

# THE MALDEN EDUCATOR

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## Super smiles



Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joan Connolly and Malden High students Michael Lee, left, and Ronald Do have plenty to smile about: the opening of school and this, the inaugural edition of *The Malden Educator*, a publication dedicated to providing an inside look at the people and programs that comprise Malden Public Schools. Mayor Richard C. Howard and Dr. Connolly introduce readers to *The Educator*: Page 2.

PHOTO: REBA SALDANHA

## Road from Malden leads to Harvard

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Walking through the historic gates of Harvard University this fall, Malden High School alumni Jonathan Brito and Jessica Chan embraced what will be their new home for the next four years.

Brito and Chan, 2006 salutatorian and class essayist of Malden High, respectively, are two of the 2,109 students admitted to Harvard from an applicant pool of 22,753 this year.

"I never even intended to apply to Harvard," said Chan, who was also accepted at Williams College and University of California, Berkeley. "I was so surprised and excited when I got in."

As the first generation in their families to pursue higher education in the U.S., Brito and Chan have accomplished the American dream. Brito's parents, John and Eva, were born, raised and educated in Cape Verde. Chan's parents,

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## FAME helps schools fly high

BY RICH FAHEY

Sometimes, there are gaps or cracks in a school system that a school budget either isn't designed for or capable of filling. In Malden, that's where FAME steps in.

The Foundation for the Advancement of Malden Education, Inc. is a registered nonprofit organization which

supports Malden Public Schools in a variety of ways. It raises funds through tax-deductible donations from alumni, the community, businesses, organizations, educators and those interested in Malden Public Schools.

FAME works to enhance current programs, not fund them. It is not designed to replace city tax dollars as a

means for funding the public schools. Foundation funds are used to subsidize the following educational activities:

- ◆ professional-development opportunities
- ◆ establishing a Performing Arts Center
- ◆ funding an Early Learning Center

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## Big idea: small schools

Linden now separate elementary and middle schools

BY RICH FAHEY

Sometimes, smaller is better.

The Linden School is unlike its sister K-8 schools in Malden, which each has one principal and an assistant principal. The Linden School is actually two schools: the Linden Elementary School, with grades K-4, and the Linden Middle School, grades 5-

8, each with its own principal: Diane Buttimer at Linden Elementary, and Camille Colantuoni at Linden Middle.

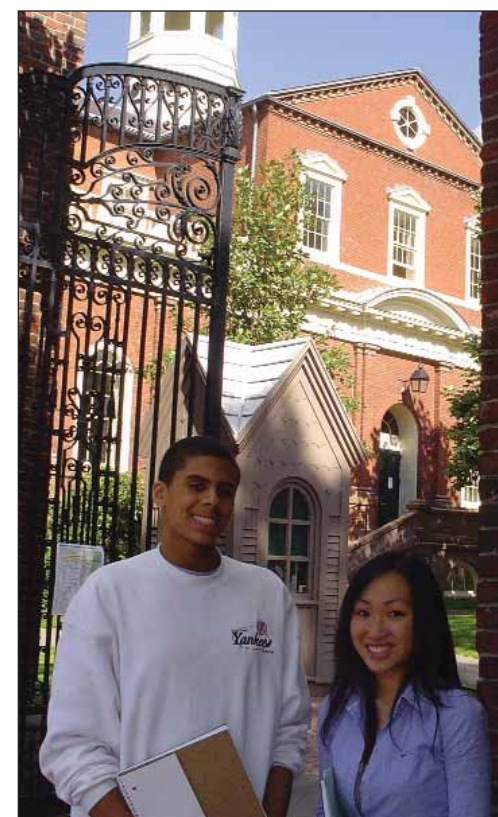
The Linden is a member of the New England Small Schools Network (NESSN), funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. As a member of the NESSN, the Linden worked with the Center for

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Joshua Loveridge, right, a third-grader, helps reading buddy Bassie Jabri, a kindergartner at Linden.

PHOTO: REBA SALDANHA



Malden High alumni Jonathan Brito and Jessica Chan are freshmen at Harvard.

PHOTO: MEAGHAN CASEY

IN MALDEN, STUDENTS START EARLY AND STAY LATE: Pages 4-5



# Schools benefit from ‘unprecedented investment’



**RICHARD C. HOWARD**

On behalf of all Malden public officials, I am glad to take this opportunity to provide the Malden school community, present and past, with news of the great strides being made by Malden Public Schools.

Over the past decade, officials from all levels of government — federal, state and local — have joined together to make an unprecedented investment in our school system and other recreational facilities that support our athletic programs in the schools.

Five new K-8 elementary schools are framed by a model early learning center for 3- and 4-

## From the Mayor

year-olds and the soon-to-be-renovated Malden High School.

State-of-the-art field space combined with cooperative efforts to bring ice skating and crew facilities to Malden round our effort to bring the best opportunities to our children both inside and outside the classrooms.

Simultaneous to our efforts to rebuild our facilities, administrators, principals, teachers and support staff have taken on the daily work of providing a nurturing and stimulating environment for more than 6,300 students and their programs. Beginning with the realignment of grade sequencing from the elementary-junior high school model to a more traditional K-8

alignment, Malden Public Schools has taken on a number of new initiatives to improve student performance.

Gifted-and-talented programs, language immersion, environmental themes, technology-enhanced learning and extended-day opportunities, along with partnerships with companies and colleges, are examples of curriculum changes that enhance students' learning experiences in our schools.

Most impressively, Malden High School, which in 2007 celebrates 150 years as an exemplary secondary public education institution, has successfully embarked upon a small-schools concept allowing its students to work closely with the same staff and administrators for the duration of their high-school careers.

To make sure our children receive every opportunity possible in the array of new facilities, the community has been successful in attracting grants and contributions to allow for enriching after-school, weekend and summer learning and recreational programs. All this is intended to assure Malden residents and others that we are driven to have our children achieve at high levels regardless of the standards of measurement — standardized testing, lower dropout rate, college entrance or perhaps, more appropriately, happiness and fulfillment in life and career.

Please take a moment to review the exciting news in *The Malden Educator* and, if possible, find a way to help us continue our efforts to bring the best educational opportunities to our school children and their families. Thank you.

# Plenty of good news to go around in Malden schools



**DR. JOAN CONNOLLY**

We welcomed all of our staff back to school on Aug. 28, and students started the next day. This was our first year starting a week before Labor Day and this will be our practice from now on.

We have approximately 75 new teachers and administrators. It is remarkable that many of our senior teachers have been in our system for more than 30 years. This is a tribute to their dedication to Malden students. I watched with great respect and admiration as each of them stood to be

## From the Superintendent

introduced to our school community. They are wonderful role models to our newest staff members.

We have a lot to be proud of and thankful for in Malden Public Schools. We have hard-working, highly professional staff members who have dedicated their teaching careers to our students. We have beautiful facilities in which to work. We are one of the communities whose Chapter 70 aid to public education increased significantly this year. We serve one of the most diverse groups of students in the state, who

represent the future of our society. We have elected officials in Malden who understand the hard work that we do and provide us with the resources we need.

Last year we introduced a Malden Parent/Guardian Commitment Compact. This is a contract that we are asking every child's parent or guardian to sign. It signals the important role people at home play in the education of the child. By signing the compact the parent or guardian agrees to contact the school with questions, read all school notices and attend as many meetings and events as possible, discuss what happened at school each night, and be a true partner in the education of the child. In the Malden Public

Schools we place a high value on the role of parents and hope that this contract will strengthen the bond between school and home.

We work with numerous partners who support our teachers in their ongoing training, including: Tufts University, Antioch College, Lesley University, Tri-Tech and Teachers 21. Staff members from these organizations understand the challenges of our work and work intensely with us in areas of staff development, coaching and planning.

We proceed in this school year with renewed enthusiasm, dedication and passion for teaching and learning.

**THE MALDEN EDUCATOR**  
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Richard C. Howard, Mayor

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# Malden welcomes five new administrators

BY RICH FAHEY

Meet the new members of the team.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joan Connolly welcomed five new administrators, each with her special area of knowledge, this school year.

**Dr. Jo Sullivan**, is the new assistant superintendent for curriculum, instruction and assessment. She comes to Malden from Cambridge, where, for four years, she was executive director of curriculum for Grades K-12. Before that, she was in Salem, including a stint as the principal of the Nathaniel Bowditch School.

A resident of Lynn, she is a graduate of Bishop Fenwick High in Peabody. She has a master's and doctorate from Boston University in African History. She has also taught at BU's African Studies Center.

Watertown native and Malden resident **Nancy Kassabian** is the new assistant superintendent in charge of teacher quality and professional development. She holds a master's degree in education from Tufts University, where she also lectures part-time.

**Dr. Margaret Adams** is the new director of literacy and Title I, overseeing Title I programs in



Joining the leadership team in Malden this year were, from left, Title I Director Dr. Margaret Adams, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Jo Sullivan, Forestdale School Principal Sally Orme, Assistant Superintendent Nancy Kassabian, and ELL/PIC Director Margaret Serpa.

four elementary schools and supporting initiatives in literacy at the K-8 level. Adams holds a doctoral degree in educational leadership, and two master's degrees in administration and special education.

**Sally R. Orme**, the new principal of the Forestdale School, has taught preschool in Guatemala, elementary science, bilingual kindergarten, and middle-school math. Orme has also been a VISTA volunteer, an early literacy specialist, and a trainer/consultant in conflict resolution and children's literature. For the past 10 years, she was at Cambridge's two-way immersion

school, Amigos. She has a master's in reading from Lesley College.

**Margaret Serpa** is director of the English Language Learners (ELL) program and the Parent Information Center. A native of the Azores island chain in Portugal, she came to the U.S. as a child and entered the Cambridge schools.

Serpa, an adjunct professor at Lesley College, has been working in education for more than 25 years as an administrator, teacher and social worker. She earned a master's degree from Boston State College.

# Language is a two-way street at Forestdale

BY RICH FAHEY

New Forestdale School Principal Sally Orme playfully touts one of the benefits of her school's two-way bilingual program, called Puentes (Bridges).

"Now you can talk to someone else without your parents knowing what you're talking about," said Orme.

Orme came to the Forestdale from the Amigos program in Cambridge, where she taught math in that school's two-way bilingual program.

The Forestdale School's theme is international studies, and the Puentes program fits closely within that theme. Each class is self-contained, headed by a bilingual teacher, who conducts classes in math, social studies and science in Spanish, and reading and language arts in English.

"We wanted it to be as close to 50/50 as possible," said Orme.

Puentes is a program that demands some patience from all involved, she said. Early on, as students work to capture some of the nuances of their new language, bits of content can be lost. The reward comes later.

"Studies have shown they may run behind their peers for the first few years but by the fourth or fifth grades, they have caught up or may go ahead," she said.

"Parental support is a key," Orme added. "It may take more work on their part in the early years."

Meanwhile, the native English speakers are learning from the native Spanish speakers, and vice versa. Because the English-speaking students are learning Spanish from native speakers, their accent is better. Their efforts are supported by a language laboratory.

The goal of the program is to have



Carla Mejia, left, and Mercedes Trigueros work together during a bilingual class at Forestdale School under the watchful eyes of principal Sally Orme.

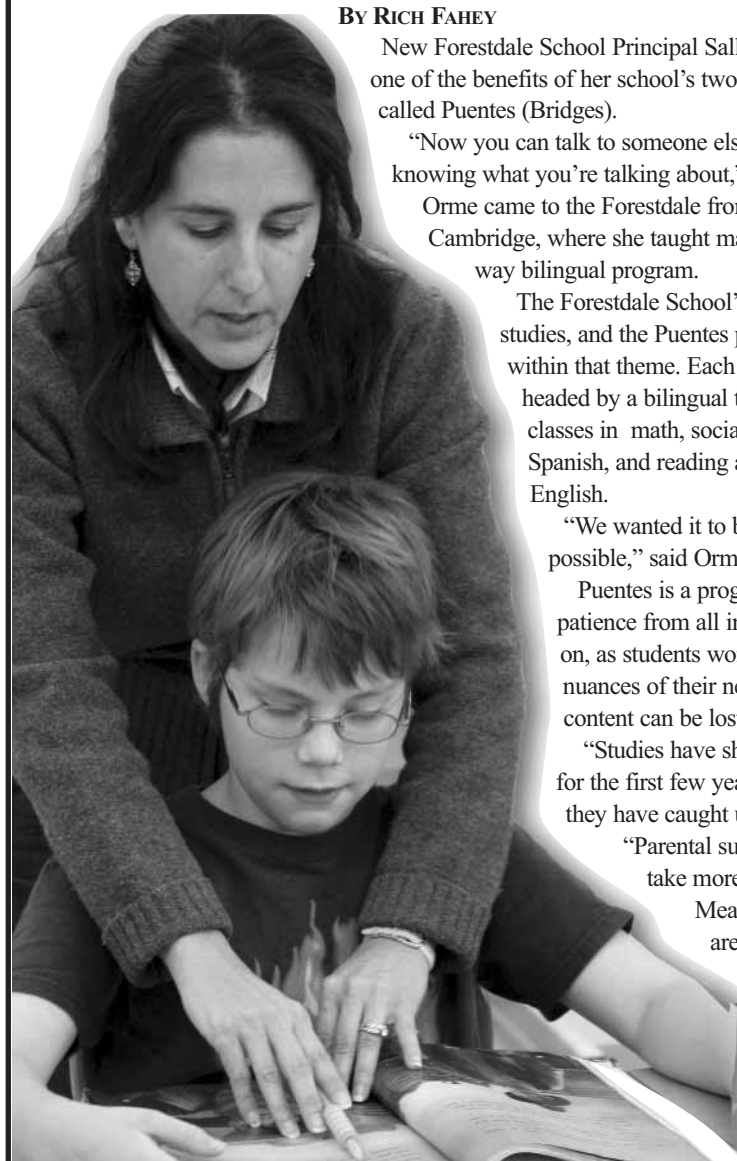
50 percent of the students who speak Spanish as their first language — better known as ELL, or English Language Learners — and 50 percent who speak English as their first language.

"Ideally, we'd like more native Spanish speakers," Orme said, adding the new program is distinct and very different from the old ESL educational model.

Approximately 25 percent of the school's 550 students are involved. Most enter in kindergarten, some in first grade. Transfers after that time will only be done if a student is already fluent in Spanish. Right now, the program covers K-6. Each year, it expands upward a grade.

A side benefit of the Puentes program is that students can take AP classes when they get to high school, receiving college credit as early as their sophomore or junior year. They can then go on to master another language in high school.

By proving their literacy in Spanish — the ability not only to speak a language, but read it and write — they may also be eligible to work part-time as a medical translator or in another job requiring bilingual skills.



Bilingual teacher Inmaculada Peters works with second-grade student Jacob Herre.

## Even Start gives immigrant families a fair chance

BY AMANDA WEBER

In Massachusetts, more than two million adults do not have functional English literacy skills or the basic abilities expected of a high school graduate.

Since September of 2002, Malden Public Schools has been doing its best to take care of this problem through the Ferryway School Family Literacy Even Start Program. With the support of Superintendent Dr. Joan Connolly, Ferryway School Principal Tom DeVito, and co-coordinator Patricia Fish, who has been running the initiative for the last five years, the program has been a success.

The Ferryway School program is just one of 22 federally-funded Even Start locations in Massachusetts offering comprehensive literacy support for families with children in the 0-7 age range. Programs provide integrated instructional services for families, where children and their parents learn together.

The Ferryway School program specifically focuses on five areas; teaching English to parents on three levels; parent education workshops geared towards teaching about the school and community; early childhood education which includes after-school literacy-based enrichment programs for children; an interactive literacy component requiring parents and children to work together each week in various ways; and monthly home visits where program staff bring free literacy materials, leave a book each month and work with parents and children on crafts and other projects. Other services are also provided including providing warm clothing if there is a need, helping and connecting with higher education and job opportunities.

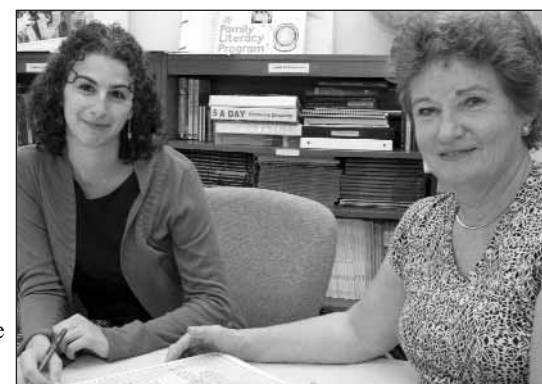
The program also sponsors author visits, school literacy nights, a pre-GED class and a computer class for adults. Eligible families include those with a child in K-3 grade at the

Ferryway, and in 2004 the grant was extended to serve Beebe School's immigrant population as well. The program directly serves more than 30 families each year and many more in other capacities.

"I've been in the education business for 25 years, 20 of them in the Malden Public Schools, and Even Start is one of the most successful programs that I've seen," said Fish, who spent 16 years teaching fifth-grade in Malden. In 2002, she decided to take a break from her usual classroom instruction to focus her efforts exclusively on increasing literacy for families and children as the Even Start co-coordinator.

Fish says the program has been very successful as a result of staff support. "Dr. Connolly has been a supporter of the program since the beginning and certainly understands the importance of what we do," said Fish.

"Imagine that you are an immigrant and just



Beth Kershner, left, and Pat Fish are coordinators of the Even Start program.

learning the English language. You are trying to navigate the schools, job market, housing, insurance, phone conversations, getting a driver's license, etc.," said Fish. "We have had a few families that have come to us with a note with their name and address and then the words 'Can you help me?'"



# Malden students start early and stay late

## Early Learning Center offers head start

By Rich Fahey

The Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC) on Mountain Avenue gives Malden something very few communities have: a state-of-the-art facility that allows all of the city's three and four-year olds access to a structured learning environment at a young age.

Studies are showing that waiting until kindergarten to begin structured learning is often too late for some children. The ECLC is a self-sustaining entity open to all children in the area who pay tuition, and tuition-free to Malden special-needs students who have been tested and accepted as part of their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Staff salaries are paid through tuition, grants, or the special education department of the school budget. The tuition for children age 3 and 4 is \$16 for a half-day, \$37 for a full day. There are subsidies available for low-income families under a grant provided by the Community Partnerships For Children program.

The building, a former elementary school, sparkles with bright colors and children's artwork. Director Anne O'Connell-Hanifan has been at the center, now in its fourth year, since it opened. The building houses 310 children, 280 3- and 4-year-olds and 30 other children in two kindergartens that house both regular-education and special-education students with moderate disabilities. Classes are capped at 15 children and each class has a teacher and at least one paraprofessional.

"Integration is our theme here," said O'Connell-Hanifan. "Special-needs students are integrated into every class with the exception of three classes with children with more severe disabilities, and they are also integrated whenever possible."

The emphasis is on building cognitive

development and motor skills, which students will use when they begin the more structured work of kindergarten. "We hope they become interested and curious and get that desire to learn that they can take with them to kindergarten," said O'Connell-Hanifan.

The center has lunch facilities, and there is a rest time after lunch for the full-day students. There are indoor and outdoor play areas and a fully-equipped gym so children "can let some steam off," said O'Connell-

Hanifan.

All teachers are certified, have at least a master's degree, and are members of the Malden Public Schools staff. The staff includes a nurse, 2.5 speech-language pathologists, an occupational therapist, a physical therapist, an early childhood social worker, an adaptive physical education teacher, a school psychologist, a vision specialist and two parent trainers.

Because of the ECLC, a child can begin his journey through the Malden Public Schools at age 3, proceed to one of the five K-8 schools, and then on to the high school.



From left, Daniel Gilligan, Ashley Stelmach, and Eric Kisich listen quietly during early education preschool at the Early Childhood Learning Center.



Left photo, Arujun Surenthra, left, and Daniel Toothaker enjoy playtime at the Early Childhood Learning Center; middle, Dempsey Toothaker, right, and Sophia Gosselin-Smoske play peek-a-boo; right photo, Yafiet Weldai takes a ride during playtime.



Left photo, kindergartners David Perez, left, and Jeremiah Oquendo-Loftman shake hands during morning activities at Salemwood School; middle, Tamires Carvalho, in red, and Ivy Bui take the Presidential Fitness Test; right photo, second-grade music students Thaila DaSilva, left, and Skylar DeAngelo strike a good note.



## Salemwood one of 10 schools in state to experiment with longer day

By Rich Fahey

For this school year, the Salemwood School has been turned into a giant laboratory, as the school is one of only 10 statewide to have been chosen to implement a school day extended by about 30 percent.

The state-funded \$6.5 million Expanded Learning Time program is adding between 1¼ and three hours of instruction and enrichment programs daily for all students in selected schools in Boston, Cambridge, Fall River and Worcester, as well as the Salemwood, the only Malden school participating.

The program means the 1,200 students and the 140 staff persons are arriving at the school earlier – 7:30 a.m. – and staying later – 3:30 p.m.

After the first two weeks of school, Principal Ron Eckel said he was seeing a better effort from students than he anticipated, given that students are often out of sync in the first few days of the school year.

"I haven't had any reports of exhaustion or lack of energy due to the longer school day," he said as he toured the school one day around 2 p.m., when students would have normally been getting ready to go home.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joan Connolly said she is pleased at how the teachers and students have adjusted.

"It's going amazingly well," said Connolly. "The teachers worked very hard over the summer planning the longer day and the parents have worked with the children to prepare them for it. This is the kind of partnership that supports innovation in our schools."

Connolly said the program isn't just about adding time to the school day, but redesigning that day into longer and shorter blocks of educational time. The program calls for teachers in grades K-4 to spend 120 minutes a day on literacy, 90 on math, and 45 on science and social studies. The teachers are allowed to break up the literacy and math time into smaller blocks.

In grades 5 and 6, teachers spend 90 minutes on literacy and math, and 45 minutes on social studies and science. In grades 7 and 8, teachers have 70-minute learning blocks for all four subjects.

"The majority of teachers have told me they enjoy the ability to spend longer amounts of time to explore some ideas and concepts," said Eckel.

While as of now the program is only guaranteed funding for one year, Eckel said he has heard rumblings that the state Department of Education is talking about expanding the program for next year, possibly doubling the number of schools involved. He said it would probably take at least 3-5 years to know if the expanded school day bears fruit in terms of increased achievement, test scores, etc.

Patty Maillet is a Salemwood paraprofessional and a member of the Salemwood PTO who also has a child in the school. She said she is enjoying the extended day. "By the end of the day I can't believe it's over," she said. "The students seem to have adjusted well. I'm in the sixth grade and we have had no sleepers or complaints. My daughter has been fine with the extended day."

"It makes a big difference when most of the homework is already completed before they get home," Maillet said. "I am also pleased to see that the community has adjusted to our schedule, by making (youth sports) practices and dance lessons at 5 p.m. It puts life on a steady flow."

One of those charged with helping students make the transition to the longer day is Brenda Keen. Previously a veteran classroom teacher of multiple grades, she has been appointed the K-8 instructional coach, supporting teachers' classroom instructional practices and needs.

"I work with grade-level teams and individual teachers in analyzing their specific needs, observing classes, collaborating on interventions, preparing materials, modeling/co-teaching lessons and providing feedback, and building networks for

change," said Keen.

She said for her the hours are not an issue and she feels they're beneficial for teachers and students.

The extended day program also encompasses several other initiatives:

- ◆ The advisor/advisee program allows staff to connect more closely with small groups of students who are about the same age in areas such as life challenges, study skills, social skills and even personal problems. The idea is to initiate give-and-take between the students and the staff member.

- ◆ Connections is an art-themed program in which students from one of the younger grades work with students from an older grade once a month, each time on a project with a different theme such as Winter Wonderland or Celebrations.

- ◆ Academic and Creative Enrichment (ACE) gives staff members who are passionate about something a chance to express that passion by engaging the students in that hobby, subject, etc. For instance, Principal Eckel will be leading a group involved with solving Sudoku puzzles.



Kindergartners, from left, Calvin Roberts, Sydney MacDonald, and Sebastian Suchite participate in morning activities at the Salemwood School. PHOTOS: REBA SALDANHA



# High-powered visit



Students at Malden High School were pleased to be visited by Superintendent Dr. Joan Connolly and Mayor Richard Howard.

# Road from MHS leads to Harvard

**HARVARD** from page 1

Michael and Lynn, grew up and attended school in China, and moved to Boston in the 1980s. Neither family would have expected to send their child to one of the nation's most prestigious universities.

"They're really proud of me," said Chan. "It's kind of like their dream come true."

Born in Boston and raised in Malden, Chan credits Malden Public Schools for her strong academic background. While at Malden High, Chan excelled in advanced placement (AP) offerings in U.S. History, European History, studio art, Spanish, statistics and calculus. She was a member of the Key Club, National Honor Society and Math Team and

volunteered at the high school's day care.

"Malden has the foundations for students to be able to go to a school like Harvard," said Chan. "Everything's there for you. You just have to take your own initiative and apply yourself."

Outside of Malden, Chan was involved with the Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth. She also participated in Summer Search, a mentoring leadership program for students in Boston, New York City, Seattle and California. Through the program, Chan traveled to Hawaii for a wilderness leadership retreat and Costa Rica, where she lived with a local family and served residents of the rural villages.

Brito, who excelled on the track field as well as in the classroom, is now a member of Harvard's varsity winter and spring track teams. While in high school, he was also a member of the National Honor Society, Key Club, Math Team and Project 540 – a service project for the betterment of the school. He took advantage of AP European History, U.S. History, Spanish, physics and calculus courses. Also accepted at Brown University, Brito chose to attend Harvard because of its academic offering, location and track program.

"I'm looking forward to meeting new people, running track and figuring out my major," said Brito, who is considering pursuing economics and law.

## MALDEN DIRECTORY SCHOOL

### Beebe School

Susan Vatalaro, Principal  
401 Pleasant St., Malden 02148  
(781) 388-0617 (K-4)  
(781) 388-0622 (5-8)

### Early Childhood Learning Center

Anne O'Connell-Hanifan, Director  
257 Mountain Ave., Malden 02148  
(781) 397-7246

### Ferryway School

Thomas DeVito, Principal  
150 Cross St., Malden 02148  
(617) 635-8529

### Forestdale School

Sally Orme, Principal  
74 Sylvan St., Malden 02148  
(781) 397-7326

### Linden School

Diane Buttmer, Principal (K-4)  
Camille Colantuoni, Principal (5-8)  
29 Wescott St., Malden 02148  
(781) 397-7329 (K-4)  
(781) 397-7218 (5-8)

### Malden High School

Dana F. Brown, Principal  
77 Salem St., Malden 02148  
(781) 397-7223

### Parent Information Center

Malden High School - Room H102  
77 Salem St., Malden 02148  
(781) 397-1568/1569

### Salemwood School

Ron Eckel, Principal  
529 Salem St., Malden 02148  
(781) 388-0642 (K-4)  
(781) 388-0646 (5-8)

# Linden now separate elementary, middle schools

**LINDEN** from page 1

Collaborative Education to provide professional development for the staff that would benefit the students.

According to the center's Web site, the mission of the CCE Small Schools Network is to demonstrate the power of small schools in successfully educating an increasingly diverse student population and preparing them for productive future lives in a democratic world.

The network seeks to transform the face of public education by focusing on creating small schools which embrace the values of democracy, equity, and personalization.

Small Schools developed out of a fairly simple concept, that is, schools should be places where each child is known, visible, and valued by at least one caring adult who takes responsibility and accepts accountability for his or her learning.

Small Schools is an attempt to address systemic ineffectiveness through starting up new, freestanding small schools and by redesigning and transforming large public schools. Linden School staff, for example, have been trained in the Critical Friends Group methods and staff members received additional training to become CFG coaches. They meet monthly under the direction of CFG coaches to help each other improve student achievement through the examination of student work and

teacher practices.

As part of the grant given to the Linden, it was decided to have the benefit of two principals, and everyone, especially the two principals, seems happy with that.

Colantuoni is a veteran administrator in her 21st year as a principal, while Buttmer is also a veteran educator, but in only her second year as a principal. Both have more than 30 years in the Malden schools and have known each other for a long time.

Buttmer, who was an assistant principal at the Salemwood School before coming to the Linden in September of 2005, said the two work as a team.

"We share the same philosophies and that helps," she said.

One of the goals both Colantuoni and Buttmer share for their schools is improving communication with parents and increasing their involvement in the schools.

One of the concerns that parents had when Malden moved to the K-8 configuration was that middle school students should not be interacting with much younger students.

At the Linden, the younger and older students don't interact, except for a little overlap in the lunchroom. But having both principals around means that students leaving Grade 4 for the middle school already know and are comfortable with Colantuoni.

"It makes for a smoother transition," she said.



From left, Robert McCarthy, director of career and business at Malden High, Paula Neville of FAME, students Carmen Onate, Kiara Munir, and Grace Deandrd, Cynthia Poor, director of Humanities for MHS and librarian Lucia Musilli.

# FAME helps schools fly high

**FAME** from page 1

- ◆ continuing a wide array of before and after-school initiatives
- ◆ enhancing technology throughout the system
- ◆ enhancing school programs and libraries
- ◆ providing grants to classroom teachers
- ◆ supporting the renovation of Malden High School's Jenkins Auditorium

FAME is independent of the school system, with its own board of directors. Members include Mayor Richard C. Howard; Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joan Connolly; Gerard Ruane of the Malden Education Association; Arthur and Barbara Kahn; Michael Goldman; Deborah A. Burke, marketing communications director for the City of Malden and the Malden Redevelopment Authority;

Michael Byrne; Malden High Principal Dana Brown; Diane Lind; Cindy Luu; and Norman Silverman.

FAME was incorporated in October, 2003, and to date has raised more than \$162,000. Funding has been used to: provide SAT-preparation courses at Malden High; purchase technology for the math department; fund coaching positions for the MHS crew team; provide biotechnological resources for Malden High; and provide resources to many classrooms through the Adopt-a-Classroom program.

FAME is actively seeking support to help make a difference for Malden students.

You can reach FAME in variety of ways. Call 1-877-324-FAME, e-mail , or write FAME Inc., P.O. Box 249, Malden MA 02148. For more information, go to [www.maldenfame.org](http://www.maldenfame.org).



# Teaching teachers

## Malden schools welcome 60 new educators

BY RICH FAHEY

There are 60 teachers new to the Malden schools this year. And even after 25 years, Nancy Kassabian, Malden’s newly-appointed assistant superintendent for teacher quality and professional development, knows how they feel.

That’s why Kassabian teaches the teachers, with a course for first-year Malden instructors.

The course is a requirement for school districts, but Kassabian said Malden moves beyond what’s required and goes the extra mile to support its new teachers.

“The most important thing any district can do is find good teachers and keep them here,” said Kassabian. “You have to pay them well and they need to feel supported by their colleagues, administrators and the central office. You need to give them the resources to be successful.”

Each new teacher has a mentor in his or her building. For the first few months, many of the questions are operational. “Where is this? Where is that?”

The new teachers learn about their responsibilities to their students, the curriculum and its requirements, how to deliver that curriculum, and teaching strategies. One of the features of the course for new teachers is a simple bus tour of the city, to get new teachers acquainted with their surroundings and where, for example, the stores selling school and office supplies are located.

Kassabian meets with the teachers for three hours each month on a different subject. Some of the topics



Nancy Kassabian, above, teaches new teachers, including Greg Hurley, below.



include: how to communicate with parents; contractual and legal issues; how to make sure the needs of each student are met; preparing for assessment tests; how to talk to students and student management (i.e. discipline).

Kassabian is a Watertown native who earned her undergraduate degree from Simmons College and her master’s degree in education from Tufts. She teaches at Tufts part-time.

Some of the new teachers have come from the Tufts graduate program, and interned in the Malden schools as part of that process.

For Greg Hurley, a new social sciences teacher at Malden High, the mentoring and advice he has received from his “amazing colleagues” has allowed him to get off to a strong start. Although he grew up not far from the city, he said he wasn’t sure what to expect when he first came to the system as an intern. He said he has found students who are ready to learn.

“I am extremely happy with my career in Malden, and that is due entirely to the people here, both staff and students, who are everyday helping me grow into a better teacher and a better person.”

Kassabian said she tries to walk that fine line between showing the new teachers the right way and letting them be themselves. “We don’t want to change their core values, their personalities and creativeness,” said Kassabian. “But we all have the same goals for teaching and student achievement.”

# What’s zoo at Beebe? Environmental studies

BY RICH FAHEY

Everybody loves to go to the zoo. For several years, the zoo has been coming to students at the Beebe School.

Well, not the entire zoo. But the school’s relationship with Zoo New England, and particularly education coordinator Kim Kezar, has strongly enhanced the school’s theme of health and environmental science.

A series of grants has allowed the Beebe School, one of five new Malden schools built in 1999, and Zoo New England’s Stoneham Zoo to work together in many ways, benefiting both the students and the community at large.

A former teacher at the school, Robin Jorgensen, who was the school’s first theme coordinator, found out about the Antioch New England Institute, which was offering an innovative “co-seed” program for schools such as the Beebe with an environmental theme.

She applied and won a three-year grant, and then approached the Stone Zoo’s Education Department about working together. Kezar, whose background was in animal care, was hired, beginning a relationship that has lasted until the present.

When the Antioch grant ran out, a Comprehensive School Reform Grant helped



Students at the Beebe School are in touch with nature.

fund the position. Kezar works with the Beebe School staff coordinating projects that have to do with the school’s rotating themes.

This year’s theme is “Malden: Our History, Our Environment, Our Health.” Next year’s theme is “How do your actions affect community health, your own health, and environmental health?”

Kezar works with staff and students on two kinds of projects: community pieces and service pieces. She does something with every grade.

“The teachers can use me as a resource to develop curricula for their classroom,” said Kezar. “We try and make the zoo an extension of the classroom.”

Unfortunately, as grants have fallen by the wayside, Kezar’s role at the school has decreased. The once full-time job decreased to half-time before funding ran out, but Beebe School Principal Susan Vatalaro has still managed to keep Kezar in the budget, if only for 2½ days a month.

# Classroom veterans go the extra mile

Principals were asked to describe a teacher who “goes the extra mile” and makes their school a better place to be.

**Cathy MacDonald** is a grade 1 teacher at the Salemwood School. “She’s enthusiastic about teaching, her students, her classroom, and life in general,” said Salemwood Principal Ron Eckel.

**Janet McKeone** is a grade 5 science and reading teacher and a 29-year veteran of the Beebe School. “She has been my mentor since the start of my teaching career,” said Beebe Principal Susan Vatalaro. She is the facilitator for the school’s Saugus Iron Works project.

**Margaret Briatico** has been a grade 5 teacher at the Ferryway School for the past 25 years. “She is very patient, able to work with all kinds of kids and get the best out of them,” said Ferryway Principal Thomas DeVito.

**Theresa Ryan**, a special-education teacher at the Linden School, began her career in Malden 28 years ago. Her work has varied from teaching preschool to teaching students with serious delays in their cognitive ability.

**Alexis Peavey** of the Early Childhood Learning Center is a gifted early-childhood teacher who has been teaching preschool children for 23 years.

**Lauren Walsh** is the seventh-grade English Language Arts teacher at the Linden Middle School. Over the past 10 years, she has taught special education, social studies, and ELA.

**Christine Nagle** has been teaching mathematics at Malden High School since 1974. For the past two school years, she has held the position of teacher-leader, supporting and mentoring the new math teachers at Malden High in the areas of curriculum and instruction. After 30-plus years in the classroom, she is able to dispense sound advice in a professional and calm manner.

**George Lyons**, one of two school adjustment counselors at Malden High School, is never too busy to meet with a student, talk with teachers or help students deal with a crisis. Among his many accomplishments, he helped to establish the Transition Program as well as Operation Success and Operation Connect.

Another veteran teacher who has made a difference is special education teacher **Ronald Janowicz**, who was hired in 1982 to work in the newly developed Transition program and is still there. This program was formed to help students move from the alternative school back to the high school. It continues to act as a transition program, and also assists students who have had psychiatric hospitalizations return to MHS.

— RICH FAHEY





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# A good Dube

## Athletic Director brings new ideas, new teams to Malden

BY RICH FAHEY

It is a sport most often associated with elite private schools and colleges with ivy-covered walls. But it is also a sport with great lessons to teach, and the latest of several new additions to the list of sports offered to student-athletes at Malden High School.

MHS students can now be seen rowing on the Malden River, thanks to the help and cooperation of several different entities.

When Tufts University opened a new boathouse, their old facility became available for use. The Golden Tornado Club, Foundation for the Advancement of Malden Education (FAME), Mayor Richard C. Howard and Gentle Giant Rowing, a private group that promotes rowing in the community, have all worked together to give MHS athletes a chance to compete.

"Gentle Giant was already running a community program for the greater Boston area and they have the coaching and equipment our kids needed," said Mike Dube, Malden High's second-year athletic director.

Racing oars and sculls are an expensive proposition, and having access to Gentle Giant's equipment has made a huge difference. FAME, meanwhile, funded the coaches' salaries.

The co-ed program officially began last spring with some 30-35 students participating, and unofficial workouts have continued this fall. Other area schools, such as Somerville, Cambridge and Medford, have also begun programs. The program is not yet sanctioned by the MIAA, but Dube sees that down the road as more public schools begin programs.

"The beauty of rowing is that it's something you can

do for your entire life," said Dube, a native of Nashua, N.H., who helped build Orlando's Boone High School athletic program into one of the strongest in Florida. "It teaches dedication, teamwork, commitment and hard work."

Boys and girls lacrosse, two other recent additions to the sports curricula, are already thriving. Girls lacrosse competed on a club level before competing as a Greater Boston League member for the first time last year on the varsity and JV level, notching its first-ever win against Cambridge. There are 40 girls involved in the program.

Boys lacrosse competed on a club level last year, with 25-30 athletes playing a half-dozen exhibition matches. They could join the GBL as a full-fledged program either this year or next. "It's the fastest-growing sport in the U.S.," noted Dube.

Girls volleyball was a club sport last year, and this fall is competing on the varsity, JV "A" and JV "B" levels with 45 participants. Dube said the school would gauge interest in a boys volleyball team and setting up a club team in that sport.

MHS students can try out a prospective sport in a physical education class. "We try to encompass as many of team sports as possible into our curricula," said Dube.

Crew and lacrosse are the two newest sports being offered at Malden High under the auspices of Athletic Director Mike Dube.



**SAVE THE DATE: MALDEN HIGH'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION IS OCT. 5-7, 2007**