

April 29, 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, Patricia Mariano, Lawrence School Committee Member, Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, Associate Commission for statewide support DESE, Noemi Custodia-Lora, VP of NECC Lawrence Campus and Chairman John Connolly, Executive Director of The 1647, Inc.

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

The Chair, John Connolly, called the meeting to order at 4:04 P.M

I. Pledge of Allegiance

John Connolly held the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Public Participation

There was no public comments.

III. New Business

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Paris provided an update of the school closure and related matters pertinent to the Covid-19 pandemic, which included principals' input on their outreach to students/families, update on remote learning, update on purchase of 2500 additional hotspots, the leadership's plan to celebrate this year's graduates.

Noemi Custodia-Lora and Jessica Andors joined the meeting at 4:10 PM.

Mayor Dan Rivera provided a Covid-19 update pertinent to the City of Lawrence and new regulations and procedures for the residents of Lawrence.

Students' Rights Code of Conduct Update – Denise Snyder provided a PowerPoint presentation on the steps in the process in rewriting the Code of Conduct Handbook. A Culture and Climate steering committee (educators, school leaders and Central Office staff) was created to complete this task. This handbook reflects the commitment to build a strong LPS climate for students. She presented the handbook's vetting process/schedule to hopefully return to present this document at the next meeting for the LAE Board's questions and approval. It was requested that Ms. Snyder provide the list of the stakeholders to the Board.

Oliver School Update – Anne Marie Stronach opened the discussion noting that the preferred schematic report is due to the MSBA by May 13. She introduced the design/project management team attending: Deborah Moray, Dan Gerber Matea, Kristen Olsen and Alex Pitkin who

provided a PowerPoint presentation of the additional PSR plan for the Oliver School, which proposed to remain at the current school site with projected additions/renovations to meet the LPS Education Plan (Grades K-8, 1000 students) with very few exceptions/compromises-a few classrooms not included. Members questioned concerns for usage of nearby parks, traffic and parking (Holy Rosary). The members voiced their approval of the design. Mayor Rivera noted that he would abstain from the vote but approves the proposed design.

Jessica Andors left the meeting at 4:50 PM.

Upon the recommendation of the Chair and motion made by Julia Silverio, seconded by Noemi Custodia-Lora, it was

VOTED: To approve the submission of the Preferred Schematic Report to the MSBA in substantially the form presented to the LAE at its February 2020 meeting and subsequently revised in accordance with the presentation at this Special Meeting dated April 29, 2020 which report is subject to revision and final approval by the Mayor of the City of Lawrence and by the LPS Building Committee representative.

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

Report of the Chair

Student Opportunity Act - Chair Connolly noted that at the last meeting it was agreed to request guidance from DESE based on moving LPS (student/family) outreach to late summer/early fall. Based on guidance, LPS will submit application when DESE determines the deadline (May 15, 2020 – On) and request to submit additional information if needed once outreach has been completed.

Superintendent Paris and her leadership team presented the updated SOA application plan. Dr. Mary Twomey presented the Draft SOA Plan 2021-2023 and answered questions of the Board. The plan consists of four commitments:

1. Expand Inclusion/co-teaching for Students with Disabilities and English learners
2. Use Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps
3. Monitoring the Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets
4. Engaging all Families

Patricia Mariano noted through a written letter she wrote/presented that more funds/attention needs to be provided to the emotional/social gap of students when they return to school after the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mayor Rivera requested clarification on the budget proposed for Curriculum & Instruction. Superintendent Paris explained that it is to build capacity and skills of the educator through the help of organizations/partners creating a better workforce. This support will also assist in

teacher retention. Dr. Rodriguez suggested the plan accent diversity in the proposed additional workforce. Superintendent noted that the district will continue to strategize with diversity. Julia Silverio noted her continued concern with the student/parent engagement. Chair Connolly reiterated that he will seek clarity from DESE on the application date and request that LPS will submit application at earliest recommended time and amend application based on student/parent engagement. Ms. Silverio noted she would not approve the SOA without this process. Chair Connolly noted that the proposed plan definitely benefits the district, but he would have liked to see Early College as one of the priorities especially with the Smith Grant ending which vastly supported it.

Mayor Rivera left meeting at 6:00 PM.

Maricel Sheets, Assistant Superintendent noted that 281 students participated in Early College this year and next year will expand the program to 304 students.

Odanis Hernandez added that there is a wait list to attend Early College; Chair Connolly requested, if possible, that she provide an update for the May LAE meeting.

Chair Connolly noted the SOA will be discussed at the May 2020 LAE meeting. Once guidance is received from DESE, a vote will be recommended.

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

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 6:17 P.M.
meeting.

John Connolly

John Connolly, Chair