

Massachusetts Gov. Baker awards \$24 Million in grants to high schools, New Bedford included

“The Baker-Polito Administration today awarded \$24 million in Skills Capital Grants to 14 different high schools. Each school received awards between \$1 million and \$2.5 million, which will enable the schools to modernize labs and significantly expand student enrollment in programs that provide career education.

Governor Charlie Baker, Lt. Governor Karyn Polito and Education Secretary James Peyser visited Westfield Technical Academy to make the announcement and visit with students exploring advanced manufacturing and culinary arts programs. The high school received more than \$1 million to modernize its advanced manufacturing and electrical instructional labs. The school will also launch a Career Technical Initiative program, supported by this funding.

The high schools receiving grants will make strategic investments over the next two years to grow their career education programs to provide more learning opportunities for both traditional high school students and adult learners, with several schools expanding their Career Technical Initiative (CTI) programs to offer more learning opportunities in the late-afternoon and evening. Over the next 5 years, today’s grant awards will directly impact approximately 10,000 students across 38 different programs.

The funding for this round of grants was included in An Act Relative to Immediate Covid-19 Recovery Needs, passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor, which included \$100

million in state resources to provide capital improvement grants to vocational high schools and public schools operating career and technical education programs.

“Since taking office, our administration has made significant investments through the Skills Capital Grant program to help more young people and adults gain the education, training and skills necessary for successful careers in rapidly growing industry sectors,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “We are proud of the impact these grants have had on both students’ educations and their futures in the Massachusetts workforce.”

“As a result of the Skills Capital Grants, high schools, colleges and other educational institutions have modernized how students learn and provided crucial experiential learning that serves students and employers well,” said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. “We appreciate the continued support of our partners in the Legislature, and we look forward to the continued growth and expansion of hands-on, career technical education programs made possible by Skills Capital Grants.”

Since 2015, 491 Skills Capital Grants totaling more than \$153 million have been awarded to different schools and educational institutions across the Commonwealth, with many organizations receiving multiple grants over the years.

“Education is our lodestar here in the Commonwealth, and I am proud that we continue to invest in educational innovation and upgrades at every level. At a time when our economy is changing at a rapid pace, ensuring that students have state-of-the-art and up-to-date equipment and technology is more crucial than ever,” said Senate President Karen E. Spilka (D-Ashland). “I’d like to thank all of my partners in the Legislature for advancing this important funding, as well as the Baker Administration for operationalizing our vision to provide increased support to vocational high schools and public schools operating career and technical education programs.”

“I’m proud of the House’s ongoing commitment prioritizing investments in job training and workforce development that meet the needs of the 21st Century economy, including dedicating funding for these grants,” said House Speaker Ronald J. Mariano (D-Quincy). “I want to thank my colleagues in the House, as well as our partners in the Senate and the Administration for supporting this critical programming, as it will help to ensure that the next generation, including our adult learners, have the tools to succeed in high demand industries.”

The Skills Capital Grant program was originally launched in 2015 with the goal of replacing outdated equipment and technology, mainly at vocational technical high schools and community colleges. Since then, the program has evolved into a crucial component of local workforce training efforts by expanding the number of young people and adults trained and experienced with the newest technologies used by local employers.

The competitive grants are awarded to educational institutions that demonstrate partnerships with local businesses, as well as align curriculum and credentials with industry demand to maximize hiring opportunities in each region of the state.

“High schools across the Commonwealth are valued partners in our efforts to create opportunity and exciting career pathways for both young students and adults,” said Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Rosalin Acosta. “This round of Skills Capital Grants is funding a wide expansion of Career Technical Initiative programming which will help the unemployed and underemployed find meaningful work that supports themselves and their families.”

“Upgrading equipment and providing hands-on learning experiences ensures that our students – both young people and adults – graduate with vital skills and knowledge,” said Education Secretary James Peyser. “Through the Skills Capital

Grants, thousands of young people and adults have been provided with educational opportunities to be successful in high-demand careers that are growing in the Commonwealth.”

“Our economy is strengthened when students and other prospective employees are equipped with skills that align with industry needs,” said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy. “Skills Capital Grants continue to play an important role preparing individuals for meaningful careers and helping companies find qualified employees to grow their businesses.”

The Skills Capital Grants are awarded by Governor Baker’s Workforce Skills Cabinet, which was created in 2015 to bring together the Secretariats of Education, Labor and Workforce Development, and Housing and Economic Development to align education, economic development, and workforce policies to strategize around how to meet employers’ demand for skilled workers in every region of the Commonwealth.

The following organizations received awards in this round:

Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School, Marlborough- \$1,268,229

HVAC: The school will modernize and expand HVAC instructional lab space to triple enrollment at the school over the next three years. The grant will enable the purchase of equipment such as work benches, project tools, oil burners, furnaces, and heat pump training equipment. The improvements will support traditional high school students and expand the Career Technical Initiative (CTI) adult training programming.

Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School, Taunton – \$1,000,000

Culinary Arts: The school will use Skills Capital funds, along with funds from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to construct a new school that will expand culinary

arts instruction. More than 100 high school students and adult program students will be taught professional cooking techniques, bakery and pastry art fundamentals, food sanitation and safety, and hospitality skills. The school will host a school restaurant and hospitality functions for the local community.

Essex North Shore Agricultural and Technical School, Danvers – \$1,725,000

Culinary Arts and Animal Sciences: The school will modernize and expand Culinary Arts and Animal Sciences instructional labs impacting more than 500 high school students and CTI adult students, through afternoon training programs for students from Beverly, Swampscott, Gloucester, and Marblehead.

Diman Regional Vocational Technical High School, Fall River – \$2,500,000

Advanced Manufacturing and Dental Assisting: The school will renovate its Advanced Manufacturing and Dental Assisting instructional lab space, impacting 175 school students, as well as launch adult CTI training programs. The lab space will also feature equipment such as dental chairs, sterilization equipment, and imaging X-ray equipment for students to get hands-on experience.

Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School, New Bedford – \$1,800,000

Culinary Arts and HVAC: The school will modernize and expand Culinary Arts and HVAC instructional labs, supporting 280 high students. The school will also expand CTI adult training programming.

Madison Park Technical Vocational High School, Boston – \$1,000,000

Carpentry and Information Support Services and Networking: The

school will modernize carpentry as well as the Information Support Services and Networking (ISSN) instructional labs to support 140 additional high school students, which will double enrollment in the Information Technology and Security Networking programs. The school will also launch a new CTI adult training program.

Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School, Fitchburg – \$1,887,127 Electrical and Carpentry: The school will repurpose and remodel space to create expanded Electrical and Carpentry instructional lab capacity, partnering with Fitchburg Public Schools, Gardner Public Schools, and Narragansett Regional School District to develop a new afternoon program projected to serve 800 high school students as well as expand the schools' evening CTI adult training program.

Nashoba Valley Technical High School, Westford – \$2,500,000

Electrical and Veterinary Science: The school will modernize and expand instructional lab space in the Electrical and Veterinary Science programs to increase enrollment by 50 percent, creating the capability to support 180 high school students and expand the school's CTI adult training programs. Equipment will include new renewable energy training equipment, including solar panel installation, Li-Ion battery storage Unit, Hydrogen Fuel Cell battery storage unit and wind turbines.

Salem High School, Salem – \$1,034,398

Culinary Arts and Medical Assistance: The school will modernize the Culinary Arts and Medical Assisting instructional labs to double student enrollment. The Culinary Arts equipment to be purchased includes advanced technology multi-use ovens with remote monitoring and cooking controls, high-efficiency ranges, ovens, fryers, steamers, dishwashers, and serving systems. Funding for Medical Assisting equipment includes innovative simulation and virtual learning

technology.

Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School, Northampton – \$2,121,200 Horticulture and Animal Science: The school will modernize and expand space for Horticulture and Animal Science instructional labs to expand student enrollment by 25 percent. The funding will support 120 additional students during the day programs and provide new capabilities for future CTI adult training programming. Students will receive simulator training on construction machines such as excavators, graders, dump trucks, and cranes.

South Shore Regional Vocational Technical High School, Hanover – \$2,500,000 Carpentry and Culinary Arts: The school will modernize and expand square footage for Carpentry and Culinary Arts instructional lab space to increase enrollment by 45 percent. The funding will impact 197 students as well as the school's CTI adult training programs.

Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School, Bourne – \$2,496,500

Environmental Science and Technology: The school will modernize and update the infrastructure of Environmental Science and Technology instructional labs supporting 100 high school and adult training program students, with new laboratory equipment such as microscopes, HAZMAT/oil spill simulators, and field equipment including sampling devices, field and marine access vehicles, cameras, and weather stations.

Westfield Technical Academy, Westfield – \$1,014,665

Advanced Manufacturing and Electrical: The school will modernize and update infrastructure for Advanced Manufacturing and Electrical instructional labs supporting 110 high school students, with new equipment such as Proto TRAK Lathes and Mills, Haas Mini Mills, CAD Workstations, Fire Alarm, Burglar and Access Control Trainers. The school will also launch a CTI training program.

Worcester Technical High School, Worcester – \$1,100,031

Automotive Technician: The school will renovate and modernize the Automotive Technician instructional lab supporting 145 high school students and provide new capabilities to expand the school's CTI adult training programming. New equipment includes auto lifts, brake lathe machines, tire balancers, alignment machines, bench racks, paint booths, and hybrid auto system tools."