

April 13, 2022

### **Minutes of the Lawrence Alliance for Education Board – LAE**

The Lawrence Alliance for Education Board meeting was held in person at the South Lawrence East Educational Complex Auditorium with the following members present: Patricia Mariano, Lawrence School Committee member, Dr. Noemi Custodia-Lora, Vice President of NECC Lawrence Campus, Maria Moeller, CEO/The Community Group, Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, Chair. Absent: Mayor Brian de Peña, Jessica Andors, Executive Director for the Lawrence Community Works, and Julia Silverio, Silverio Insurance.

Also in person, was Superintendent Cynthia Paris and Maria L. Campusano, Recording Secretary for this meeting.

Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. Dr. Ventura held the Pledge of Allegiance; following the agenda on Public Participation.

#### **Public comment: Dr. Ventura called the following:**

In person Public Participation

1. **Santina M. Turowski** (Sunny Ski) Teacher. Expressed her support for the paraprofessionals since she heard that they were having troubles having their negotiations happening, also informed that she heard lunch aids were going to have an increase in their salaries, teacher contracts -Also expressed knowing about a letter asking educators about what will they consider to stay in Lawrence which she said they responded their number one priority was money. Ms. Turowski concluded by saying that she brought pins for all who want to wear in support of the teachers and the paraprofessionals.
2. **H. Maali, Parent** 53 Chester Street, Lawrence, MA, talked about Superintendent Cynthia Paris leadership involvement since the gas crisis to the pandemic. Adding that the education of the children never stopped, and how the 100 days of listening to parents and community is now her practice. In addition, Mr. Maali, spoke about the improvement in maintenance of the school building, and how parent and community involvement continued to improve, Mr. Maali concluded by saying the task as citizens is not over, that they must continue to support their teachers and their union, and demanded that Lawrence paraprofessionals and teachers receive competitive and fair compensation.
3. **Jean Zembruski**, President of the Lawrence Administrators Association representing deans, supervisors, and assistant principals. Ms. Zembruski expressed concerns regarding more veteran staff leaving for another school district, that she was there to offer an extension to work together to stabilize the teachers, the administrators, and the environment that is going on in the LPS in order to retain the people who really want to work in an urban setting.

#### **Superintendent Report:**

- Superintendent Paris shared that a communication letter to staff and families went out regarding sending out Covid tests for everyone asking to utilize the text before returning from the school break.
- **Time on Learning Discussion**
  - Superintendent Paris, expressed the district is currently engaging in a study with an external consultant about the use of time during the school day and we're actively exploring how to use student learning time in the most impactful and efficient way while maintaining the ability to provide high quality collaboration and planning time for teachers.
- **SQR Update**
  - Superintendent Paris, shared the SQR preliminary data on 18 schools' highlighting positive school culture, goals, action plans, and leveraging resources.
  - Focus areas on preliminary data about assessment still in developing stages, new to the rubric is indicator 11 student academics, and developing support. Expect that there will be a full comprehensive report and review in focus areas tied back to the turnaround plan. The process is very rigorous. In conversations with school leaders, They observed the following patterns: Careful observation of teaching and learning, focus groups with teachers, families, school leaders, students, and a variety of stakeholders, at the end of the day they shared school findings. Expect a full report in about a month's time.
- **FY 2022-2023 Budget Presentation**
  - Masiel Jordan, Chief Operations, shared the final proposed budget for SY 2023 of \$230,794,148 which is an increase of 18,368.919 over last year
- **ESSER Update**
  - Masiel Jordan, Chief Operations, provided detailed information as to how these additional funds are utilized. Described how the fund is expended in regards to salaries and fringe benefits, stipends, contracted services, facilities, tech infrastructure, supplies, and materials. Masiel also said that the application for ESSER III has been approved; concluding that there is a presentation on Esser III forthcoming.

VOTED: To approve the FY 2023 Budget in the amount of \$232,441,371 to move forward and to send it to the City Council

Vote: Upon the motion made by Dr. Ventura approve the FY 2023 Budget in the amount of \$232,441.371; So move by Patricia Mariano and seconded by Maria Moeller

The Vote: Yes - Maria Moeller  
 Yes - Noemi Custodia-Lora  
 Yes - Patricia Mariano  
 Yes - Dr. Ventura Rodriguez

**Motion passes**

- **SY 2022-2023 School Calendar**

- Odanis Hernandez, Chief of Operations presented the academic school calendar for 2022-2023, proposing to start the school year on August 29th which will bring the end of the school year for 2023 to August 20th including 5 build in snow days. This is to account for and to allow longer winter break for students and staff to enjoy a week worth of winter break

VOTED: To approve the 2022-2023 School Calendar

Vote: Upon the motion made by Dr. Ventura to approve the FY 2022-2023 school calendar; So move by Noemi Custodia - Lora; Seconded by Maria Moeller

The Vote: Yes - Maria Moeller  
 Yes - Noemi Custodia-Lora  
 Yes - Patricia Mariano  
 Yes - Dr. Ventura Rodriguez

**Motion passes**

- **MSBA Leahy Update**

Odanis Hernandez, Chief Operations shared that the City and the MSBA had executed the project funding agreement to the MSBA and it is now under the process of the designer team with the city to bring the design to the LAE board; anticipating it by June 2022. Ms. Hernandez also shared that work is being done with the procurement office to relocate the Leahy School students.

- **Extraordinary Maintenance Waiver**

Masiel Jordan, Chief Financial Officer. Presented a letter seeking the approval of the board to bring it to DESE and to the commissioner of education requesting a waiver of the extraordinary maintenance for the purpose of funding facilities repairs through net school spending totaling \$1,600,000.

- Generator for the Arlington School Complex
- Paving for three schools: Hennessey, Breen, and LHS Campus

VOTED: To approve the extraordinary maintenance waiver letter to bring it to DESE and the Commissioner

Vote: Upon the motion made by Dr. Ventura to approve the Extraordinary Maintenance Waiver request to DESE; So Move by Maria Moeller; Seconded by Naomi Custodia  
 The Vote

The Vote: Yes - Maria Moeller  
 Yes - Noemi Custodia-Lora  
 Yes - Patricia Mariano  
 Yes - Dr. Ventura Rodriguez

**Motion Passes**

VOTED: To accept a check in the amount of \$100. donation from the Dean Eastman to the

Lawrence High School Library

Vote: Upon the motion made by Dr. Ventura to accept the \$100.00 donation to the LHS Library; So move by Maria Moeller; Seconded by Patricia Mariano

The Vote: Yes - Maria Moeller  
Yes - Noemi Custodia-Lora  
Yes - Patricia Mariano  
Yes - Dr. Ventura Rodriguez

**Motion Passes**

VOTED: To accept a donation in the amount of \$20,000.00 from DCU to the LHS students in the forms of scholarships.

Vote: Upon the motion made by Dr. Ventura to accept the \$ 20,000.00 donation from DCU; So move by Patricia Mariano; Seconded by Maria Moeller

The Vote: Yes - Maria Moeller  
Yes - Noemi Custodia-Lora  
Yes - Patricia Mariano  
Yes - Dr. Ventura Rodriguez

**Motion Passes**

VOTED: To approve the March 3, 2022 Emergency Board Meeting Minutes

Vote: Upon the motion made by Dr. Ventura to approve the minutes of the emergency board meeting; So move by Maria Moeller; Seconded by Noemi Custodia

The Vote: Yes - Maria Moeller  
Yes - Noemi Custodia-Lora  
Yes - Patricia Mariano  
Yes - Dr. Ventura Rodriguez

**Motion Passes**

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 6:47 p.m.

Vote: Upon the motion made by Dr. Ventura to adjourn the meeting at 6:47p.m, so moved by Patricia Mariano; seconded by Noemi Custodia

The Vote: Yes - Maria Moeller  
Yes - Noemi Custodia-Lora  
Yes - Patricia Mariano  
Yes - Dr. Ventura Rodriguez

**Motion Passes**

---

Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, Chair  
Date: