

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 Patricia Mariano, Chair, Lawrence Alliance for Education/School Committee member, Maria Moeller, CEO, The Community Group, Julia Silverio, Silverio Insurance and Jessica Andors, Executive Director for the Lawrence Community Works (joint the meeting via Zoom at 6:35 p.m.) Absent, Mayor Brian DePeña and Dr. Noemi Custodia-Lora, Vice President of NECC

Also in person, was Superintendent Cynthia Paris and Maria L. Campusano, Recording Secretary for this meeting.

Chair Mariano, called the meeting to order at 6:25 p.m. Promptly asked Mr. Homayoun Maali to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Before calling for public participation, the Chair explained they were waiting for some members to join the meeting via zoom; Nevertheless, she was opening the meeting for public participation.

Under Public Participation: Chair Mariano called the following:

1. Homayoun Maali, Parent, 33 Chester Street, Lawrence. Honored Superintendent Cynthia Paris and the LAE board members for granting the teachers, paraprofessionals, and cafeteria workers. Mr. Maali added that her impeccable leadership that took place during the first 100 days of listening sessions, compounded by the gas crisis and the global pandemic, the increase of parenting involvement and the construction of new school buildings concluding that “we are thankful for her hard work and sacrifices.”
2. Vivian Bonet, President of the Lawrence Administrators Support Staff. Thanked the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Maricel Goris for coming to an agreement during the negotiations.

Chair announced a recess time at 6:30 p.m. to allow the rest of the team to join the meeting.

Meeting resumes at 6:34 p.m.

VOTED: To go into executive session at 6:35 p.m.

VOTE: Upon the motion made by Ms. Mariano made a motion to take items out of regular order asking to go into executive session for the purpose of negotiations with union and nonunion personnel; So moved by Julia Silverio; Seconded by Maria Moeller.

The Vote:

The Vote	Yes - Jessica Andors
	Yes - Julia Silverio
	Yes - Maria Moeller
	Yes - Chair, Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

VOTED: To come out of the Executive Session at 7:42 p.m.

VOTE: Upon the motion made Ms. Mariano to come out of executive session; So move by Julia Silverio; Seconded by Maria Moeller

The Vote:	The Vote	Yes - Jessica Andors
		Yes - Julia Silverio
		Yes - Maria Moeller
		Yes - Chair, Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

Chair's Report

Under the Superintendent's evaluation, Ms. Mariano read a compilation summary from the board members highlighting the following areas, engagement with families - Tu Voz Council and the Coffee Hours allowed parents the opportunity to engage in problem solving and to share immediate concerns involving the district i.e. Coffee Hour on December 7th with more than 100 parents focusing on winter school closings and attendance, the reorganization of the Family Resource Center into the office of Community, Family and Student Partnerships - the district is divided into four zones to support Prek - 8 schools which allows to personalized supports for families in consistent manners for grades Prek-8, the budget process - well structured which allows principals the opportunity to work with the district budget goals

VOTED: To accept the superintendent's evaluation as described

VOTE: Upon the motion made by the Chair Patricia Mariano to approve the superintendent's evaluation as described ; So move by Julia Silverio; Seconded by Jessica Andors

The Vote	Yes - Jessica Andors
	Yes - Julia Silverio
	Yes - Maria Moeller
	Yes - Chair, Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

Chair, Patricia Mariano explained that upon completion of the superintendent's evaluation; she is entitled to a pay increase

VOTED: To approved a pay increase to the superintendent

VOTE: Upon the motion made by the Chair Patricia Mariano to grant Superintendent Paris a 3% increase effective July 1, 2022; So move by Jessica Andors; Seconded by Maria Moeller

The Vote	Yes - Jessica Andors Yes - Julia Silverio Yes - Maria Moeller Yes - Chair, Patricia Mariano
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Motion Passes

Superintendent Updates:

- Under the Wellness Policy, superintendent Paris noted during the previous meeting, Carol Nooman shared the updated Wellness Policy

VOTED: To adopt the Lawrence Public Schools Wellness Policy

VOTE: Upon the motion made by Chair Patricia Mariano that the Lawrence Alliance for Education votes to adopt the Lawrence Public Schools Wellness Policy with the proposed changes presented by the committee. This revision supports the important relationship between wellness and academic success for all students and staff; So move by Julia Silverio; Seconded by Maria Moeller

The Vote	Yes - Jessica Andors Yes - Julia Silverio Yes - Maria Moeller Yes - Chair, Patricia Mariano
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Motion Passes

- Under the Budget Priorities, Masiel Jordan explained that the budget committee had recommended the continuation of the budget priorities for the SY 2020-2024 since they are aligned with the district turnaround plan in order to successfully achieve these priorities by them connecting it to the programs in order to help fulfill the plan in student achievement, support services, grow a culturally responsive workforce, and deepen family and student partnerships.

VOTED: To approve the Lawrence Public Schools budget priorities for the SY 2023-2024 as presented

VOTE: Upon the motion made by Chair Patricia Mariano to approve the Lawrence Public Schools Budget priorities for the SY 2023-2024; So move by Jessica Andors; Seconded by Julia Silverio.

The Vote	Yes - Jessica Andors Yes - Julia Silverio Yes - Maria Moeller Yes - Chair, Patricia Mariano
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Motion Passes

VOTED: To table the following items: Attendance Update and Teaching and Learning: Acceleration Academies, SQR

VOTE: Chair Patricia Mariano made a motion to table the following items: Attendance Update and Teaching and learning: Acceleration Academies, SQR; So move by Julia Silverio; Seconded by Jessica Andors

The Vote Yes - Jessica Andors
 Yes - Julia Silverio
 Yes - Maria Moeller
 Yes - Chair, Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

Chair Patricia Mariano shared that Superintendent Cynthia Paris will transition out of a role as of January 13, 2023. On behalf of the board I want to formally thank superintendent Paris for her leadership on behalf of the Lawrence Public Schools. I'd like the motion to execute the separation agreement between superintendent Cynthia Paris and Lawrence Alliance For Education as presented by Attorney Jennifer Miller.

VOTED: To execute the separation agreement between Superintendent Cynthia Paris and the Lawrence Alliance for Education as presented by Attorney Jennifer Miller

VOTE: Upon the motion made by Chair Patricia Mariano to execute the separation agreement between the Superintendent Cynthia Paris and the Lawrence Alliance for Education; So move by Julia Silverio; Seconded by Jessica Andors

- A vote was not taken

Julia Silverio thanked the superintendent for her service. Ms. Silverio, expressed that while she understood that Cynthia came to the district during a very difficult time including the challenges of working with the board; she has strived and thanked and wished her well in her next endeavors.

Jessica Andors shared that Cynthia has done a great job through very difficult and extraordinary circumstances in a challenging environment; adding that she never doubted her weavering dedication to the kids. Cynthia has a deep heart for this job commending her for diversifying the educator workforce and supporting a number of initiatives that would have a very significant impact for the years to come. Wishing her the best in the future endeavors

Maria Moeller, shared that she hopes Cynthia Paris continues to be an intelligent and strong woman; she also identified with her being a Latino woman and hoped that the students also identified with her. Ms. Moeller expressed that she was very excited about the many seeds that were planted and many of the projects that just started and hopes that they continue and also for surrounding herself with a great team

Chair Patricia Mariano shared Cynthia’s 100 days listening tour and believes that she is still listening and that she appreciates everything Cynthia has done for the district; also shared Cynthia’s patience with her in her new role as a Chair wishing her nothing, but the best. Also asked Cynthia to keep in touch with Lawrence.

Cynthia Paris expressed being overwhelmed expressing that when she arrived to the community four years ago, she was smitten with this community and that still remains true. Ms. Paris said that she will miss everyone and thanked the board for their support, “*the team has been exceptional and that is hard for her.*” concluding that without them the district would not be where it is today. She Acknowledged the principals, teachers, and students

Chair Patricia Mariano shared that she has been thinking about an interim superintendent from within the district to temporarily lead while the process of searching for the district's next permanent superintendent; Chair shared that along with conversations with Commissioner Riley has led to her to Mr. Juan Rodriguez. in addition, the Chair shared a few highlights from Mr. Rodriguez’ resume who has been a leader in Lawrence since 2015.

VOTED: To recommend Mr. Juan Rodriguez as the interim superintendent and further directing Attorney Miller or her designee to begin contracts negotiations with Mr. Rodriguez

VOTE: Upon the motion made by Chair Patricia Mariano to recommend Mr. Juan Rodriguez as the interim superintendent; So move by Jessica Andors; Seconded by Julia Silverio

The Vote Yes - Jessica Andors
 Yes - Julia Silverio
 Yes - Maria Moeller
 Yes - Chair, Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

Chair Patricia Mariano noted that the board looks forward to working with Mr. Rodriguez appreciated his willingness to step into this temporary role and further explained that the board will move forward on the next steps of finding the district superintendent in the next meeting.

Chair Patricia Mariano took an opportunity to wish her colleagues on the board a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to our Lawrence Public Schools staff wishing them and their family happy holidays and finally to our students and their families Feliz Navidad!

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

VOTE: Upon the motion made by Chair Patricia Mariano to adjourn the meeting at 8:03p.m. So move by Julia Silverio; Seconded by Maria Moeller

The Vote Yes - Jessica Andors
 Yes - Julia Silverio
 Yes - Maria Moeller
 Yes - Chair, Patricia Mariano

Motion Pasess

Patricia Mariano, Chair

Date: