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Governor
Deval Patrick



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GOVERNOR PATRICK HIGHLIGHTS STATE'S INVESTMENT IN ESSEX NORTH SHORE AGRICULTURAL AND VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL

Pledges continued support for public-private partnership in Danvers

DANVERS - Friday December 11, 2009 - Governor Deval Patrick today visited the Essex Agricultural and Technical High School to highlight the state's investment in the Essex North Shore Agricultural and Vocational Technical School project that will provide education and job training for students on the North Shore. The project will be jointly funded by resources from the state, the School Building Authority and member communities. The Commonwealth has committed to investing as much as \$21.1 million in the project on top of commitments from local cities and towns. The construction of the merged agricultural and vocational school will maximize educational and workforce development opportunities for high school students and adult learners across the North Shore.

"Strengthening our regional economies is central to our economic recovery," said Governor Patrick. "This project offers two essential building blocks of economic growth. It gives students on the North Shore the foundation they need to achieve success, and provides local businesses with a talented and well-trained workforce."

The Governor announced in October that the state is committed to providing financial support for the Essex North Shore Agricultural and Vocational Technical School project, which includes the construction of a new, School Building Assistance-eligible \$125 million facility on the site of the old school. The school will be comprised of the state-owned Essex Agricultural and Technical School, the North Shore Regional Vocational Technical School, and the vocational component of Peabody High School.

On Monday December 7th, the town of Beverly voted to join the school's regional district, propelling the project past the local approval threshold required by state law for the project to go forward. As of Wednesday, Salem, Beverly, Peabody, Danvers, Gloucester, Middleton, Rockport, Essex, Hamilton, Wenham, and Boxford had all voted to join the proposed new district. Six other towns are planning votes at their spring town meetings, including Swampscott, Marblehead, Nahant, Lynnfield, Topsfield, and Manchester.

"This project is very unique as it merges together a regional vocational school, a comprehensive vocational school, and a state agricultural school for the mutual benefit of the daytime high school students and evening adult learners to provide them with the knowledge and skills they will need to access and maintain job opportunities on the north shore," said Roger Bourgeois, Superintendent-Director of Essex Agricultural and Technical High School. "Because of its complexity, there will be many difficult issues and details that will need to be worked out but I am confident that all municipal and state government leaders will continue to work collaboratively to make this important initiative a reality for all of our students."

"As President of North Shore Community College and Chairman of the North Shore Chamber of Commerce, I appreciate, perhaps more than many, the enormous importance of Governor Patrick, Lieutenant Governor Murray, Senator Fred Berry, and Representative Speliotis' announcement to the educational community and business leaders on the North Shore," said Dr. Wayne M. Burton, President of North Shore Community College. "The new technical high school they support represents more than a great future for its graduates. It fulfills a decade-long North Shore Chamber priority and is a jewel in the crown of the North Shore, a region on the rise in the revitalized economy of the region and Commonwealth. We are grateful to Governor Patrick, Senator Berry, Representative Speliotis and the entire North Shore delegation for their efforts on behalf of our membership and the North Shore."

"There is nothing more vital to our economic strength as a Commonwealth than the education of our students," said Education Secretary Paul Reville. "The Essex Agricultural school project is a great illustration of the state and its communities joining together to develop an action plan that will benefit residents of several surrounding communities toward preparing our students

and providing training for adults to help all achieve a successful future."

"This project is a top priority of mine, and the North Shore is so fortunate that Governor Patrick has been a driving force in making this vision a reality," said Senator Frederick Berry.

"I don't believe we would have the votes to build this school if not for the \$21 million dollars Governor Patrick is putting in to this project. Our cities and towns realize that this is a once in a lifetime chance to put in funding for the construction of this school. I'm truly pleased that the Governor will be coming out for a tour. This is the first time in our Commonwealth that we were able to combine three vocational and technical high schools together to build a first rate school for our kids," said Representative Speliotis.

"This was a great collaborative effort that ties in with all of the principles of regionalization we so often talk about. Not only will this benefit today's students, but it will serve as an economic generator for years to come. Night school, re-education and retraining are invaluable, especially in difficult economic times," said Peabody Mayor Michael Bonfanti.

"This is a crucial investment that will benefit the region for a long time to come," said Salem Mayor Kimberley Driscoll. "Especially in these difficult times, this type of major investment in our education infrastructure is exactly what we need to provide greater opportunity for the people of the North Shore."

"I am proud that Beverly's unanimous City Council vote put this project over the top. The combined school will enable significant numbers of students to obtain a first class vocational education. Graduates will improve the cost competitiveness of the North Shore by providing adequate numbers of skilled workers. Most importantly, the combined school will have the critical mass to ensure a forward looking curriculum aimed at new and emerging industries. After more than twelve years of work by many of us, this is a great day for the North Shore, one that would not have been possible without the terrific support of the Patrick Administration and the efforts of Senate Majority Leader, Fred Berry," said Beverly Mayor Bill Scanlon.

To date, Governor Patrick and members of the Massachusetts Congressional delegation have invested over \$2 billion in federal recovery funds to support and strengthen the Commonwealth's schools, transportation infrastructure, businesses, public safety programs and other vital services that residents depend upon. These efforts have created or saved the jobs of more than 23,500 individuals and promise to help Massachusetts families regain their economic footing and keep our Commonwealth on a path toward recovery.

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