

# NEW PATHWAYS FOR DIRECT ENTRY FOR MADISON PARK GRADUATES INTO UNION APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

*Project Labor Agreement for Boston Public Schools will also ensure a consistent supply of skilled workers for the Long-Term Facilities Plan*

**Tuesday, May 13, 2025** – Mayor Michelle Wu signed a landmark agreement with the Greater Boston Building Trades Unions and the North Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters to create a new and expanded direct pathway for graduates of Madison Park Technical Vocational High School to good-paying, stable union jobs in the construction trades. This commitment is part of a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) for the Boston Public Schools (BPS) Long-Term Facilities Plan, ensuring a consistent supply of skilled, union labor for major BPS capital projects.

“It is a historic day for Boston Public Schools and Madison Park. This agreement is a statement on the City of Boston’s values, delivering three major wins, for our schools, our students and our partners in the trades,” said Mayor Michelle Wu. “We are doing this because our students deserve every improvement, every opportunity, and expansion of resources now. They deserve spaces to build lifelong friendships and expand professional networks and develop the skills to serve at every step of their journey.”

“After graduating Madison Park, I didn’t have a clear plan. I didn’t have access to college or a roadmap to a sustainable career. That all changed when I discovered a pre-apprenticeship

Project Labor Agreement. Through a PLA negotiated by the unions, I didn't just get a job, I built a career. When we commit to union labor through a PLA, we're not just hiring workers, we're investing in families. We're putting real wages into the hands of parents who are raising the next generation. We're investing in our neighborhoods, small businesses, and community centers. This PLA is an engine of economic growth. It ensures local hiring, so the people building these schools are the same people who walk these streets, ride the T, send their kids to these classrooms. It means more of our young people are getting into a lifetime career. The ripple effects of this PLA will be felt for decades creating stable pathways to home ownership, to save for the future, and building stronger, safer communities. This is how we fight inequality, not with words, but with work. With opportunity. With good union jobs," said Chaton Green, Business Agent, Greater Boston Building Trades Unions.

Under Mayor Wu's administration, the City of Boston has dedicated an increasing share of its capital budget to accelerate the pace of major school construction projects through the Long-Term Facilities Plan. This PLA ensures that all major BPS capital projects moving forward will have a consistent supply of skilled, union labor. These projects must be completed quickly and carefully sequenced to minimize disruptions to school communities. By signing this PLA, the City is creating greater efficiency and stability in large-scale, multi-step projects, while aligning with the City's equitable procurement and supplier diversity standards to expand opportunities to women- and minority-owned businesses. Future school projects will be evaluated for potential inclusion in the PLA after a case-by-case review, as required by the Mass Leads Act, the economic development bill signed by Governor Maura Healey in November 2024.

"This landmark agreement creates real opportunities for students, especially young women and students of color, to thrive and build long lasting, fulfilling careers in the city they call home," said BPS Superintendent Mary Skipper. "Throughout the district, we are creating pathways to college and career in areas like health care, education, the arts, and the building trades. This agreement ensures that Boston will have a skilled, qualified workforce well into the future."

The PLA also specifies that graduates of Madison Park will have direct entry into the Building Pathways pre-apprenticeship program. Building Pathways is a non-profit organization founded by the Greater Boston Building Trades Unions dedicated to the recruitment, retention, and advancement of under-represented groups in the union building trades, particularly women, people of color, and young adults. Madison Park offers six Ch. 74-certified vocational programs aligned with the building trades: Carpentry; Electricity; Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC); Metal Fabrication; Plumbing; and Building and Property Maintenance.

According to the terms of the PLA, the top-performing half of each graduating class from each of

Madison Park will be the only technical vocational school in Massachusetts to offer its graduates direct entry into apprenticeship programs at this scale.

“Madison Park should and will be the best technical vocational high school in the country,” said Paul Neal, Head of School at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School. “I’m grateful to have Mayor Wu’s partnership to give Madison the level of support that will uplift our students today and for their long term success, and I want to thank the Building Trades Unions for working with us to create these opportunities right in the heart of Roxbury.”

This expanded partnership with the building trade unions is a continuation of Mayor Wu’s and Superintendent Skipper’s commitment to immediate investment in Madison Park—including expanding co-op opportunities for students and modernizing curriculum and technology—even as the City continues its planning and design work for a re-designed Madison Park campus. In April 2025, the City and BPS submitted a Statement of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority’s Core Program to seek state support for the project.

The PLA also commits to enhancing childcare opportunities for workers in the participating unions by exploring the creation of a trust fund to subsidize the cost of high-quality childcare, similar to the trusts that the unions currently administer for health insurance and pension benefits. This builds on the City’s ongoing efforts, in partnership with the Care That Works coalition, to create more options for high-quality childcare for workers with non-traditional schedules.

The BPS Long-Term Facilities Plan commits to dramatically overhauling the district’s physical footprint, with multiple complex projects underway simultaneously. Since 2022, the City has completed the Boston Arts Academy, the Josiah Quincy Upper School, and the new Horace Mann School (in the former Edwards building); and has broken ground on the new Carter School (on track to open in September 2025), a gut renovation of the Irving building for the new Sarah Roberts Elementary (on track to open in September 2025), and a major renovation and expansion of the PJ Kennedy Elementary School (on track to be complete in September 2025). The City has successfully secured state support from the Massachusetts School Building Authority for the Shaw-Taylor Elementary School and the Ruth Batson Academy with several more schools, including Madison Park. This is more major capital projects underway at once than has been completed in the last 40 years combined.

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