MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor William Samaras and Members of the Lowell School Committee
FROM: Dr. Joel D. Boyd, Incoming Superintendent of Schools
RE: Organizational Coherence and Efficiency
DATE: June 14, 2019

As of July 1 2019, due to both the longstanding vacancy of the Chief Human Resources Officer position and the pending retirement of the Deputy Superintendent, 50% of the Lowell Public Schools' existing executive cabinet positions - which are responsible for critical systemic functions under the current organizational structure - will be vacant. These vacancies require one of three immediate decisions:

Option 1: Post and fill the current vacancies as previously designed. Over the past month, I have met with several individuals and groups of people in the community, who either work directly in our schools or as partners in support of our schools. Through those meetings, three common challenges have emerged which require attention in the district's overarching organizational design:

- A need to improve delivery of services from the central office to school sites,
- A need to enhance the level of support provided to school-based administrators, and
- A need for greater clarity in the district's central administrative structure to improve internal workflow among offices and increase access to centrally-provided services for families and the broader community.

These challenges are perceived by both internal and external stakeholders as significant hindrances to the district's productivity and would be perpetuated with a status-quo approach to addressing the current, executive-level vacancies. Option 1, while perhaps offering the easiest decision to execute, could lead to the possibility of hiring individuals who are ill-suited to meet the long-term needs of the organization. Thus, this option is **not recommended**.

Option 2: Leave the positions unfilled until the culmination of the soon-to-be launched strategic planning process and task current staff members with absorbing the relevant work streams. This option would lead to significant risk in major compliance areas of the district and appears unrealistic in practical terms as the numerous prior cuts to the central administration have left a skeleton crew which is already stretched beyond a reasonable working capacity in many instances. As a result, this option is also **not recommended**.

Option 3: Leverage these current vacancies as an opportunity to thoughtfully enhance and streamline the way we support our classrooms through a cost-effective, organizational redesign of the district's central administration. While this option may require the greatest amount of near-term work on the part of our administrative team to execute, it is the **recommended course of action** as we strengthen our focus on teaching and learning as the core of our business, now and into the future.

Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations Billie Jo Turner and Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Robin Desmond have worked closely with me to analyze the district's needs and to consider alternatives to the district's current organizational structure to position the central office to more effectively and efficiently deliver core support services to schools. As a result of that work and in accordance with School Committee Policy CC, I am submitting the attached organizational chart for the School Committee's review and approval.

This reorganization will result in a **total cost savings of $65,609.00** to the previously approved operating budget for FY20. The attached table provides a full breakdown of the cost implications and net savings that will be realized as a result of this action item. These additional funds will be held for future

necessary position reinstatements and/or adjustments at school sites and/or centrally pending the outcome of the final FY20 budget allocation by the legislature.

If approved by the School Committee, the following improvements will be made to the district's organizational design (illustrated on the attached organizational chart), and all associated vacant positions will be posted on the district's website and through other relevant recruiting outlets immediately.

- The position of **Chief Equity and Engagement Officer** will be created to (1) lead the district's work to embed equity and culturally sustaining practices into every core district function, ensuring that all students have full and equitable access to the district's programs and resources, and (2) lead the district's efforts to engage students, families and community members as true partners in the educational process,
- The position of **Chief Schools Officer** will be created to directly coach and support principals and school-based teams to improve the quality of teaching and learning and close opportunity gaps in every classroom. This position will also assume primary leadership of the district's professional development, data, performance management and student assessment functions.
- The position of Chief Human Resources Officer will be merged into the position of **Chief Operating Officer**, with an expanded focus on leading all non-financial business operations of the district in addition to human resources,
- All cabinet level job titles will be adjusted for greater organizational coherence with each position residing in one of three central divisions to improve internal work flow and increase clarity for internal and external stakeholders: The Office of Educational Equity and Community Empowerment, the Office of Teaching and Learning and the Office of Finance and Business Operations.
- The positions of Deputy Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent for Student Support Services will be eliminated as they will become superfluous in the new organizational design.

Chief Equity and Engagement Officer

This new position will strengthen the district's commitment to authentic community engagement, ensuring that students, families and the broader community have an active voice in district decision-making, and will lead the district's efforts to raise cultural awareness and competence among employees across the system to increase the academic achievement of the diverse populations we serve. This position will:

- ensure that Lowell's diversity is leveraged as an integral part of the district's strategy for raising academic achievement,
- ensure that all students have equitable access to programs and resources through analysis, monitoring and policy development,
- act as the lead in enhancing parental and community involvement in district decision-making,
- serve as the district's public information officer and coordinate all media-related activities,
- coordinate the district's legislative agenda and manage government relations, and
- enhance the district's relationship with the vast network of community partners across the city.

This position will reside in the Office of Educational Equity and Community Empowerment and will report directly to the Superintendent.

Chief Schools Officer

Under this new design, a Chief Schools Officer (CSO) will support the improvement of instruction within schools through coaching, professional development and performance management. This position will:

- coordinate all centralized professional development for instructional staff,
- serve as an instructional coach and primary rating officer for principals,
- develop and monitor school improvement plans with principals and school teams.

- design and implement a system-wide performance management system,
- develop and maintain data reporting systems, and
- set concrete academic goals and track achievement of benchmarks for all schools.

This position will reside in the Office of Teaching and Learning and will report directly to the Superintendent.

Chief Operating Officer

The Chief Operating Officer will align all aspects of the district's operational portfolio, including Human Resources, Facilities, Food Service, Transportation and Safety and Security, and work closely with the Chief Financial Officer to ensure expert oversight of the district's business functions to seamlessly deliver related services to schools, enabling school leaders to focus their time on supporting teaching and learning in the classroom. This position will:

- act as the district's Chief Human Resources Officer to fulfill the district's strategic staffing goals,
- serve as the district's primary point of contact with the city on all major capital projects in our schools,
- provide strategic oversight in the areas of facilities and transportation to ensure maximum cost efficiencies and optimal service delivery, and
- Ensure that every school facility is safe and welcoming through coordination of all security functions and alignment of those functions with the district's core commitment to social-emotional learning.

This position will work within the Office of Finance and Operations and will report directly to the Superintendent.

HR Implications

Salaries for the newly created positions will be established in the range of $150,000 with specific salaries to be determined based on the selected candidates experience and qualifications. If the School Committee approves this item, I will also be working closely with our Labor Counsel to review the existing contracts of the two Assistant Superintendents and will bring back to the Committee for approval any necessary adjustments related to changes in titles and responsibilities to align those contracts with this improved organizational design.

As organizational improvement is an ongoing process, I believe the proposed changes I've outlined above will bring us closer to our goal of making Lowell the highest performing district in the state. I look forward to our continued collaboration around this work.

c: LPS Executive Team

Attachments

Lowell School Committee Policy
Section C – General School Administration

File: CC - ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION PLAN

The central administration will be organized in a manner that assures that the Lowell Public Schools will be able to effectively and efficiently carry put programs and respond to any new programs demanded by our needs or opportunities, or suggested by research or successful practice. The organization must also allow the schools opportunities to address their particular needs and improve existing programs.

The legal authority of the School Committee will be transmitted through the superintendent along specific paths from person to person through the approved organizational structure.

The organizational structure approved by the Committee will represent direction of authority and responsibility; it will not restrict cooperation among staff members at all levels or the flow of ideas necessary in the decision making processes.

The superintendent will be responsible for keeping the administrative structure of the school system up-to-date with the changes in goals, curriculum, instructional arrangements, and school services, and will recommend revisions in the structure as necessary to the School Committee.

Current Practice Codified 1978