

June 17, 2020

Minutes of the Lawrence Alliance for Education Board

A virtual meeting of the Lawrence Alliance for Education Board was held at 4:00 P.M. with the following members present: Honorable Dan Rivera, Mayor of Lawrence, Julia Silverio, Lawrence City Councilor and local business owner, Jessica Andors, Executive Director for Lawrence Community Works, Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, Associate Commission for statewide support DESE, Patricia Mariano, Lawrence School Committee Member, Dr. Noemi Custodia-Lora, VP of NECC Lawrence Campus and Chairman John Connolly, Executive Director of The 1647, Inc.

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

The Chair, John Connolly, called the meeting to order at 4:03 P.M

1. Pledge of Allegiance

John Connolly held the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Public Participation

No public comment.

3. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Paris provided information on the virtual graduation and parade for 1920 seniors with the support of the Mayor/City of Lawrence. 767 students graduated with an additional 132 to graduate in August.

An Operational and Social/Emotional Task force has been implemented in planning the opening of school with the assistance of the DESE guidance.

The Learning Professional Institute for Leaders is scheduled on 6/24, 6/25/20.

Remote Learning Survey Results – Denise Snyder presented a PowerPoint and reviewed the results (2005 responses) from an online survey provided to families. The findings from this survey will be used to adjust future practices.

The members noted some concerns such as the missing results from families not engaged in the remote learning, feedback from families with students with additional needs/assistance, the need to inform families the importance to do the survey; assistance of the Parent Liaison; to request feedback from other districts on their results and the importance to access students' logging in remotely by programs and tracking attendance. Superintendent Paris noted that the district will continue to reach out to families during the summer. Ventura Rodriguez noted that DESE will provide guidelines for the new school year that will support districts. Chair Connolly stated that

this unprecedented event will continue into the fall. This Board needs the data and a clear picture of the process to assist LPS to be prepared for the new school year.

Chair Connolly proposed a Special Meeting next week for a tactical vote for Earned Autonomy and an additional update on the Remote Learning to present a clearer picture recognizing the challenges to understand preparation for September.

School Closure/Covid-19 Response Update - Superintendent Paris updated the Board noting that she and her leadership team continue to meet with the stakeholders. A task force will be implemented to support the district's operations for opening of school. A social/emotional task force has already been implemented to support students, parents, and the community needs in the coming months.

Mayor Rivera provided an update on the current City's statistics to Covid-19. The City will reopen slowly to bring down the rates of infection. Testing is available.

Facilities Update – A video presentation was provided by Chris Merlino on the district's process in preparing for safe and clean school buildings for students and staff. He also presented the work and renovations done on some school buildings.

Prior to her leaving the meeting, Julia Silverio inquired on the number of graduates who will be attending college and are students tracked during college enrollment. Masiel Sheets noted that the National Public Clearing House subscription provides the district with tracking the students in college and she will provide the information on how many graduates will be attending college. She would not agree with the SOA vote to take place at this meeting unless the reengagement for the SOA survey was implemented. Superintendent Paris explained that the vote is on the Draft SOA noting that with the additional feedback and priorities the plan would be amended.

Julia Silverio left at 5:32 P.M.

Superintendent's Mid-Year Review – Superintendent Paris provided an overview of her four (4) goals and highlights to June, 2020 date.

SY'21 LPS Calendar – Superintendent Paris and Kinnon Foley provided an overview of the calendar revision. The Boston Marathon has been cancelled and an amendment would add this day (9/14/20) back to the calendar as a school day and the last day of school returns to June 21, 2021.

Upon the recommendation of the Chair and motion made by Mayor Dan Rivera, seconded by Ventura Rodriguez, it was

VOTED: To accept the SY'21 School Calendar proposal as presented.

The Vote: Yes – Mayor Dan Rivera
Absent – Julia Silverio
Yes - Jessica Andors
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez
Yes – Patricia Mariano

Yes – Noemi Custodia-Lora
Yes – Chair John Connolly

4. Report of the Chair

Turnaround Plan Update - Chair Connolly reviewed the process of the Turnaround Plan to date. Michelle Milstein, Senior Associate for Great Schools Partnership, along with David Ruff, Executive Director and Mo Nunez, Senior Associate, provided a PowerPoint presentation. The process culminated in many conversations between January-May 2020 with 71 participants from different stakeholder groups. Ms. Milstein and Mr. Nunez reviewed the stakeholders' feedback by objective: 1. Expectations, Time, and Date; 2. People and Partners, 3. Support and Engagement and 4. Autonomy and Accountability. They will prioritize hearing from the missing stakeholder groups for revision if necessary.

Mayor Rivera left meeting at 6:15 P.M.

Chair Connolly and members provided their comments on the various objectives presented. Chair Connolly reiterated that the LAE Board agreed to extend the outreach until fall, both consultants' contracts expire in June and LPS will have to go out to bid again. The present desire is to vote on the Turnaround Plan no later than November. David Ruff provided the anticipated timeline is to gather information from the additional stakeholders and to report to the LAE Board in October with anticipation for vote in November. Chair Connolly reiterated this anticipated plan schedule.

Student Opportunity Act - Chair Connolly opened in noting there is an August 18 submission deadline from DESE and it would be the best interest is to vote on the current SOA plan based on DESE's June 19 deadline and with the understanding that the family/student outreach clarification will not be completed by then and with the understanding that funding may change. Assistant Superintendent Mary Toomey presented the LPS-SOA plan's overview by PowerPoint providing the Four Commitments for the SOA plan based on the current survey results.

All members noted their appreciation in how well the SOA Plan aligned with the district's plan/needs as well as incorporated the LAE Board's feedback into this proposal.

Upon the recommendation of the Chair and motion made by Patricia Mariano, seconded by Jessica Andors, it was

VOTE: To approve the Student Opportunity Act application for submission as presented.

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

Earned Autonomy Framework – Chair Connolly noted that Maddie Sims with the assistance of Grace McCarty has presented at three LAE meetings, three Joint Steering Committees and the EA Subcommittee. Ms. Sims and Ms. McCarty presented an overview of the Earned Autonomy Framework including dashboard updates, the target setting, public snapshots and how the plan will be carried forward.

Chair Connolly noted that Phase II will be forthcoming. The Superintendent and he have been working on an outline on this process. A meeting will be scheduled next week for this discussion.

Jessica Andors left the meeting at 7:15 P.M.

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

VOTE: To approve the Earned Autonomy Framework as presented and to be implemented in the SY'20/21.

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

5. Other Business

Approval of Minutes

Upon the recommendation of the Chair and motion made by Ventura Rodriguez, seconded by Patricia Mariano, it was

VOTED: To approved the Regular Minutes for the April 29, 2020 meeting.

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

Upon the recommendation of the Chair and motion made by Patricia Mariano, seconded by Ventura Rodriguez, it was

VOTED: To approved the Regular Minutes for the May 13, 2020 meeting.

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

Upon the recommendation of the Chair and motion made by Patricia Mariano, seconded by Ventura Rodriguez, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 7:30 P.M.
meeting.

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

John Connolly, Chair