**Linden STEAM Academy**

Governing Board Meeting

May 14, 2014 5:45 PM Linden Library

Attendees: Nicholas Catoggio, Kathleen Cutting, Laura Degelmann, Rachana Gray, Jocelyn Ken, Alisha King, Melissa Lightbody, Linda Patrie, Ann Schiro

**Agenda**

IConnections/Public Comment

* Ann Schiro said it was an honor to work with everyone on the board. Her daughter is graduating this year. She felt that her time at Linden has been an amazing experience, and that she has seen her daughter grow and thrive during her years here.
* Rachana Gray suggested that the board recognize any staff that is leaving LSA due to retirement or other reasons. Also new staff starting at the LSA should receive a greeting from the board. Since we have no budget yet, it could begin with just a card signed by the board member. Once we have some funds we may increase it to a small gift as the budget allows. This will help us connect more with the staff on a more personal level.
* Kathleen Cutting said she will find the list of teachers who are leaving and bring some cards to the next board meeting for us to sign.

**II** Acceptance of Minutes 4/10/14

* There were no changes needed.
* Nicholas Catoggio accepted and Kathleen Cutting seconded.

**III** Principal’s Report

* Richard Bransfield apologized for having to take calls and texts as he was working to the last minute to finalize the budget.
* The original plan to cut five positions has been reduced to two.
* The School committee had suggested that we cut one of the STEM teachers. Richard Bransfield explained that it wasn’t an option since we received a $90,000 grant from the state to incorporate a new program called Project Lead the Way. He would have a hard time explaining that he no longer had the teachers needed to run the program
* We have the largest SPED population of all the schools in the district and we are barely handling what we have. We have three social workers in the school. While they are already over worked, one thought was to eliminate one position. The Ferryway school is losing one due to retirement. So the thought is to move on of ours to their school so that the cut position doesn’t result in a job loss. Unfortunately, social workers are in the SPED budget which is separate from our so it doesn’t really help our issue.
* Another thought was to eliminate the Integrated Kindergarten position but that is also in the SPED budget and doesn’t help us.
* If he cuts any exploratory then no grades would have planning time together. We have four classes of each grade. We need all the exploratory classes so that the teachers can be freed up to meet together.
* We can’t reduce the number of classes per grade since each class is already at or near capacity.
* The final cuts have to be done tomorrow.
* All retirements are off the board because they have already been taken into account. The cuts would be worse if they hadn’t been.
* At the district level:
  + the director of guidance is leaving and the position is not being refilled.
  + The director of ELA is retiring and that position will also not be refilled.
* Privatizing the custodians that wil lsave half a million dollars. But Richard reminded us there is a human cost to the cuts. People who have worked
* The Cafeteria is being privatized. The current workers will have their jobs, but they will report to a private company
* Alisha King asked if the SPED department was in the same trouble. Richard Bransfield responded that they are, but they have been able to collapse positions so it is not as bad.

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**IV** Old Business

* Progress of new board member elections
  + The list of teachers leaving the board are: Linda Bell, Linda Patrie, Deborah Gesualdo, and Kathleen Cutting.
  + There are several teachers from the PBU committee who will be running for their positions in the next election.
  + Ann Schiro said that she really liked Eric Hamylak’s suggestion of creating standing committees and that we should do that when the next board is elected.
  + Rachana Gray handed out a sample ballot. One candidate did not seem to understand the section for describing why they are running. She will reach out them to see if she can get something more in line with the other candidates.
  + Rachana Gray said she was encouraged by the candidates that are running. She would like the parent member to be more diverse so that we can better represent the parents/guardians. So a PACE parent, a gifted parent, an ESL parent would all be welcome additions.
  + Someone suggested we update the bylaws to specify that make up, but the general feeling was that we didn’t want to limit ourselves and we may have years where it is difficult to get parent/guardians to run.
  + There was discussion of when the new board should run and when the next officer election should be held. We decided to move onto the suggested bylaw changes.
* By-laws
  + The PBU committee brought suggestions for a new mission and vision statement. They wanted to make them more kid friendly so that all the students could read and understand them. They are still tweaking them and will mail them out to the board for review prior to the next meeting.
  + The board approved of the direction they are going in and will vote on approving them at the next meeting.
  + Kathleen Cutting and Jocelyn Ken read over their suggested changes for the bylaws. The added clarity to many of the vague sections. The number of board members will not change but the makeup will be in more detail. Kathleen will email out a copy of the changes for the board to review prior to the next meeting
  + Everyone complemented them on their hard work and especially on Jocelyn Ken’s word smithing skills.
* Linda Patrie will follow up on our nonprofit status and give a report at the next meeting.

**V** New Business

* PBU Committee – Would like to institute the 5 C’s of 21st Century Learning. They are: Collaborator, Critical Thinker, Communicator, Creator, and Citizen.
  + These are in line with our current mission and vision
  + We previously had the Habits of Mind which everyone appreciated.
  + They would like to create 5 banners, one for each C. The banners would have pictures of actual LSA students demonstrating the associated C. the banners would be hung in the main lobby.
  + They want to incorporate them into the Friday Friendzi projects and give the kids strategies for each of the C’s.
  + Rachana Gray was concerned about using the student’s pictures. She was concerned about how the other students who were not in the pictures might feel and how the selection process would work.
  + Rachana Gray also asked where the money for the banners would be coming from. She was told that Richard Bransfield said he had the funds to cover it.
  + Overall everyone thought it was great idea and approved the creation of the banners.
* Alisha King brought back feedback from the 2nd grade team. They feel we should survey the teachers about what they want and need.
* Ann Schiro said she always felt that we need to get the teacher’s input. They probably have lots of innovative ideas that we need to tap into.
* Alisha King will come up with a survey and present it to the board.
* Melissa Lightbody brought a question from the parents. They want next year’s school supply list at the end of school this school year. Many of the sales happen over vacation and can be purchased much cheaper. Also, the parent feels less rushed to get everything at the last minute.
* Rachana Gray said that the parents really liked when the supply lists were posted on the PTO Facebook page. We need to continue doing this.
* Kathleen Cutting brought up the fact that the copy machines are making people crazy. She understands that there may not be money to get them fixed but it does make things very difficult and frustrating.

Parent /Teacher Election to Board Update

**VI** Next meeting date/June 11, 2014 at 5:45 PM

**VII** Board Members’ Comments

* There were none.

**VIII** Adjournment

* Kathleen Cutting adjourned the meeting and Ann Schiro seconded it.