



Office of the Superintendent

Timothy Sippel, Ed.L.D., Superintendent of Schools
Ariana Langston, Executive Assistant and Clerk to the School Committee
110 Pleasant Street, 3rd Floor
Malden, MA 02148

tsippel@malDENps.org
alangston@malDENps.org
Phone: 781-397-6100
www.maldENps.org

To: School Committee
From: Superintendent Timothy Sippel
Date: 2/26/2026
Re: Recommendation to Close PreK-8th Grade Schools for March 31 Special Election

Greetings, Mayor Christenson and Members of the School Committee. I am recommending a change to the current school calendar that would close six (6) schools that will be used as polling places for the Special Election on Tuesday, March 31, 2026. Please find below the background and rationale for this recommendation.

Background

The Malden City Council has scheduled a Special Election for a public vote on Proposition 2 1/2 override ballot questions on Tuesday, March 31, which is a date we are scheduled to have school. Since the official scheduling of the election, I have been consulting with the School Committee Chair and Vice Chair, our school principals, district administrators, the MEA President, and the Malden Police Department as I have assessed whether we can safely operate schools that day. The schools impacted by the election are listed in the table below, including the number of precincts and the locations on each campus that are to be used as polling places.

School*	Number of Precincts	Locations of Polling Places
Beebe	Four (3-1, 3-1A, 3-3, 3-4)	K-4 Gymnasium; Music Room
ELC	Two (4-1, 4-3)	Gymnasium
Ferryway	Four (1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 7-1)	Cafeteria; Lobby area outside library
Forestdale	Three (5-2, 5, 3, 5-3A)	Cafeteria
Linden	Three (8-1, 8-2, 8-3)	Cafeteria
Salemwood	One (5-1)	Cafeteria (for Grades 5-8)

**Note: Malden High School is not designated as a polling place for this election.*

School Committee Policy EBCD “Emergency Closings” authorizes the Superintendent to close schools due to an “actual occurrence or imminent possibility of any emergency condition that would make the operation of schools difficult or dangerous.” However, the Massachusetts

Association of School Committees (MASC) has advised that a Special Election may not meet the definition of an “emergency condition.”

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has separately advised that the district may close schools for the Special Election provided the day be rescheduled for later in the year as it would for an emergency closure.

Rationale

I have visited all six schools and walked spaces with principals to assess the impact of conducting the election while school is in session. I have followed up with additional in-person site visits alongside officials from the Malden Police Department to examine safety concerns.

Fundamentally, I cannot assure the School Committee and our community that students and staff across the affected schools would be as safe during an election day as they would on a regular school day. The legal requirement to keep school doors unlocked and accessible to the public throughout the election day creates a significant safety concern.

In several schools (Beebe, Ferryway, Forestdale, and Linden) main offices are located in lobby areas through which the public would enter and exit the buildings to reach their respective polling places. Students and staff also enter and exit through these spaces and need to access the main offices throughout the day. While additional police would be assigned to monitor these lobby areas, the absolute safety of the schools cannot be guaranteed. These concerns are mitigated at the Early Learning Center and Salemwood as the public can access the polling places without needing to enter the school’s main lobbies. Nonetheless, members of the public would potentially interact with our students in ways that might compromise their safety.

The logistics of operating school in most of our buildings would also be extremely challenging, especially in those schools that would need to shift breakfast, lunch, and other operations from their cafeterias to alternate locations such as gymnasiums. While these logistical challenges could be overcome for the day, the overriding security concerns lead me to recommend the closing of schools that have been designated as polling places for the day.

Proposed calendars for adoption are attached. Upon School Committee approval of this recommendation, I would seek a DESE waiver for Salemwood to not be required to make up the sixth day of instruction it lost in October due to closure for a power outage. This would allow all PreK-8 schools to end on Tuesday, June 23. The high school is not affected by this recommendation and would have its last day of school on Monday, June 22 (assuming no additional emergency closures are required for snow).

Thank you for your consideration of this recommendation.

Attachment: [Proposed PreK-8 School Calendars \(4 snow days + Special Election\)](#)

MALDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS – PreK–8 2025–2026 CALENDAR

4 Snow Days + ElectionDay

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL (Grades 1-12): August 27 FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL (PreK & K): September 4 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL W/5 SNOW DAYS: June 23

AUGUST 2025 (2 DAYS)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	25*	26*	27	28	29	30

8/25: First Day for All Staff - No School for Students
8/26: Prof Dev Day - All Grades - No School for Students
8/27: First Day of School Grades 1-12
8/28: Kindergarten Orientation/Screening
8/29: No School - All Grades

SEPTEMBER 2025 (21 DAYS)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

9/1: No School - Labor Day
9/2: Classes Resume
9/2 & 9/3: Kindergarten Orientation/Screening
9/4: First day of School for PreK and Kindergarten

OCTOBER 2025 (22 DAYS)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

10/13: No School - Indigenous People's Day

NOVEMBER 2025 (15 DAYS)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
2	3	4*	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

11/4: Prof Dev Day - All Grades - No School for Students
11/11: No School - Veterans Day
11/26-28: No School - Thanksgiving Break

DECEMBER 2025 (17 DAYS)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

12/23: 11:00 a.m. Dismissal for Students and Staff
12/24-1/2: No School - Winter Break

JANUARY 2026 (18 DAYS)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12*	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

1/1-1/2: No School - Winter Break
1/5: Classes Resume
1/12: Prof Dev Day - All Grades - No School for Students
1/19: No School - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
1/26-1/27: Snow Days

FEBRUARY 2026 (15 DAYS)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

2/16-20: No School - February Break
2/23-2/24: Snow Days

MARCH 2026 (22 DAYS)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

3/31: No School Grades PreK-8 - Special Election

APRIL 2026 (17 DAYS)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

4/3: 11:00 a.m. Dismissal for Students and Staff
4/20-24 No School - April Break

MAY 2026 (20 DAYS)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

5/25: No School - Memorial Day
5/28: Last Day of Classes for Graduating Seniors

JUNE 2026 (11 DAYS)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23				

6/7: Malden High School Graduation
6/19: No School - Juneteenth
6/23: Last day of school w/ 5 snow days (185 Days) - 11:00 a.m. Dismissal for Students and Staff

Extenuating circumstances and/or inclement weather may necessitate changes to the calendar during the year. Visit Maldenps.org/calendar for current information.

Malden Public Schools proudly serves a multi-cultural and religiously diverse community. Although the schools are open, excused absence is available in observance of religious holidays. Students who miss school work because of an excused absence will be given time to complete assignments/tests by the educator.

5 Snow Days + ElectionDay

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL W/5 SNOW DAYS: June 23

OCTOBER 2025 (22 DAYS)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

10/13: No School - Indigenous People's Day
10/15: Unexpected Closure, No School - Power Outage

JANUARY 2026 (18 DAYS)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12*	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

1/1-1/2: No School - Winter Break
1/5: Classes Resume
1/12: Prof Dev Day - All Grades - No School for Students
1/19: No School - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
1/26-1/27: Snow Days

APRIL 2026 (17 DAYS)						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

4/3: 11:00 a.m. Dismissal for Students and Staff
4/20-24 No School - April Break

Extenuating circumstances and/or inclement weather may necessitate changes to the calendar during the year. Visit [Maldenps.org/calendar](https://www.maldenps.org/calendar) for current information.

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11:00 a.m. Dismissal for Students and Staff

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Assumes Waiver for one day