

January 8, 2020

Minutes of the Lawrence Alliance for Education Board

A meeting of the Lawrence Alliance for Education Board was held at 6:00 P.M. in the North Common Educational Complex Library, 233 Haverhill Street, with the following members present: Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, Associate Commission for statewide support DESE, Patricia Mariano, Lawrence School Committee member, Dr. Noemi Custodia-Lora, VP of NECC Lawrence Campus and Chairman John Connolly, Executive Director of The 1647, Inc., Julia Silverio, Lawrence City Councilor and local business owner and Jessica Andors, Executive Director for Lawrence Community Works. Absent: Honorable Dan Rivera, Mayor of Lawrence,

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

Dr. Ventura Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 5:40 P.M

Upon the motion made by Mayor Rivera seconded by Patricia Mariano, it was

VOTED: To go into Executive session for the purpose of the Superintendent Contract at 5:40 P.M.

The Vote: Yes – Mayor Daniel Rivera
Yes – Ventura Rodriguez
Yes – Patricia Mariano
Yes – Noemi Custodia-Lora

Upon the motion made by Mayor Daniel Rivera, seconded by Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, it was unanimously

VOTED: To come out of Executive Session at 6:00 P.M.

Dr. Ventura Rodriguez noted for the record that the Board unanimously approved a non-salary change to the Superintendent's current contract.

I. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair, John Connolly held the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Public Participation

Homayan Maale, 53 Chester Street – He requested the support for the leadership, teachers and for the Superintendent to move the district forward with student achievement and parent involvement. .

III. New Business

Superintendent's Report

- Superintendent Goals – Superintendent Paris provided the members with a revision to her Goals, which now includes five goals based on their feedback from the last meeting's discussion. The fifth goal is on standards-aligned curricula and instruction. She reviewed each proposed goal for the members' consideration for approval this evening.

Upon the recommendation of the Chair, motion made by Dr. Ventura Rodriguez and seconded by Patricia Mariano, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the Superintendent's Goals with the amendment to Goal #3, fifth priority (see below).

Ms. Andors and Ms. Silverio requested the restoration of local community educators be included as a part of the goals, a plan to engage parents in their students' education, and a process to measure the progress of the goals.

The Superintendent explained that the Turnaround Plan would provide very specific goals, which would include her yearly goals. The restoration of local education would be a district priority incorporated under the Turnaround Plan as an initiative priority so that the hiring practices can align with the students and families.

Ms. Andors requested that the priority of local hiring be added in the proposed document. Ms. Andors suggested the following amendment to the last bullet under Goal #3 to read: "Look for continued opportunities to recruit and expand bilingual **and bicultural** staff for all roles across the district." Dr. Ventura accepted the friendly amendment and for the record, the district has been committed expanding the number of community educators and Latino staff.

- High School Update – Maricel Sheets, Assistant Superintendent provided a PowerPoint presentation that included the NEASC Accreditation, and update on the LHS School Culture and Climate and the Headmaster Search. The Accreditation Report is on the LPS website. Ms. Sheets provided the NEAS commendations. A planned celebration is on January 30, 3-4pm at the LHS PAC. Mayor Rivera requested a one-page document detailing the LHS School Culture and Climate procedures. Ms. Silverio requested a measure report on the improvements; Ms. Sheets commented that the internal benchmarks through an insight survey from the Redesign Grant showed significant growth through leadership, student support, and student achievement and teacher professional development. Ms. Sheets continued with information on the Headmaster search including the Advisory Committee, interview schedules and decision date.

Mayor Rivera volunteered to be a member of the interview process. Superintendent Paris invited him to the finalist round at the PAC.

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

VOTED: To nominate a member of the LAE Board to be assigned to the SAC in search of a Headmaster.

The Vote: Yes – Mayor Dan Rivera
Yes – Julia Silverio
Yes – Jessica Andors
No – Dr. Ventura Rodriguez
Yes – Patricia Mariano
Yes – Noemi Custodia-Lora
Yes – Chair John Connolly

Ms. Silverio and Ms. Andors nominated Mayor Rivera.

Chair Connolly recommended he receive clarification on this selection.

Chair Connolly noted that the NEASE Commendations are what is important. LPS adopted Mass. Course Standards, which shows that students who participate in these standards are far likely to complete college.

- Restorative Justice Update – Assistant Superintendent Mary Toomey, Shalimar Quiles, Robert Cayer and Allison Balter. Dr. Toomey provided a brief overview of the practices and progress update on the initiative. Through the partnership with Suffolk University, restorative justice is a broad term encompassing a growing movement to commit to building communities in which all participants feel safe and valued. The three other leaders provided progress updates pertinent to their school's participation.

Report of the Chair

Chair Connolly informed the Members that there would be families and external partners providing input during the remaining meetings through June at which time the Board would be voting to approve the Turnaround Plan and the Earned Autonomy Framework.

- Early College Presentation – Marjorie Ringrose who leads the education work for the Smith Family Foundation, who provides funding towards the LHS Early College Program in partnership with Merrimack College and Northern Essex Community College. Ms Ringrose provided a synopsis of the Early College program, how well it is doing and how it can expand. She noted that the Smith Family funding is expiring and she provided the estimated amount the district would need to contribute to sustain the current program or expanding it. The students and parents provided input on their experience with the Early College program. Discussion amongst the members surrounded the amount needed to budget the program for the current 275 students versus an expanded program accommodating 400 students, requirements for students to participate and the capability of transferring credits to other colleges.

- Student Representative – Jessica Andors highly apologizes for the delay in selecting the student representative. She will have the item ready at the February meeting.
- Turnaround Plan Update –Ms. Andors noted that the consultant has been selected who is the Great Schools Partnership and in order to start the process, the contract needs to be finalized.
- Oliver School Update - The designer team SMMA, project manager team PINK and Anne Marie Stronach provided a revised presentation for the Oliver School project based on concerns noted at the December meeting. SMMA: Alex Picken and Kristin Olsen, and PINK: Deb Morai and Danny Garber Latisha.

Ms. Stronach noted that the current information is not for the public since project is in the research phase.

Mr. Picken opened in noting that the Preferred Schematic Plan is due to the MSBA in one month. The Building Committee accepted the PSP as the Stone Mill. He provided an overview for the upcoming schedule and noted that a meeting has not been successful with City Council, but individual meetings have taken place with the City Council Members to keep them informed until this project can be set on an upcoming City Council Meeting. He responded to their concerns for the Stone Mill location.

- 1) Transportation routing would only effect five students,
- 2) Traffic studies revealed that it should not make outstanding changes,
- 3) Available parking spaces should be sufficient,
- 4) Flood plane not effecting the project
- 4) There are not many other suitable sites as options in the district: current Oliver School cannot accommodate 1,000 students, the O’Neill Park would require an Article 97 land swap and there is no other parcel of land to accommodate this requirement,
- 5) The neighboring lots of the Oliver School are historic City sites, which would limit it to accommodate the 1,000 students.

The next report’s submission will be one week prior to the LAE’s February meeting at which time be considered for your approval for the preferred project of Stone Mill.

Mayor Rivera commented based on the information and reports provided the best choice is the Stone Mill.

Julia Silverio requested a report on the Stone Mill site from the environmental agency next month on the effects to the children, etc. who will be occupying that space.

In response to Dr. Ventura Rodriguez’, Mr. Picken explained that the FEMA map provides an elevation and contours are set to determine the flood map. Julia Silverio requested an elevation certificate, which dictates the issues with the plot.

- LHS JROTC Out of State Travel

Upon the recommendation made by the Chair, and motion made by Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, seconded by Patricia Mariano, it was unanimously

VOTED: To add the LHS JROTC Out of State travel request to the agenda.

Superintendent Paris commented that the Tiler Cross Academy in London invited the LHS JROTC to visit in March 2020. The US Embassy has fully funded this trip.

Upon the recommendation made by the Chair, and motion made by Julia Silverio, seconded by Noemi Custodia-Lora, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the LHS JROTC international travel to London, England as submitted.

- Earned Autonomy Update – Chair Connolly noted that the TAP consultant was selected and are currently engaging a consultant for Earned Autonomy. The Steering Committee will be a Joint Steering Committee for the TAP and Earned Autonomy and will convene within a month. At the February meeting, the LAE will be briefed on the full timeline goals and objectives and invite the consultants to answer questions.

Other Matters

- Approval of Minutes

November 13, 2019 - Hold approval until the February meeting.
December 11, 2019 - Hold approval until the February meeting.

Upon the recommendation of the Chair and motion made by Julia Silverio, seconded by Dr. Ventura Rodriguez, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 8:48 P.M. meeting.

John Connolly, Chair