***Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education***

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 Jeffrey C. Riley

*Commissioner*

March 28, 2023

Dear members of the Lawrence Public Schools community,

I am writing to provide an update on the next phase of governance for the Lawrence Public Schools

(LPS). In the most recent renewal of the Lawrence Turnaround Plan, 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 ensuring that new programs and policies implemented as part of the district turnround and the academic gains and improvement in graduation rates are fully preserved 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. To achieve this, members of the state legislative delegation representing Lawrence will make recommendations to me for four of the seven LAE member seats. The fifth seat will continue to be held by Mayor DePeña. Lastly, given their significant knowledge and expertise in K-12 education, and to satisfy the required qualifications for a receiver set out in state law, Patricia Mariano, current Lawrence School Committee member and retired LPS principal, and Maria Moeller, Chief Executive Officer of the Community Group, will retain their positions on the Board in the remaining two seats. I anticipate the new membership will be in place by April 30, 2023.

I wish to thank the three outgoing members – Jessica Andors, Noemi Custodia-Lora, and Julia Silverio – for their service and dedication to the students, families, teachers, and staff of LPS. Their experience, perspective, and thoughtful comments throughout their service on the LAE have contributed to our work on behalf of our students.

Beginning this fall, with the support of an executive search firm, the newly constituted Board will engage with the Lawrence community to determine the qualities and competencies a superintendent must exhibit to be successful. After seeking community and stakeholder input, the Board will recruit and, consistent with LAE bylaws, recommend to me for appointment a permanent superintendent for Lawrence. Following this appointment, Mayor DePeña and I will discuss the next steps for exiting receivership.

I look forward to working closely with Mayor DePeña, elected officials, and the LAE on behalf of the students in the Lawrence Public Schools.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Riley

Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education