



Press Release

For immediate release

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Members of Lawrence Alliance for Education Board Announced

Board will oversee a new superintendent and report to the state commissioner

MALDEN — Elementary and Secondary Education Acting Commissioner Jeff Wulfson today announced six of the seven members of the Lawrence Alliance for Education, the board that will oversee the Lawrence Public Schools when Superintendent/Receiver Jeffrey C. Riley steps down. A seventh member is expected to be named shortly.

In mid-November, Mr. Riley announced his decision to step down at the end of the current school year, more than six years after he was appointed. The Department announced that the next receiver would be a partnership board, known as the Lawrence Alliance for Education.

The Lawrence Alliance for Education will have the statutory authorities granted to a receiver by state law. The board, with the commissioner's approval, will identify a superintendent who will manage the district on a day-to-day basis, reporting to the partnership board. The board itself will report to the commissioner of elementary and secondary education.

The six members of the Lawrence Alliance for Education being announced today are:

- Chairman John Connolly, executive director of The 1647, Inc. in Boston, an organization that helps schools increase family engagement;
- Hon. Daniel Rivera, mayor of the city of Lawrence;
- Jessica Andors, executive director of Lawrence Community Works, a community development corporation;
- Dr. Noemi Custodia-Lora, vice president of the Lawrence campus and community relations for Northern Essex Community College;
- Patricia Mariano, member of the Lawrence School Committee and former principal of the Francis M. Leahy School, an elementary school in Lawrence; and
- Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, associate commissioner for the statewide system of support at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

"Under Jeff Riley's leadership, Lawrence schools have started to turn the corner with improved math and English language arts scores, as well as higher graduation rates. As Mr. Riley prepares to step down, the creation of this board means that the important work of school improvement will continue in Lawrence. We are very thankful Mayor Rivera and other local leaders have agreed to be a part of this very important next phase in Lawrence schools," **Education Secretary James Peyser said.**

"In selecting these people, I looked for people with a record of success in improving schools, as well as people with knowledge of the community," **Commissioner Wulfson said.** "I am grateful to each of these individuals for agreeing to serve."

"Lawrence Public Schools have made great improvement through the hard work of Mr. Riley, Lawrence educators and Lawrence families," **said Lawrence Alliance for Education Chair John Connolly.** "I look forward to working with the board members and the Lawrence community to continue working for every Lawrence child and family to have access to a world-class education."

The board will meet regularly in open session.

Mr. Riley will continue to have full authority in the district in the short term. Members of the Lawrence Alliance for Education will serve in an advisory capacity until a date to be determined by Acting Commissioner Wulfson.

For more information on Lawrence and Level 5 (chronically underperforming) districts, go to <http://www.doe.mass.edu/level5/districts/>.

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