APPROVED

Lawrence Family Development Charter School

Minutes

LFDCS Board of Trustees Meeting-Zoom Only

Date and Time
Wednesday February 11, 2026 at 5:30 PM

Location
Zoom

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

Trustees Absent
L. Perez

Trustees who arrived after the meeting opened
D. DeFillippo, J. Cedeno, L. McRae

Guests Present
C. Parcell (remote), D. Thakkar (remote), H. Castleman (remote), M. Ventre (remote), N. Arpin (remote), Nicole Dean-Ward (remote), S. Stukuls (remote), Y. Rodriguez (remote), shecht@lfdcs.org (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 Feb 11, 2026 at 5:37 PM.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Approve minutes from the January 14, 2026 BOT Meeting

E. Nolberto made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting-Zoom on 01-14-26.
C. Needham seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

II. Superintendent's Report

A. LFDCS recognized by DESE for 30 Years of Family Engagement Best Practices.

J. Cedeno arrived at 5:44 PM.
D. DeFillippo arrived at 5:44 PM.
L. McRae arrived at 5:48 PM.
Darshan T. shared with the trustees and school staff that LFDCS recently received recognition from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). DESE reviewed accountability reports for charter schools that have reached 30 years of operation in order to identify practices that have contributed to their long-term success.

DESE highlighted each of the recognized schools across the state. Each school was recognized for excelling in one of ten accountability criteria. For LFDCS, DESE identified Culturally Responsive Family Engagement under Criteria #7: School Climate and Family Engagement as a best practice. This recognition reflects LFDCS’s strong commitment to engaging and supporting its families.

B. Accountability Plan for 2025-2030

Darshan T. shared that the school must update its charter language from Dual Language Education to Heritage Language Education. This change is necessary because the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has updated the requirements for schools identified as Dual Language Education (DLE) programs.

Under the updated guidelines, a DLE school must teach all subjects in both English and another language and must also obtain formal certification from DESE through an application process. At this time, LFDCS does not meet the criteria required for DLE designation but does align with the standards for a Heritage Language Education program.

DESE recommended that LFDCS transition to the Heritage Language Education model to avoid confusion within the community regarding the school's program structure.
As part of this process, DESE is requesting that the school submit a board-approved amendment to update the language in the school's accountability plan, replacing Dual Language Education with Heritage Language Education.
D. DeFillippo made a motion to accept the accountability report including the ammendment of changing from a dual language school model to heritage language model and submit the ammendment to Charter School Redesign.
J. Henriquez seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

III. Assistant Superintendent's Report

A. Updates from the Assistant Superintendent

Sally-Ann S. shared the most recent version of the Board Recruitment Brochure that she and Tricia Chisolm have been developing. The brochure includes information on the expected time commitment, the qualities the Board seeks in prospective members, an overview of the school, its mission and educational philosophy, and descriptions of the various positions on the Board. It also features quotes from current trustees sharing their experiences serving on the Board.

The brochure is expected to be finalized in March, and the Family Liaison will distribute copies at upcoming family events.

IV. Finance Department

A. Lease Update

In order to proceed with execution of the lease, Elka Sachs of Krokidas & Bluestein prepared a Board Resolution for review and approval that was presented by Mark Ventre. The Board agreed to review and vote on each resolution individually.

The resolution authorizes the Board Chair, Vice Chair, and Superintendent to execute the lease, ensuring that a designated signatory is available if another is unavailable. It also affirms the School's intent to incur financing in connection with the project and establishes a maximum debt and reimbursement threshold, including professional fees related to the acquisition and renovation of the properties. The total estimated project cost is set at $31 million.

Elka Sachs clarified in her communication with Mark Ventre that the resolution does not constitute authorization to borrow funds, nor does it represent final approval of financing. Rather, it serves as a declaration of intent to allow financing proceeds to reimburse the School for eligible expenses incurred prior to the closing of tax-exempt bond financing. She further explained that the $31 million cap may be increased to $35 million if deemed advisable. Increasing the cap would not obligate the School to incur $35 million in expenses but would provide additional flexibility to ensure that pre-financing expenditures are eligible for reimbursement.

Mark Ventre shared that Tony Cichello of Krokidas & Bluestein reported to him that the fund has agreed to the lease terms, and the remaining matter is finalizing an agreed-upon timeline.

Mark Ventre presented a draft reimbursement budget for the Board's review. The preliminary budget includes approximately $300,000 in legal fees, $250,000 for engineering, $75,000 for appraisal services, and $1 million for renovations, totaling over $2 million in anticipated reimbursable expenses.

Resolutions that need to be voted:

Resolution #1: Is to approve the school, LFDCS, to enter in the lease with the nonprofit, Lawrence Family Development Inc (LFD) dated July 1, 2025 and expires on July 2027, for a term on 2 years with three one-year renewal options. Authorizes Germinudy Lopez, Elizabeth Nolberto, and Darshan Thakkar to sign the lease.

Discussion: A proposal to update the Board Resolution to state two years instead of three years with three one-year extension to coincide with the language in the lease.

Chris Needham made a motion to approve this resolution. Elizabeth Nolberto seconded.

Roll Call: CN-Y, DD-Y, JH-Y, EN-Y, JC-Y, RA-Y, LM-Y GL-Y, JT-Y

Resolution #2: Approval of the project, which is the acquisition and renovations of various properties, 34 West Street, 125-129 Bradford St, 400 and 404 Haverhill Street, 8 Bradford Street, 7 May Street a/k/a 10 Railroad Street and to exercise the right to purchase.
Discussion: None
Chris Needham made a motion to approve this resolution. Dave DeFillippo seconded.
Roll Call: CN-Y, DD-Y, JH-Y, EN-Y, JC-Y, RA-Y, LM-Y GL-Y, JT-Y

Resolution #3: The Board authorizes the School as borrower to incur Financing in connection with Project and to grant security interests in any and all assets of the School including but not limited to the Project and the Property.

Chris Needham made a motion to approve this resolution. Dave DeFillippo seconded.
Roll Call: CN-Y, DD-Y, JH-Y, EN-Y, JC-Y, RA-Y, LM-Y GL-Y, JT-Y

Resolution #4: The School reasonably expects to incur debt to reimburse expenditures (including expenditures made within the last sixty (60) days temporarily advanced form internal funds for the Project). The maximum principal amount of debt expected to be issued for the Project, including for reimbursement purposes is approximately Thirty-One Million Dollars ($31,000,000.00).
Discussion: Chris N. requested clarification regarding the language of the resolution, noting that it appeared to reference only the reimbursement of expenditures. Mark V. clarified that, pursuant to applicable regulations, expenditures incurred within sixty (60) days prior to the vote are eligible for reimbursement.
Darshan T. recommended that the resolution include an enumeration of the preliminary budget. Mark V. expressed concern that specifically itemizing the budget within the resolution could inadvertently restrict purchasing flexibility by establishing fixed caps on certain line items.
Chris N. also recommended removing the parenthetical language at the beginning of the resolution and instead stating more directly that the School reasonably expects to incur debt in connection with the acquisition.
Mark V. further clarified that expenses related to the survey would not be eligible for reimbursement, as they were incurred outside the 60-day reimbursement window. He noted that legal fees incurred to date have been minimal. Any eligible project-related expenses incurred after the date of the vote, including costs such as title insurance would qualify for reimbursement through the financing. The maximum anticipated reimbursement amount for the project remains approximately $31,000,000.
Chris made a motion to approve this resolution, as amended. Elizabeth Nolberto seconded.
Roll Call: CN-Y, DD-Y, JH-Y, EN-Y, JC-Y, RA-Y, LM-Y GL-Y, JT-Y

Resolution #5: The foregoing vote is intended to be a declaration of intent pursuant to Treasury Regulation Section 1.150-2 of the Internal Revenue Code to reimburse the school for original expenditures it incurs with the proceeds of an tax-exempt bonds.

Chris made a motion to move this resolution. Dave DeFillippo seconded.
Roll Call: CN-Y, DD-Y, JH-Y, EN-Y, JC-Y, RA-Y, LM-Y GL-Y, JT-Y

Resolution #6: This resolution will take effect immediately.
Chris made a motion to approve this resolution. Dave DeFillippo seconded.
Roll Call: CN-Y, DD-Y, JH-Y, EN-Y, JC-Y, RA-Y, LM-Y GL-Y, JT-Y

Resolution #7: That Germinudy Lopez, the Chair of the Board, Elizabeth Nolberto, the Vice Chair of the Board, or Darshan Thakkar as Superintendent, each acting singly, is authorized, on behalf of the School, to take any action as may be necessary or desirable and to execute and deliver any and all other agreements, assignments, conveyances, certificates, affidavits, documents as may be desired or reasonably required in connection with the Amended and Restated Lease, including without limitation a notice of lease to be recorded with the Essex County Registry of Deeds – Northern District.
Discussion: Lynette M. suggested adding a time limitation to the resolution, expressing concern that the current language appeared open-ended. Mark V. responded that there is no clearly defined financing window to reference. Lynette M. proposed revising the language to specify that the authorization would remain in effect through the conclusion of the financing period.
Darshan T. clarified that the intent of the resolution is to ensure that an authorized signatory is available if one of the designated individuals is unavailable at the time a document requires execution.
Dave D. clarified that the authorization is limited to this specific project. Chris N. stated that he was hesitant to modify the language, as the Board had already approved the execution of the lease in the first resolution. He explained that this resolution serves as a clean-up measure to address ancillary documents related to the lease and does not constitute approval of the property purchase. He further noted that additional documents may arise in connection with the lease that require authorized signatures.
Darshan T. provided the example of recording documents with the Registry of Deeds, explaining that if a signature error were identified, an alternate authorized individual, such as himself or Elizabeth N., could execute corrective documents if Germinudy L. were unavailable.
Chris N. reiterated that the first resolution pertains specifically to the lease document itself. Darshan T. suggested that the language could clarify that the authorization remains in effect from the initiation of the project through its conclusion. Mark V. emphasized that this resolution is not connected to the financing or purchase of the building. Chris N. maintained his position that the language of the resolution should not be revised.
Chris made a motion to approve this resolution. Dave DeFillippo seconded.
Roll Call: CN-Y, DD-Y, JH-Y, EN-Y, JC-Y, RA-Y, LM-N GL-Y, JT-Y

Resolution #8: That the Amended and Restated Lease is approved and any and all actions heretofore taken by Darshan Thakkar as Superintendent of the School and by any other members of the Board, officers, employees, or agents acting on behalf of the

School in furtherance of entering the Amended and Restated Lease are hereby ratified and confirmed.
Discussion: Chris N. says this is a clean-up, that any other action needed to be take to execute the lease are authorized.
Dave DeFillippo made a motion to move this resolution. Chris Needham seconded.
Roll Call: CN-Y, DD-Y, JH-Y, EN-Y, JC-Y, RA-Y, LM-Y, GL-Y, JT-Y

B. Authorization to open a checking account for Scholarship Fundraising and for Extended Day Program.

Mark V. asked the Board for a motion to approve opening two additional bank accounts. One for fundraising/scholarships and another for Extended Day.
E. Nolberto made a motion to open two bank accounts, one for extended day and the other for scholarship and fundraising.
D. DeFillippo seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

V. Principal's Report

A. SY' 2026-2027 Calendar

Hali C. presented a draft of the 2026-2027 school year calendar for Board approval.
E. Nolberto made a motion to approve the draft calendar as a final version.
J. Henriquez seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

G. Lopez	Absent
R. Almanzar	Aye
L. McRae	Aye
J. Tejada	Aye
J. Henriquez	Aye
J. Cedeno	Aye

Roll Call

E. Nolberto Aye
C. Needham Aye
L. Perez Absent
D. DeFillippo Aye

B. Second Quarter Results

Hali C. presented on behalf of Laurie Lawler, who was not able to attend the meeting. Some of the highlights for Quarter 2 in K1 and K2 are:

- In K1 the percentage of students on high honor roll increased. Model student percentage stayed the same.
- In K2, the number of students in honor roll increased. Model student percentage did decrease, consistent with the trend this time last year.
- Perfect attendance percentage did decrease due to absences related to the flu.

Nicole D. presented for Academy B, grades 1 and 2.

- There was an increase in the percentage of students receiving high honor roll and honor roll in grades 1 and 2, more significantly in grade 2.
- There was an increase in the percentage of students receiving model student.
- There was also decreases in percentage of students receiving perfect attendance due to the flu.

Chloe P. presented for the Lower School, grades 3 and 4.

- For 3rd grade, high honor, honor roll and model student percentages increased. Third grade was also affected by absences due to the flue season and caused the percentage in perfect attendance to drop.
- In the fourth grade, high honor roll percentages decreased and honor roll increased. Model Student percentages also decreased as well as perfect attendance.

Nicole A. reported on the Upper School, grades 5-8.

- 5th grade had a decrease in percentages in high honor roll, honor roll, model student and perfect attendance.
- 6th grade had an increase in high honor roll percentages, decrease in honor roll, a significant increase in model student and a decrease in perfect attendance percentages.

- 7th grade stayed consistent in their percentages with sligh decreases in honor roll, model student and perfect attendance.
- 8th grade saw a decrease in percentage for high honor roll, and perfect attendance, but had a significant increase in honor roll and model student.

C. Winter MAP Data

Nicole D. presented the winter MAP data to the Board. She noted that some students are still completing the test, so the figures shared are not yet final. Currently, there has been a decrease in the percentage of students in Tier 3 across reading, math, and science. In contrast, Spanish showed a slight increase of 1% in Tier 3 students.

D. Winter Panorama Data

Nicole D. presented the results of the Panorama Survey, which serves as a social-emotional learning (SEL) screener and provides teachers with a comprehensive, actionable view of every student. Students in grades 3–8 completed the SEL survey, which focused on supportive relationships, social awareness, challenging feelings, emotion regulation, and self-efficacy (for grades 7–8). For 7th and 8th graders, the areas of greatest challenge were challenging feelings and self-efficacy. Many students reported difficulty pushing through tasks they found challenging and struggling to recover when feeling sad or frustrated. When asked how teachers or adults could support them, students primarily requested that adults take time to listen. When asked what they found most difficult, many cited balancing school with outside activities.

The 6th-grade survey was administered independently. Their main area of need was emotion regulation, specifically managing and recovering positively from difficult emotions. Students indicated that maintaining their grades was the hardest part, and they suggested that teachers and adults could support them by listening and helping them work through problems in a positive way.

Students in grades 3–5 struggled most with social awareness, particularly understanding the perceptions and feelings of others. Many concerns were related to issues at home, with some focused on academics. Students suggested that teachers and adults could support them by allowing breaks and opportunities to step away when needed.

For K1–2, students showed growth in all areas, particularly in classroom effort. Teachers noted that students are adapting well to classroom routines and demonstrating strong effort.
Overall, 27% of students scored in Tier III, with the highest areas of need being emotion regulation for grades 3–8 and self-management for K1–2. Teachers are providing

interventions for Tier III students, and ongoing work ensures that all components of Morning Meeting and Advisory are implemented as Tier I supports.

E. Lottery 3/4/2026

Hali C. shared that the annual lottery will take place on March 4, 2026. It will be an electronic lottery. So far they have received 307 applications in grades K1-4, with 86 slots available in K1. The application window closes at the end of February.

F. Read Across America 3/6/2026

Hali C. shared that Student Services Coordinator, Arlene Garcia, has emailed trustees to invite them as volunteer readers for the students in K2 through 2nd grade.

VI. Department Highlight

A. Paraprofessional Coaching

Sarah H. presented to the Board on her work as the school's Paraprofessional Coach. She outlined the coaching framework, including how paraprofessionals are supported through the para-to-teacher pipeline, and highlighted key accomplishments in paraprofessional development.

Coaching begins at the start of the school year with goal-setting meetings, followed by multiple check-ins throughout the year. These include classroom observations, after-school professional development, and progress monitoring. At the end of the year in May, progress monitoring meetings provide an opportunity to reflect on the year and assess whether goals were met.

Sarah H. uses data collection to identify trends and common areas of need, which informs the coaching framework and guides professional development. As a result of this coaching support, the number of paraprofessionals taking the MTELs increased from four last year to eight this year. Participation in career-advancing professional development, such as SEI training or Studying Skillful Teaching, also rose from four to eight participants. Additionally, the percentage of paraprofessionals enrolled in college increased from 22% last year to 51% this year.

VII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

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

Roll Call

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

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Y. Rodriguez

Documents used during the meeting

- Accountability Plan 2025 2030 Provisionally Approved.docx
- Board of Trustees Brochure 2026.pdf
- SCHOOL CALENDAR 26-27 DRAFT 1.pdf
- Awards 2025-2026 (2).pdf
- MAP Results Winter 26.pdf
- SEL Survey Results Winter 2026 (1).pptx
- Paraprofessional Board Presentation.pptx