



## Minutes of the LAE Superintendent Search Subcommittee Meeting

02.12.2024 Minutes

Time: 5:13 p.m.

### Attendees:

1. Sylvia Flowers, Alma Advisory Group
2. Eliana Pereyra, Alma Advisory Group
3. Naya Thompson, Alma Advisory Group
4. Patricia Mariano, LAE Board Chair
5. Maria Moeller, LAE Member
6. Juana Matias, LAE Member
7. Lauren Woo, DESE
8. Breanna Higgins, DESE
9. Anne Marie Stronach, DESE

Alma Leader Sylvia Flowers introduced the agenda items to be covered at the meeting: review the job description, presentation for the February 14 LAE meeting, the selection process steps.

### Voted:

To approve the minutes of the Superintendent Search Subcommittee on 01.22.2024

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent Search Subcommittee member Patricia Mariano to approve the minutes of January 22, 2024; a motion was made by Juana Matias; Seconded by Maria Moeller

### The vote:

Yes	Sylvia Flowers, Alma Advisory Group
Yes	Eliana Pereyra, Alma Advisory Group
Yes	Patricia Mariano, LAE Board Chair
Yes	Maria Moeller, LAE Member
Yes	Lauren Woo, DESE
Yes	Breanna Higgins DESE
Yes	Juana Matias, LAE Member

Motion Passes



- Patricia Mariano read the shared purpose guidance statement which outlines the following: *our goal is to recruit, screen and select the next collaborative inclusive, outcome driven Superintendent of the Lawrence Public Schools. Our purpose is to lead a transparent superintendent search process engaging as many people as possible guided by the input of the Lawrence staff, students, families, partners, leaders in the community and designed to mitigate bias every step of the way.*

- Sylvia Flower presented the group with a revised superintendent timeline which extended the time they took from the stakeholders input which reflects their current expectations. Indicating that after presenting to the LAE Board on February 14th the community report and the presentation of the drafted job description, if approved from February to March recruitment and screening begins. March to April is the semi-finalist round and April to May the finalization of induction plans
- So far the team has accomplished communications and outreach to the community, launch of survey, Virtual and in-person meetings, and completion of community survey, completion of the job profile for the LAE to review.
- What is coming next is heavy recruitment candidates for the role, and the interview and selection of candidates.

### **Community Engagement Report**

- Between December and January, the Alma team collected input from the Lawrence community through various channels including their community survey, virtual, and in-person sessions resulting in 1866 responses
  - o In-Person Community Gathering. Resulted in 30 In-person meetings
  - o Virtual Interviews and Focus Groups. Resulted in 32 virtual interviews and focus groups
  - o As a result of 62 meetings, Alma touched base with 390 participants among students, parents, staff, community members and district partners.

### **Students Voices and Perspectives**

- Included the voices of students representing the Superintendent's Cabinet, Arlington MS, Nuestro Mundo, Parthum MS, Lawrence HS, Unidos Academy, Oliver MS, Spark Academy
  - 68 Student in-person participation and 277 Students who participated in the survey
  - ***The Alma team had prepared a student summary and would like to take it back to the students as they asked how the information would be used.***
- Survey generated 1866 responses representing a range of community stakeholders that include: Caregivers, students, staff and community members



- Racial/Ethnicity of survey respondents indicated that 700 respondents were completed in Spanish

#### **What had the Alma team learned through the survey:**

- Lawrence is a resilient, caring and very involved community
- Lawrence has a very strong involved political climate
- Lawrence has a rich history of resilience, diversity and mutual aid and support
- Resources to aid families are essential for the success and stability of students
- School autonomy while described as a positive, also poses some challenges
- Differing perspectives exist about the benefits and challenges of state receivership

#### **LPS has many strengths to champion and protect**

- Caring educators and dedicated staff
- Students who care about their future and want to be heard
- Consistent professional development for new teachers and expansion of PD for other roles
- History of school autonomy and evolving earned autonomy model
- Strong partnerships with community organizations to support schools and families
- Developing a diverse pipeline of bilingual paraprofessionals and educators
- Family Resource Center and school - based parent liaisons
- Emerging practices and programs implemented to support literacy, special education and programs for multilingual students

#### **Lifting Students Voices - What they want to protect - Areas to improve**

- The sense of community within the schools and district
- Student voice and community are celebrated and honored
- Newcomers appreciated the effort schools make to welcome them into the community and help them make friends and join activities
- Additional course offering including classes with real world application
- Increase the number of school activities
- Consistent enforcement of policies
- Increase mental health services and support
- Strengthen measures to promote and create safer schools
- Improve the quality of food in the cafeteria and offer more options that reflect the culture of our community

#### **Lifting Caregiver-Community Voices - What they want to protect - areas to improve**

- Increase collaboration and receptiveness to working with and listening to parents
- Supportive and caring teachers, staff and leaders
- Community Partnerships



- Improve academic and technical offerings for our students so they have more choices in the future and success
- Improve school safety especially outside and perimeter of school grounds
- More inclusion and additional supports and services for multicultural learners and students with IEPs and 504s (before and after school)
- Communication and transparency
- More quality and culturally diverse food options in schools

### **Opportunities for Improvement - Eight areas were highlighted**

- Recruitment and Retention
- Safety and Security
- Inclusive communication and access to information in the home language e.g. Spanish
- Coordinating and organizing resources to address the mental health needs of students
- Increase options for before and after school extracurriculars activities, ensuring student access to these opportunities that also include transportation
- Improve alignment and coordination of community partnerships
- Improve human resources expertise and support for principals/school leaders
- Increase resources and access to services like inclusion for students with Disabilities and Multilingual Learners/Newcomers at all schools.

Top 5 issues in open text responses: ***“Lawrence Public Schools will be successful if we accomplish these 3 things within the next 5 years”***

- Recruiting, retaining and supporting teachers, school leaders and support staff
- Staying focused on academics
- Improving school safety for students and staff
- Increasing trust, collaboration and transparency
- Engaging and involving families/caregivers more

### **Critical Skills for the next Superintendent**

*The Lawrence community wants an experienced educational leader who celebrates and embraces the diversity of the community. A leader who skillfully builds trusting relationships and fosters a safe and supportive environment for students, teachers, staff, and families through collaboration and transparency with a laser focus on continuous improvement and student centered decision making*

A leader who:

- is culturally competent, open-minded
- fosters open dialogue and transparent communication and is responsive to feedback
- is fully committed to creating a culture of trust and respect
- keeps the impact on students as the primary focus when making decisions



- is deeply knowledgeable and has track record of success improving academic and socio-emotional outcomes for students
- an adaptable leader who willing explore and pursue innovative ways to address new and existing challenges
- is active in promoting an inclusive environment that fosters a sense of being welcome and valued
- a leader who provides the resources and support needed for all to excel

**The Job Profile will be divided into two categories:**

- The Key responsibilities - the WHAT
- And the skills and experiences needed - the HOW

**Job Description - Headlines**

- Brief about the district
- Role of the Superintendent
- Responsibilities
- Requirements
- Benefits

**Next Steps:**

- Juana M. to coordinate returning to the radio station to share the report.
- Patricia M. to send the draft of the Job profile to the LAE members before the LAE board meeting on February 14th. to capture a job description with the edits to have it ready after any edits are made
- Alma group to insert the draft watermark to the job description document
- Sylvia F. to send a student summary (one pager) back to the students as well as to have a place for it on the website. Sylvia would like to bring it to one of the Student Cabinet meetings.
- Patricia Mariano to send an email to board members to expect the drafted document the following day
- Next anticipated meeting: Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.

**VOTED:**

To adjourn the meeting at 6:26 p.m.

Upon the recommendation made by Patricia Mariano to adjourn the meeting at 5:26 p.m.; So move by Juana Matias; Seconded by Maria Moeller

The Vote:            The vote:  
Yes                  Sylvia Flowers, Alma Advisory Group



- Yes Eliana Pereyra, Alma Advisory Group
- Yes Patricia Mariano, LAE Board Chair
- Yes Maria Moeller, LAE Member
- Yes Lauren Woo, DESE
- Yes Breanna Higgings, DESE
- Yes Anne Marie Stronach, DESE
- Yes Juana Matias, LAE Member

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Ms. Patricia Mariano, Chairwoman of the LAE Board

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Date