

Comments from Christopher Mastrangelo, Principal of Malden High School

(with regard to article in Neighborhood View "BIPOC Alumni detail difficult racial experiences in Malden Public Schools")

The work around equity and student voice is a passion of mine and the entirety of MHS. This work has to be done right. In order to make real and significant change we have to have an informed and intentional approach. We need to fight the urge to jump in and make change just so we can say we did. That will only contribute to the problem and create a deeper divide. I have committed to a grass root initiative at MHS that is focused on enlisting student voice, faculty collaboration, and community input. This is evident with the formation of the Student Voice Project, our partnership with Youth Truth, Student / Faculty Advisory Council, Collaborative Inquiry Groups, Student / Faculty Review Board, and Principal Focus Group. I strive to have a welcoming environment to all students and staff at MHS and a big step towards creating that is to lean into our areas of growth. Our students are brilliant and they have incredible insight. Student voice is the key to making positive change at MHS.

I am committed to staffing MHS with the best educators. I am also aware that students having educators that "Look like them" is important. Although we still have work to do, I am proud of the progress in this area. Since the 2017-2018 school year (I took over in January of 2018) we have grown from 18 (10.1%) BIPOC staff to 42 (21.4%). Among this group we have hired 7 MHS grads, 4 of which identify as BIPOC. With our new *Grow Your Own* class at MHS, a class that is focused on recruiting our own students to start them down the path towards a career as educators, we hope to hire many more MHS grads in the future.