

April 14, 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; Jessica Andors, Executive Director for Lawrence Community Works; Julia Silverio, Lawrence City Councilor and local business owner; 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, Ashly Dominguez, Student Representative and Joan Milone, Recording Secretary for this meeting.

The Acting Chair, Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, called the meeting to order at 6:42 P.M, apologized for the delay in commencing the meeting which was due to an extended Executive Session. He noted in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order, the meeting was being held with all Board Members, District Staff and guests remotely. YouTube is streaming the meeting live. He held the Pledge of Allegiance. Public comment may be submitted via [info@lawrenceallianceforeducation.org](mailto:info@lawrenceallianceforeducation.org) by 12 noon the day of the meeting to be included as public record.

### Superintendent's Report

Proposed FY22 Budget – Superintendent Paris introduced Masiel Jordan, Chief Financial Officer, who will share final numbers of proposed budget, budget goals and resources with a request for the LAE Board's vote for approval.

Masiel Jordan provided a summarization of the proposed budget of approximately \$212.4M for the Board. The funding received would be allocated across 4 district priorities: Student Achievement, Student Support, Grow a Culturally Responsive Workforce and Deepen Family and Student Partnership. She opened it for any additional questions, request a vote on the proposed budget. Dr. Rodriguez noted that two budget hearings were held previously with opportunity for more discussion.

Upon the motion made by Dan Rivera, seconded by Julia Silverio, it was

VOTED:           To approve the proposed FY22 Budget as submitted.

Dan Rivera requested Masiel present the budget process. She also noted the difference between Net School Spending and the City's contribution was approximately \$5M; the proposed budget increased approximately \$11M. No other questions.

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

Reopening Update – Mary Twomey provided an update related to the reopening to the in-person learning which began place on April 5 for Grades Prek-5 and district Special Education program.. The next two phases will be on April 28 for middle school and for the high school May 3 and 4. She provided the percentage of students returned and the anticipated students returning. Lastly, she reviewed health and safety protocols.

Each member expressed their appreciation for the information and for all the work the teachers, nurses and staff have been continuously doing in making this work. Jess expressed her concern with the teachers who are instructing both students in class and at home simultaneously. Superintendent Paris provided more detail of the processes teachers have implemented.

Teaching and Learning Highlights – Superintendent Paris presented a video providing some highlights of the reopening of schools and students attending in-class learning.

Summer Program – Christopher Heath presented on the planning for enriching and supportive programs. There will be 4 programs across 13 sites across the city. He reviewed each program and their staffing model. The four programs are: Level Up K-8, High School, Extended School Year and Newcomer EL. Superintendent Paris noted that the high school team will join the Board to provide summer opportunities for their students. She also noted that families will be provided the option for in-person/remote participation in the summer programs. She reiterated what Chris Heath mentioned and thanked the partnerships in creating an exciting, fun summer program.

Donation from Whirlpool to ARL – Superintendent provided information for the \$10K donation for the Arlington Elementary School.

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

VOTED:     Yes – Jessica Andors  
                  Yes – Noemi Custodia Lora  
                  Yes – Patricia Mariano  
                  Yes – Dan Rivera

Yes – Julia Silverio  
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

Donation from private family (Jean and Philip Kochman Scholarship Fund \$1000) for the senior class at Upper School Academy.

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

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

Other Business

Executive Session – Superintendent’s contract

The Chair noted agreement was met by the Board; the Superintendent’s current contract expires June 30, 2021. This 3-year contract will commence on July 1, 2021.

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

VOTED:       To approve the proposed Superintendent’s contract with the provision to include the vacation language that was previously agreed to in August 2019.

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

Superintendent Paris thanked the Board for their support and stated she was eager to continue their work started together.

Minutes – LAE Board Regular Meeting - March 17, 2021

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

Julia Silverio referred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph under the topic “In Person Return” – and noted her recollection was she agreed for additional compensation for the teachers working during Covid. Jessica Andors withdrew her motion to hold the minutes till the next meeting.

Julia Silverio noted that the Board is not taking the public comments lightly and that they have faith that the LTU and the Superintendent will come to an agreement.

Jessica Andors suggested that the district reach out to Essex Art for their support in the Summer Program. Patricia Mariano agreed.

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

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 8:01 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