



MALDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Rafael A. Garcia Jr.

Principal

Linden STEAM Academy

Julie Jones, Assistant Principal 6-8

Eddie Rodriguez, Assistant Principal 3-5

Jordan Yost, Assistant Principal K-2

Linden School Council Minutes for Meeting on 11/24/2025

Meeting Location: Google Meet from 6:00pm - 7:00pm

Attendees: Principal Rafael Garcia, Jeremie Bateman, Carla Lucas, Martha Bezzat, Heidi Schmidt.

All the Council members introduced themselves and their roles: Mr. Garcia, Principal; Jeremie Bateman, Parent; Carla Lucas, Teacher; Martha Bezzat, Teacher; Heidi Schmidt, Parent.

Martha Bezzat offered to be the Recorder and take minutes.

Since not all Council members were present, the Council decided we would decide on the Co-Chair at the next meeting. The Council also decided to set future meeting dates for the year at the next meeting

Mr. Garcia gave an overview of the School Improvement Plan (SIP). Highlights included the four targets:

- 1) Goal Setting includes specific goals in iReady (reading) for grades 3-8, in Dibels (reading) for grades K-3, and in IXL (math) for all grades, with specific achievement and growth targets for all students, including specific goals for EL (English Learners) and SWD (Students With Disabilities). Details are in the SIP.
- 2) Instructional Priority is that "Educators will actively involve students in meaningful thinking for the majority of instructional time." There is Professional Development for staff around "Priority Look Fors" to ensure that teachers are facilitating "students doing the heavy lifting" This aims to build higher order thinking skills. Lesson plans are reviewed, artifacts are collected. PD are scheduled every 2 weeks, plus in August, November, January and includes follow up at staff meetings.
- 3) The MTSS Priority (Multi-tiered System of Supports) is the new Literacy Intervention block, which is an added instructional block in the day when all students get the

appropriate, leveled instruction in literacy that they need. Progress is tracked three times per year. This is school-wide.

- 4) The Attendance Priority is to track attendance and implement the attendance policy in order to address chronic absenteeism; this will be a collaborative effort between families, teachers, administrators, school counselors and school social workers. There will be a focus on elementary students, but all students' attendance is being looked at. Sometimes it's related to trips or illness, and some obstacles have already been addressed for families.

Questions from Council members included:

How is the attendance policy being implemented? Letters have already gone home to families and conversations have been had, and they're already seeing improvement.

How can parents on the Council help the school? Parents can help by getting feedback from other families and also from themselves on how the school is doing in these areas.

Could students use their golden tickets for IXL or iReady time after school? Gold tickets are a big hit in general, that would have to be coordinated with the MOST program.

What are the numbers by cohort as a starting point - and are we checking throughout the year? Mr. Garcia can get the numbers. We can't control the attrition rates at the school, and sometimes a needier cohort comes in, so there is a constant adjustment.

Mr. Garcia then reviewed the Accountability Data which tracks MCAS and ACCESS data. Highlights included:

- Grades 4 and 7 have shown the most growth in ELA across the board in both achievement and individual students' growth.
- 7th grade is a bright spot in both ELA categories!
- Despite post-pandemic declines in both ELA and Math achievement and growth, we're beginning to reverse that. Our post pandemic dip mirrors the state's.
- We are on the lower end for typical Math growth, but we're trending up.
- Overall, we held steady with Science. 5th grade increased in achievement and 8th grade decreased in achievement.

- For ACCESS, we are making progress. Grades 1-5 are doing better than grades 6-8 as a whole, but there is more ML support in classrooms.

The next meeting of the Council will be in January.

Meeting ended.

Minutes submitted by Martha Bezzat