APPROVED

Lawrence Family Development Charter School

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting-Zoom

Date and Time
Wednesday January 14, 2026 at 5:30 PM

Location
Zoom

Trustees Present
C. Needham (remote), D. DeFillippo (remote), E. Nolberto (remote), G. Lopez (remote), J. Tejada (remote), L. Perez (remote), R. Almanzar (remote)

Trustees Absent
J. Cedeno, J. Henriquez, L. McRae

Trustees who arrived after the meeting opened
L. Perez

Guests Present
C. Parcell (remote), E. Fuller (remote), H. Castleman (remote), M. Ventre (remote), N. Arpin (remote), Nicole Dean-Ward (remote), S. Reardon (remote), S. Stukuls (remote), Sandra Calandrella (remote), Y. Rodriguez (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. **Record Attendance**

B. **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 14, 2026 at 5:37 PM.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Approve minutes from the December 10, 2025 BOT Meeting

C. Needham made a motion to approve the minutes from LFDCS Board of Trustees Meeting on 12-10-25.
E. Nolberto seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

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

II. Board Composition

A. Attendance record to date.

Assistant Superintendent Sally-Ann Stukuls shared trustee attendance data with the board through December 2025. The information was organized into three categories: Board Meetings, Finance Committee Meetings, and Academic Advisory Committee Meetings.

Dave D. and Chris N. confirmed that attendance will be reviewed every other board meeting. If the board identifies any members who are not in compliance, a phone call will be made to the respective trustee.

Elizabeth N. also recommended documenting all communications with the trustee to ensure accurate tracking of contact attempts.

B. Re-elect Rita Almanzar to a second term.

This agenda item has been postponed. Rita A. requested a separate meeting with the Board Chair and the Superintendent to discuss the circumstances affecting her regular attendance.

In the interim, trustees recommended continuing to recognize Rita A. as an active board member, pending the formal vote on her new term.

III. Superintendent's Report

A. Lease Update

Finance Director, Mark V. provided the Board with an update regarding the lease. He reported that there has been no response from the Fund's attorney, Wayne Simmins, which raises concerns that the Fund may not be current on its legal fees.

As next steps, the school will proceed with signing the lease in accordance with the terms agreed upon by LFDCS and the Fund (LFD), secure a leasehold title insurance policy, and begin scheduling interviews with financing advisors.

Mark V. explained that title insurance protects property owners and lenders against defects in title, such as undisclosed debts, liens, recording errors, incomplete documentation, restrictive covenants, or easements that could materially affect the property. Lenders typically require title insurance as a condition of financing. If a property does not qualify for title insurance, lenders may withdraw or delay financing until a clear title can be established. Title insurance transfers liability for covered title defects and serves as a reliable indicator of clean title. Leasehold title insurance is available and appropriate in this case.

The purpose of obtaining title insurance and conducting a survey is to identify and address any issues that could arise during the building purchase process. Given the school's strict timeline, completing this preliminary work is essential to ensuring the transaction can close by the required deadline.

The survey identified several encroachments, including retaining walls extending over property lines. However, legal counsel, Krokidas & Bluestein, determined these to be immaterial and not likely to impede financing.

The title review revealed two issues requiring resolution. The first is a railroad easement affecting 34 West Street, which must be discharged by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. This matter is considered a high priority and may be time-consuming to resolve.

The second issue involves the solar panel installations. Mark V. obtained copies of the power purchase agreements, as-built plans, easements, and ownership transfer documents from TrueGreen Capital, which financed the installations. The agreements were executed by the school, although the Fund owns the buildings, raising questions regarding legal standing. Additionally, the Fund granted an easement to connect to the electrical grid at the auto shop located at the corner of Haverhill Street and West Street, a

property the Fund does not own. Krokidas & Bluestein will review all permits and related documentation associated with the installation.

Moving forward, Krokidas & Bluestein recommend proceeding with execution of the lease. Anthony Cichello will attempt to reestablish contact with the Fund's attorney. Elka Sachs is preparing a board resolution to approve and authorize execution of the lease. The school will also secure title insurance and begin interviewing financial advisors to initiate the building purchase process.

B. Audit Update

Mark V. shared that the 2025 Audit has been successfully submitted to DESE by the January 1st deadline.

Mark V. reported that the Finance Department's next steps include initiating the QuickBooks implementation, developing the budget for the upcoming fiscal year, and advancing the renovations at 404 Haverhill Street. The renovation project will require a formal procurement process and ongoing financial reporting.

IV. Assistant Superintendent's Report

A. Updates from the Assistant Superintendent

L. Perez arrived at 6:09 PM.
Sally S. shared that she and Tricia C. have been developing a board recruitment brochure to support the recruitment of new members next year. Elizabeth N. suggested incorporating testimonials from current board members reflecting on their experiences. In response, Sally S. will distribute a Google Form to gather feedback and quotes from trustees. These testimonials may also be featured on the school's website. Trustees are additionally invited to submit photographs for inclusion on the website.

Sally S. shared her efforts in piloting a breakfast program in the school. At LFDCS, breakfast is currently offered before students enter their classrooms. Through a newly awarded $20,000 EOS Foundation grant, the school will pilot a Breakfast in the Classroom program in the spring, specifically in May, beginning with grades K1, 1, 3, and 7, with plans to expand schoolwide in the fall. The grant will fund necessary equipment and program implementation. In preparation, Rachel Sanchez has been educating students on the importance of a nutrient-rich breakfast, and staff will receive additional information this winter. EOS is also providing consultation and opportunities to visit other schools successfully operating the program to support effective implementation.

V. Principal's Report

A. SEPAC/ELPAC Meeting 12/17

Special Education Director Sean Reardon and ELL Coordinator Elaine Fuller provided the Board with an update on the Special Education and ELL programs at LFDCS. Prior to winter break, they co-hosted a combined SEPAC/ELPAC meeting, which serves as the school's PAC meeting and is held every other month. The meeting was attended by more than 20 parents.

The focus of the December meeting was an anti-bullying presentation delivered by Rachel Sanchez. The presentation addressed the definition of bullying, how LFDCS responds to incidents, the school's efforts to promote awareness and prevention, and ways parents can support their children. The next PAC meeting is scheduled for February 25, 2026, during which Sean R. will review parents' rights. The final meeting of the school year will take place on April 29, 2026, and will include the election of new committee members.

B. Winter Showcase 12/18/25

Principal Hali Castleman shared with the Board that the school hosted its second annual Winter Showcase on December 18, 2025. The event featured performances by the step team, bucket drummers, student actors, and choirs representing multiple grade levels, including the Academy. Photos from the event were shared on the school's Facebook page.

C. Math Curriculum Committee Update

Hali C. informed the Board that the school's math curriculum has not been formally reviewed in eight years. A Math Curriculum Committee, consisting of the math specialist and ten teachers, has been convened to research and evaluate available curriculum options. As part of the review process, the committee will participate in a professional development day focused on one of the programs under consideration.

The committee plans to pilot two curricula, Desmos and i-Ready, during the spring semester. The goal is to complete the evaluation process and select a new math curriculum by the end of March.

D. Extended Day and Clubs

Extended Day Coordinator Sandy Calandrella reported that enrollment in the Extended Day Program has increased to 104 students, a 13% rise from last year, with 65 students in grades K1–2 and 39 in grades 3–6. This year, the program implemented EZChildTrack, an online registration and student management system that improves family communication, tracks attendance via iPad, maintains student health information, and supports financial reporting. Additionally, a seasonal club catalog was introduced, resulting in more than 200 students participating in club offerings across the Academy, Lower School, and Upper School, including activities such as Model UN, Student Council, Choir, Running Club, Step Team, Volleyball, and LEGO Robotics.

Sandy C. also highlighted expanded athletic opportunities, with LFDCS basketball teams participating in both the Massachusetts Charter School Athletic League and Fundamental Hoops, providing students with regional competition and team-building experiences. Other initiatives include the launch of the LFDCS Swag Store and implementation of the Track It Forward alumni volunteer management system, which has already registered more than 40 alumni to support volunteer and scholarship hours tracking efforts.

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

D. DeFillippo made a motion to adjourn.
E. Nolberto seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 6:29 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Y. Rodriguez

Documents used during the meeting

- board attendance .pdf
- Board of Trustee Report for January 14, 2026.pdf
- BOT Update - 1-14-26.pdf