**Linden STEAM Academy**

Governing Board Meeting

March 20, 2013 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Atendees: Richard Bransfield, Diana Buonopane, Nicholas Catoggio, Kathleen Cutting, Laura Degelmann, John Froio, Deborah Gesualdo, Rachana Gray, Jocelyn Ken, Melissa Lightbody, Linda Patrie, Ann Schiro, Franklin Shearer, Susan Terban, Lenny Young

**Agenda**

* **Public Speaker, Sharyn Zeiberg 3 min.**
  + **Expressed concern about the clothing choices. She would like to see more than just polo shirts. She expressed concerns about different body types and how offering multiple styles will help with body image issues. She had a well written opinion and the board asked for a copy of it. The Uniform Sub-committee agreed with many of her points and will work to incorporate them into the final policy.**
* **Uniform Committee Report 25 min.**
  + **The sub-committee handed out a report.**
    - **The report contained a lot of information and will be posted on the school website once all the items are finalized.**
  + **Why we are doing it.**
    - **This is spelled out in the report. The basic points are:**
      * **Help increase a sense of school pride and belonging**
      * **Help create a learning atmosphere**
      * **Help students with self-esteem** 
        + **One of the issues that come up often is kids who wear the same clothes over and over again. The uniforms will remove this source of teasing.**
      * **Help bridge the socioeconomic gap between students**
      * **Help encourage appropriate behavior. To date we have had 427 discipline/incident reports.**
      * **Help with building safety. Make it easier to identify intruders.**
  + **Notice has been sent to the Parent Info Center**
    - **Kindergarten and transfer students are being made aware of the uniform situation.**
  + **Styles**
    - **The report spells out the styles that are being considered. The basics are:**
      * **Khaki or Navy Blue bottoms**
      * **Long pants**
      * **Knee length shorts (both girls and boys)**
      * **Skirts and skorts**
      * **Jumpers**
      * **Sweatpants (Solid Navy Blue or STEAM Academy style)**
      * **Tops** 
        + **Navy Blue, White or Yellow**
        + **Long or short sleeve polo style shirt (with collar)**
      * **The sub-committee agreed to go back and review the styles based on Sharyn Zeiberg’s comments.**
  + **Richard Bransfield spoke with one group of kids. Their reactions were interesting.**
    - **Out of about 60 kids, only a small handful felt the uniforms would cause a major change in their lives.**
    - **When they were told of the three color choices for tops, they expressed that they would only want two choices. They felt three was too many.**
    - **They expressed a desire for No Uniform Today (NUT ) days.**
    - **They wanted to know if there would be gym uniforms. The committee felt that it would be too much for the kids to have to change into gym uniforms and back into regular uniforms. So most likely there will not be a gym uniform.**
    - **They wanted to know if they would have to wear uniforms to school dances. The answer was no.**
    - **They wanted to know if they could change afterschool if they attend the afterschool program. The answer was yes.**
  + **Discipline – Richard Bransfield is following up with the School Attorney, The Superintendent and the State to ensure that the discipline is legal and in line with what other schools are doing in the state.**
    - **A handout included the details of the 1st through 4th offenses.**
    - **Expulsions and suspensions will not be a part of this policy.**
    - **Basically the offenses will require the parent/guardian to bring appropriate uniform to school. Subsequent offenses will increase parent involvement such as signing notification of the offenses, meeting with the Principal to work out solutions and days of detention for the student.**
    - **The point of the discipline will be to work out solutions rather than to punish the child.**
  + **Economics** 
    - **Melissa Lightbody and Richard Bransfield found that some stores offer grant money for uniforms. This could be used for families that would have difficulty affording the uniforms.**
    - **Some stores offer money back to the schools when a certain number of uniforms are purchased. This could also be used to fund extra uniforms.**
    - **NUT days could cost $1 which could be used to pay for extra uniforms**
    - **The PTO will hold two uniform swaps each year. They attended a swap held by another school and have gotten ideas on how to run them.**
    - **The handout has a price chart. The sub-committee went to several stores and have the prices listed out.**
    - **Melissa Lightbody went to Kohls and purchased 5 uniform pieces for $7.03. The receipt is included in the handout.**
* **Technology update**
  + **Richard Bransfield was able to purchase 10 Mimeos that turn white boards into smart boards with innovation grant money. They have come in.**
  + **They include hand held tablets that can be passed around the room. What is written on the tablet shows up on the white board.**
  + **It also has hand held clickers for each student in the class. The students can use them to answer questions. The teacher can use the responses to gauge student understanding of what is being taught.**
  + **The devices come with professional development. They will use the teachers teaching teachers approach. So a few teachers will attend the training and then train the rest of the staff.**
  + **Baystate Reading purchased 10 projectors for us.**
  + **5 of the devices will be made available for the k-4 side and 5 for the 5-8 side.**
  + **Currently the school has spotty wireless. Richard Bransfield is hoping to fix this situation so that we can move forward with more technology in the future.**
* **Communication 25 min.**
* **Website and Email needs**
  + **An informal vote was taken to approve the Board website and email address.**
* **Governing Board Transparency**
  + **The new website gives us a single place where we can post our meetings, agendas and meeting notes.**
* **Communication Officer/committee?**
  + **It was decided to create a communication sub-committee. Volunteers for the sub-committee are Deborah Gesualdo, Rachana Gray, Jocelyn Ken and Susan Terban.**
* **Task Board Development 60 min.**

**We created a list of items we want to tackle in the coming years. The items came from, Richard Bransfield, The teachers and the governing board.**

* + **Scheduling/common meeting time.** 
    - **There isn’t enough time in the day to cover all the required literacy and math blocks plus give the teachers time to meet.**
    - **Is it possible to cut the required literacy and/or math time without hurting our great scores?**
  + **Hire a Tech Ed teacher and a obtain a grant for the smart lab.**
    - **What do we do with the teacher if we don’t get the smart lab? K-5 or 5-8?**
  + **School day** 
    - **We added 15 minutes and it is under heavy debate over whether or not we should keep it.**
    - **If we lose it, then we will have even less time for teacher meetings.**
    - **Can we schedule Band so 6-8 graders don’t have to choose between academics and music? There is an “A” in STEAM.**
  + **Pre-AP model grades 6-8**
    - **We should look at different ways of grouping kids.**
      * **Not all gifted kids are gifted in all areas.**
      * **Should they be grouped by scores?**
      * **Use data to figure it out. MCAS scores**
  + **Revamp the gifted program**
    - **Gifted kids are transferring out of Malden to more affluent schools districts. Leaving open seats in the program.**
    - **We need better ways to test kids. Currently kids who get teacher/principal approval get in the gifted program. Some of the kids who get the approval, really don’t belong there. They shouldn’t be all the teacher pleasers and others who don’t should be.**
    - **By 3rd and 4th grade the other student catch up to early readers. So kids who may not have been ready for the program initially, maybe later on. And kids who were eligible may no longer be.**
    - **We currently have 4 kindergarten classes. If less than a full class of kids are eligible for the gifted program, where will the other kids go?**
    - **Should there be gifted subjects instead of gifted classes? So a gifted math class and a gifted ELA class instead of a whole classroom of kids?**
  + **Implement full inclusion models in k-8**
    - **Sped teachers going into the class room vs taking kids out of the classroom**
    - **We get kids who are programmatically placed in our school. They are in a pace room or individual management room. They are not counted with the grades. How do we place them in the regular mainstream classes when we don’t have extra seats for them?**
    - **They need the opportunity to mainstream**
    - **They shouldn’t be sentenced to separate classrooms forever because there isn’t space.**
    - **There is a scramble to get resources when they are added to classes like music. Kids notice this and don’t feel welcome.**
    - **This year is the worst numbers wise and next year will be worse.**
    - **Could we have Transition classes for kids who are not quite ready for first grade?**
    - **One third of the kids move in and out of Malden schools**
    - **Only 50% of kids who start from kindergarten graduate from Malden.**
    - **Malden high school numbers are going up. But this increase is not from Malden’s k-8 schools.**
  + **Use of data – We have lots of data. We need to think of creative ways to use it.**
  + **District testing vs LSA testing. 6-8**
    - **Midterms are usually 10% of final grade**
    - **Sped kids get hurt by Midterms. One test can ruin their final grades with no indication of the work they did throughout the year.**
    - **LSA opted out. Our Midterms were scored as a regular test grade**
    - **LSA didn’t take the district tests**
  + **LSA curriculum – How can we add more STEAM into it?**
  + **Afterschool activity with the Partnership for Community schools.**
  + **Changing the report cards.**
    - **Trimester instead of Quarters causes issues for exploratory teachers since they split the school up by halves.**
    - **The report cards are hard to read for the younger grades can they be improved?**
  + **Character building**
  + **Project based units**
    - **Well received by teacher**
    - **Need more Professional Development for it**
  + **Professional development**
    - **More is needed especially for exploratory teachers. Current PD doesn’t always help their curriculum.**
    - **More PD to help with project based curriculum**
  + **Parent teacher meeting**
    - **These have left parents standing in halls for hours only to be asked to leave without ever meeting with a single teacher.**
    - **Parents with multiple children have to choose which teachers to see.**
    - **Parents with multiple children in 6-8 cannot meet with all the teachers.**
    - **It is agreed that no solution will please everyone but some change is needed.**
  + **Elections. We need to plan out how elections will be held. Which positions will be up for elections on which years?**
  + **Capital improvement – We need to manage how we spend any money we receive.**
  + **Foreign language – Each k-8 school is handling it differently.**

**Next meetings:**

**April 2nd 7am -8am and April 24rd 6pm-8pm in the LSA Library.**

**Action items:**

* **The Uniform Sub-committee will meet again to finalize the plan. They will take under advisement the items that were brought to their attention.**
* **Rachana Gray will ask Denise Perry to put a link to the new website on the school website.**
* **The board will think about prioritizing the list of tasks.**