concerns from the rest of department

Peer feedback

- Directors and content lead provided input on draft materials

Proposed Assessments by Content Area

Content Area	Assessment Type
English Language Arts	Portfolio and a timed reflection essay
Math	Mid-term and final exams in Math I and Math II
Science	End of course exam
U.S. History	Document based quarterly writing tasks combined with midterm and final exams assessing taught historical content.

Accommodations

Assessments of Mastery will follow the established MHS procedure for providing accommodations for assessments:

- Accommodations will be student-specific based on an IEP or level of language-acquisition
- Students with disabilities will only have their testing accommodations apply to testing within the student academic areas impacted by the student’s disability. Multilingual learners will receive their student-specific accommodations in all subject areas.
- In an inclusion class, the general educator and the special educator are jointly responsible for testing accommodations and modifications.
- Each student on an IEP is assigned to a special education liaison. If there are any questions about a student please reach out to the student’s special education liaison.

Accommodations*		Modifications *	
Universal*	Designated Features	Accessibility Features	Special Access
☐ Highlighter ☐ Notepad ☐ Redirect attention to the test	☐ Noise buffer ☐ Separate test location ☐ Frequent breaks	☐ Track test items ☐ Text to speech (Math, STE, Civics) ☐ Approved Graphic Organizer	☐ Text to speech ELA ☐ Human Read-aloud for ELA ☐ Calculator for Math (noncalc sessions)

**This is a sampling of possible accommodations and modifications, not an exhaustive list.*

Next Steps

- Finalize assessments
- Develop structure for common scoring across educators within a content area
- Create rubrics, exemplars, etc for educators
- Roll out with all educators
- Communicate with families of class of 2029 about next year's pilot
- Communicate with families of class of 2030

Thank you!