

March 11, 2020

Minutes of the Lawrence Alliance for Education Board

A meeting of the Lawrence Alliance for Education Board was held at 6:00 P.M. in the North Common Educational Complex Library, 233 Haverhill Street, with the following members present: Honorable Dan Rivera, Mayor of Lawrence, Julia Silverio, Lawrence City Councilor and local business owner and Jessica Andors, Executive Director for Lawrence Community Works, Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, Associate Commission for statewide support DESE, and Chairman John Connolly, Executive Director of The 1647, Inc. Patricia Mariano, Lawrence School Committee Member attended the meeting via phone. Dr. Noemi Custodia-Lora, VP of NECC Lawrence Campus was absent.

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

The Chair, John Connolly, called the meeting to order at 6:09 P.M

I. Pledge of Allegiance

John Connolly held the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Public Participation

Homayan Maale – During the global Covid-19 crisis, all must unite and support the Superintendent to continue the education for the children. The LHS reaccreditation makes the community proud.

Chair Connolly recommended a vote to add an item Covid-19 virus update to the agenda,

Upon the motion made by Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, seconded by Julia Silverio, it was unanimously

VOTED: To add an update of the Covid-19 virus by Superintendent Paris and Mayor Rivera to the agenda.

Superintendent Paris noted that a Task Force has been appointed to oversee to be in communication with City and State health officials and DESE. Cancellations include school based events, all travel, have started deep sanitization of the buildings, began support of the nurses and their needs and are preparing food distribution upon a required school closing.

Mayor Rivera added he has met with all heads of the City departments and hospitals. There has been slight increases in positive results in Massachusetts. He noted the City will adopt the Governor's State of Emergency directories as of March 12 and will review every 30 days. The

City will also cancel all travel, large meetings, conferences and to start to use alternative meeting methods. He provided a list of the priorities the City will oversee in order to provide necessary information/assistance to the City community.

Ms. Silverio asked if the Superintendent has considered closing schools. Superintendent Paris noted she is not encouraging remote learning and are hopeful if needed to close the schools for one day for deep cleaning. Discussion will continue with DESE based on the forthcoming events with the pandemic.

Mayor Rivera left the meeting at 6:24 P.M.

III. New Business

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Paris opened in providing the district highlights: LHS Dancing with the Stars; Headmaster Update: Currently in the finalist round process in checking the candidates' references. Student Opportunity Act: Met with 11 of the stakeholders (students, families, teachers and principals) to share information—students care about early college and dropout prevention; teachers care about PD opportunities/training and one of the principals' main priorities is mental and behavioral health support for students. The SOA's draft plan will be presented at the next LAE meeting.

John Connolly reminded the members to fill out their SOA survey after they review the summary sheet.

Ms. Andors is concerned on how the summary sheet is understood by the different stakeholders. Superintendent Paris explained that the Leadership will be providing specific examples for the summary's categories to provide full understanding.

Ms. Silverio requested the Superintendent to provide the LAE members with the examples that have been provided to the individual stakeholder groups.

Upon Ms. Mariano's inquiry whether the School Committee were invited to complete the survey, the Superintendent noted that they and City Council were invited to attend the LAE meeting and have received the survey electronically.

Mayor Rivera returned to the meeting at 6:37 P.M.

Mayor Rivera added that he reached out to the School Committee also and has invited him to participate by coming to the LAE Board meetings.

Chair Connolly noted School Committee Member Enrique Matos, City Councilor Reyes and LTU President Kim Barry were in attendance.

He noted the meeting on March 31 is to review the SOA plan and another meeting will be needed prior to this date to review the plan and provide time before the submission deadline of April 1, 2020. He will confirm the date with the members.

- SY20-21 Student and Family Calendar – Superintendent Paris noted it is an exact replica of the SY19-20 school calendar. She noted the start date for the school year for grades 1-12 and PreK-K. The Superintendent confirmed that the Unions’ leadership and the EMOs support the calendar structure.

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

VOTED: To accept the SY20-21 Student and Family Calendar as submitted.

The Vote: Yes – Mayor Dan Rivera
Yes – Julia Silverio
Yes – Jessica Andors
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez
Yes – Patricia Mariano
Absent – Noemi Custodia-Lora
Yes – John Connolly

Report of the Chair

- Turnaround Plan Update: Chair Connolly noted the Joint Steering Committee has met with consultants who presented updates. CPRL (overseeing the Earned Autonomy Frameworks) is well into the engagement process. Great Schools (TAP) is beginning the process making sure to gather information from three students and families from each school level and to include ELL and special need students. Both CPRL and Great Schools will be at the April meeting to update on the stakeholder engagement, which should be complete in order to move toward the drafting of the actual Turnaround Plan renewal and the Earned Autonomy Frameworks. Jess Andors has assisted the consultants to gain access to the students and families. Jess Andors added that she, Pat Mariano and Noemi Custodia-Lora have provided detail to Great Schools for them to reach the community groups (CPAC, LCW, YMCA, Girls and Boys Club, etc.) to set up meetings. The concern is how the Covid-19 may affect the process. Chair Connolly added that all the City elected officials and State delegation have been contacted to set up meetings. Dr. Ventura Rodriguez commented that once all the data is collected, it would be appreciated to know what they as educators think how best to serve the students and he applauded that the evidenced based practices have been planned around the priorities of the district. The Superintendent noted that the plan will be formed from data of the subgroups to ensure to include the feedback received under the priorities for the three year plan. Student Representative Joseph Trinidad asked when these plans would be implemented. The Superintendent explained that once the plan is approved (June), the plans could start in the summer/fall 2020. Jess Andors requested a quarterly update (after implementation) on how the priorities are being met.

Chair Connolly noted that the next item for the LAE to discuss for approval is the FY21 Budget. There are two hearings scheduled in April for budget review and a subcommittee needs to be appointed. They are: Mayor Rivera, Patricia Mariano, Julia Silverio, Dr. Ventura Rodriguez and himself.

Other Business

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

VOTED: To approved the Regular Minutes for the February 12, 2020 meeting.

The Vote: Yes – Mayor Dan Rivera
Yes – Julia Silverio
Yes – Jessica Andors
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez
Yes – Patricia Mariano
Absent – Noemi Custodia-Lora
Yes – John Connolly

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

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 7:09 P.M. meeting.

The Vote: Yes – Mayor Dan Rivera
Yes – Julia Silverio
Yes – Jessica Andors
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez
Yes – Patricia Mariano
Absent – Noemi Custodia-Lora
Yes – John Connolly

John Connolly, Chair