

Minutes of the Lawrence Alliance for Education Board – LAE

The Lawrence Alliance for Education Board meeting was held in person at the South Lawrence East Educational Complex Auditorium with the following members present: Maria Moeller, CEO/The Community Group; Patricia Mariano, Chair; Dr. Dolores Calaf, Early Childhood and K-12 Education, Consultant with Community Collaborative; Juana Matias, Regional Administrator for the New England Regional Office, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Edgar De Leon, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Director at Noble and Greenough School, and Arlene Garcia, Parent Liaison, Lawrence Family Development Charter School. Absent: Mayor Brian DePeña

Also in person were Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez; Yedrianny Alvarez, LAE Student Representative and Maria L. Campusano, Recording Secretary for this meeting.

Chair Mariano, called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. The Chair called the audience to recite the pledge of allegiance.

Public Participation

Chair Mariano explained the norms of public participation. She then called on Mr. Homayoun Maal.

Mr. Homayoun Maali, 53 Chester Street, Lawrence, MA stated that citizens are committed to supporting teachers and their unions; demanding the best compensation for LPS employees at this critical time. He also added that the new superintendent must listen to the teachers and their unions. He concluded that we must work hard to improve community and student engagement.

Chair Patricia Mariano's Report

Chair Mariano shared that the superintendent search is underway, last month's work included designing the engagement and community strategy to ensure that the process is accessible and inclusive. The search subcommittee meets bi-weekly on Mondays at 5:00 p.m. LAE members: Juana M., Maria M. and Chair Patricia M. are working closely with the Alma Advisory Group and are also working with the district's communication and operations team to plan and facilitate the community engagement activities, including the site visit community meeting. Chair Mariano also shared that the community survey was launched on December 21, 2023 in English and Spanish with 400 responses and she hopes to receive at least 1000 responses. The survey will close on January 24, 2024. Alma's team has conducted 17 one to one interviews with elected officials and key community leaders to gather initial insights and perspectives on what is most important to the next superintendent. The Alma Advisory Group will conduct focus groups at Parthum and South Lawrence East Complexes on January 17 and 18 at 6:00 pm.

VOTED: To approve the proposed school calendar for the academic year 2024-2025

Vote: Upon the recommendation of the Chair Patricia Mariano to approve the school calendar year 2024-2025; A motion was made by Juana Matias; Seconded by Edgar de Leon

The Vote

Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
Yes - Edgar de Leon
Yes - Arlene Garcia
Yes - Juana Matias
Yes - Maria Moeller
Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

VOTED: To approve the November 8, 2024 LAE board minutes

Vote: Upon the recommendation of the Chair Patricia Mariano to approve the November 8 minutes; A motion was made by Juana Matias; Seconded by Maria Moeller

The Vote

Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
Yes - Edgar de Leon
Yes - Arlene Garcia
Yes - Juana Matias
Yes - Maria Moeller
Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

VOTED: To approve the December 13, 2023 LAE board minutes

Vote: Upon the recommendation of the Chair Patricia Mariano to approve the December 13 minutes; A motion was made by Juana Matias; Seconded by Arlene Garcia

The Vote

Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
Abstain - Edgar de Leon
Yes - Arlene Garcia
Abstain - Juana Matias
Yes - Maria Moeller
Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

District Updates

Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez shared photos of recent LPS celebrations and events showcasing the Pathway Night; Naira Sanchez nominated Artist of the Week; Reindeer Robotics Tournament; JROTC hosting the MA competition and holding a second place for the Governor's Cup; Nutrition Services for serving 433 families; Youth Against Violence at Sullivan Park with LHS Speaker Mia Mejia Class of 2024; Oliver Elementary held a winter celebration featuring the characters of Elsa and Olaf; South Lawrence East hosted a holiday sing-along and had a presentation of winter science facts. Mr. Rodriguez also showcased Athletics in Action with Girls Basketball defeating Amesbury and Whittier Tech; Boys Basketball finishing second in the Commonwealth Motors Christmas Classic, Wrestling continuing in action most recently at Methuen High School; LPS Intramurals with over 528 students participating. The Facilities Department resurfaced 4 gymnasiums throughout the district. The Superintendent shared that the District has been preparing for winter weather, including working over the weekend and into Monday to clear snow from sidewalks and parking lots around the schools. The Superintendent shared that this work was also done in collaboration with the Mayor's Office, DPW, LPD, and LFD.

School Planning for SY 2024-2025

Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez provided a presentation that included a School Planning timeline, a school Planning overview, School Planning Committee meeting dates, the goals of the Budget Subcommittee during the school planning meetings, the goals of the Budget Subcommittee in co-creating the FY 24-25 budget book, budget priorities centered on student achievement, support services, growing a culturally responsive workforce, and deepening family/student partnerships.

LPS School Autonomy Framework

Principals, Ms. Cheryl Merz, Mr. Alex Rock, and Mr. Erik Desmond gave a presentation showing what the School Autonomy Framework (SAF) is, how SAF fits into the Turnaround Plan, the work done in collaboration with the Center for Public Research and Leadership (CPRL), the transition to the SAF Management Committee, the school designation process, and how the dashboard will inform school planning meetings and the tiered system of supports.

Teaching and Learning

Ms. Brittany Lynch, Director of Behavioral Health, gave a presentation on the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support framework (MTSS), the goals of interventions. Ms. Lynch also explained that there are currently two partnership models, training offered through Suffolk University - Center for Restorative Practices, Lesley Institute for Trauma Sensitivity: Safety Care Training De-Escalation and Physical Management, the Impact Sports Lab & MyMindset 360 program that supports PEAR: The Holistic Student Assessment (HSA) HSA data: Interventions, Prevention and Promotion, Stakeholder Voice Into Action: Supporting a Successful Bus Ride for All Students, and the monthly parent newsletters.

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

Vote: Upon the recommendation of the Chair Patricia Mariano to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 p.m.; A motion was made by Juana Matias; Seconded by Arlene Garcia

The Vote

Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
Yes - Edgar de Leon
Yes - Arlene Garcia
Yes - Juana Matias
Yes - Maria Moeller
Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes¹

Ms. Patricia Mariano, Chair
Date

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