



# The Future of Whittier Tech

Quarterly Newsletter | Spring 2026

## MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



Whittier Tech has served students and families across its 11 communities for more than 50 years. During that time, the world of career and technical education has evolved significantly. Today's students are preparing for careers in advanced manufacturing, health sciences, information technology and many other fields that require modern facilities and cutting-edge equipment. Ensuring students

is essential to preparing them for success after graduation and supporting the future workforce across our region.

Over the past several years, the district has taken important steps to plan for the future of Whittier Tech.

Through its partnership with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), the district is evaluating multiple options to address the needs of its current facility, including maintaining or renovating the existing building, rebuilding on the current site, or exploring a shared campus at Northern Essex Community College.

This process requires collaboration across member communities, thoughtful planning, and open communication. Our goal is to keep families, residents, and local leaders informed every step of the way as the district carefully evaluates the best path forward for students and the community.

Sincerely,  
Maureen Lynch

## WHITTIER TECH BY THE NUMBERS



**1,291**  
STUDENTS

**216**  
STAFF



**11**  
MEMBER  
COMMUNITIES

**21**  
CAREER &  
TECHNICAL  
PROGRAMS



NAMED 2024 DESE  
**SCHOOL OF  
RECOGNITION**

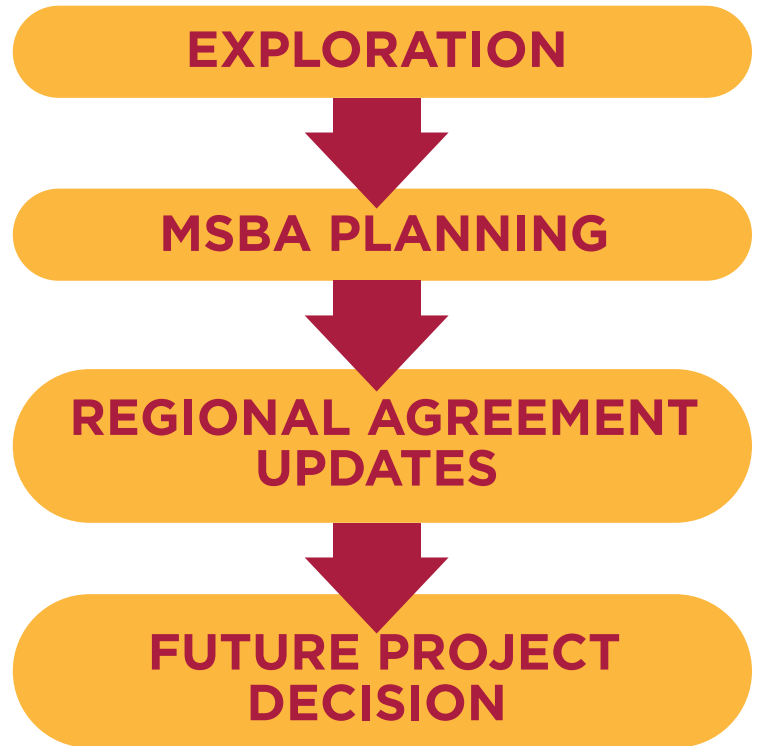


# OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF WHITTIER TECH

As part of the MSBA feasibility process, the district is evaluating multiple options to address the needs of its current facility. No decision has been made.

- Maintain the current building (continued costly repairs; limited or no MSBA support)
- Renovate the existing facility
- Rebuild on the current site
- Explore a shared campus at Northern Essex Community College

## STEPS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS



## A CLOSER LOOK: SHARED CAMPUS OPTION AT NORTHERN ESSEX

As part of the MSBA feasibility process, district leaders are exploring a potential shared campus option at Northern Essex Community College.

Current areas of exploration for this option include:



### NEW CAREER PATHWAYS

Potential Chapter 74 programs such as Criminal Justice and Information Support Services and Networking.



### COLLEGE CONNECTIONS

Exploring opportunities for dual enrollment and stronger pathways from high school to college programs.



### WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration on workforce training initiatives, including HVAC and heat pump technology programs.



# PLANNING AND LEADERSHIP

## SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

### Role

- Leads facility planning and feasibility work through the MSBA process.

### Key updates

- Leadership established
- Initial walkthrough of existing building completed
- Feasibility study planning underway (funded by Whittier Tech)

### Leadership

**Frank G. Cousins Jr., co-Chair**  
Former Essex County Sheriff

**James A. Rurak, co-Chair**  
Former Mayor of Haverhill

*“When we talk about the future of the Whittier Tech, we’re really talking about the future of our students and the workforce that keeps our regional economy strong.”*

— Mike Colburn, Whittier Tech School Building Committee member

## REGIONAL AGREEMENT AMENDMENT COMMITTEE (RAAC)

### Role

- Reviews and updates the regional agreement to support the district’s long-term future.

### Key updates

- Leadership established
- Initial walkthrough of existing building completed
- Feasibility study planning underway (funded by Whittier Tech)

### Leadership

**Angus Jennings, Chair**  
Town Manager, West Newbury

**Melinda Barrett, Vice Chair**  
Mayor, Haverhill

*“It’s not about Rowley or Haverhill. It’s about all of us. We are one district, and the goal is to come to the table with an open mind so we can find a compromise that works for all communities.”*

— Cesare Paglia, RAAC member and Whittier Tech School Committee Member

## KEY TOPICS UNDER DISCUSSION

### Capital Cost Allocation

How communities share costs for building maintenance, repairs and major capital improvements.

### Operational Costs

How communities share costs related to the day-to-day operation of the school.

### Regional Governance

Ensuring the agreement reflects how the district operates today and supports future planning.

# WHY THIS PROJECT MATTERS + WHAT COMES NEXT



## Investing in the Future of Career and Technical Education

Whittier Tech plays a vital role in preparing students for careers in skilled trades, advanced manufacturing, health care, technology, and more. These programs support local employers and strengthen the regional economy across 11 member communities and beyond.

While modern facilities would allow for program expansion, this discussion is not simply about building something new. Options under consideration include maintaining or renovating the current facility, rebuilding on the existing site, or exploring a shared campus at Northern Essex Community College.

The current facility, now more than 50 years old, requires significant repairs and upgrades. District leaders are working to ensure students have safe, effective learning environments while addressing long-term building needs.

## What Happens Next

- Continued RAAC and Building Committee meetings
- Feasibility study development with MSBA
- Evaluation of all options as part of the feasibility process
- Ongoing collaboration with Northern Essex Community College
- Continued updates to residents and member communities

All meetings are open to the public. Scan for details.



## WHITTIER TECH PROJECT ROADMAP

**Aug. 2025**

Whittier Tech enters MSBA pipeline

**2026**

Regional agreement discussions and feasibility planning underway

**2028**

Schematic design detailed

**2029**

Secure funding

**2030**

Design and construction

**2031**

Project complete



Subscribe to the district's monthly newsletter, The Wildcat Wire.



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**Working together to build the future of Whittier Tech for our students, our communities and our regional workforce.**