*****Massachusetts Department of***

***Elementary and Secondary Education***

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| Jeffrey C. Riley*Commissioner* |  |

# MEMORANDUM

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| **To:** | Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education |
| **From:**  | Jeffrey C. Riley, Commissioner  |
| **Date:**  | April 20, 2023 |
| **Subject:** | Update on Lawrence Public Schools |

To keep the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) well informed about the progress being made by schools and districts in state receivership, I am providing regular updates.

In the most recent renewal of the [Lawrence Turnaround Plan](https://www.doe.mass.edu/level5/districts/2022-0112lawrence-turnaround-plan.docx), I committed to meeting with Lawrence city and state officials to discuss potential pathways for exiting receivership. To that end, following Mayor DePeña’s inauguration, we began discussions on strategies and options for maintaining effective programs and policies that have been implemented as part of the district turnaround, and building upon the academic gains and improvement in graduation rates, post-receivership.

Now, as a further step toward local control, we are changing the membership of the Lawrence Alliance for Education (LAE), the receiver, to allow for input from the elected state delegation. Thus, on March 28, 2023, as the original members of the LAE neared the end of their five-year term, I announced that the state delegation representing Lawrence would recommend four individuals to me for new appointments to the LAE. The newly constituted LAE will begin a search for a permanent superintendent in the fall of 2023.

The Lawrence Public Schools remains committed to implementing the priority areas in the district turnaround plan, which was last renewed in January 2022 for a three-year term. At the Board meeting on April 25, 2023, Patricia Mariano, Interim Chair of the Lawrence Alliance for Education and Juan Rodriguez, Interim Superintendent, will update the Board. Mr. Rodriguez has led the district since January 2023 when Cynthia Paris resigned after four years as superintendent. The presentation to the Board will include an overview of the district’s strategic priorities, implementation of its district-wide literacy plan, initiatives to continue diversifying the workforce, and efforts to improve family engagement and attendance. Deputy Commissioner Russell Johnston and Strategic Transformation Director Lauren Woo from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will be available to answer questions.