

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: Brooke Leavitt	CTE Program: Medical Assisting
Recorder: Rita Fazio	
Materials Manager: Sarah Coutu	
Dialogue Monitor: Rita Fazio	
Timekeeper: Tamie Harris	
Faculty Present	
Brooke Leavitt	11th-grade Instructor, Department Lead
Rita Fazio	10th-grade Instructor & 12th grade related
Sarah Coutu	12th-grade Instructor
Tamie Harris	9th-grade Instructor & 11th-grade Related
Audra Durkin	GLTS Coop Coordinator
Advisors Present	Name of Business
Elizabeth Torres, RN	PAC Chairperson Devoted Health - Utilization Management Nurse
Linda Coke, RPh	Greater Lawrence Family Health Center Director of Pharmacy
Holly Braid, COTA	Element Care - Lowell/Methuen
Christen Fragala	Physician - Westford Family Health Center
Ryann Abrams, PharmD	Director of Pharmacy, GLFHC
Kathleen Welch-Hudson	Dean of Health Professions at NECC
Cynthia Gomez	RN @ Lahey 12th-grade GLTS parent
Madiely Jacobita	2025 GLTS Medical Assisting Graduate Nursing Student UMass Lowell
Guests:	
Eliana Reyes	12th-grade student
Yuleidy Sanchez	11th-grade student
Naomi Pujols Castro	11th-grade student
Reymon Sanchez Morel	11th-grade student
McKenzie Schiavone	CVS- Workforce Innovation Talent Center Manager
Zachary Yu	Pharmacist- CVS 110 Turnpike St, North Andover.

Agenda Item #1: Meeting called to Order at 5:16 pm

- a. Welcome/Introductions: New and existing member 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. The facilitator asked members to review representative populations via QR Code sign-in. 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. Minutes reviewed by members; paper copy provided for members, as well as previous recommendations reviewed.
- b. Action Items -
 - i. Recommendations **NOT MET** included
 1. **Larger lab space**,
 2. **Shop classes together**, no separate classroom on "the bridge."
 - ii. Recommendations that were **MET**:
 1. **ID now** - we purchased 4 machines,
 2. **PCT certification** - we are offering to seniors not on Co-op,
 3. **Cert Billing/Coding** - were purchased but not yet implemented,
 4. **Sustained budget** for curriculum resources, supplies, equipment, certifications, and early college.
- c. Facilitator solicited a motion to approve the minutes and a 2ND motion.

Recommendation: The committee reviewed previous Advisory Fall minutes and reviewed recommendations. Discussion held regarding the Action Items, which included recommendations that were met and not met. Recommendation made to approve the minutes.

Motion: Christen Fragala moved to approve the minutes of October 23, 2025.

2ND: Elizabeth Torres

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: INVESTMENT - Anamotage Virtual Cadaver Table recommended by Christen Fragala as a useful educational investment. Also, future expense - exam tables that lower and raise electronically as more clinics utilize this style. Just purchased new exam tables, so this recommendation can be looked at again in the future.
 2. Emerging tools & industry upgrades: EHR simulation
- b. Facility Design, Functionality & Safety
 1. Shop design & industry alignment: The shop space continues to be inadequate. Current space poorly fits students' needs and safety.
 2. Safety, repairs & functionality: There is no adequate storage space. Currently, boxes are laid out in most classrooms due to a lack of storage
 3. Facility conditions & improvements: Currently none that can be done to improve immediately. Potential for expansion is being worked on by the superintendent.
- c. Compliance & Program Review
 3. Review NIOSH & program-specific checklist:
 1. What feedback or insights can the PAC provide? Reviewed checklists for regulated medical waste, bloodborne pathogens, and PPE. Updated annual safety competencies and written tests for the entire department per grade level to ensure compliance and industry preparation. Recommendation made to incorporate safety handling and disposal of hazardous Medications.

Recommendations: Incorporate safety for hazardous medication waste/storage/handling into annual safety procedures. The Anamotage Virtual Cadaver Table was recommended for a future Capital Expense Investment. Also, height-adjustable exam tables were also recommended for future expense (recently purchased new exam tables that are not height adjustable). EHR simulation software continues to be a recommendation, though we have not been successful in finding an adequate one. Currently utilizing EHR GO, but discrepancies with the program exist, making it less user-friendly than was hoped for. Shop space continues to be inadequate both for instruction, safety, and storage.

Motion: Christen Fragala made a motion to approve the status report on facilities review

2ND: Cynthia Gomez

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. [FY26/27 Medical Assisting Budget](#)
- ii. Purchases: trauma & geriatric mannequins, two Audiometers, HgB analyzer
- iii. Appropriate Equipment - none
- iv. What tools and/or equipment replacement needs - none
- v. 5-year outlook for tool/equipment replacement needs - n/a

Recommendations: Budget reviewed and additional recommendations made for the budget to include - Pharmacy Technician State Licensure fee - \$150 - max hours 1500 hrs & 18 y.o (state requirements). CVS covers the cost of state licensure for its pharmacy tech trainees, but GLFHC does not.

Motion: Elizabeth Torres made a motion to approve the budget as written.

2ND: Christen Fragala

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:** None
- b. **Industry Evolution (Past Year):** None
- c. **AI Integration & Readiness:** transcription AI (MAs may need to educate patients regarding it ahead of time), Open Evidence (ChatGPT for MDs - not for MAs), AI utilized for reports and for insurance authorizations
- d. **Curriculum Adaptation:** Health Literacy/patient education and understanding of content.
- e. **Outdated Skills & Equipment:** Certain POCTs are not being done in many offices anymore - for example, Fecal occult, mono, H.pylori are not done at Dr. Fragala's practice, and patients are sent to the lab.

Recommendations: Currently, no new emerging Technology or techniques are emerging that would impact our current curriculum. AI is being utilized mostly in terms of transcription, reports, and by MDs specifically. Recommendation made for the curriculum to increase focus on Health Literacy and patient education. Certain POCTs are being performed less in practice, but continue to be on DESE frameworks for curriculum.

Motion: Christen Fragala made a motion to approve the curriculum.

2ND: Elizabeth Torres

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. GAPS - Ear irrigation, manual BP, counting money, Insurance coverage/how it works, prior authorizations, formularies.
- b. Finding candidates - staff shortages in many places

2. TECHNICAL & PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- a. “Soft Skills”
- b. Attendance, punctuality, phone usage, lack of initiative, and engagement
- c. Attendance, punctuality, initiative, phone usage, lack of initiative, and engagement

3. PROGRAM ALIGNMENT & STUDENT PREPARATION

- a. NECC, CVS, and Greater Lawrence Family Health Center state our students are personable, engaged, social, and ask good questions (esp at NECC).
- b. No specifics other than continue with soft skills, and fill in the skill gaps mentioned

4. FUTURE-FOCUSED & PROGRAM PRIORITIZATION

- a. A recommendation was made to certify students in CPI training.
Continued focus on soft skills, including attendance, punctuality, showing initiative, etc continue to be very important and an ongoing problem with new hires.
- b. Certain POCTs are less relevant as explained earlier - mono, H. pylori, fecal occult.

5. PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- a. We have increased our Early College program with Northern Essex Community College and hope to continue to offer more classes to both our Junior and Senior classes in the upcoming year. Regarding Co-op placement, a barrier to placement locally is that Greater Lawrence requires a High School diploma to be hired. As for clinical sites, many practices are too short-staffed to take on clinical students. Recommendation was made to try more private practices such as: Mill City Medical - Lowell, Riverside Medical and Riverside Surgical Group - Lowell, Dr. Ramadan at Oak Pediatrics in Westford,

Westford Primary Care, Northeast Medical Group in Lowell, Nephrology Associates in Tewksbury, Fresenius Dialysis in Methuen and Chelmsford, Gastrohealth and Integrated GI, Merrimack Valley Orthopedics.

Recommendations: Recommendations made to look into private practice sites for primary care/ specialty practices. Continue focusing on soft skills. Some gaps in skills to focus on would be ear irrigation, manual BPs, counting money, insurance coverage/workings, prior authorizations, and formularies. Recommend looking into CPI training/de-escalation (verbal and/or physical).

Motion: Linda Coke made a motion to implement soft skills training in the curriculum (Example)

2ND: Holly Braid

Vote: Unanimous

Agenda Item #8: Other:

Status Report:

Recommendations:

Motion:

2nd Motion:

Vote:

ADJOURNMENT

Recommendations: Facilitator made a recommendation for a motion to adjourn at 6:32 pm

Motion: Ryann Abrams

2ND: Christen Fragala

Vote: Unanimous

Next Meeting: October 2026

Respectfully Submitted: Rita Fazio 4/14/2026