

MONTACHUSETT REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
and
GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Chapter 74 Partnership Program
Memorandum of Agreement

The following agreement is entered into between Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School District (MRVTSD), located at 1050 Westminster Street, Fitchburg, Massachusetts and Gardner Public Schools (GPS), with administrative offices located at 70 Waterford Street, Gardner, Massachusetts. This agreement was developed in partnership with school officials representing the interests of both parties, and will be in effect through the 2024-2025 school year. Thereafter, the agreement will be reviewed by Superintendents (or their designees) from both districts, and amended or renewed “as-is” annually.

MRVTSD is designated as the “Program District” and GPS is partnering with the Program District for the purpose of enrolling their students in the following Chapter 74 training programs:

Carpentry: CIP Code 460201
Electricity: CIP Code 460302

Responsibilities

In order for the program to be successful, each partner will make significant contributions. Accordingly, MRVTSD and GPS agree to the following:

MRVTSD will provide:

- Administrative representation and planning assistance at all meetings of the partnership
- Qualified instructors to teach agreed upon courses
- Orientation sessions for new students and their parents
- Provide bus transportation to GPS students enrolled in the Partnership Program(s), both to/from the training facility
- Award GPS students a vocational certificate indicating completion of competencies, the total number of training hours completed, and industry-recognized credentials earned upon successful completion of two years of the program
- Data such as attendance, course completion rate and average grade to track program outcomes delivered at the end of each quarter
- Provide daily lunch
- In year two, provide eligible GPS students the opportunity to participate in cooperative education for applicable programs as available
- General instructional support for English Language Learners and Special Populations
- All consumable technical materials
- Procurement of consumable technical materials
- Required PPE or other technical program clothing or materials to all students as needed to participate
- Administration of program staff compensation
- General financial management of program

GPS will provide:

- A district representative who will coordinate, support students and provide program oversight
- Administrative representation and planning assistance at all meetings of the partnership
- Coordinate student outreach and recruitment assessments for prospective students
- Eligible students with application materials, local admission policy, and all related program materials, so that qualified students may make an informed decision regarding participation in this elective program

- Enrolled students with a “week about” schedule, denoting academic coursework one week, and full-day vocational training the next
- Designate enrolled students as Chapter 74 in October 1 SIMS Report each year

Operational Considerations

- GPS students will complete all academic coursework in their home school district, following a “week about” schedule, with academic coursework one week, and full-day vocational training the next.
- GPS students will attend full-day vocational training at the Montachusett Vocational Partnership (MVP) Academy on alternating weeks.
- GPS students will follow a schedule mutually agreed upon by MRVTSD and GPS. The academic calendars, including non-typical school days, such as standardized testing dates, early release days, and professional development days will be reviewed and agreed upon prior to the start of the school year.
- Delayed starts and early dismissals, as prescheduled or due to weather, will follow the MRVTSD schedule.
- Vocational training program information will be shared through the GPS guidance department and GPS school liaison.
- MRVTSD will provide daily notice of student attendance and GPS will update daily attendance accordingly.
- MRVTSD will report student conduct referrals to GPS. GPS will be responsible for assigning and documenting appropriate discipline.

Services

- Instruction: GPS will provide academic instruction to all GPS students enrolled in the Partnership Program. To ensure students are progressing, and remain on track to graduate with their peers, GPS will provide progress reports and transcripts to MRVTSD each quarter. Similarly, MRVTSD will provide technical instruction and provide progress reports, term grades, and attendance records to GPS each quarter, at a minimum. Program Directors, instructors, guidance counselors, and parent liaisons will meet at regular intervals to discuss student progress in the program.
- Guidance Services: GPS will provide guidance services including career assessments and the development of a four-year career plan. MRVTSD, working in partnership with GPS guidance, will provide opportunities for eligible students to be placed in cooperative education during the second semester of their Senior year.
- Transportation: MRVTSD will provide standard bus transportation to GPS students enrolled in the Partnership Program(s), both to/from the training facility. In the event, that a student’s living situation or IEP requires specialized transportation, then the assignment and cost for that specialized transportation will be provided by GPS.
- Special education; English language learners: Students with disabilities and English Language Learners will be supported, including implementing student’s IEP’s and 504’s during their vocational instruction by their vocational instructors and supporting paraprofessionals. Vocational instructors will be SEI endorsed. GPS, as the LEA, will develop and provide progress monitoring for all students with IEP’s. MRVTSD vocational instructors will provide competency-based progress updates for students with IEP’s to GPS. GPS will share plans such as IEP’s, 504’s, and EL proficiency levels with MRVTSD program director and MRVTSD instructional staff. If a student’s IEP requires specific personnel to support that student’s needs, for example 1:1 support or hearing impairment translation, then that personnel will be provided by GPS. Lastly, in alignment with ongoing practice, the coordination of specialized service programs and providers, all required IDEA/ADA evaluations, assessments and data collection will remain with GPS.

Staffing

Programs will be staffed to meet Chapter 74 guidelines for each technical area. Staff will be highly qualified and hold current Massachusetts teaching licenses, and required endorsements. Instructors will be evaluated by MRVTSD administrative personnel, annually. Funding for staff will be budgeted from monies received from partner schools and grant funding.

Admissions Policy

Participation in the Chapter 74 Partnership Program is open to a total of twenty rising juniors and seniors. All Gardner Public School rising juniors and seniors are eligible to apply. Interested students will submit an application to GPS guidance counselors and/or the program liaison during their sophomore year. Vocational training and the “week about” academic schedule will commence junior year and will continue through senior year. Proportion of students admitted to the Partnership Program from each school has been agreed upon by MRVTSD, FPS, GPS, and NRS D leadership. The table below outlines the expected student enrollment at Montachusett Vocational Partnership (MVP) Academy, beginning Fall 2024:

Participating District	Percentage of MRVTSD current enrollment	# of slots allotted to each partner school district
Fitchburg Public Schools	23%	52
Gardner Public Schools	12%	20
Narragansett Regional School District	8%	12
Total participants		84

The application process may include an information session and interview component to allow students to express their interest and commitment and to discuss how the Chapter 74 Partnership program would help them accomplish their career and academic goals.

Selection of candidates, admission to the Partnership Program, and subsequent enrollment at the Montachusett Vocational Partnership (MVP) Academy is solely determined by GPS personnel.

Eligibility & Selection Criteria

Student eligibility to participate in the Partnership Program is fully determined by the GPS administrative team. Furthermore, students who are enrolled in the Partnership Program will not be considered for transfer to MRVTSD.

Enrollment:

To enroll, interested students will complete the MVP Academy Application for Admission, which contains the following GPS forms:

- MVP Academy New Pupil Information Form
- Consent for Release of Records
- Media Release Form
- Health Related Forms:
 - Student Health/Emergency Form
 - Medication Authorization Form
 - Patient Consent Form

By completing these forms, GPS will have permission to share student records, and MRVTSD will have information needed to act appropriately in an emergency.

Continued Eligibility

A student’s continued eligibility to participate in the Partnership Program is based on progress reviewed at the end of each academic year to meet the following academic expectations:

- Students that receive a failing grade (D or F at MRVTSD) are required to meet with their home school Guidance Counselor and a representative of MRVTSD to determine a plan of action.
- GPS is solely responsible for potential removal from the program.

Budget/Funding/Budget Development & Management

The Partnership Program Budget is funded through private contributions, state grants and an annual per pupil assessment from the sending district to MRVTSD. The total assessment is the difference between the current year DESE Office of School Finance Chapter 70 Foundation Budget rates per pupil for MRVTSD vs. GPS. For example, in FY23 the Chapter 70 per pupil rate for vocational schools is \$15,697.71 while the high school rate is \$10,475.88. Therefore, the difference per pupil is \$5,221.83, and this is the base per pupil contribution to MRVTSD from sending schools. NOTE: Since the program will not commence until FY25, numbers noted above are subject to change, reflecting appropriate foundation budget rates, per pupil.

The total contribution each year is based on the number of sending school students enrolled in vocational education at MRVTSD on October 1 of the previous year. The number who are enrolled must be accurately reflected on the sending school’s previous year October 1 SIMS Report. Payment is one year “behind” student enrollment. The table gives an example of how student enrollment, SIMS Reporting, and sending school per student payment should align.

Fiscal Year	Students’ GPS Enrollment	SIMS Report – listed as vocational student	Sending School makes per pupil payment to MRVTSD
FY25 (7/1/24 – 6/30/25)	GPS students as 11 th graders	On 10/1/24 Report	
FY26 (7/1/25 – 6/30/26)	GPS students as 12 th graders	On 10/1/25 Report	FY26 based on 10/1/24 Report
			FY27 based on 10/1/25 Report

Financial Management

Each partner agrees to the following responsibilities in fiscal management

- MRVTSD will plan the annual budget and provide overall fiscal management.
- MRVTSD will procure grant or other funding to support the program as needed.
- GPS will apply for Perkins grant funding and use funds specifically generated by the MVP programs to offset costs associated with vocational training efforts.
- GPS will accurately enter GPS students enrolled in the Partnership Program as vocational students on their October 1 SIMS Report
- MRVTSD, for the purpose of collection of the total assessment, will invoice GPS in three installments per annum, in December, February and May each year according to the number of students enrolled in the Partnership Program on October 1 of the previous school year. This should align with the Partnership program enrolled GPS students reported on the October 1 SIMS Report.
- MRVTSD will invoice GPS monthly for the number of meals served based on the agreed upon rate dependent on a possible continuation of universal meal plans.
- GPS will make payment on Partnership Program invoices in a timely manner.
- Budget or fiscal disagreements will be reviewed by MRVTSD and GPS Partnership Program coordinators. If disagreements cannot be resolved, they will be escalated to the Superintendents of each district.

Decision Making Process

All decisions including academic programs to be made regarding the partnership will be made by consensus of the representatives for each participating agency. MRVTSD shall control all decisions related to vocational training program curriculum and content, hiring, evaluation, and retention of staff, and awarding of grades. Resolution of issues not covered in this MOA will be escalated to school leadership.

Dispute Resolution

Any dispute arising under this MOA shall be decided by the MRVTSD and GPS Superintendent, or their duly authorized representative, and will be presented in writing. The decision shall be final and conclusive unless determined by the court of competent jurisdiction to have been fraudulent or capricious or arbitrary, or so grossly erroneous as necessarily to imply bad faith, or not supported by substantial evidence. In connection with any appeal proceeding under this clause, each school shall be afforded an opportunity to be heard and to offer evidence in support of its appeal. Pending final decision of a dispute hereunder, each school shall proceed efficiently with the performance of this MOA and in accordance with the decision of the Superintendents or their duly authorized representatives.

The dispute resolution process does not preclude consideration of law questions in connection with decisions provided for in the paragraph above, provided that nothing in this MOA shall be construed as making the final decision of any administrative official, representative, or board on a question of law.

MOA Amendment or Termination

This MOA is valid from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. If amendments are recommended by either party, it should be completed by June 30th in order to be applied to the MOA renewal prior to the following academic year.

If either party chooses to withdraw from the partnership, it must be done by June 30th, one academic year in advance. Further, either party must present the other party a notice of the parties' intent to terminate at least sixty (60) days in advance of the start of the next academic year. This will allow all enrolled students to complete the program prior to the termination of the partnership.

Authorized Signatories

As the representatives of Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School District, we agree to all terms of the Memorandum of Agreement, proposed herein.

Thomas Browne
Thomas R. Browne, MRVTSD Superintendent-Director

03 / 08 / 2023
Date

Eric Commodore
Eric Commodore, Chair, Monty tech school Committee

03 / 08 / 2023
Date

As the representatives of Gardner Public schools, we agree to all terms of the Memorandum of Agreement, proposed herein.

Mark Pellegrino
Mark Pellegrino, Superintendent

03 / 08 / 2023
Date

Michael Nicholson
Mayor Michael J. Nicholson, Chair, Gardner School Committee

03 / 08 / 2023
Date

Signature Certificate

Reference number: FFJED-IEYEQ-8VGTC-ZXFZV

Signer	Timestamp	Signature
Michael Nicholson Email: mayor@gardner-ma.gov Sent: 08 Mar 2023 18:27:27 UTC Viewed: 08 Mar 2023 18:51:02 UTC Signed: 08 Mar 2023 18:51:16 UTC		
Recipient Verification: ✓ Email verified	08 Mar 2023 18:51:02 UTC	IP address: 166.137.175.16
Thomas Browne Email: browne-thomas@montytech.net Sent: 08 Mar 2023 18:27:27 UTC Viewed: 08 Mar 2023 19:01:33 UTC Signed: 08 Mar 2023 19:02:49 UTC		
Recipient Verification: ✓ Email verified	08 Mar 2023 19:01:33 UTC	IP address: 162.245.233.77 Location: Fitchburg, United States
Eric Commodore Email: e-commodore@montytech.net Sent: 08 Mar 2023 18:27:27 UTC Viewed: 08 Mar 2023 18:32:06 UTC Signed: 08 Mar 2023 21:35:37 UTC		
Recipient Verification: ✓ Email verified	08 Mar 2023 18:32:06 UTC	IP address: 73.100.26.176 Location: Gardner, United States
Mark Pellegrino Email: pellegm@gardnerk12.org Sent: 08 Mar 2023 18:27:27 UTC Viewed: 08 Mar 2023 22:04:27 UTC Signed: 08 Mar 2023 22:04:45 UTC		
Recipient Verification: ✓ Email verified	08 Mar 2023 22:04:27 UTC	IP address: 50.206.123.142 Location: Gardner, United States

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Page 1 of 1



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