

January 13, 2021

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

A virtual meeting of the Lawrence Alliance for Education Board was held at 6:00 P.M. with the following members present: Dan Rivera, CEO/President Mass Development, Julia Silverio, Lawrence City Councilor and local business owner, Jessica Andors, Executive Director for Lawrence Community Works, Patricia Mariano, Lawrence School Committee Member, Dr. Noemi Custodia-Lora, VP of NECC Lawrence Campus and Acting Chairman Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, Associate Commission for statewide support DESE.

Also present was Superintendent Cynthia Paris, Ashley Dominguez, Student Representative and Joan Milone, Recording Secretary for this meeting.

The Acting Chair, Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M, and held the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dr. Rodriguez introduced and welcomed the new student representative, Ashley Dominguez. He noted that the meetings are virtual based on the Covid pandemic and is streamed by Facebook live; any public comment needs to be emailed by 12 noon of the scheduled meeting.

#### Superintendent's Report

- Superintendent's Student Cabinet – Superintendent Paris introduced the students: Chantel Diaz, Joslyn Rodriguez and Joshua Figueroa, Based on student feedback, the student cabinet was implement last year to engage in leadership opportunities. This year, the students have had discussions with surveys in changing Columbus Day to Indigenous People Day to celebrate heritage and culture. The Cabinet has implemented three subcommittees on this project: research, partners in engagement, and proposal/presentation. The students will formally entertain the Board's approval on the holiday name change at next month's meeting.
- Community Day Arlington Name Change – Amanda McLellan and Alex Rock, Co Principals and Maria Moeller, CEO CDA Network were in attendance. Amanda McLellan presented the background in the management between the Community Group and the LPS over the past eight years. In the last year, the school wished to become autonomous from the Community Group and be identified to be a K-8<sup>th</sup> grade campus. In November 2020, the Arlington School Leadership Team voted to change the Arlington Elementary School back to a traditional LPS school and asked the Board for their approval in the name change.

Upon the recommendation of the Chair, a motion was made by Dan Rivera, and seconded by Patricia Mariano, it was

VOTED: To accept the recommendation to change the name of the Community Day Arlington to the Arlington Elementary School.

Amanda McLellan provided information on the benefits in changing the name to Julia Silverio, which are: to identify no longer as part of the Community Group, community facing, reinforcement as an aligned campus with Arlington Middle. Julia Silverio inquired whether there was a vote on the name change eight years ago. There was not vote at that time based on the Superintendent was also the Receiver. Ms. Silverio requested a copy of the document listing the partnership between LPS and CDA.

Dan Rivera requested information be brought back to the Board on the reflection period on the good learnings from this partnership in the last 8 years.

The Vote: Yes – Jessica Andors  
Yes – Noemi Custodia Lora  
Yes – Patricia Mariano  
Yes – Dan Rivera  
Yes – Julia Silverio  
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

- Oliver School Partnership Project – Odanis Hernandez, Acting Chief Operating Officer, requested the Board’s approval to accept the custody and management of parcels of land involving the OPS Project.

Upon the recommendation of the Chair, a motion was made by Dan Rivera and seconded by Julia Silverio, it was

VOTED: As provided under MGL c 40 sec 15A and on behalf of Lawrence Public Schools, LAE accepts the care custody, management and control of the following 4 parcels:

- 96-98 Oak Street
- 104-106 Oak Street
- 132-134 Oak Street
- Cardillo Way

Dan Rivera noted that it was not a unanimous vote by City Council and suggested the Board reach out for support to a City Council member or the Mayor.

The Vote: Yes – Jessica Andors  
Yes – Noemi Custodia Lora  
Yes – Patricia Mariano  
Yes – Dan Rivera  
Yes – Julia Silverio  
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

- CBI Update – Mike Teller provided an update on the HVAC system for the LPS district. The update provided the results after every school was reviewed and equipment ventilation was documented. He provided details on what equipment is needed with needed ongoing maintenance and repairs, on what procedures should be implemented for air circulation in the classrooms and the anticipation for the district to prepare for funding for future repairs and installation of upgraded systems.

Mr. Teller accepted questions of the Members pertaining to social distancing, classroom and population. He noted that CBI worked on the physical maintenance and the district has done well on their protocols. Julia Silverio asked if he could provide the anticipated cost for the district. Superintendent Paris noted that information will be shared with the City and with the LAE Board. Superintendent Paris can provide a timeline on the anticipated repairs, etc. and the funding for upgrade. She also noted that they are in the preliminary stages ensuring the buildings are well ventilated to return the high needs students, but will focus attention on the long-term and can bring an update including the needed funding and recommended upgrades to the ventilation systems. Ms. Silverio suggested this be presented sooner than later based on the staffs' concerns upon returning. Jessica Andors concerns were with communicating this information to the students and families. Superintendent Paris noted that the LTU have received the same information from CBI and the principals host school based sessions to answer concerns.

Attendance Update – Denise Snyder provided an update on the current students' attendance (September 20 – December 20). Members voiced their concern for the students to return to in-person learning safely. Superintendent Paris will provide information on chronic absenteeism in early spring based on the Board's concern. Julia Silverio requested the attendance update include the number of students absent per grade. Jessica Andors requested the information include the percentage subset is chronic vs. sporadic.

Dan Rivera recommended the district should submit a Press Release on the approved policy for students to attend the LPS while living outside the district – especially in that 200 families signed this policy agreement.

School-Based Supports – Mary Toomey provided an in-depth update on the return of the high needs students. The return will be in three phases and will be a very limited and controlled process. Currently, the staff are receiving in-person training on protocols, students will attend in large classrooms with face masks and in-class lunch and limited visitors. The LAE Board are welcomed to participate in the informational zoom meetings.

Kinnon Foley provided an informational update on the ELLs Access Testing which will take place between January – May. Schools will follow all protocols for in-person learning

Dan Rivera suggested the plan be placed on the website for everyone's information. Dr. Toomey noted that the family can change their minds and may opt to return at next marking period.

Superintendent Paris provided the process to be followed if an attending student is found to be positive. Dan Rivera suggested that the additional number of paraprofessionals in the classrooms be rewarded in some way such as petition DESE to receive credits towards licensure etc. Superintendent Paris noted that the district is very mindful of our added staffs' work and will discuss with DESE and will continue to support them.

Superintendent Paris introduced Doug Miller, the district's Director of Math and Science. Doug provided a presentation of the challenges and opportunities for teachers during remote learning. As a new paradigm, a teacher would need to create joy, build relations and re-envision learning through new components for instruction such as Zoom, Near Pod, ClassDojo and he provided examples on the instruction through these components.

The members noted the presentation was very informative. Julia Silverio suggested to highlight these tools to the parents. Doug Miller explained that each school has technical staff who assist parents at home. Ashley Dominguez added that Near Pod is of great assistance for her during remote learning. Julia Silverio and Dan Rivera suggested informing parents with flyers, etc., while they may be waiting at the testing site.

FY'21 Superintendent Goals - Superintendent Paris presented a draft of her upcoming year goals based on the LAE members recommendations and feedback in collaboration with the leadership team and priorities for the district's budget. Her FY21 Goals are: 1. Cultivate a Focus on Student Achievement, 2. Deepen efforts to recruit and retain culturally responsive, highly effective teaching and professional staff; 3. Deepen and expand ways in which the district engages with families and students; 4. Maintain Effective District Governance Model, including positive and transparent Board/Superintendent relations. The Superintendent noted that the TAP academic goals will be measurable. Jessica Andors suggested that a few of the provided goals could embrace partnerships outside LPS. Ventura Rodriguez asked the Superintendent how she and her team measure their goals. Superintendent Paris noted that these goals will be included in the TAP, which is more of a roadmap for measurement and assessment.

The Chair noted that the Goals are presented for the Board's feedback and the final goals and the cycle for evaluation will be discussed at the next meeting. Julia Silverio requested a copy of the Superintendent's last goals for comparison and feedback.

### Report of the Chair

Earned Autonomy/Turnaround Plan Update – The Chair provided a review of the discussions from previous meetings; both the Earned Autonomy and TAP subcommittees met in December and plan to meet again in January in preparation to bring these topics to the Board at the February meeting.

Other

Upon the recommendation of the Chair, a motion was made by Jessica Andors and seconded by Dan Rivera, it was

VOTED: To approve the December 9, 2020 LAE Minutes as presented.

The Vote: Yes – Jessica Andors  
Yes – Noemi Custodia Lora  
Yes – Patricia Mariano  
Yes – Dan Rivera  
Yes – Julia Silverio  
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

Upon the recommendation of the Chair, a motion was made by Dan Rivera, and seconded by Patricia Mariano, it was

VOTED: To approve the December 9, 2020 LAE Executive Session Minutes as presented.

The Vote: Yes – Jessica Andors  
Yes – Noemi Custodia Lora  
Yes – Patricia Mariano  
Yes – Dan Rivera  
Yes – Julia Silverio  
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

Upon the recommendation of the Chair, a motion was made by Patricia Mariano, and seconded by Julia Silverio, it was

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 8:35 P.M.

The Vote: Yes – Jessica Andors  
Yes – Noemi Custodia Lora  
Yes – Patricia Mariano  
Yes – Dan Rivera  
Yes – Julia Silverio  
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

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Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, Acting Chair