



Massachusetts School Building Authority

Deborah B. Goldberg
Chairman, State Treasurer

James A. MacDonald
Chief Executive Officer

John K. McCarthy
Executive Director / Deputy CEO

March 9, 2021

Mr. Stephen F. Dockray, Superintendent-Director
Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical School District
147 Pond Street
Franklin, MA 02038

Re: Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical School District, Tri-County Regional Vocational
Technical High School

Dear Superintendent Dockray:

I would like to thank you and representatives of the Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical School District (the “District”) for meeting with Massachusetts School Building Authority (the “MSBA”) staff on December 22, 2020 to review enrollment projections and methodologies. Additionally, I would like to thank the District for the email sent on December 9, 2020 containing the Chapter 74 Vocational Technical Education Viability Documentation form as well as enrollment numbers by member towns sent on December 23, 2020 for the Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School project (the “Proposed Project”). As discussed, the next critical step is for the MSBA and the District to agree on an enrollment for the Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School.

The MSBA works with local communities to create affordable, sustainable, and energy efficient schools across Massachusetts. A critical early component in achieving these objectives begins with an appropriate design enrollment that positions the District to efficiently meet space capacity needs throughout potential future enrollment variations.

The MSBA uses a data driven enrollment projection methodology based on the widely accepted modified grade-to-grade cohort survival methodology (the “enrollment methodology”). The MSBA’s enrollment methodology generates a baseline enrollment projection as discussed during the December 22, 2020 enrollment meeting, and as further described on the MSBA’s website found under the ‘Building With Us’, ‘MSBA Enrollment Methodology’ section.

Based on information supplied by the District including the attached Chapter 74 Viability Form, data from sources such as the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (“DESE”) and Department of Public Health, and discussion with the District, the MSBA has been able to create an enrollment projection for the Proposed Project, as follows.

The Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School is a vocational technical high school that serves a portion of the grade 9-12 enrollment from the following member

communities: Franklin (which constitutes approximately 17.9% of the nine-year average District grade 9 enrollment from FY11-FY19), Medfield (1%), Medway (5.8%), Millis (4.8%), Norfolk (3%), North Attleborough (30.2%), Plainville (9.1%), Seekonk (8.4%), Sherborn (<1%), Walpole (6.4%), and Wrentham (5.9%). The MSBA understands that the District also receives students from non-member communities, which constitutes approximately 7.4% of the average District enrollment from FY11-FY19.

The table below illustrates the District's application, acceptance, and waitlist information as reported by the District to the MSBA, and the District's grade 9 enrollment during the most recent nine-year period as reported by DESE.

Fiscal Year	Applied Grade 8	Accepted Grade 8	Waitlisted Grade 8	Enrolled Grade 9
2012	348	326	11	278
2013	338	321	7	259
2014	366	335	8	288
2015	304	289	5	250
2016	330	320	2	291
2017	356	329	0	284
2018	333	307	0	248
2019	332	313	0	275
2020	309	286	0	229

The total grade 9 enrollment in the Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical School District as reported by DESE for the 2019-2020 school year is 229, which reflects an enrolled rate of 74.1% when compared to the number of applications received for the same school year. Comparatively, this reflects a decrease of 38 students (-14.2%) from the average enrolled rate of grade 9 students reported during the preceding nine-year period. The waitlist for the 2019-2020 school year was zero students, which has been consistent over the last four years following a declining trend in waitlisted students.

The MSBA understands that the District is proposing a design enrollment of 1,000 students in grades 9-12 at the Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School. This includes the District's goal of expanding capacity in 16 of its current 17 Chapter 74 program offerings and discontinuing one of its current 17 programs as part of the Proposed Project, the details of which may be found in the attached Chapter 74 Viability Form. The District's grade 9-12 enrollment in the 2019-2020 school year was 969 students.

With respect to future enrollments, the MSBA first performed base enrollment projections through grade 8 for each of the above-mentioned member communities to understand the projected pool of students that could apply to the Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School. The projections indicate that the total grade 8 enrollment will continue to experience a declining trend through the 2022-2023 school year then increase through the 2029-

2030 school year. Analysis of the communities that have historically contributed the largest portion of enrollment at the Tri-County Regional Vocational High School indicates that the grade 8 enrollments in the Town of North Attleborough and Town of Franklin will continue to decline over the projection period, while the towns in the King Philip Regional School District, each of which are member communities of Tri-County Regional Vocational School District, will increase, on average, through the end of the projection period.

The MSBA then performed a base enrollment projection for grades 9-12 based on average local grade 8 to vocational grade 9 'survival' ratios and historic total grade 9-12 enrollments at the Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School. In accordance with the MSBA's Enrollment Methodology, the baseline enrollment is calculated using the ten-year average of projected enrollments. As such, the average grade 9-12 base enrollment projection for the Tri-County Regional Vocational High School through the 2029-2030 school year is 885 students.

As a result of a sensitivity analysis performed by the MSBA on this base enrollment projection, the following adjustment was made to the total base enrollment projection:

- Out-of-District Enrollment
 - In order to adjust for the potential expansion of the District's program offerings which may result in higher application rates, the MSBA has made an additional adjustment to the base enrollment projection.
 - In order to make this adjustment, the MSBA adjusted the grade-to-grade survival ratios for grades 9-12 by a total of 3.3% throughout a four-year period.
 - This adjustment added 75 students to the average grade 9-12 enrollment as compared to the projection without this adjustment, bringing the grade 9-12 enrollment projection up to 960 students.

As a result of analysis on the average base enrollment projection, the adjustment to the base projection described above, and the District's stated Chapter 74 program goals for expanding capacity in 16 of its 17 program offerings, the MSBA recommends a design enrollment of up to but no more than 1,000 students in grades 9-12 for the Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School project.

An updated Chapter 74 Viability form will be required to substantiate that the proposed program adjustments were planned in consultation with the respective advisory committees based on adequate and timely information regarding student, workforce, and job development demands or job market trends. Documentation will also be required for programming that overlaps with other member high school program offerings to acknowledge and consider the student enrollment at those high schools, as well as a summary of the conversations held with member communities reflecting acknowledgement and support of the proposed expanded programs. In addition, further analysis of the application/enrollment/student program choices data will be required to demonstrate that the program choices will be sufficient to fulfill the proposed program additions and expansions.

March 9, 2021

Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School Enrollment Letter

The above noted documentation to support the modification of existing Chapter 74 programming and the addition of new Chapter 74 programming must be submitted with the Preliminary Design Program during Feasibility Study. The MSBA will review for completeness and forward this form to DESE for its review. Preliminary approval of the proposed program changes by DESE will be required prior to the MSBA accepting a Preferred Schematic Report. If the expansion of Chapter 74 programs is included in a preferred solution, the District will be required to provide an expansion plan that details proposed staffing, proposed budgets and proposed phasing to realize full enrollment for each program as a result of this Proposed Project, and that the preferred solution has been approved by the Regional School Committee and other necessary District officials. Further, the MSBA will require a written plan from the District describing the process for determining local support for the potential expansion of programs.

Please note the enrollment recommendation to be included in the feasibility study does not represent an affirmation by the MSBA for approval and/or funding of any options and is intended only to provide a framework to inform the feasibility study to be conducted as a means of determining the most cost effective and educationally sound solution to be agreed upon by the District and the MSBA.

The MSBA design enrollment is an upper limit based in part on the District's proposed programming changes and may be adjusted downward pending the outcome of the District's review undertaken during Feasibility Study or the outcome of DESE review of the District's updated Chapter 74 Viability Form. Please sign and return the attached certification within 17 calendar days to confirm agreement on this design enrollment.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me or Jennifer Flynn (Jennifer.Flynn@massschoolbuildings.org) at 617-720-4466.

Sincerely,



Mary Pichetti
Director of Capital Planning

Cc: Legislative Delegation
Brian Mushnick, Chair, Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School
Committee
Greg St. Lawrence, Vice-Chair, Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School
Committee
Daniel Haynes, Business Manager, Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High
School
File: 10.2 Letters (Region 5)