APPROVED

# Lawrence Family Development Charter School

## Minutes

### LFDCS Board Meeting - January 8, 2025

**Date and Time**
Wednesday January 8, 2025 at 5:30 PM

**Location**
Orange Wheeler House
355 Haverhill Street
Lawrence, MA 01841

Join Zoom Meeting
https://zoom.us/j/99676553416?pwd=UWIAIMJT1VyhoUphOKxiv8i6WcH0Po.1

Meeting ID: 996 7655 3416
Passcode: 6sukFr

**Trustees Present**
C. Needham (remote), D. DeFillippo, E. Nolberto, G. Lopez, J. Henriquez, J. Tejada (remote), L. McRae

**Trustees Absent**
J. Cedeno, L. Perez, R. Almanzar

**Guests Present**
A. Croes, C. Parcell, D. Thakkar, H. Castleman, L. Lawler, N. Arpin, Nicole Dean-Ward (remote), P. Macario, S. Perry, T. Schumann, Y. Rodriguez, rsanchez@lfdcs.org

**I. Opening Items**

### A. Pledge of Allegiance

### B. Record Attendance

### C. Call the Meeting to Order

G. Lopez called a meeting of the board of trustees of Lawrence Family Development Charter School to order on Wednesday Jan 8, 2025 at 5:38 PM.

### D. Approve Minutes

D. DeFillippo made a motion to approve the minutes from November 13, 2024 LFDCS Board Meeting on 11-13-24.
J. Henriquez seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| J. Cedeno | Absent |
| J. Tejada | Aye |
| J. Henriquez | Aye |
| C. Needham | Aye |
| G. Lopez | Aye |
| R. Almanzar | Absent |
| L. McRae | Absent |
| E. Nolberto | Aye |
| L. Perez | Absent |
| D. DeFillippo | Aye |

## II. Superintendent's Report

### A. Management Services Agreement

Darshan T. reported that a joint meeting was held between the finance committees of both the fund and the school. During this meeting, several options were discussed, and it was decided that this matter will remain a standing agenda item.

Dan H. and Darshan T. will develop various scenarios, which will be presented at the next finance committee meeting. It is anticipated that these scenarios will be presented for board approval by the March board meeting.

No additional questions were raised by the remaining members of the board.

### B. MA extends 85W protections

Darshan T. reported that in November, the Governor signed amendments to the 85W law, which provides protections for board members serving as volunteers for nonprofit

organizations. The updated law specifies that board members who are not volunteers can still be compensated up to $500 annually while maintaining these protections.

The current bylaws of the LFDCS Board state that trustees are not compensated for their service but may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses. Darshan T. suggested that if the board wishes to allow compensation of up to $500 per year, the bylaws should be amended to align with the new law, ensuring that no trustee receives more than $500 in compensation.

Elizabeth N. noted that this change would be beneficial for board members, particularly for covering expenses such as fuel. Darshan T. clarified that this change would not replace reimbursement for expenses.

Chris N. commented that there was no need to delay the decision or wait for a finance meeting, as this adjustment would not impact the school's finances.
D. DeFillippo made a motion to make a change to the bylaws regarding board member compensations and for it to instituted.
E. Nolberto seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| L. McRae | Absent |
| D. DeFillippo | Aye |
| E. Nolberto | Aye |
| J. Henriquez | Aye |
| L. Perez | Absent |
| G. Lopez | Aye |
| J. Tejada | Aye |
| J. Cedeno | Absent |
| C. Needham | Aye |
| R. Almanzar | Absent |

### C. Educator Diversity Act

Darshan T. reported that the Governor recently signed the Educator Diversity Act, a new piece of legislation related to schools. He noted that the disparity between students and the educators who teach them has been a known issue for years, and this law aims to address that imbalance.

Darshan T. presented an overview of a presentation that examined the current data on the education system in Massachusetts, highlighting the growing gap in diversity between teachers and students. He emphasized that teacher diversity not only enhances student achievement but also helps in reducing disciplinary issues in schools.

Darshan T. also reviewed the current teacher pipeline in Massachusetts, as well as the proposed Alternative Certification Pilot by the Department of Education, designed to provide additional pathways into teaching.

In response to a question from Dave D. regarding the implementation timeline, Darshan T. clarified that the law is in effect and as soon as the necessary forms become available, the the school can have individuals begin the application process.

## III. Principal's Report

### A. Food Drive Update

Hali C. provided an update on the Changemakers who did a food drive this past November. This was their second year conducting the food drive and this year they included the entire school. They were able to successfully collect 3000 items to donate to local shelters in Lawrence.

### B. Cookie Dough Fundraiser Update

Hali C. provided a report on the results of this school year's first fundraiser, Cookie Dough. She highlighted that this year's campaign was different from previous years, as no paper order forms were used; instead, the entire process was conducted online.

The school's portion of the sales amounted to $1,264. Hali C. also mentioned that she would collaborate with the team to improve fundraising efforts for the upcoming spring season.

### C. School Site Council Minutes 11/20

Hali C. provided a review from the last School Site Council meeting held on November 20, 2024.
At this meeting they reviewed the health curriculum. Hali C. mentioned that this was the third time they have gone over the health curriculum and this time they were able to show actual curriculum lessons that included activities and videos.

The next SSC meeting will touch on the benefits of bilingualism and how to promote bilingualism in the home including in literacy.

### D. SEPAC/ELPAC Meeting 12/18

During the SEPAC/ELPAC meeting held on December 18, 2024, the topic of "Know Your Rights" was discussed. This session was particularly important for parents of students in Special Education and ESL programs, as it provided valuable information regarding their rights.

The meeting was offered both in-person and online, which facilitated increased parent participation and engagement.

### E. Winter Showcase 12/19

Hali C. provided a report on the inaugural Winter Showcase, organized by the music teacher, Angeli Brito. The event featured  student performances that included Bucket Drumming, the School Choir, School Step Dance, and a short skit by the Changemakers.

The organizers hope to establish the Winter Showcase as an annual tradition. This year's event saw a significant turnout, with 250 attendees.

Jose H. mentioned that his children conveyed that the students were enthusiastic and eagerly anticipating the event.

## IV. Other Business

### A. Wellness Committee Update

Rachel S. reported that the recent committee meeting was well attended. The group discussed the ongoing composting program, which is maintaining a 93% participation rate. Masa H. shared that the district has saved $70,000 in costs since the composting initiative began. Currently, composting takes place during breakfast and lunch at the Upper and Lower Schools, and during lunch at the Academy. The committee aims to expand composting to breakfast at the academy and plans to partner with the Changemakers to educate students across various buildings on composting and recycling. Additional information will be provided in the spring.

Rachel S. also reported that an 8th-grade class conducted a survey on social online safety. They are considering extending the survey to gather more comprehensive data, which will help provide targeted support.

In her outreach efforts, Rachel S. has been visiting classrooms to discuss mindfulness, healthy eating, and physical activity. She challenged each classroom to take a pledge to adopt healthier habits, with the reward being an hour of recess, which the students greatly enjoyed.

Rachel S. asked students about breakfast participation, and found that few students regularly eat breakfast. A survey revealed that many students prefer to eat at home or do not like eating so early. However, they expressed willingness to participate if additional options were available. This led to a taste test of new breakfast items. A similar breakfast survey will also be conducted at the Lower School.

Rachel S. mentioned that she will be introducing a "Healthy Choices, Healthy Eating" Bingo game at the Lower School as well. Additionally, she plans to create programs for

students and parents focused on food and health, which will be featured at upcoming events.

Dave D. provided an update to the Trustees, reporting that the Academic Advisory Committee held its fifth meeting. The committee serves as a platform for faculty to share concerns and positive feedback with the trustees regarding the school's operations. Dave D. emphasized that the discussions have been productive and insightful.

He also took the opportunity to commend the school leadership for their thoughtful and comprehensive responses, which have been valuable in helping teachers recognize the positive strides the school is making.

Additionally, Dave D. provided an update on the Superintendent Search Committee. The committee has been actively working since posting the position in late November across various platforms. The application deadline was January 31st, with Jose T. overseeing the receipt of applications before they are distributed to the committee. So far, 5-6 qualified candidates have been identified. The committee plans to review the applications and narrow the field for interviews, aiming to present a final candidate for the board's approval at the March meeting.

## V. Closing Items

### A. Adjourn Meeting

D. DeFillippo made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
J. Henriquez seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| C. Needham | Aye |
| R. Almanzar | Absent |
| J. Tejada | Aye |
| G. Lopez | Aye |
| J. Cedeno | Absent |
| L. McRae | Aye |
| D. DeFillippo | Aye |
| E. Nolberto | Aye |
| J. Henriquez | Aye |
| L. Perez | Absent |

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 6:26 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Y. Rodriguez