



237 Essex Street · Post Office Box 1498 · Lawrence, MA 01840

**May 08, 2024**

### **Minutes of the Lawrence Alliance for Education Board – LAE**

The Lawrence Alliance for Education Board was held in person at the South Lawrence East Educational Complex Auditorium with the following members present: Patricia Mariano, Chair; Dr. Dolores Calaf, Early Childhood and K-12 Education, Consultant with Community Collaborative; Juana Matias, Regional Administrator for the New England Regional Office, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); Arlene Garcia, Parent Liaison, Lawrence Family Development Charter School; Mayor Brian DePeña; Maria Moeller, CEO/The Community Group and Edgar De Leon, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Director at Noble and Greenough School

Also in person Maria L. Campusano, Recording Secretary for this meeting.

Chair Mariano, called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. The Chair called the audience to recite the pledge of allegiance.

#### Remarks

Chair Patricia Mariano shared the honor of having the presence of the Acting Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, Dr. Russell Johnston

Dr. Johnston addressed the LAE Board and expressed his gratitude. He thanked the members for their dedication and participation in the superintendent search process, one of the most important decisions the Board will make. Dr. Russell also thanked the parents, students, district staff, elected officials, and the entire community of stakeholders who participated in the process by first completing a survey with nearly 2,000 responses, attending meetings and helping to develop the vision for the next superintendent of Lawrence Public Schools, to creating the interview selection committee members who devoted much time and effort to provide the LAE subcommittee with their reflections and thoughts for consideration.

Dr. Russell shared three important points:

- First, the understanding of the council for the LAE advised members of the board to seek guidance from the state ethics commission about potential conflicts of interest they may have related to the superintendent search process and he appreciated it sincerely that members have followed that advice
- Second, commending the LAE superintendent search subcommittee Chair Patricia Mariano, Juana Matthias, Maria Moller who put forward a strong slate of diverse experienced candidates. The subcommittee was tasked with identifying finalists to bring before the full board after candidate interviews. They carefully considered the perspective of everyone on the interview committee, reviewed their recommendations and made the final decision to bring before you this impressive group of candidates.



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- Third, I was especially impressed by the transparent and robust interview process that has occurred over these last two days yesterday and today. The candidates have already been interviewed by six panels including stakeholders from across the city some of which were live streamed and have also attended a school tour and through this process the candidates have spoken to students, families, teachers, administrators and community members.

The Commissioner concluded by encouraging the LAE Board members to listen to the critically important feedback from those stakeholders who provided the information and input needed to make this important decision. Dr. Johnston added that as board members embark on the next week of careful consideration and deliberation, they should review what they have heard tonight, review input from the community and go through this deliberative process.

Dr. Russell encouraged the LAE board to continue the process with the fairness and objectivity that they have throughout the process by listening carefully to each candidate with an open mind, with curiosity about what the candidate will bring to this community. Does the superintendent have the ability to maintain the progress in the Lawrence Public Schools, to discuss, and to vote for what is best for the students of Lawrence.

### **Interview of Superintendent Finalists: Ralph Carrero, Dr. Alma Gonzalez de Castillo, Ligia Noriega-Murphy and Dr. Timothy Sippel**

LAE board members introduced themselves to the candidates and then asked each candidate four questions:

Please share how you have addressed the components of early childhood development in your current or previous experience with a population similar to ours at Lawrence Public Schools how you propose to integrate and address Early Childhood initiatives into our district?

In your current or previous role were there any missteps what did you learn and what would you do differently if selected for this position?

Could you tell us about a time when you developed or inherited a plan and determine that it needed to be changed? What steps did you take to implement those changes?

Over the past several years LPS has adopted high quality and culturally relevant curriculum materials across our schools. What experience do you have in leading District level professional development tied to curriculum implementation? How would you tackle this issue in a district that values School autonomy?

To watch the full interview go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZOsyHJ2Wgg>



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VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 9:38 p.m.

Vote: Upon the recommendation of the Chair Patricia Mariano to adjourn the meeting at 9:38 p.m.; So Moved by Arlene Garcia; Seconded by Edgard de Leon.

#### The Vote

Yes - Dr. Dolores Calaf  
Yes - Edgard de Leon  
Yes - Arlene Garcia  
Yes - Juana Matias  
Yes - Maria Moeller  
Yes - Mayor Brian de Peña  
Yes - Chair Patricia Mariano

#### Motion Passes

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Ms. Patricia Mariano, Chair  
Date