

June 14 , 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 de Peña (Arrived at 6:12 p.m.), Dr. Dolores Calaf, Early Childhood and K-12 Education, Consultant with Community Collaborative, Maria Moeller, CEO/The Community Group, Arlene Garcia, Parent Liaison at the Lawrence Family Development Charter School, Patricia Mariano, Chair. Absent: Juana Matias, Regional Administrator for the New England Regional Office, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Also in person was Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez, and Maria L. Campusano, Recording Secretary for this meeting.

Chair Mariano called the meeting to order at 6:07p.m. Chair Mariano recited the Pledge of Allegiance; then welcomed Ms. Arlene Garcia for joining the LAE board. Ms. Garcia thanked Commissioner Riley, and expressed being honored to be appointed as a member of the LAE board for the Lawrence Public Schools.

VOTED To go into an Executive Session in accordance with general law chapter 30 A section 18 to discuss the negotiations of an employment agreement with Mr. Juan Rodriguez, Interim Superintendent

Vote: Upon the motion made by Chair Mariano, to convene an executive session at 6:13 p.m. to discuss negotiations in regards to Mr. Juan Rodriguez; So Move by Edgar De Leon, Seconded by Maria Moeller

The Vote Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
Yes - Edgar De Leon
Yes - Maria Moeller
Yes - Arlene Garcia
Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

VOTED To open the public meeting at 6:27 p.m.

Vote: Upon the motion made by Chair Mariano, to open the public meeting at 6:27 p.m.; So move by Mayor Brian de Peña; Seconded by Edgar de Leon

The Vote Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
Yes - Edgar De Leon
Yes - Arlene Garcia
Yes - Maria Moeller
Yes - Mayor Brian de Peña
Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

Public comments: 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. Thanked the Lawrence Public Schools teachers, paraprofessionals, and cafeteria workers for their hard work and their union, also for helping the students get their education; Mr. Maali referred to a quote from Nelson Mandela, *“Education is indeed the most powerful weapon to change the world”* Also wished the best summer vacation for all LPS employees.
- **James Carras**, Cambridge, MA Introduced himself as a consultant for the City of Lawrence specifically working with the mayor's office on a variety of issues with the city on its economic future including to advise the city on the future of the school department and to think through what are the key issues for which some research is being done to come up with recommendations about the future of the school department in relationship with the state of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Mr. Carras concluded by expressing that he was looking forward to working with the board, the mayor's office, and the commissioner's office.

VOTED To approve Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez' contract and to authorize the Chair Patricia Mariano to sign the contract on behalf of the board

Vote: Upon the motion made by the Chair Patricia Mariano to approve Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez contract and to authorize the Chair to sign the contract; So move by Maria Moeller; Seconded by Mayor Brian de Peña.

The Vote Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
 Yes - Edgar De Leon
 Yes - Arlene Garcia
 Yes - Maria Moeller
 Yes - Mayor Brian de Peña
 Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

Superintendent's Report on LPS Highlights and Updates

- Construction Easements for the intersection improvement project at Marston and East Haverhill Streets. Mr. Daniel McCarthy, Director of Planning and Economic Development with the City of Lawrence expressed that he had been working with Mass DOT on the development at the intersection of Marston and East Haverhill Streets for which there is a proposal requiring a vote to donate real property from the Lawrence School Department by the Lawrence Alliance for Education to the City of Lawrence

VOTED: To approve the donation of the nine easements to the City of Lawrence Planning Department for the improvements of Marston and Haverhill Streets

Vote: Upon the motion made by Chair Mariano to approve the donation of the nine easements to the City of Lawrence Planning

Department for the improvement of Marston and Haverhill Streets area;
So move by Edgar De Leon; Seconded by Arlene Garcia

The Vote Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
 Yes - Edgar De Leon
 Yes - Arlene Garcia
 Yes - Maria Moeller
 Yes - Mayor Brian de Peña
 Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

Superintendent's End of Year Updates:

- Showcased visuals of end of the school year celebrations reflecting excitement, joy, and collaboration including students during the show "We are Lawrence", LHS graduation, groundbreaking ceremony of the Leahy School with elected delegation from the city, state, and students.
- Message from Luis Marroquin, student representative who could not attend his last meeting with the LAE *"it's been an honor to serve on the board this year I hope my insights were helpful one way or another I hope to see LPS achieve great things for both students and staff and I hope to come back one day and see how LPS has improved and become better than it has ever been. I hope they can find an even better candidate next year who will outshine me on the board. Thank you all for an amazing opportunity and good luck with everything the same way we hope that you are going to continue to cheer me on and I will be cheering everyone in Lawrence on from Boston"*
- Leadership Updates: New appointments within the Lawrence Public Schools, Geraldo Acosta, Assistant Superintendent for Community, Family, and Student Partnerships; Ariel Perez, Chief Financial Officer; Kevin Tracey, Principal at Alexander Bruce School; and Carlos Cordero, Principal at Rise Academy.
- Lawrence Working Families Initiative Graduated the fifth cohort of the paraeducator program with 15 adults.
- Adult Learning Center graduated 35 adult learners, 29 obtained their high school equivalency, 5 students received their high school diploma.
- Special Olympics Unified Games was held at the Veterans Memorial Stadium and South Lawrence East Educational Complex where 600 students participated in 10 different athletic stations throughout the day.
- Leahy Groundbreaking Ceremony - a state of the art facility with 128 rooms is designated to educate approximately 1,000 students.
- Spring Festival Activities - schools have had a variety of spring and end-of-year celebrations and were joined by the LPD Community Policing Unit, Ice Cream Truck.
- Promotional Ceremonies were held for grade 8th students across the district.
- End of the year at LHS. Great images with scholars receiving academic achievements, awards, scholarships; students attending their prom
- The Lawrence High School graduation took place on June 2, 2023 graduating 687 students - 69 graduates attained the State Seal of Biliteracy, 27 graduates attained vocational credentials along with their LHS diploma. Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez also thanked the facilities team for setting up two graduation venues due to the impending inclement weather, also thanked the

Department of public works, the Lawrence Police Department, and the Fire Department for their continued partnership.

Mayor Brian De Peña departed the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Teaching and Learning

- Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez presented a snapshot of the School Quality Review (SQR) process, schools documents, data, feedback on how to improve the results at the schools progress trends including areas of focus.
- Summer Programs Presentation. Danielle Archambeault, Director of Inclusion Education, Marlena Ysalguez, Sped Zone 1 Director, and Jullisa Declet, ESL Facilitator presented an overview of the summer program offerings which included summer learning vision: Level Up (K-8) and LHS, Newcomer Program, and Extended School Year to serve over 3000 students

Attendance and Graduation Data. Assistant Superintendent Geraldo Acosta provided an overview of the total number of students enrolled in the Lawrence Public Schools 13,820, attendance rate 89.9%, anticipated total of student graduation 847. Mr. Acosta also provided information regarding the results of the Family Experience Questionnaire in which 5,493 families responded

VOTED: To approve the May 8, 2023 minutes

Vote: Upon the motion made by Chair Mariano to approve the the May 8 minutes; So move by Edgar de Leon; Seconded by Maria Moeller

The Vote Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
 Yes - Edgar De Leon
 Yes - Arlene Garcia
 Yes - Maria Moeller
 Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

VOTED: To approve the May 10th Budget Public Hearing minutes

Vote: Upon the motion made by Chair Mariano to approve the the May 10th Budget Public Hearing minutes; So move by Maria Moeller; Seconded by Edgar de Leon

The Vote Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
 Yes - Edgar De Leon
 Yes - Arlene Garcia
 Yes - Maria Moeller

Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

VOTED: To approve the May 10, 2023 Regular LAE minutes

Vote: Upon the motion made by Chair Mariano to approve the the May 10th Regular Minutes; So move by Edgar de Leon; Seconded by Maria Moeller

The Vote Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
Yes - Edgar De Leon
Yes - Arlene Garcia
Yes - Maria Moeller
Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

Vote: Upon the motion made by Chair Mariano to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m.; So move by Edgar de Leon; Seconded by Maria Moeller

The Vote Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf
Yes - Edgar De Leon
Yes - Arlene Garcia
Yes - Maria Moeller
Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano

Motion Passes

Ms. Patricia Mariano, Chair

Date: