

June 9, 2021

Minutes of the Lawrence Alliance for Education Board

A virtual meeting of the Lawrence Alliance for Education Board was held at 6:00 P.M. with the following members present: Dan Rivera, CEO/President Mass Development, Jessica Andors, and Executive Director for Lawrence Community Works, Julia Silverio, Lawrence City Councilor and local business owner, Patricia Mariano, Lawrence School Committee Member, Dr. Noemi Custodia-Lora, VP of NECC Lawrence Campus and Acting Chairman Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, Associate Commission for statewide support DESE.

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

The Acting Chair, Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M, and noted in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order, the meeting was being held with all Board Members, District Staff and guests remotely. Facebook is streaming the meeting live. He held the Pledge of Allegiance. He noted that public comment may be submitted via info@lawrenceallianceforeducation.org by 12 noon the day of the meeting to be included as public record. He noted this meeting would probably be the last one held virtually and anticipated in-person meetings starting the next school year.

Dr. Rodriguez acknowledged that the LAE Secretary, Joan Milone, would end her service to the LAE Board on June 30.

Superintendents Report

Superintendent Paris opened her report noting the two LHS graduation ceremonies held on June 5, 2021 for 725 graduating high school students.

- Teaching and Learning –

- Tu Voz Council – Presentation – Superintendent Paris provided the background and overview of the President's Council implementation and process. There has been a lot of discussion and effort made to restructure the President's Council; the logo and name has been changed (Tu Voz Council).

The group has worked on multiple projects:

- Attendance (Tenacity Project)
- Restorative Practices
- Remote Learning & Engagement
- Self-Care

Members of the Board conversed with two parents to discuss their experience as part of the Presidents Council and their child's experience as a student in the district. The Chair thanked them on behalf of all the parents who are involved in this group.

- Facilities – Superintendent Paris opened this discussion noting the need for the LAE Board's support for capital improvement plans. Chief Financial Officer, Masiel Jordan, shared that that the district is allowed to allocate \$150K per project under Chapter 70 funding for building repairs – she on behalf of the district requested the Board to approve a waiver to (to Commissioner for approval) spend above this amount, which would still count towards Net School Spending (NSS). Christopher Merlino, Facilities Director, provided detail on examples for the related projects that would need this waiver request (boiler repairs \$462 LPS cost) Bruce School roof w/exhaust system (\$605K LPS cost). Members

Upon the motion made by Dan Rivera, seconded by Julia Silverio, it was

VOTED: To endorse the Superintendent's request to the Commissioner to waive the school finance regulation regarding the specific building projects discussed.

Christopher Merlino provided detailed information on plans for upcoming repairs to the district's schools based on the members' questions.

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

- Policies – Assistant Superintendent, Denise Snyder, presented a review of each of the 5 policies which need the LAE Members approval: JB: Equal Educational Opportunities; JF: School Admissions; JFABD: Homeless Students Enrollment Right and Services; JFABE: Educational Opportunities for Military Children; JFABF: Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care.

Julia Silverio noted she would abstain; she did not attend last meeting for the discussion.

Upon the recommendation of the Chair, a motion was made by Dan Rivera, seconded by Patricia Mariano, it was

VOTED: To approve the policy: JB Equal Educational Opportunities as submitted.

The Vote: Yes - Jessica Andors
Yes - Noemi Custodia Lora
Yes – Patricia Mariano

Yes – Dan Rivera
Yes – Abstain
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

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

VOTED: To approve the policy: JF School Admissions as submitted.

The Vote: Yes - Jessica Andors
Yes - Noemi Custodia Lora
Yes – Patricia Mariano
Yes – Dan Rivera
Abstain – Julia Silverio
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

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

VOTED: To approve the policy: JFABD: Homeless Students Enrollment Right and Services as submitted.

The Vote: Yes - Jessica Andors
Yes - Noemi Custodia Lora
Yes – Patricia Mariano
Yes – Dan Rivera
Abstain – Julia Silverio
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

Upon the recommendation of the Chair, a motion was made by Noemi Custodia Lora, seconded by Patricia Mariano, it was

VOTED: To approve the policy: JFABE: Educational Opportunities for Military Children as submitted.

The Vote: Yes - Jessica Andors
Yes - Noemi Custodia Lora
Yes – Patricia Mariano
Yes – Dan Rivera
Abstain – Julia Silverio
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

Upon the recommendation of the Chair, a motion was made by Jessica Andors, seconded by Noemi Custodia Lora, it was

VOTED: To approve the policy: JFABF: Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care as submitted.

The Vote: Yes - Jessica Andors
Yes - Noemi Custodia Lora
Yes – Patricia Mariano
Yes – Dan Rivera
Abstain – Julia Silverio
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

- Summer Program Update – Superintendent Paris provided an update on the Summer Programs, which include four distinct programs for students, which include Level Up K-8, High School Program, Extended School Year and Newcomer EL. She provided the programs’ schedules and the staffing model for the five weeks.

Superintendent Paris requested and answered questions from the Board which consisted of funding, communication, enrollment and who are partners. Patricia Mariano suggested allowing non LPS Lawrence students be offered to attend the program as well if there are seats available. Denise Snyder provided detailed information on the partners who are supporting the summer program.

- Earned autonomy framework-update - Elizabeth Daniel, Project Director, and Cristobal Bisso from CPRL presented information on the Earned Autonomy Framework’s proposed recommendations on autonomies and supports.

Ms. Daniel presented the background; 1.Purpose; Domain and Indicators: Outcomes-- Engagement Growth Achievement and Success. Performance Scoring. 2, Preparing for Implementation: gathering stakeholder input and view: more detail at August meeting.

CPRL received feedback based upon recommendations received upon “How Does a Menu Help Schools”.

She presented recommendations for the district, menu of autonomies and supports and the timeline for the summer of 2021.

Julia Silverio left the meeting at 7:50 P.M

CPRL with Central Office will have tasks over the summer to support the development of a pilot of the EAF.

Jess Andors noted her concern implementing this process along with the restarting of school in the fall. The Superintendent will work with the Board for their guidance to implement the pilot.. Members noted the thoroughness of the information. The Chair added that the Board would have to review this information again in August or September to decide on what to implement for the school year.

Cynthia Paris left the meeting at 8:05 P.M.

Report of the Chair

- LAE and DESE MOU

The Chair noted that the LAE's selected appointments are for a 5-year term; the MOU is a 5-year agreement to expire June 2021. He provided an updated (mirror) MOU for the Board's approval to extend it for 3 additional years and requested the Board's approval.

Upon the motion made by Dan Rivera and seconded by Jessica Andors, it was

VOTED: To extend the revised MOU as submitted for the next 3 years as long as there are no significant changes.

Dan Rivera agreed to approve in order for the MOU would not expire. Jessica Andors wanted to review the MOU prior to approval based on multiple items that may need revision (LAE's relationship to DESE and to the School Committee) and provided items such as the open position on the Board and the LAE Board's lack of evaluation. The Chair noted that the MOU allows the LAE Board as a body to work legally as the Receiver. These topics are important for discussion and for conference with the Commissioner, but are not part of the MOU. Dan Rivera suggested that the Board approve the MOU for one year to motivate discussions during the year for the 3-years. Patricia Mariano noted that evaluations were received by email annually in June/July. Other members commented that the MOU is separate from the topics discussed. Jessica Andors noted to vote for a new 3-year MOU she wanted assurance that there will be a documented commitment from DESE to integrate the Receivership and the elected School Committee to implement somewhat of local control. She noted for the record that she would vote with Dan Rivera's amendment to get this resolved this year. Patricia Mariano noted that the MOU on item 10, the Commissioner can dismiss the LAE Board by terminating the MOU which would allow (if ready) to transfer control to the School Committee. Jessica Andors added that the MOU has some shading of what are the LAE Board's responsibilities.

Jessica Andors withdrew her 2nd motion. Patricia Mariano seconded the motion.

The Vote: No - Jessica Andors
No - Noemi Custodia Lora
Yes – Patricia Mariano
Yes – Dan Rivera
Absent – Julia Silverio
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

PASSES

The Chair will approach the Attorney to discuss and approach the concerns of the Board and how and will respond back to the Members.

Other

- Minutes

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

VOTED: To approve the March 17, 2021 Regular Minutes as submitted.

The Vote: No - Jessica Andors
No - Noemi Custodia Lora
Yes – Patricia Mariano
Yes – Dan Rivera
Absent – Julia Silverio
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

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

VOTED: To approve the April 14, 2021 Executive and Regular Minutes as submitted.

The Vote: No - Jessica Andors
No - Noemi Custodia Lora
Yes – Patricia Mariano
Yes – Dan Rivera
Absent – Julia Silverio
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

Upon the recommendation of the Chair, a motion was made by Noemi Custodia Lora, seconded by Patricia Mariano, it was

VOTED: To approve the May 12, 2021 Executive and Regular Minutes as submitted.

The Vote: No - Jessica Andors
No - Noemi Custodia Lora
Yes – Patricia Mariano
Yes – Dan Rivera
Absent – Julia Silverio
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

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

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 8:52 P.M.

The Vote: No - Jessica Andors
No - Noemi Custodia Lora
Yes – Patricia Mariano
Yes – Dan Rivera
Absent – Julia Silverio
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez

Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, Chair