

GREATER LAWRENCE TECHNICAL SCHOOL
57 River Road, Andover, Massachusetts 01810

PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
April 7, 2026

A meeting of the Greater Lawrence Technical School Program Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, April 7, 2026, at Greater Lawrence Technical School.

The following members were in attendance:

Facilitator: Danielle Ahern	CTE Program: Environmental Science
Recorder: Dana Nuenighoff	
Materials Manager:	
Dialogue Monitor:	
Timekeeper: Doug Pottle	
Faculty Present	
Danielle Ahern	Grade 9 Instructor
Dana Nuenighoff	Grade 10 Instructor
Doug Pottle	Grade 11 & 12 Instructor
Advisors Present	Name of Business
Nick Ferry	Department of Conservation
Cheri Cousens	Greater Lawrence Sanitation District
Jerry Keefe	Environmental Protection Agency
Jeffrey Cary	Town of Andover
Dave Heislein	Army Corp of Engineers
Morgan Conklin	Woodard & Curran
Guest Present	

Agenda Item #1: Call to Order

- a. Welcome/Introductions

Status report:

Agenda Item #2 Verification of committee members' contact information, phone numbers and emails.

- a. Please verify the e-mail address for each member.
- b. Per DESE PAC Guidelines, it is important that every effort has been made to ensure the membership of our Advisory Boards are inclusive and diverse. Review the **composition populations** listed on the Program Advisory membership forms. Ask members to sign-in using the [Google Form](#) (Share link with all members) and ask that they select any of the sub-groups they are able to represent.
 - i. Persons of racial or linguistic minorities.
 - ii. Persons are nontraditional by gender for the program.
 - iii. Persons are well-equipped to represent the perspectives of persons with disabilities.

Status Report:

- a. Email Addresses have been verified for each member.
- b. Facilitator asked for members to review representative populations. Union representation will be updated when the members fill out the Google form.

REPORT OF OLD BUSINESS**Agenda Item #3: Minutes**

- a. Review minutes from the Program Fall Advisory meeting, and voice comments, questions, or concerns (Minutes are posted on the GLTS website).
- b. Provide an update on action items from the previous meeting. The facilitator should recap the conversation ([Link to recommendations updates](#))
- c. Solicit a motion to approve minutes, 2ND the motion.

Status Report:

- a. Fall 2025 Minutes were reviewed, no comments or concerns
- b. Action Items : There were no questions or concerns
- c. A motion to approve minutes was solicited, as well as a 2ND motion.

Recommendation: It is recommended to to make a motion to approve the minutes.

Motion: Nick Ferry moved to approve the minutes of October 23, 2025

2ND: Dave Heislein

Vote: Unanimous

NEW BUSINESS**Agenda Item #4: CTE Program Facilities Review****a. CAPITAL EQUIPMENT PLANNING & INVESTMENT**

1. **Capital Equipment Replacement (5-Year Outlook)** Are there any major pieces of equipment (approximately \$25,000+) that we should plan to replace or upgrade within the next five years?
2. **Emerging Tools & Industry Upgrades** What new tools, equipment, or facility upgrades are becoming standard in your industry that we should consider incorporating into our program?

b. FACILITY DESIGN, FUNCTIONALITY & SAFETY

1. **Shop Design & Industry Alignment** Does our current shop layout and design reflect industry standards and real-world work environments?
2. **Safety, Repairs & Functionality** Are there any safety concerns, needed repairs, or workflow inefficiencies in the space (e.g., layout, storage, equipment placement) that we should address?
3. **Facility Conditions & Improvements** Are there any updates, cosmetic or structural, that would improve the learning environment or better reflect industry expectations?

c. COMPLIANCE & PROGRAM REVIEW (NIOSH + PROGRAM CHECKLISTS)

3. After reviewing the NIOSH and program-specific checklists, are there any areas where our facilities, equipment, or practices do not fully align with current standards?
 - a. [NIOSH Department Checklist Review](#) & [All Programs Checklist Review](#) (Each Program Lead should provide their PAC with a copy of the applicable NIOSH Checklist for review)

Status Report:

- a. Capital Equipment Planning & Investment
 1. Equipment replacement:
 - a. The Environmental Science bus was repaired, inspected and registered at the beginning of 2026. The bus was used once but on the second field trip it stopped working while still on campus. A more reliable, dedicated transportation unit

would be good to have so that we can store equipment within the bus for field investigation. Possibilities are:

- i. Traveling mobile lab–pull out bench
 - ii. Mobile lab equipment
 - iii. Solar powered generator
 - iv. Research on other tech schools to see what they use
2. Emerging tools & industry upgrades:
- a. Nick suggested purchasing a fish hatchery equipment system for sea-run salmon. This could be a good link for coop placement if in collaboration with local hatchery programs. We could possibly start small and grow from there, maybe with freshwater muscles or other smaller species.
 - b. Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) could be an investment for the program, especially beneficial for freshmen exploratory.
 - i. Inspection of bridges underwater, pipe lines, etc
 - ii. Can be trained in the pool for exploratory.

b. Facility Design, Functionality & safety

1. Shop design & industry alignment:

- a. Room 6002 requires a laboratory bench with sink (multiple) set up as well as a safety shower and eyewash for chemical labs
- b. Room 6002 and 6003 require a shop sink or floor drain system for large/dirty water volumes
- c. Room 6002 and 6003 require epoxy flooring to match 6006 for water seal and use
- d. The layout of having Room 6002 does not work for the shop. Room 6004 should be used instead of or in addition to Room 6002 so that the students have access to the shared lab space. This is a safety concern if a teacher has to leave the room or if students are back and forth to/from the shared lab space for supplies, etc.
- e. Students should have their own outdoor bags for outdoor work
 - i. Baggie of disposable gloves
 - ii. Safety glasses
 - iii. Water quality mini kits–collection cups with ice packs
 - iv. Binoculars
 - v. Field guide books

2. Safety, repairs & functionality:

- a. Fish tank maintenance–possible grant for summer and weekend maintenance of the students
- b. Utility sink put in to 6002 and 6003 connected to a floor drain
- c. Dry well to the outside
- d. Floors in 6003 should match 6006 due to water damage

3. Facility conditions & improvements

- a. See 1 and 2 above.

c. Compliance & Program Review

3. Review NIOSH & program-specific checklist:

1. What feedback or insights can the PAC provide?

1. The shop does not currently comply with the NIOSH checklist due to the following concerns:
 - a) Fume hood required
 - b) Fire cabinet required
 - c) Automated vent for humidity in the summer
 - d) Humidifier in the winter

Recommendations: It is recommended that Room 6004 be used instead of (or in addition to) Room 6002 due to student safety concerns. If Room 6002 is to remain part of the program, a laboratory bench with sinks should be added to the wall against Room 6003. A safety shower with eye wash should also be added to Room 6002 if it remains part of the program. Epoxy floors should be extended to Room 6003 and 6002/6004 to match 6006. The fume hood and fire cabinet should be installed in Room 6006. Utility sinks and a floor drain system should be added to the program for aquarium cleaning and dirty water disposal.

Motion: Nick Ferry moved to approve the Program Facility Review

2ND: Dave Heislein seconded

Vote: Unanimous

Agenda Item #5 Equipment / Budget

Review Budget for FY26/27 & Prepare Budget for the upcoming school year (SY27/28)

a. Review Voc Budget FY 26/27 and begin Draft Budget for FY27/28.

Status Report:

a. Review of FY26/27 Budget and Draft Budget for FY27/28

- i. The anticipated budget for next year is similar with building out for the new classroom, similar to what it was for SY25/26. Consumables, equipment and maintenance needs are also similar with next year being the same as this year. The certification budget was not used this year because most seniors were out on coop and staff availability. This will change for next year having more seniors and them being in opposite weeks. The 5 year outlook for consumables, equipment, and maintenance remains stable.

Recommendations: The 26/27 budget is similar to years past as the program is still growing. It is anticipated that the equipment budget will reduce next year as we finalize the shop space and curriculum.

Motion: Nick Ferry moved to approve the 26/27 budget.

2ND: Jeffrey Cary seconded

Vote: Unanimous

Agenda Item #6: Curriculum

- a. **Emerging Technology & Techniques:** What new technologies, tools, or techniques are gaining traction in the industry that students should be exposed to?
- b. **Industry Evolution (Past Year)** How has the industry changed over the past year, and what new or evolving skills are now essential for entry-level employees?
- c. **AI Integration & Readiness** What specific AI tools or applications are becoming essential in our industry, and what foundational skills do students need to use them effectively and ethically?
- d. **Curriculum Adaptation** How are emerging technologies, beyond AI (e.g., automation, sustainability practices), fundamentally changing job roles, and how quickly should our curriculum be adapted to address these new industry needs?
- e. **Outdated Skills & Equipment** Are there any tools, equipment, or skills that are becoming outdated or no longer widely used in your industry that we should consider reducing or phasing out?

Status Report:

a. Emerging Technology & Techniques:

- a. Drones with infrared and heat cameras used for population tracking, search and recovery
- b. ROVs used for underwater inspection, search and recovery
- c. Hand operated drill for sample collection
- d. Lidar survey for topography mapping

b. Industry Evolution (Past Year):

- a. Wildlife pathology has been emerging this year with bird flu, etc.
- b. Dredging is always an option for chemical analysis and environmental remediation trends

- c. Waste audit can be an interesting way for students to connect with sustainability, compost, food trends
- c. **AI Integration & Readiness:**
 - a. Pattern recognition in data sets is used in industry
- d. **Curriculum Adaptation:**
 - a. Have a firm come and map here for the students to study—need the correct program for students to look at the data
 - b. arcGIS/Autodesk for free
 - c. Focusing on NECO/Middlesex curriculum, connect with faculty for a possible AP or dual enrollment opportunity
 - d. Certifications
 - i. Wetland Delineation
 - ii. OSHA Hazwopper
 - iii. SCUBA
- e. **Outdated Skills & Equipment:** There was no outdated skills and equipment discussion.

Recommendations: It is recommended to connect with local community college faculty to discuss AP or dual enrollment opportunities, and to learn what the introductory curriculum for those college courses are and to gear senior year toward those subjects. It is recommended to utilize the drones that we have and to purchase ROV equipment to follow industry trends.

Motion: Nick Ferry moved to approve the curriculum recommendations.

2ND: Dave Heislein

Vote: Unanimous

Agenda Item #7: Cooperative Education/Industry Trends

1. **HIRING & SKILL GAPS**
 - a. When hiring entry-level employees, what skill gaps do you most commonly see?
 - b. What are your biggest challenges when hiring new employees in your industry?
2. **TECHNICAL & PROFESSIONAL SKILLS**
 - a. What technical skills are essential for success in entry-level roles at your company?
 - b. What specific professional (“soft”) skills do you prioritize, and what distinguishes a strong candidate from an average one?
 - c. In the first 90 days, which professional skills most impact whether a new hire succeeds or struggles?
3. **PROGRAM ALIGNMENT & STUDENT PREPARATION**
 - a. If you have hired our co-op students or graduates, what are their strengths? Where do they need further development?
 - b. What should we be doing differently in our programs to better prepare students for success in your company/industry?
4. **FUTURE-FOCUSED & PROGRAM PRIORITIZATION**
 - a. As technologies (including AI) evolve, what new skills or competencies are becoming most important?
 - b. Which skills, tools, or processes are becoming less relevant or outdated? Where should we consider reducing emphasis to make room for higher-impact learning?
5. **PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**
 - a. What other companies or organizations would you recommend we partner with for co-op placement?

Status Report:**1. HIRING & SKILL GAPS**

- a. Programs such as DCR have had trouble with students in the past. It is important to teach students technical skills but also soft skills like time management, communication, organization, etc.
- b. Summer internships should start to become available

2. TECHNICAL & PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- a. Students need to be able to use and understand when to use PPE and safety equipment.
- b. Basic tech skills include lab protocol, technical writing.
- c. Professional skills would be similar to those listed in the skills gap section such as time management, communication, organization, uniform, etc.

3. PROGRAM ALIGNMENT & STUDENT PREPARATION

- a. See section 1 and 2.

4. FUTURE-FOCUSED & PROGRAM PRIORITIZATION

- a. It's suggested by Jeffery and Nick that government co-ops would be harder to get into than the private industry
- b. Survey work–Dave has a list of firms. Highlight marine surveys on boats
- c. Find grants to help get them into more internship co-ops with sending communities, Andover, Methuen, Lawrence, North Andover

5. PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- a. Sustainable Farming
- b. GIS
- c. Black Earth
- d. Woodhills Compost Site
- e. Forestry contractors
- f. AVIS (Andover Village Improvement Society)

Recommendations: It is recommended that instructors connect with local communities for summer internships that could extend into next school year for coop placement. It is also recommended that teachers focus on industry skills but also soft skills which will promote professionalism.

Motion: Nick Ferry motioned to approve the Industry Trends recommendations

2ND: Dave Heislein

Vote: Unanimous

Agenda Item #8: Other:**Status Report:****Recommendations:****Motion:****2nd Motion:****Vote:****ADJOURNMENT**

Recommendations: Danielle Ahern recommends meeting adjournment at 6:53pm

Motion: Nick Ferry motions to adjourn

2ND: Dave Heislein

Vote: Unanimous

Next Meeting: October 2026

Respectfully Submitted: Danielle Ahern