



May 21, 2024

Minutes of the Lawrence Alliance for Education Board – LAE

A meeting of the Lawrence Alliance for Education Board meeting was held 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); via Zoom Edgar De Leon, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Director at Noble and Greenough School; Maria Moeller, CEO/The Community Group; Arlene Garcia, Parent Liaison, Lawrence Family Development Charter School. Absent: Mayor Brian De Peña

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

Chair Mariano, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The Chair called the audience to recite the pledge of allegiance.

Public Participation

- Online: Patricia Frank, LPS Teacher. Lawrence's decision is a disgrace, as it doesn't benefit students, families, or teachers. A restart of the search is needed, and collaboration with the superintendent is crucial.

Budget Presentation

The Proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Budget for the Lawrence Public Schools is \$280,013,380.

Mr. Juan Rodriguez stated that the district has proposed an additional 126 full-time positions for the upcoming school year, including teaching, counselors, support staff, professional, and instructional technology positions. This is an encouraging move for the district, as it allows for the addition of positions that will facilitate the opening of new buildings and instructional technology. The budget projections are meticulously planned to avoid underspending or having money left at the end of the year.

The district has been careful in accurately projecting the budget lines to avoid underspending and addressing costs beyond their control such as custodial overtime for snow removal. The board has supported salary market rate adjustments for almost all staff members, but there is still room for improvement in certain areas. The district is in a sustainable FY25 budget, and stakeholders who participated in the budget development process, particularly the principals and leadership team, are commended for their efforts in making this a sustainable FY25 budget process.

Ariel Perez, Chief Financial Officer, presented a powerpoint presentation outlining the Fiscal Year 2025 Proposed Budget on four major priorities:

- Acceleration Academies and summer school opportunities
- Enhanced curriculum materials and professional development
- A holistic learning environment



Facilities upgrades, repairs, and school building improvements

The Budget presentation also included the proposed local appropriation request, projected all revenue funds, how the general fund budget is spent, what positions are funded with this budget, and the next steps for the FY 2025 budget process in May and June. The 2025 fiscal year begins on July 1, 2024.

Superintendent Evaluation

Interim Superintendent Juan Rodriguez presented a powerPoint presentation with the Superintendent Goals:

Goal #1 - Create a vision for instruction that drives student achievement. This is comprised of the Strategic Literacy Plan, NWEA/Dibels, Acceleration Academies, Advanced/Expert Educators, Data Wise, School Quality Reviews (SQRs), High Quality Professional Learning, Inclusion-Co-Teaching for Students with Disabilities and Multilingual Learners, Dual Language Planning for Implementation, Visual & Performing Arts, Educator Accountability, Early Childhood Education.

Goal #2 Deepen efforts to recruit and retain culturally responsive and highly effective teaching and professional staff: Highlight of initiatives and emerging systems on District Leadership Positions, District Hiring Practices, Parent to Para-educator through Lawrence Working Families Initiative, Umass Lowell (UML) Lawrence Public Para-to-Educator Program, Regis College -Lawrence Public Schools Partnership, Teacher Diversification Pilots, Boston College (Lynch Leadership Cohort), Latinos for Education Fellowships, recruitment Fairs.

Goal #3 Deepen and expand ways the district engages with families and students working closely with the Assistant Superintendent to partner with and support schools, expand district initiatives that build school-based skills (LFISS, Play to Learn), redouble efforts to engage families in parent workshop series designed to support and partner with families/guardians of multilingual and special education students, district -partnership that provides a comprehensive strategy to increase family economic success.

Goal #4 Maintain effective lines of communication and collaboration with all community and city stakeholders including LAE, city officials, school committee members. Provide the LAE regular communication regarding teaching and learning efforts and progress, maintain open communications with LAE members to ensure productive relationships and regular exchange of information and perspectives.

Chair Patricia Mariano shared that the superintendent has consistently released monthly reports on the district; sharing a template with the members and asking members to complete their individual evaluation and return to her by May 31, 2024.

Member: Juana Matias, asked if members of the LAE board could be included in the budget meetings the district holds.



VOTED: To approve the FY:2025 budget as presented

Vote: Upon the recommendation of the Chair Patricia Mariano to approve the FY: 2025 budget as presented; So Move by Juana Matias; Seconded by Maria Moeller

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

Motion Passes

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m.

Vote: Upon the recommendation of the Chair Patricia Mariano to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m.; So Move by Juana Matias; Seconded by Maria Moeller

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

Motion Passes

Ms. Patricia Mariano, Chair
Date