



Massachusetts School Building Authority

Deborah B. Goldberg
Chair, State Treasurer

James A. MacDonald
Chief Executive Officer

Mary L. Pichetti
Executive Director / Deputy CEO

December 13, 2024

Ms. Maureen Lynch, Superintendent
Whittier Regional Vocational Technical School District
Superintendent's Office
115 Amesbury Line Road
Haverhill, MA 01830

Re: Whittier Regional Vocational Technical School District, Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School

Dear Superintendent Lynch:

I am pleased to report that the Massachusetts School Building Authority (the "MSBA") Board of Directors has voted to invite the Statement of Interest (the "SOI") for the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School, serving grades 9-12, in the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical School District (the "District") into the MSBA's Eligibility Period.

The 270-day Eligibility Period formalizes and streamlines the beginning of the MSBA's grant approval process and benefits the District by providing a definitive schedule for the completion of preliminary requirements, assisting with the determination of financial and community readiness, and identifying needs for planning and budgeting. Successful completion of all activities in the Eligibility Period will allow the District to be eligible for an MSBA invitation to Feasibility Study.

Invitation into the Eligibility Period is **not** an invitation to Feasibility Study. Moving forward in the MSBA's process requires collaboration with the MSBA, and an invitation to Feasibility Study will require a further vote of the MSBA Board of Directors. Communities that "get ahead" of the MSBA without MSBA approval will not be eligible for grant funding. Additionally, the District's vote by the Board of Directors approving of a potential invitation to Project Scope and Budget will be no sooner than July 1, 2027. To qualify for any funding from the MSBA, local communities must follow the MSBA's statute and regulations, which require MSBA partnership and approval at each step of the process.

Please note, the MSBA and the District previously collaborated to conduct a Feasibility Study to address issues identified in the Statement of Interest submitted by the District for a project involving the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School, and pursuant to the Feasibility Study Agreement dated July 21, 2021, the District was reimbursed by the MSBA for the MSBA's share of approved, eligible costs. Therefore, the District is not eligible to request reimbursement for any costs related to or incurred in connection with a Feasibility Study resulting from this invitation for the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School.

Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School Eligibility Period Board Action Letter

The District's Eligibility Period is scheduled to commence on Friday, August 1, 2025, and conclude on Tuesday, April 28, 2026. In order to proceed into Eligibility Period on August 1, 2025, the District must provide the following information to the MSBA prior to July 1, 2025.

A letter signed by the local chief executive officer of each member community of the Regional School District evidencing that each of the eleven-member communities are prepared to:

- Amend, as may be needed, the existing Vocational Regional School District Agreement;
- Support the District during the feasibility study phase to examine both the existing site of the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School and the possible relocation of the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School to the Haverhill campus of Northern Essex Community College, as described in the SOI; and
- Proceed with the understanding that a Feasibility Study conducted in connection with this Eligibility Period invitation will not be eligible for MSBA reimbursement and that 100% of the cost of such Feasibility Study will be borne by the District.

If the District is unable to provide the requested letter by July 1, 2025, the District will not be eligible to commence the Eligibility Period and will be asked to execute and submit a Declaration of Removal of a Statement of Interest form by August 1, 2025. This would serve as confirmation of the District's decision to remove the Statement of Interest for the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School from the MSBA's Eligibility Period. The MSBA would then include the recommendation to remove the Statement of Interest for the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School from the Eligibility Period at the August 27, 2025 meeting of the MSBA's Board of Directors.

In addition, the District must complete the Eligibility Period requirements in accordance with the schedule on page five of this letter. In advance of completing the first listed item, the Initial Compliance Certification, the District must satisfy the requirements to submit a letter as described above. Provided the letter is submitted to the MSBA by the deadline, the Initial Compliance Certification will be sent to the District electronically two weeks prior to the District's commencement date, on Friday, July 18, 2025.

Furthermore, in order to complete the Eligibility Period requirements, the District must provide the following with each identified deliverable, which deliverables are also listed with the schedule on page five:

- School Building Committee – The District must provide a letter signed by the chief executive officer of each member community of the Regional School District evidencing each of the eleven-member communities support their community representation on the School Building Committee. This must be provided with the School Building Committee deliverable that is due by September 30, 2025.
- Educational Profile Questionnaire – The District must complete the ongoing study guided by the Northern Essex Community College's and District's joint engagement with the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute and make the results of the study available in time to fully inform the Educational Profile Questionnaire deliverable that is required by October 30, 2025.
- Online Enrollment Projection – Completion of the same ongoing study guided by the Northern Essex Community College's and District's joint engagement with the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute which shall be available in time to fully inform the MSBA's Online Enrollment Projection deliverable that is required by October 30, 2025.

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Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School Eligibility Period Board Action Letter

The ability of the District to complete the preliminary requirements within the 270 days does not guarantee an invitation into the MSBA Capital Pipeline. Further, if the District cannot complete the preliminary requirements within the 270-day Eligibility Period, the MSBA will require the District to withdraw its SOI, and the District will have to re-file an SOI during the next open SOI filing period and/or when the District has the required financial and community support.

Upon completion of the preliminary requirements of the Eligibility Period and invitation to Feasibility Study, the District will be required to resolve any potential amendments to the Vocational Regional School District Agreement regarding any issues including, but not limited to, the level of participation from each member community and each member's apportionment of capital costs prior to the MSBA Board approving a recommendation for Preferred Schematic Design.

If the District has concerns about meeting any of the deadlines set forth on page five of this letter, please notify the MSBA in writing immediately. If you have questions or would like additional information regarding the Eligibility Period or any of the required documentation, please refer to our website and/or contact Allison Sullivan at the MSBA (Allison.Sullivan@MassSchoolBuildings.org).

I look forward to continuing to work with you throughout the MSBA's grant program process. We encourage you to share this letter with other District stakeholders. As always, feel free to contact me or my staff at (617) 720-4466 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Mary L. Pichetti
Executive Director

Cc: Legislative Delegation
The Honorable Kassandra Gove, Mayor, City of Amesbury
Daryle J. Lamonica, Chair, Georgetown Board of Selectmen
Orlando Pacheco, Georgetown Town Administrator
Kathleen Kastrinelis, Chair, Groveland Select Board
Rebecca Oldham, Groveland Town Administrator
The Honorable Melinda Barrett, Mayor, City of Haverhill
Linda D. Alexson, Chair, Ipswich Select Board
Stephen Crane, Ipswich Town Manager
Chris Manni, Chair, Merrimac Select Board
Stephanie Brensike, Merrimac Town Administrator
Alicia Greco, Chair, Newbury Select Board
Tracy Blais, Newbury Town Administrator
The Honorable Sean Reardon, Mayor, City of Newburyport
Christine A. Kneeland, Chair, Rowley Board of Selectmen

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Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School Eligibility Period Board Action Letter

Deborah M. Eagan, Rowley Town Administrator

Michael Colburn, Chair, Salisbury Board of Selectmen

Neil Harrington, Salisbury Town Manager

Wendy Reed, Chair, West Newbury Select Board

Angus Jennings, West Newbury Town Manager

Scott W. Wood, Chair, Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School Committee

Kara Kosmes, Business Manager, Whittier Regional Vocational Technical School District

File: 10.2 Letters (Region 3)

Eligibility Period Schedule of Deliverables¹

Whittier Regional Vocational Technical School District Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School

MSBA Board of Director Meeting – December 13, 2024

| Eligibility Period Commences – Friday, August 1, 2025 | | |
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| MODULE ONE - Eligibility Period | | |
| Deliverable | Days | Due Date and Status |
| Initial Compliance Certification | 30 | Tuesday, September 2, 2025 Required |
| School Building Committee | 60 | Tuesday, September 30, 2025 Required |
| Educational Profile Questionnaire | 90 | Thursday, October 30, 2025 Required |
| Online Enrollment Projection | 90 | Thursday, October 30, 2025 Required |
| Ch. 74 Vocational Technical Education Viability Documentation | 90 | Thursday, October 30, 2025 Required |
| Enrollment Meeting Held | 180 | Wednesday, January 28, 2026 Required |
| Maintenance and Capital Planning Information | 180 | Wednesday, January 28, 2026 Required |
| Local Vote Authorization | 270 | Tuesday, April 28, 2026 Required |
| Feasibility Study Agreement | 270 | Tuesday, April 28, 2026 Required |
| Eligibility Period Concludes – Tuesday, April 28, 2026 | | |

¹If the District has concerns about meeting any of the following deadlines, please let the MSBA know by Friday, August 1, 2025. The MSBA will require districts that are unable to complete the preliminary requirements within the timeframes noted for each to withdraw its SOI and reapply when the district has the financial and community support required.