

“Operation Clean Sweep” seeks volunteers for upcoming South End of New Bedford clean-up

When: Saturday, May 21st, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Where: Meet at the Orpheum Theatre parking lot, 1005 S. Water St. New Bedford, MA

Volunteers will be cleaning up the Southend Neighborhoods. You can pre-register online.

- Free t-shirts to all volunteers
- Gloves and tools provided
- Wear closed-toe shoes
- If unvaccinated, wear a mask
- Review the safety notes [here](#)
- Walk-ins welcome

Upcoming Cleanups:

- June 18th – Purchase Street area, set up at Servpro
- July 16th – West End, Southcoast Hospitals Group
- August 27th or about that date will be Palmer Island
- September 17th – World Cleanup Day, to be determined

Long-time educator, leader of

New Bedford's Alma del Mar School selected as Executive Director

First female, person of color to lead organization.

After a months long internal search process characterized by broad outreach and community engagement, the Alma del Mar Board of Trustees have selected Ms. Taylor DeLoach as the next Executive Director of Alma del Mar Charter Schools. Ms. DeLoach will be the first person of color and the first female to lead the organization. See Ms. DeLoach's Faces of New Bedford here

A former classroom teacher and founding principal at Alma's Frederick Douglass Campus, Ms. DeLoach was unanimously approved by Alma's board on Friday, April 29.

"Taylor's experience and past roles at Alma provide her with the institutional knowledge and affinity with Alma culture and practices to lead the two-campus charter school network as scholars and families continue to traverse the challenges of recovering from the pandemic," said Ms. Jan Baptist, Chair of Alma's Board of Trustees.

Alma's Board of Trustees enthusiastically agreed during their meeting that Ms. DeLoach is well-qualified for the position and that she has the skill set that Alma needs for its growth and continued success in the years ahead.

"I joined Alma as a teacher fresh out of teacher training in 2014," Ms. DeLoach said. "Since then, I have had the privilege of working with hundreds of scholars, families, and educators within the Alma community. I have enjoyed every moment of my time at Alma and in New Bedford, and I am lucky to be able to channel the love I have for our community into the work I do

every day. I am honored to have the opportunity to serve Alma in this new role, and I look forward to continuing the critical work of serving our community.”

The Board of Trustees, Mr. Will Gardner and Ms. DeLoach will work closely to ensure a smooth transition. Ms. DeLoach will assume the role of Executive Director as of July 1, 2022.

“I couldn’t be more thrilled that Ms. DeLoach will be taking the lead at Alma,” said Will Gardner, Founder and current Executive Director. “She is a truly gifted leader who always puts our scholars first and who deeply understands what it takes to make great learning happen. When I step down I know I will be passing the baton to someone who can build on what makes Alma so special and create even more opportunities for our scholars and families.”

Background:

In March of 2022, Founder and Executive Director Will Gardner announced his plans to step away from his role after 11+ years. At this time, the Alma del Mar Board of Trustees appointed a search committee made up of various board and former board

leaders to develop and execute an internal search process to find and secure Mr. Gardner’s replacement.

As a part of a commitment to ensuring family and community voice was present in the process, the Alma Executive Director Search Committee, under the leadership of Alma’s Board of Trustees Chair Ms. Jan Baptist, launched a series of Focus Group meetings and an anonymous survey targeting three specific stakeholder groups: Parents and Families, Alma Staff, and Community Partners and Supporters.

These efforts were focused on collecting feedback on the characteristics, skill sets, and opportunity moments for Alma’s next Executive Director, as well as the most pressing issues facing the school network’s next leader. This feedback

was used in the evaluation and vetting process for Alma del Mar's next executive director.

Biography of Taylor DeLoach

Taylor DeLoach is originally from Maryland and graduated from Wesleyan University in Middletown, CT. She began her career in education as a graduate student at the Charles Sposato Graduate School of Education in Boston, where she now serves on the Board of Directors. Taylor joined Alma's team in 2014 as a first grade lead teacher and took on additional responsibilities as a teacher team leader a year later. In 2017, Taylor became an Academic Dean and co-teacher in third grade. She then held the role of Dean of Culture at Alma for two years before being named Founding Principal of Alma's new Frederick Douglass Campus in 2019. Taylor was also a part of the 2020-21 cohort of Boston College's groundbreaking Lynch Leadership Academy, which sharpens the skills of current and future school leaders and executive managers.

About Alma del Mar Charter Schools:

Alma del Mar operates two charter public schools in New Bedford. The schools are tuition-free. Alma's mission is to put every one of our scholars on the path to college and to challenge them to be service-minded leaders. We achieve this mission by providing a demanding and supportive education to every scholar who walks through our doors.

Alma features a longer school day, a longer school year, high expectations for all scholars, and outstanding teachers from across the country. We currently serve 940 scholars across two campuses.

New Bedford Police Department celebrate “High Five Friday” with elementary school students

“Yesterday morning, New Bedford police officers lined up at elementary schools around the city to greet the students and give them a high five as they walked into school.

This event, also known as High Five Friday, is a way for officers to build a positive relationship with the youth. Hope you guys loved it as much as we did! ☺?

In the video: Ofc. Manny Sequeira at Carlos Pacheco Elementary School.” -City of New Bedford Police Department.

In Mattapoisett, Two Open School Committee Seats and No Candidates

By Meg McIntyre
State House News Service

When Mattapoisett residents head to the polls in less than a month, their ballots will list two open spots on the School

Committee and no candidates to fill them. Neither of the incumbents who would be up for reelection this year pulled or returned papers declaring their candidacy, according to the town clerk's office. Two other potential candidates took out papers in March but did not file them before the town deadline.

"This past September, my husband and I welcomed our second child into our family and I am ready to open the seat for someone who has more time to devote to the position," incumbent Karin Barrows said in a statement to Sippican Week. "I am so thankful for the time I spent on the board and grateful to the people of Mattapoissett who entrusted me to make critical decisions about their children's education during such a tumultuous time." The other incumbent, Shannon Finning-Kwoka, did not return requests for comment from Sippican Week, the paper reported.

The board comprises five members, with one serving as a delegate for the Old Rochester Regional School Committee that governs schools serving Mattapoissett, Rochester and Marion. Candidates could still be elected to the two empty seats via write-in campaigns. Mattapoissett's election is scheduled for May 17.

Massachusetts Gov. Baker launches internship program, gives students STEM Work

experience opportunities

More than \$4 million in grants will pay students' salaries in STEM jobs at local companies.

BOSTON – The Baker-Polito Administration is launching a new internship program that will provide an additional 2,300 high school students with opportunities for paid work experiences in STEM fields and make it easier for companies to hire students by paying their salaries through local MassHire Career Centers and Workforce Boards. Approximately \$4 million in grants will be awarded to the 16 regional Workforce Boards and 24 Career Centers across the Commonwealth, enabling them to pay students directly for the first time.

“This new STEM internship program will give more students across the Commonwealth foundational opportunities to gain meaningful work experience,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “Under this program, employers and students will both benefit as the hiring process is streamlined and internships are made more financially feasible for both parties.”

“As Co-Chair of the STEM Advisory Council, I have heard from STEM employers and students that making connections early and often to STEM careers is critical to growing our economy,” said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. “With this new program, we are targeting the barriers around short-term employment and recruiting young people, and by addressing these gaps, our administration hopes to boost the pipeline of STEM talent streaming into the Commonwealth’s workforce.”

With this new internship program, more than 10,000 students annually will participate in state-sponsored internships when combined with the Connecting Activities program. Connecting Activities is a joint initiative of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development that supports college and career

readiness for high school students by partnering with local MassHire Workforce Boards to connect schools with businesses. Each year, approximately 7,700 high school students participate in Connecting Activities internships.

The new internship program aims to help more students – with preference given to those who live in communities significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic – gain high-quality, paid internships in STEM fields to prepare them for future career and college opportunities. The internships can take place during the summer or school year and can be either in-person or virtual, with a goal of 100 hours of work experience for each student.

“Here in the Commonwealth the growth industries are in STEM occupations, so the inclusion of more students is very important,” said Education Secretary James Peyser. “Through these internships we want more high school students to gain work experience with STEM employers so they are able to make wise college and career decisions.”

Working with the MassHire Career Centers and Workforce Boards will provide students access to professionals who can help them prepare resumes, job applications and help coordinate with potential employers.

“Introducing youth across the Commonwealth to career possibilities in the high-demand STEM sector through paid internships is a win-win for students and employers,” said Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Rosalin Acosta. “Our regional MassHire Career Centers and Workforce Boards are the perfect vehicle to connect potential interns and employers, while assisting with program logistics.”

A portion of the grant funding will also be awarded to MassLife Sciences Center and Mass Cyber Center to expand their existing internship programs by an additional 300 students.

The Administration will highlight this new STEM internship

opportunity with employers during the upcoming STEM Summit, to be held virtually and in-person at regional locations across the Commonwealth. Register for the 2022 STEM Summit this Thursday, April 28th [here](#).

Massachusetts Gov. Baker announces \$520 Million investment in college infrastructure, STEM studies

Additional \$400 Million Will Be Invested Over the Next Five Years for Critical Building Infrastructure.

The Baker-Polito Administration today announced investments totaling more than \$120 million to four public colleges and universities to renovate and expand campus facilities that further students' skills in STEM fields. Salem State University, Massasoit Community College, Springfield Technical Community College, and the University of Massachusetts Lowell will each receive \$30 million for major capital projects that will modernize campus facilities to support STEM instruction and expand the number of skilled workers in key STEM occupations in the Commonwealth. The improvements will increase enrollment capacity in these programs by about 2,000 students. Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito announced the funding today at an event at Salem State University.

The Administration today also announced a new \$165 million program to make critical infrastructure upgrades at higher education campuses over the next five years. The first four

awards of the new Critical Building Infrastructure Program, totaling over \$60 million, will support projects at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, Northern Essex Community College, Berkshire Community College, and Massachusetts Maritime Academy. This funding is in addition to \$250 million the Administration has committed to address smaller critical repairs at college campuses over the next five years.

“The investments we are announcing today will help our public colleges and universities better educate and train the workforce of tomorrow,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “The overarching goal of these investments is to modernize campus facilities to support STEM instruction, ensuring students graduate from college with skills to be ready to compete in high-demand fields.”

“These capital projects at our state colleges and universities will help to further expand capacity in the STEM workforce and grow enrollment at these institutions,” said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. “We are glad to support these projects and invest in our public institutions of higher education.”

The state’s investment will leverage local contributions, bringing the total investments to \$242 million for the four major projects. The state funds are available through An Act Providing for Capital Facility Repairs and Improvements for the Commonwealth, a \$3.9 billion capital bond bill passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor in 2018.

The projects will help the colleges and universities boost enrollment in high-demand STEM programs, and three projects will expand enrollment capacity in nursing and health sciences programs, which will assist the Commonwealth in supporting a pipeline of new talent for an essential workforce impacted by the pandemic.

“All four of these major projects address critical workforce

and economic development priorities in their regions for high growth STEM majors and occupations,” said Education Secretary James Peyser. “And the UMass Dartmouth project will be the first project undertaken as part of our strategy to address critical building infrastructure needs at all of our public higher education campuses over the next five years.”

“These investments will enhance campus facilities and open opportunities for more students across the Commonwealth to access education in critical, high-demand fields,” said Administration and Finance Secretary Michael J. Heffernan. “We are pleased to fund this important capital work at colleges and universities that will deliver long-lasting benefits to our students, workforce, and economy.”

Each project was evaluated on how it will respond to workforce needs, potential impact on students, collaboration with industry organizations and education partners, as well as criteria established as part of the administration’s strategic framework for long-term capital investments at public higher education campuses, which prioritizes projects to address the deferred maintenance backlog and support workforce needs.

Major Capital Project Awards – \$120 Million:

Massasoit Community College, Science, Nursing and Allied Health Renovations: The project will include comprehensive renovations to the college’s science and liberal arts buildings, which will benefit nearly every student enrolled at the college. Science labs will be modernized, specialized instructional space increased, and classrooms expanded. The total project will cost approximately \$41 million, with \$30 million in state funds.

Salem State University, SSU BOLD: This project will alter the campus footprint through the sale of the South Campus and provide updated healthcare and STEM spaces that will positively impact students’ experiences. The total project

cost is estimated at \$84 million, with \$30 million in state investment, \$54 million investment from Salem State and private donations.

Springfield Technical Community College, Relocation of the School of Health and Patient Simulation: This project will relocate the School of Health and Patient Simulation programs out of Building 20 into more suitable locations on the STCC campus and in the Springfield Technology Park. The total projected cost is \$41 million, with \$30 million state funds, \$11 investment from STCC and private resources.

University of Massachusetts Lowell, Olney Hall: This project will modernize and improve capacity in lab spaces and address size constraints and enrollment needs in STEM fields such as biomedical engineering, chemical engineering, chemistry, physics, and civil and environmental engineering. The total project cost is \$75 million, with \$30 million in state funds and \$45 million committed by UMass Lowell.

New Critical Building Infrastructure Program:

This new program launched by the Administration today will address critical building infrastructure renovations at higher education campuses. Approximately \$165 million will be invested over the next five years to renovate or repair critical building infrastructure like updating HVAC systems, repairing elevators, and improving energy efficiency in buildings. The Administration has also committed \$250 million over five years for smaller critical repairs, like replacing roofs, windows, floors, and bathrooms, \$50 million of which will be invested in FY23.

University of Massachusetts Dartmouth: UMass Dartmouth's \$30 million building infrastructure project will modernize the Liberal Arts and Sciences Building that was constructed in 1966 by providing a sustainable, energy efficient HVAC system that includes air conditioning and individual space

temperature control. A new ventilation system will improve comfort and offer energy monitoring and control capabilities. Electrical systems will be upgraded and expanded to support the new HVAC equipment, and the project will also involve window replacement and building envelope improvements.

Northern Essex Community College: This \$10 million investment will support the renovation of the General Services (B) and Science (E) Buildings: Infrastructure renovation of the “B” General Services and “E” Science Buildings on the Haverhill campus, which houses classrooms, labs and offices. The focus of the renovation is on energy efficiency including systems upgrades and replacement of windows and doors, critical ADA compliance needs, and enhanced life safety. The total project cost is estimated at approximately \$12 million.

Berkshire Community College: This \$10 million investment will support window replacement at Koussevitzky and Edwards Library buildings, including the removal of caulking and replacement of windows to comply with EPA requirements.

Massachusetts Maritime Academy: This \$10.5 million investment will support upgrades to the infrastructure of the Massachusetts Maritime Academy pier to support the Academy’s training operations.

Since 2018, the Baker-Polito Administration has provided significant investments for deferred maintenance projects at all the Commonwealth’s public colleges and universities. During the past six years, the Administration has committed funds or invested approximately \$1.1 billion to address deferred maintenance and critical repairs at higher education campuses.

Report: Government Choices Shifting College Costs To Students

By Matt Murphy

State House News Service

The erosion of government support for higher education over the past 20 years has made obtaining a four-year degree increasingly inaccessible to low-income students in Massachusetts, particularly students of color, as tuition and fees increases have required greater borrowing, a new report shows.

The study, produced by the Hildreth Institute and being published Monday, found that while state funding for public higher education declined 20 percent per full-time student between 2001 and 2020, tuition and fees at four-year institutions rose an average of 59 percent.

Financial aid has also failed to keep pace with rising costs being shifted onto families, falling 35 percent for full-time students from \$595 to \$386 during a time when median household earnings have climbed 13 percent, the report found.

"After two decades of disinvestment, we're too far down the road to expect a few reforms will re-chart a new course for our public institutions and students. Years of inaction will force the state to finally decide the role the Commonwealth, which prides itself on being the birthplace of public education, should play in post-secondary public education," wrote Bahar Akman Imboden, managing director of the Hildreth Institute and the author of the report.

The state this year budgeted nearly \$1.2 billion for its higher education campuses, including \$577.5 million for the

University of Massachusetts, out of a \$48 billion state budget. After passing a law before the pandemic reforming the way the state funds K-12 education, lawmakers are now grappling with how to make education more affordable at both the beginning and advanced stages of a student's educational career.

Senate President Karen Spilka and House Speaker Ron Mariano have both discussed finding ways to use federal dollars and other resources to lower the cost of early education and care while Reps. Natalie Higgins and Sen. Jamie Eldridge have filed legislation to make debt-free college a reality for tens of thousands of students.

Mariano and House Ways and Means Chairman Aaron Michlewitz are expected on Monday to announce new investments in the early education workforce that will be a part of the House's fiscal 2023 budget due out on Wednesday.

Imboden said state policymakers should seriously consider the framework put forward by Higgins and Eldridge in their bills (H 1339. S 829) to guarantee debt-free higher education for all students, and estimated that it could cost between \$771.7 million and \$1.015 billion, depending on who would qualify for enhanced aid.

Public universities now rely on tuition and fees for 40 percent of their revenue, according to the report, which is a far different paradigm from the 1980s when student charges delivered less than a quarter of an institution's revenue.

In the 1980s, financial aid through the MassGrant program – the state's main form of need-based financial assistance – covered 80 percent of a student's tuition and fees. It now covers 10 percent of a full-time student's expenses, researchers wrote.

"With this shift and the decline in financial aid to students, the financial burden on public higher education students and

their families is at an all-time high,” Imboden wrote.

The shift puts more hardship on students from low- to moderate-income backgrounds, requiring them to work more hours outside of school and take on more students loans, and putting them at greater risk of not finishing their degree.

Sixty-three percent of students at public universities now take out loans to complete their degrees, compared to 53 percent of their peers at private colleges, the report found, and public university students now graduate with more debt (\$24,112) on average than their private school peers (\$23,940).

The COVID-19 pandemic has only made the situation more dire, according to the Hildreth Institute, which found that public higher education enrollment dropped 6.9 percent in 2020 and another 4.2 percent in 2021, with community colleges seeing the sharpest declines and Black and Latino first-year students dipping 33 percent between 2019 and 2020.

“Until we address the fact that chronic disinvestment has priced out those who stand to gain the most through higher education, we will continue to see negative enrollment trends that further disenfranchise communities most in need of investment,” the report stated.

Communities of color have a higher rate of student loan debt in default than white communities – 12 percent to 5 percent.

The Hildreth Institute concludes that state government should expand eligibility of the MASSGrant program, as well as the types of educational expenses that students can put the money toward, and boost funding to cover the unmet need of students attending public institutions so that they can graduate with little to no student debt.

Massachusetts Gov. Baker awards \$600,000 in grants to high schools to support innovation pathways

These early career programs help students connect learning to in-demand industry sectors.

The Baker-Polito Administration awarded more than \$600,000 to 22 school districts to help support Innovation Pathway programs, which provide high school students with opportunities to learn and gain experience in a particular industry through career exploration, technical courses and internships.

Students are also able to enroll in post-secondary courses, at no cost to them, to help them make progress toward industry-recognized credentials. Most Innovation Pathways are in STEM-related fields, including advanced manufacturing, information technology, environmental and life sciences, health care and social assistance, and business and finance.

“These programs provide students with hands-on skills learning and access to opportunities for future success in high-demand fields,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “The expansion of Innovation Pathways will allow more students to gain knowledge and work experiences that prepare them for successful careers before they graduate high school.”

“We remain committed to closing opportunity and workforce gaps for students in communities across the Commonwealth, and Innovation Pathways are another tool we can use to do so,”

said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. “These early career programs and rigorous learning opportunities offer chances for achievement both inside and outside the classroom.”

The Baker-Polito Administration launched these early career programs in 2017 to help students develop knowledge and skills related to a chosen field of study before they graduate high school. To date, 49 high schools across the Commonwealth have designated Innovation Pathways, totaling 121 different programs. Innovation Pathways differ from its sister program – Early College – in that students focus on a specific industry sector, with greater emphasis on career exploration, technical courses, work-based learning experiences and industry-recognized credentials, rather than college credit courses and college planning.

The 22 schools awarded grants today received designation from 2018 through 2020 and will use funding from the state to support work-based learning, industry recognized credential attainment, and dual-enrollment opportunities with partnering colleges and universities.

“When students have a sense of purpose, they become more interested and engaged in their studies, able to easily see how it all fits into their future,” said Secretary of Education James Peyser. “As more students gain skills and knowledge in a particular industry sector, they will have a better sense of what they want to do after they graduate and what additional post-secondary courses and training they will need to ensure their success.”

“Through participation in Innovation Pathways, students are empowered to explore firsthand and take steps toward possible future careers in promising sectors,” said Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley.

The following school districts received awards:

- Atlantis Charter School – \$41,250

- Barnstable Public Schools – \$26,576
- Berkshire Hills Regional School District – \$41,250
- Boston Public Schools, Dearborn STEM Academy – \$52,250
- Burlington Public Schools – \$26,575
- Dudley Charlton Regional School District – \$30,000
- Everett Public Schools – \$30,000
- Gardner Public Schools – \$30,000
- Hadley Public Schools – \$3,000
- Haverhill Public Schools – \$15,000
- Lawrence Public Schools – \$15,000
- Mashpee Public Schools – \$15,000
- Nantucket Public Schools – \$30,000
- Northampton Public Schools – \$26,575
- Norwood Public Schools – \$26,575
- Somerset Berkley Regional School District – \$30,000
- Tewksbury Public Schools – \$15,000
- Uxbridge Public Schools – \$15,000
- West Springfield Public Schools – \$30,000
- Westfield Public Schools – \$15,000
- Woburn Public Schools – \$41,250
- Worcester Public Schools – \$29,449

Schools that apply for designation for an Innovation Pathways are required to follow five design principles:

- Equitable access for all students
 - Guided academic pathway, which, in the case of Innovation Pathways, must relate to one of five specified broad industry sectors
 - Enhanced student supports
 - Relevant connections to career
 - Deep partnerships between high schools and employers or workforce development boards
-

BCC, in partnership with New Bedford Public Schools and Argosy Charter School, awarded early college programs designation

Students at New Bedford Public Schools and Argosy Collegiate Charter School will be provided with the opportunity to attend college free of charge.

Bristol Community College's Early College program, in partnership with New Bedford Public Schools (NBPS) and Argosy Collegiate Charter School, in Fall River, Mass., has received the prestigious Early College Programs Designation from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The college's Early College program will also support Bristol and DESE's shared commitment to eliminating barriers to college access for underrepresented student populations.

The awarded designation and the Baker-Polito Administration's announcement on Monday, March 28, 2022, of new Early College program grants totaling more than \$1.3 million to high schools launching or expanding early college programs, is part of a statewide effort to increase the number of high school students who take college courses and earn college credits at no cost before they graduate high school. Through these newly awarded designations and grants, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Education anticipates that approximately 8,700 students will be enrolled in early college programs by the 2024-2025 school year.

In Bristol's Early College program, students at NBPS and Argosy Collegiate Charter School will be provided with the

opportunity to attend college, free of charge, enabling students to earn 12 to 24 credits, equaling one to two semesters of higher education experience, while simultaneously completing their high school diploma. Students enrolled in the program from NBPS will participate in flexible pathways, including business and health sciences, while students from Argosy Collegiate Charter School will complete a liberal arts transfer pathway. All students are provided with academic advising and access to the college's wraparound academic and student support services to boost success and encourage completion.

"Early college is an invaluable tool that supports increased college enrollment among participating students, particularly students from groups historically underrepresented in higher education, and helps them succeed once they arrive on campus," said Governor Charlie Baker. "Today's announcement will boost participation rates at schools that already have programs, as well as launch new and exciting programs that will create more pathways to college."

"Successful early college programs create a coherent course of study that can change the trajectory of a student's life," said Education Secretary James Peyser. "By designating these early college programs, we are creating a shift in the educational experience for thousands of students."

"As part of the intra-agency early college collaboration, the Board and Department of Higher Education has approached this effort, as with all our work, from an empirically-based policy analysis frame," said Department of Higher Education Commissioner Carlos Santiago. "We are therefore pleased with early data showing that designated Massachusetts early college programs have prioritized and demonstrated progress in raising college-going rates and matriculation for students of color and low-income students, who continue to confront the highest barriers to higher education."

“Bristol Community College is proud to partner with New Bedford Public Schools and Argosy Collegiate Charter School on the development of a vibrant Early College program collaboration that will provide critical and equitable college access for students who may not have pictured themselves pursuing a college degree,” said Dr. Laura L. Douglas, President, Bristol Community College. “Students in these programs build academic confidence and recognize that college is a great option to a good-paying, sustainable career.”

“The New Bedford Public Schools and Bristol Community College Early College program will offer New Bedford High School Students the opportunity to expand access and success to higher education within their chosen pathways while fulfilling their high school graduation requirements at no cost to them and their families. We are excited to partner with Bristol in bringing our early college programmatic design to life and to increase equitable outcomes for New Bedford students, in particular students that are historically underrepresented at the collegiate level,” said Magaly Sanchez, Curriculum Data and Assessment Manager for Accelerated and Enrichment Programs, New Bedford Public Schools.

“Argosy Collegiate Charter School is thrilled to continue and grow our college preparatory program for our scholars with our newly awarded Early College designation from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education,” said Kristen Pavao, Founder & Executive Director, Argosy Collegiate Charter School. “Our partnership with Bristol Community College allows us to provide our scholars with wall-to-wall access to free college credits beginning as early as 9th grade. 100% of our scholars will graduate with 12 college credits, and many will earn a full year of college credits upon 12th-grade graduation. In collaboration with Bristol, Argosy Collegiate is transforming college-going educational opportunities for all of our scholars so they can be successful in college, career and life.”

The Massachusetts Early College Initiative was launched in 2018 with state approval of an initial cohort of eight programs in high-need, low-income school districts. It gives students the opportunity to experience the rigors of college coursework and earn college credit before they graduate from high school, providing a jumpstart to college admission, supported pathways to completion of degrees and certificates, and substantial tuition savings.

For more information about Bristol Community College's College Access Dual Enrollment programs, including Early College, please visit www.bristolcc.edu/collegeaccess.

Massachusetts Gov. Baker's administration announces early college programs; awards \$1.3 million in grants

Eight high schools received official designation to launch new programs and fourteen school districts awarded grants to boost student enrollment.

The Baker-Polito Administration today announced eight new early college programs and awarded several grants totaling more than \$1.3 million to high schools launching or expanding early college programs as part of a statewide effort to substantially increase the number of high school students who take college courses and earn college credits at no cost before they graduate high school.

Through these newly awarded designations and grants, the

Executive Office of Education anticipates that approximately 8,700 students will be enrolled in early college programs by the 2024-2025 school year. Early college programs combine traditional high school courses with an opportunity to earn college credit at a college or university. Currently, there are approximately 5,400 students enrolled in early college courses at 50 high schools across the Commonwealth.

“Early college is an invaluable tool that supports increased college enrollment among participating students, particularly students from groups historically underrepresented in higher education, and helps them succeed once they arrive on campus,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “Today’s announcement will boost participation rates at schools that already have programs, as well as launch new and exciting programs that will create more pathways to college.”

Since its launch in 2017, the Baker-Polito Administration has strived to expand access to early college programs. The Governor’s FY23 budget proposal includes \$7.3 million for early college funding, representing a significant increase over FY22, to bring the total annual investment to more than \$18 million.

“The more communities that launch early college programs, particularly in our Gateway Cities, the more we can provide opportunities to students that help close achievement and workforce gaps,” said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. “By creating and supplementing designated early college programs with our municipal partners, our administration aims to break down barriers that persist between high school and higher education.”

Eight high schools and their higher education partners were awarded official designation status this month by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Higher Education to launch new early college programs.

“Successful early college programs create a coherent course of study that can change the trajectory of a student’s life,” said Education Secretary James Peyser. “By designating these early college programs, we are creating a shift in the educational experience for thousands of students.”

The majority of students who participate in early college programs meet MassCore college readiness curriculum requirements while also successfully completing credit-bearing college courses. Early college has also been shown to boost college completion rates for low-income, minority and first-generation college students. Early college students enroll in college at significantly higher rates than their high school peers. For example, in 2019, approximately 76 percent of early college students enrolled in college after graduation compared to 55 percent of their peers who did not participate in early college.

“As part of the intra-agency early college collaboration, the Board and Department of Higher Education has approached this effort, as with all our work, from an empirically-based policy analysis frame,” said Department of Higher Education Commissioner Carlos Santiago. “We are therefore pleased with early data showing that designated Massachusetts early college programs have prioritized and demonstrated progress in raising college-going rates and matriculation for students of color and low-income students, who continue to confront the highest barriers to higher education.”

“It’s wonderful to see additional and expanded designated early college programs everywhere from the Berkshires to the coast,” said Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley. “These programs are a great opportunity for students to see that they’re capable of college-level work and take their first steps on that path.”

The newly designated programs are:

- Fenway High School in partnership with Wentworth Institute of Technology
- Mt. Everett Regional High School in partnership with Bard College at Simon's Rock
- Narragansett Regional High School in partnership with Mt. Wachusett Community College and Fitchburg State University
- New Mission High School in partnership with Wentworth Institute of Technology
- Argosy Collegiate Charter School in Fall River in partnership with Bristol Community College
- Cambridge Rindge & Latin School in Cambridge in partnership with Lesley University
- Essex North Shore Agricultural & Technical School in partnership with North Shore Community College
- New Bedford High School in partnership with Bristol Community College

In addition, five high schools and their college partners were awarded a total of \$750,000 to create early college programs that are large-scale, with at least 400 students or the whole school participating. This new "immersive early college" model will provide students with an opportunity to earn a minimum of 30 college credits prior to graduating high school.

Each of the following schools received \$150,000 in grant funding:

- Drury High School in North Adams in partnership with Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
- Saugus High School in partnership with Northern Essex Community College
- Mt. Everett High School in Sheffield in partnership with Bard College at Simon's Rock
- Veritas Prep Springfield in partnership with Springfield Technical Community College and Westfield State University
- Claremont Academy in Worcester in partnership with Quinsigamond Community College and Worcester State University

Additionally, nine schools were awarded expansion grants, totaling more than \$650,000, to support their existing early college programs and boost the number of students enrolled, particularly those underrepresented in higher education.

The grantees include:

- Durfee High School in Fall River in partnership with Bristol Community College – \$75,000
- Framingham High School in partnership with Framingham State and Mass Bay Community College – \$75,000
- Marlborough High School in partnership with Quinsigamond Community College – \$59,000
- Lawrence Public Schools in partnership with Northern Essex Community College – \$75,000
- Lowell High School in partnership with Middlesex Community College – \$75,000
- Salem High School in partnership with Salem State University – \$75,000
- Worcester Public Schools in partnership with Quinsigamond Community College and Worcester State University – \$75,000
- Haverhill High School in partnership with Northern Essex Community College – \$75,000
- Holyoke High School in partnership with Holyoke Community College – \$75,000