

October 11, 2023

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

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 6:10 p.m. The Chair called the audience to recite the pledge of allegiance, immediately followed by a moment of silence in memory of the passing of Antoinette Aldrich, a paraprofessional, supporter of the LHS cheerleader squad, and a parent who passed unexpectedly.

Chair Mariano also welcomed to the meeting state representative and vice chairman of the City of Lawrence City Council Ms. Estella Reyes.

Public Participation

Chair Mariano explained what the expectation of public participation is and how it is conducted, she called the following:

- Homayoun Maali, 53 Chester Street, Lawrence, MA spoke about supporting the teachers and their union this academic year and the hiring of the superintendent. Also demanded that teachers, paraprofessionals and cafeteria workers have competitive wages. adding that to improve the academic performance, the need of parent and community involvement is needed citing a quote from Benjamin Franklin on education investment.

Chair Patricia Mariano Report

- Shared information concerning e-mail protocols, asked DESE and the Attorney to develop the protocols for handling emails that are sent to the board. The recommendations were; emails should be sent to the LAE@lawrence.k12.ma.us official email address, continue the practice of regularly checking the inbox of the e-mail address, if individual board members receive emails from the public concerning LAE business, those emails should be forwarded to the official email address, all emails to this address must be considered a matter of public record and must be accurately recorded and tracked. Chair Mariano explained that she will email members a more detailed protocol which will delineate responsibilities for responding to emails and request for items to be placed on future agendas of the LAE through board members.
- In the second item, Chair Mariano explained that she was holding on to the response to Ms. Matias inquiry on the vendor report for the superintendent search as Ms. Matias was absent from the meeting.

Superintendent's Report

- Dan McCarthy, Director of the Office of Planning and Development accompanied by Ms. Jennifer Sanchez, Lawrence homeowner. Mr. McCarthy presented information regarding the Mount Auburn Street back lot adjacent to Frost Complex property. Mr. McCarthy explained what the requirements were in the 1960s for buildables homes; adding that he was looking for a vote from the board to allow an intergovernmental department transfer to allow the 4,000 square foot portion of the land to be subdivided.

VOTED: To allow the subdivision of the property between 33 Hamlet Street next to 27 Mt. Auburn Street.

Vote: Upon the motion made by Chair Patricia Mariano to allow the subdivision of the property between 33 Hamlet Street next to 27 Mt. Auburn Street to be subdivided for an intergovernmental department transfer to occur; So move by Mayor Brian DePeña; Seconded by Maria Moeller

The Vote

Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
Yes - Edgar De Leon
Yes - Maria Moeller
Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano
Yes- Mayor Brian DePeña

Motion Passes

VOTED: To approve a request to the commissioner for a waiver of the extraordinary maintenance limit related to roof replacements at the Leonard and Tarbox Schools

Vote: Upon the motion made by Chair Patricia Mariano to approve a waiver of the extraordinary maintenance limit in regards to funding facilities repair through net school spending specifically related to roof replacements at the Leonard and the Tarbox Schools. The cost of the roof replacement at the Leonard School is \$456,220 and the cost of the Tarbox School roof replacement is \$329,493; So move by Maria Moeller; Seconded by Mayor DePeña.

The vote:

Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
Yes - Edgar De Leon
Yes - Maria Moeller
Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano
Yes - Mayor Brian DePeña

Motion Passes

School Safety Update:

Mr. Geraldo Acosta, Assistant Superintendent, provided a presentation showcasing roles and responsibilities of the school safety officers, school cameras, school crisis plan, protocols of school drills, school resource officers, and our 2-year old bloodhound certified comfort dog for emotional support, Lancer.

Financial Update:

Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez provided a snapchat of the FY24 budget vs. actuals (explained how much money the district had spent to the present). The new dashboard tracks the expendings and also indicates where the incumbent money is. Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez concluded that LPS is in pretty good shape as we've gone through about a quarter of the fiscal year that started on July 1, 2023.

MSBA Projects:

Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez provided an update of the Leahy School construction site which included demolition and abatement, general contractors, anticipated move in by July, 2025 and an estimate of the project cost.

Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez provided an update of the Oliver School construction site indicating a time-line of where the project is currently, and the anticipated project close out.

MCAS Presentation:

Ms. Kristyn Sullivan, Office of Assessment and Accountability, provided a powerpoint presentation describing overall school accountability ranking relative to other schools districts statewide, progress towards state sets improvements, closing the achievement gap by raising the performance of the lowest performing student subgroups, the next generation MCAS, student growth percentile, progress toward attaining English proficiency, chronic absenteeism, and high school performance indicators.

Superintendent's Goals:

Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez briefly described the goals that will be part of his evaluation. These goals consisted of creating strengthening a vision for instruction that drives student achievement, depending efforts to recruit and retain culturally responsive and highly effective staff excellent teachers, deepen and expand ways that the district engages with families and students, maintaining effective lines of communication and collaboration with all the community and city stakeholders including LAE, City officials, school committee members etc.

Superintendent Acknowledgments:

Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez thanked the North Reading Subaru for adopting the Frost School event, and the Gear Up College and Career Fair departments for hosting over 200 colleges and technical schools that came in to talk to students about possibilities for after high school.

Overview of the Turnaround Pillar 1

Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez, showcased the rigorous standard based curricula and assessment that is aligned with theme 3 empowering teachers, principals, families, and the community to drive improvement, and strategy 4, coupling autonomy with accountability for improved student outcomes, the literacy assessment DIBELS, standards based curricula k-8, standard based curricula at the high school level, standards, domain, cluster, etc., use of Pre-AP with Springboard, rigorous standards and early college.

VOTED: To approve the minutes of September 13, 2023 meeting minutes

Vote: Upon the motion made by Chair Patricia Mariano to approve the minutes of September 13, 2023; So move by Mayor Brian DePeña; Seconded by Maria Moeller

The vote:

- Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
- Yes - Edgar De Leon
- Yes - Maria Moeller
- Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano
- Yes - Mayor Brian DePeña

Motion Passes

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m.

Vote: Upon the motion made by Chair Patricia Mariano to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m.; So move by Maria Moeller, Second by Dr. Dolores Calaf

The vote:

- Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
- Yes - Edgar De Leon
- Yes - Maria Moeller
- Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano
- Yes - Mayor Brian DePeña

Motion Passes

Ms. Patricia Mariano, Chair
Date