



HONORABLE MAYOR
WILLIAM LANTIGUA

Immediate Release

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Press Release

“We can’t wait any longer”

Mayor William Lantigua met with Education Commissioner Mitchell Chester earlier this month to discuss the future of the Lawrence Public Schools. Over the course of the past several months, Mayor Lantigua has been personally engaged in ongoing conversations with Commissioner Chester about the future of the Lawrence Public Schools and what is needed to advance as a school district. “I’m convinced, after analyzing many scenarios, that certain tools are needed in order for our public schools to progress. Some of the tools are very specific and are only available to us with strict oversight by the Department of Education and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts”, stated Mayor Lantigua.

The Lawrence School Committee launched a search for a new Superintendent this past spring, however, though seventeen people applied, the search did not yield any one candidate to be named as permanent Superintendent.

“We can not wait any longer as a school district to see the transformative changes that is needed in order for the Lawrence Public Schools to reach the levels of achievement that the children of our community deserve. I have long listened to the single parent theories and the so called troubled neighborhood excuses”, stated a passionate Mayor William Lantigua. “The same children of the same single parents are excelling in the halls of Bellesini and Esperanza Academy, Community Day and Family Development Charter Schools, along with Notre Dame Academy all in our Great City of Lawrence,” Mayor Lantigua added.

“As of today, I have asked Commissioner Chester to take the extraordinary steps necessary to give the next Lawrence Public Schools Superintendent tools to reform our school system. In this request, I am seeking immediate state oversight, including the appointment of a Receiver, pursuant to all applicable laws within the Commissioner’s authority to assist Lawrence Public Schools,” further stated Mayor William Lantigua.

Mayor Lantigua hopes that a new Superintendent will bring ongoing reform to the school system and with state oversight; this person will be able to make the wholesale changes that have been ignored for years by previous administrators. Several schools in Lawrence have long been labeled as “level 4” and today three additional schools were added to that list. However with Mayor Lantigua’s call for state oversight, the district as a whole would be declared chronically underperforming, pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 69, and a Receiver appointed.

The Lawrence Public Schools has a long history with the Department of Education. In 1998, former Mayor Patricia Dowling signed a memorandum of agreement forming a partnership with the State and the Lawrence Public Schools.

Today’s request by Mayor Lantigua is much more comprehensive than previous oversight by the Department of Education.