

**Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Massachusetts School Building Authority
Chapter 74 Vocational Technical Education Viability Documentation**

Date: Jun 25, 2024; updated and resubmitted 3/19/2025

School District (the “District”): Medford Public Schools

Superintendent: Dr. Suzanne Galusi

Author(s) of the Chapter 74 Viability Form (Name, Title): Jenny Graham MCHSBC Chair, Dr. Peter J. Cushing Assistant Superintendent of Enrichment, Innovation & Operations, Chad Fallon Director of Medford Vocational Technical High School

This form and other information and evidence referenced herein must be submitted as a component of all Massachusetts School Building Authority (<https://massschoolbuildings.org/about>) projects that include plans to:

- Continue to offer existing Chapter 74 state-approved Vocational Technical Education (VTE) programs;
- Expand the size of, contract the size of, or close existing Chapter 74 state-approved Vocational Technical Education (VTE) programs; and/or,
- Add new Chapter 74 state-approved Vocational Technical Education (VTE) programs.

Completed forms and attachments should be returned to the MSBA Project Coordinator.

NOTE: The information provided by MSBA applicants does not eliminate the requirement to engage the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Chapter 74 New Program Application process in its entirety **in the year prior** to the proposed program’s opening. However, submission of this information will allow DESE to provide MSBA with a “**viability**” letter that would result in a potential recommendation that the MSBA Board of Directors vote to authorize the district to proceed into the schematic design phase of the building project.

A. Overview of Chapter 74 Programs

1. **General Information.** Complete the table below for all current and proposed Chapter 74 Programs to be considered for inclusion in the proposed project.

| Chapter 74 Program Offerings | 2023 - 2024 Enrollment | Proposed Capacity /Applicable School Year | Comment* |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|---|--|
| Existing | | | |
| Automotive Tech | 30 | 40 FY26 | In addition to space needs, the district will need an additional teacher to reach expanded capacity. See attached for School Committee approval. |
| BioTechnology | 17 | 30 FY26 | |
| Business Marketing | 19 | 20 FY26 | Space limitations |
| Carpentry | 20 | 30 FY26 | |
| CCL - Construction & Craft Laborers | 39 | 45 FY26 | |
| Cosmetology | 24 | 37 FY25 | In addition to space needs, the district will need an additional teacher to reach expanded capacity. See attached for School Committee approval. |
| Culinary | 34 | 35 FY25 | |
| Early Childhood | 18 | 30 FY26 | |

| | | | |
|--|-----|----------------------------|--|
| Electrical | 40 | 60 FY26 | In addition to space needs, the district will need an additional teacher to reach expanded capacity. See attached for School Committee approval. |
| Graphic Design | 18 | 20 FY25 | |
| Health Assisting | 32 | 50 FY27 | In addition to space needs, the district will need an additional teacher to reach expanded capacity. See attached for School Committee approval. |
| Media Tech | 29 | 40 FY26 | |
| Metal Fabrication | 12 | 15 FY26 | The district will need an additional teacher to reach expanded capacity in the area of 30 students. Space is not currently an issue for expansion. |
| Robotics & Engineering | 34 | 40 FY26 | |
| Programming and Web Design | 23 | 20 FY25 | |
| Grade 9 Exploratory | 298 | 300 (EST) | |
| | | | |
| Proposed New | | | |
| Dental Assisting | N/A | 24, FY30 | Plan to begin programming before the new HS; timeline dependent on DESE approval and budget allocation |
| Criminal Justice/Protective Services | N/A | Proposed Capacity 30, FY28 | Dual enrollment opportunity with Bunker Hill Community College |
| Plumbing/HVAC | | 24, New High School ~FY30 | The Plumbing CTE program cannot begin before space is available in the new HS. |
| Information Systems - OT/Networking - Cyber Security | | 24, FY27 | Plan to begin programming before the new HS; timeline dependent on DESE approval and budget allocation |
| | | | |
| Total | 687 | 938 | |

* Indicate whether the program is an existing program, proposed to be expanded, a new program, a program to be scaled down, or program to be discontinued.

2. **School Committee Support.** Provide a copy of the school committee meeting minutes, which include language and outcome of the vote regarding the Chapter 74 Programs to be studied as part of the feasibility study for the proposed project.

Medford Response:

Expansion plans were presented to the School Committee on 5/20/2024. See the attached presentation. Motion by Member Graham for the School Building Committee to explore the program expansions and new programs outlined in the SBC feasibility study, second by Member Reinfield - 7/0 passed

Update as of 2/26/2025 - Consistent with our conference with DESE and their recommendation, we have removed Veterinary Science from our Chapter 74 program plans and made small adjustments to the timeline for other proposed programs, which are reflected in the above table. Motion by Member Graham to remove veterinary science from exploration and adjust the expansion timelines for Dental Assisting, Criminal Justice/Protective Services, Plumbing/HVAC, and Information Systems per the presentation, second by Member Ruseau. - 7/0 passed

B. If Expanding the Size of Existing Chapter 74 Programs

1. **General Information.** Please provide the name of your district, and the existing Chapter 74 program(s) you are proposing to expand in conjunction with this MSBA project.

Medford Response:

Medford Public Schools seeks to expand several CTE programs due to waitlist data compiled over several years. We are seeking expansion in the following Chapter 74 programs: Automotive Technology, Cosmetology, Electrical, and Health Assisting. These programs historically are over-subscribed and a waitlist is generated. See above for proposed expansion plan. The School Committee approved the expansion plan unanimously at the 5/20/2024 School Committee Meeting.

2. **Student Demand.** Please provide evidence of increased student demand for the Chapter 74 programs you propose to expand. The best source of data for this would include recent waitlist trend data for both entrance to the school (which will provide evidence for the expansion of 9th grade exploratory) and in student selection of programs after completing exploratory.

Medford Response:

Currently, we have 687 students participating in a CTE program (including CTE Exploratory). Due to enrollment constraints, we are not able to offer any seats to out-of-district students, which we have done in many of the past years. The practice of admitting out-of-district students ended in school year 23/24 due to enrollment constraints. For the programs listed as “Expanded,” we have reviewed waitlist data for the past five years, which demonstrates the need for expanded CTE opportunities across programs. Many always have more requests than seats available (noted in the chart above).

- School year 21/22 - 14
- School year 22/23 - 65
- School Year 23/24 - 47

C. If Adding New Chapter 74 Programs

1. **General Information.** Please provide the name of your district, and the new Chapter 74 program(s) you are considering applying for in conjunction with this MSBA project.

Medford Response:

Medford Public Schools is seeking new program approval in the following Chapter 74 program areas: Criminal Justice, Dental Assisting, Information Systems, Plumbing/HVAC, and Veterinary Science.

2. **Alignment with Regional Workforce Development Priorities and Critical Industries and Occupations.** The Governor's Office and DESE seek to ensure that Chapter 74 program approvals align with regional workforce needs. The Department encourages Chapter 74 program applications that:

- Align with regional occupational priorities as outlined in [the state's MassHire regional workforce development Blueprints](#); and
- Demonstrate evidence of consultation and collaboration involving regional MassHire Boards (formerly Workforce Investment Boards); school districts, including regional vocational technical school districts and, where applicable, county agricultural school districts; postsecondary educational institutions; and other key regional stakeholders as appropriate.

Proposed programs that do not align with priorities and critical needs as outlined in a regional Blueprint may still be viable, if they are accompanied by an analysis of need that is grounded in labor market demand, student demand, and support from the stakeholders listed above.

REGION 1: Berkshire - Includes Berkshire Workforce Area
 REGION 2: Pioneer Valley - Includes Franklin/Hampshire and Hampden Workforce Areas
 REGION 3: Central Massachusetts - Includes North Central and Central Massachusetts Workforce Areas
 REGION 4: Northeast - Includes Greater Lowell, Lower Merrimack and North Shore Workforce Areas
 REGION 5: Greater Boston - Includes Boston (Private Industry Council), Metro North, and Metro South/West (Partnerships for a Skilled Workforce) Workforce Areas
 REGION 6: Southeast - Includes South Shore, Brockton, Bristol, and New Bedford Workforce Areas
 REGION 7: Cape Cod and Islands - Includes Cape Cod and Islands Workforce Area

Does the Chapter 74 program (or programs) you are considering align with a priority industry sector and/or occupation for your region of the Commonwealth for the next 5 to 10 years?

Medford Response:

The Medford High School CTE program plans to add Veterinary Science, Criminal Justice, Plumbing, Dental Assisting, and Information Services, all of which align with the following statements:

Yes, the program(s) we are considering align with a priority or critical **industry and occupation** within the region. Again, this is true for Veterinary Science, Criminal Justice, Plumbing, Dental Assisting, and Information Services based on our industry sector research.

- 3. Labor Market Demand.** If the proposed program does not align with regional priorities or critical industries and occupations outlined in Question 2 above, it is the obligation of the applicant to make a compelling case for the viability of the program with respect to labor market demand. If you were able to answer ‘Yes’ to any of the conditions described in Question 2 above, no further labor market demand information is required.

Medford Response:

Not Applicable

- 4. Student Demand.** Please provide preliminary evidence of student demand for the proposed new programs (this could include recent waitlist trend data, waitlist data for similar/proximate programs, and student demand for the new program(s) statewide and regionally). This is particularly important for proposed new capital-intensive programs such as those in the Agriculture and Natural Resources, Construction, or Transportation Clusters, or a program like Advanced Manufacturing.

Medford Response:

On Monday, May 20, 2024, District and School leadership presented evidence-based expansion plans to the Medford School Committee that align with our regional blueprints and local demand. The presentation is included as an appendix to this document. Of 332 survey responses from our 7th and 8th grade students:

- 83.1% expressed interest in adding Criminal Justice Protective Services to our vocational portfolio
- 66.9% expressed interest in adding Information Systems to our vocational portfolio
- 52.1% expressed interest in adding Dental Assisting to our vocational portfolio
- 59.8% expressed interest in adding Plumbing/HVAC to our vocational portfolio

- 5. Consultation with Industry, MassHire Boards, and Postsecondary Partners.** New Chapter 74 programs under consideration must be planned in consultation with industry experts and postsecondary partners. The formal Chapter 74 application process requires the formation of Program Advisory Committee (see [Program Advisory Committee for VTE Form](#)). For the purposes of a MSBA project, preliminary consultation with your MassHire board, associated industries, and higher education representatives (where applicable) in your region is sufficient.

Please provide evidence that this consultation has occurred and that such consultation included information about workforce and job development demands or job market trends and student demand.

Medford Response:

Three separate meetings were conducted (4/21/24, 5/1/24, 5/8/24) with our local MassHire agency for the purposes of aligning our new and expanded CTE program opportunities with local employment needs as well as what occupations are seen as “critical” to the industry over the coming years. A labor market data request was completed by the representatives at MassHire, which allowed us to see current data to support our plan to open new Chapter 74 programs that meet the demands of our region. As we reviewed potential program additions, we consulted our regional blueprints and viewed the hiring demand for each. We have worked with DESE on program expansions in the past and are prepared to comply with DESEs requirements around program advisory committees.

6. **Consultation with other potential providers of Chapter 74 programs in your region.** Please provide a description of any consultation that has already been conducted, along with consultation that is planned. See specific consultation expectations in the Consultation Appendix to guide your description.

Medford Response:

Our consultation with schools in our region has been limited to startup costs, startup planning, and survey consultation for developing a student survey of interests.

- D. **Consultation Appendix.** Please review and address all parts that apply to your situation.

1. **For Districts that are Members of Regional Vocational Technical Schools**

Medford Response:

Not Applicable

DESE requires that applicant school districts that are members of regional vocational technical school districts consult, and provide evidence of consultation, with the regional vocational technical school district.

This expectation applies regardless of whether the program under consideration duplicates one currently available within the regional vocational technical school district. Consultation between school districts considering new Chapter 74 programs and the regional vocational technical school districts to which they belong is intended to encourage cooperation in the provision of technical programming, the coordination of efforts, and strategic alignment with regional workforce needs.

A. *Please specify the regional vocational technical school district of which the prospective applicant is a member.*

B. *Does the program(s) you are proposing duplicate one currently offered at the regional vocational school district indicated above?*

No
Yes

C. *Have you engaged in discussions with the regional vocational technical school district regarding your consideration of the program(s) indicated above with respect to your MSBA project?*

No
Yes, and I'm attaching additional documentation of these discussions

2. For Regional Vocational Technical Schools

Medford Response:

Not Applicable

DESE requires that regional vocational technical school districts consult, and provide evidence of consultation, with all member cities and towns. This expectation applies regardless of whether the program(s) under consideration duplicates ones currently available within any member cities and towns. Consultation between the regional vocational technical school districts and member cities and towns is intended to encourage cooperation in the provision of technical programming, the coordination of efforts, and strategic alignment with regional workforce needs.

A. *What are the member cities and towns that comprise the regional vocational technical school district?*

B. *Have you engaged in discussions with all cities and towns that are members of your regional vocational technical school district regarding your consideration of the program(s) indicated above in relation to an MSBA funding application?*

No

Yes, and I'm attaching additional documentation of these discussions

3. For Districts located within Bristol, Essex or Norfolk Counties:

Medford Response:

Not Applicable

NOTE: DESE requires that applicants consult, and provide evidence of consultation, when the Chapter 74 program(s) under consideration duplicates one already offered at Bristol County Agricultural High School, Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical High School, or Norfolk County Agricultural High School in the same county. Consultation between school districts considering creation of Chapter 74 programs and the county agricultural school districts is intended to encourage cooperation in the provision of agricultural programming, the coordination of efforts, and strategic alignment with regional workforce needs.

A. *Is your school district located within Bristol, Essex or Norfolk County?*

Medford Response:

No

B. *Are any program(s) you are proposing identical to a Chapter 74 program currently being offered at your Agricultural High School?*

Medford Response:

Not Applicable

C. *Have you engaged in discussions with your Agricultural High School regarding your consideration of the program(s) indicated above in relation to an MSBA funding application?*

Medford Response:

Not applicable.

4. For all applicants: Duplicating Programs Offered at High Schools in Close Proximity

NOTE: DESE requires that applicants consult, and provide evidence of consultation, when the Chapter 74 program(s) under consideration duplicates one already offered in another school district at a school in close proximity. Consultation between school districts considering creation of Chapter 74 programs and school districts offering the identical program at a school in close proximity is intended to encourage cooperation in the provision of technical programming, the coordination of efforts, and strategic alignment with regional workforce needs. DESE suggests

the following geographical boundaries to assist districts in determining “close proximity” as follows:

- For school districts in areas east of Route 495, any Chapter 74 programs within 5 miles of the proposed Chapter 74 program(s)
- For school districts west of 495, to the east border of Berkshire County, any Chapter 74 programs within 10 miles of the proposed Chapter 74 program(s)
- For school districts in Berkshire County, any Chapter 74 programs within 20 miles of the proposed Chapter 74 program(s)

A. *Are any of the programs you are proposing identical to a Chapter 74 program currently being offered in another school district in a school in close proximity?*

Medford Response:

Yes

B. *What are the names of the school districts currently offering identical Chapter 74 programs at a school in close proximity?*

Medford Response:

- *Somerville High School*
- *Cambridge Rindge & Latin*

C. *Have you engaged in discussions with the school district(s) with schools in close proximity offering the same program regarding your consideration of the program indicated above in relation to an MSBA funding application?*

Medford Response:

No, we have not engaged in discussion with the school district(s) indicated above. The schools noted above currently limit their enrollment to students from their own city.

Similarly, Medford’s focus is to provide programming to Medford resident students. Survey data from our students indicates that offering this programming will fulfill the unmet needs of the students of Medford.