

**GREATER LAWRENCE TECHNICAL SCHOOL**  
**57 River Road, Andover, Massachusetts 01810**

**PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**November 4, 2021**

The Greater Lawrence Technical School Program Advisory Committee meeting was held on November 4, 2021, at Greater Lawrence Technical School.

*The following members were in attendance:*

<b>Facilitator:</b> Theresa Hurley	<b>CTE Program:</b> Health Careers/Medical Assisting
<b>Recorder:</b> Brooke Leavitt	
<b>Materials Manager:</b> Sherry Abruzese	
<b>Dialogue Monitor:</b> Karen Conway	
<b>Timekeeper:</b> Rita Fazio	
<b>Faculty Present</b>	
Karen Conway	Sophomore Health Assisting Instructor
Sherry Abruzese	Junior Health Assisting Instructor
Jillian Butler	Senior Health Assisting Instructor
Rita Fazio	Freshman Medical Assisting Instructor
Audra Durkin	Sophomore Medical Assisting Instructor
Brooke Leavitt	Junior Medical Assisting Instructor
Theresa Hurley-Health Careers Lead Instructor	Senior Medical Assisting Instructor
<b>Advisors Present</b>	<b>Name of Business / Population Represented</b>
Judi O'Hara (Chairperson)	Director Undergrad Nursing, Rivier University
Dr. Christen Fragala	Family Physician, Westford, MA
Michael Mulligan	11th grade Medical Assistant Student
Jeizlany Mena	11th grade Medical Assistant Student
Sydney Reynolds	11th grade Medical Assistant Student
Elizabeth Oller and mother Mercedes	11th grade Health Assisting Student
<b>Guest Present</b>	
Pat Willet	NECC Professor, Radiology Tech.
Elizabeth Torres	CCMA, Pentucket Medical Associates-RWK

<b>Agenda Item #1: Call to Order</b>
a. Welcome/Introductions
<b>Status report:</b> The meeting was called to order at 6:07 PM by Karen Conway and seconded by Dr. Christen Fragala.

**Agenda Item #2 Verification of committee members' contact information, phone numbers, and emails.**

- a. Please verify the e-mail address for each member.
- b. Please distribute and collect information sheets for new members and members with pending paperwork. Please return the paperwork to Sue Ouellette.
- c. Solicit representation for all **representative populations** listed on the Program Advisory membership forms.

**Status Report:**

- a. Each instructor, student, advisory member and guest gave a brief introduction.
- b. Email addresses have been verified/updated for each member using a Google form.
- c. Judi O'Hara agreed to accept the position of Chairperson moving forward.
- d. Facilitator asked for outstanding forms; three members returned the paperwork. (Example)
- e. Facilitator asked for members to review representative populations. Union representation was updated. (Example)

**REPORT OF OLD BUSINESS**

**Agenda Item #3: Minutes**

- a. Review minutes from the last advisory meeting, and voice comments, questions, or concerns (Minutes are posted on the GLTS website).
- b. Solicit a motion to approve minutes, 2<sup>ND</sup> the motion.

**Status Report:**

- a. The facilitator reviewed Spring 2021 meeting minutes with all members.
- b. No questions from members/guests.

**Recommendation:** Theresa Hurley recapped the conversation and made a motion to approve the minutes from April 5, 2021, 2nd motion.

**Motion:** Judi O'Hara moved to approve the minutes from April 3, 2021.

**2ND:** Dr. Christen Fragala

**Vote:** Unanimous

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Agenda Item #4: CTE Program Facilities Review**

- a. **Discuss shop facilities and equipment.**
    - i. Update advisory board on the progress and response to previous recommendations.
    - ii. Considering the impact of the Pandemic on the Industry and workspaces, please share how the industry has adapted to meet the current safety guidelines and standards.
      1. Have day-to-day operations changed?
        - a. Are there any operational adjustments that GLTS should consider implementing?
- 
- a. **Discuss shop facilities and equipment.**
    - i. Update provided on previous recommendations.
      1. All students have returned to full in-person learning.
      2. Updates were given on what has been done within the department since the last meeting including covering the cost of CNA exams and CCMA study guide/exams for students and covid tests for student practice.

3. Students have been CPR certified (grade 11 and 12), the cost of e-cards from AHA was covered by the department.
- ii. Industry practices in response to the Pandemic.
1. Day-to-Day Operations:
  2. Staffing shortages are being seen across the field.
    - (1) Vaccine mandates can contribute to this.
    - (2) The Director of Nursing had to work as a CNA as the facility was so short CNAs.
    - (3) CCMA's are leaving and/or being pulled to other offices. Have seen increases in MA pay since their value to the healthcare team is being seen more now, than ever.
    - (4) Medical Imaging: big impact on staffing; due to COVID there has been a decrease in the number of procedures so cut back on staffing. Vaccine mandates caused employees to leave. Pay adjustments are being made.
  - b) College clinical placements have been decreased in the past 2 years due to staffing and needing a 1:1 student to clinical instructor ratio.
  - c) Reductions are being made to the number of students being accepted into college-level programs for the past 2 years as they don't have the clinical placements for the volume of students.
  - d) The pros to staffing shortages have been:**
    - (1) There are going to be a lot of job opportunities in the future including Medical Assistants, Nursing, CNAs, laboratory, and medical imaging.
    - (2) Employers are offering sign-on bonuses.
    - (3) Seniors are being offered jobs now for after they graduate with a sign-on bonus, which is unheard of in past years.
    - (4) Employers are offering paid on-site training to advance clinical positions. For example, training CNAs and offering sign-on bonuses.
  3. Given the increase in the availability of vaccine doses and testing students should be trained on COVID testing and be competent in IM injections as they will most likely be exposed to both in the clinical setting.
    - a) COVID testing kits were received for students to learn and practice with.
    - b) IM injections are included in the current curriculum
  2. Physical Layout:
    - a. The number of students per grade level reviewed.
    - b. Department layout reviewed for new members; a virtual tour of the department was given during the Spring 2021 Advisory Board Meeting.
  3. Tools and Supplies:
    - a. Blood pressure kits were distributed to all junior and senior students during remote learning and have since been purchased for the current sophomores.

**Recommendations:** It was recommended that the study guide/practice exams and CCMA exam continue to be covered for MA students and that the CNA exam cost continues to be covered for HA students. It was also recommended that students continue to practice COVID testing in preparation for entering the clinical field.

**Motion:** Dr. Christen Fragala motioned to accept the budget recommendations.

**2nd Motion:** Judi O'Hara seconded.

**Vote:** Motion carried unanimously.

**Agenda Item #5: (FALL ONLY) Reviewing Proposed Budget for the upcoming school year (SY22/23):**

**a. Review SY21/22 Budget**

- i. Review Spring Minutes and Proposed Department Budget (for SY21/22) Is the proposed budget for FY22/23 budget inclusive of equipment and supplies recommended by the Advisory Program Committee at the last Advisory meeting?

**Status Report:**

- a. SY 21/22 budget reviewed with members
- a. Current Medical Terminology Program (Dean Vaughn): need to purchase a yearly license per student, which is done for sophomore students
- b. Members would like to see the cost of exams continue to be covered for students, also AHA CPR e-cards for junior students and OSHA cards for sophomore students.
- c. RealityWorks Infant simulator curriculum reviewed, currently only taught in Medical Assisting and would like to bring in special care infants (Premature, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, Drug Withdrawal, Down Syndrome and Shaken Baby Syndrome). Members feel the infant simulators should also be incorporated into Health Assisting given their co-op opportunities. Reviewed the infant simulators RealityWork has to offer.

**Recommendations:** It was recommended by the board that infant simulators be purchased for the Health Assisting Department to include in their curriculum given students are attending co-op sites at daycares, and the special care infants for Medical Assisting. It was also recommended GLTS continue covering the cost of exams and certifications for students to have them ready to enter the industry.

**Motion:** Dr. Christen Fragala motioned to accept the budget recommendations.

**2nd Motion:** Judi O'Hara seconded

**Vote:** Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Agenda Item #5 (SPRING ONLY) Prepare Budget for the upcoming school year (SY22/23)**

- a. Is the program equipped with equipment and supplies that will support preparing students for entry into the industry?
- b. What tools and/or equipment are cost-prohibitive to repair and should be replaced?
- c. What tools and/or equipment should be replaced within the next 5 years?
  - i. If yes, is there a specific manufacturer or model that we should request for equipment recommended?

**Status Report:**

- a. (Record Discussion)
- b. (Record Discussion)
- c. (Record Discussion)
- d. (Record Discussion)

**Recommendations:** (Example: "It was recommended by the board that....")

**Motion:** (Name of Board Member)

**2nd Motion:** (Name of Board Member)

**Vote:** (Motion Carried or Motion Failed)

**Agenda Item #6: Curriculum**

- a. Is there any new technology or techniques that we should be teaching our students?
- b. Are there any additional certifications that are valuable for students to have in the Industry?

**Status Report:**

- a. Teachers provided an update on their current grade level curriculum.
- b. Overview given on curriculum to be covered the remainder of the school year, with an emphasis on skills given remote learning last year and the goal of clinical and co-op placements.
- c. Discussed the use of geriatric simulators to prepare students for patient care in the industry.
  - i. There is one set of simulators to share between Health Assisting and Medical Assisting.
- d. Members agree the use of simulators should be incorporated into student learning whenever possible.

**Recommendations:** It was recommended that another set of geriatric simulators be purchased so students in both departments have access to them to be prepared for caring for the rising geriatric population in the industry. It was also recommended that concussion simulators be purchased for both departments given the relevance of concussions seen among patients of all ages.

**Motion:** Judi O'Hara motioned to accept the current curriculum.

**2nd Motion:** Dr. Christen Fragala seconded.

**Vote:** Motion Carried Unanimously

**Agenda Item #7: Cooperative Education/Industry Trends**

1. In thinking about recent and/or new hires at your company or in your industry, what are the skills they are lacking?
2. What is your biggest challenge when hiring new employees?
3. What skills are essential for new hires at your company/in your industry?
4. Have you hired any of our students (coop or recent grads) and if so, what are their strengths and what skills/understandings are they lacking?
5. What should we be doing as teachers to help our students be prepared to be successful at your company and/or in our industry?
6. What other companies in your industry can we partner with to place our students on Coop?

**Status Report:**

1. Updates given on clinical and co-op placements per department.
2. Members emphasized the importance of soft skills, appropriate cell phone use within the workplace, and medication challenges (knowledge and pronunciation) with new students/new hires.
3. Uniform policies at the college level reviewed and how they match our department's current uniform policy.
4. New hires are lacking manual vital signs especially blood pressure as they are being trained using an automatic vitals machine.
5. Members reported staff struggling with interpersonal skills and communication skills when issues arise amongst coworkers, problem-solving skills.
6. At the college level, math courses are slowing students down in their programs.
7. Self-care is a priority in the industry and is encouraged by management.
8. Discussion with members regarding barriers to clinical; they provided input and suggestions based on what they are seeing in the industry.
  - i. It was suggested student schedule changes to help with clinical issues if sites become available and we are restricted by student schedules.
  - ii. LGH covid clinics (registration, observing, covid vaccinations)
  - iii. Lawrence Public Health Nurse (Jackie--will provide contact info)
  - iv. Suggested that we reach out to Merrimack College Health Center or any public-school systems for any clinical opportunities with nurses
  - v. Shelters; students could assist with blood pressure checks
  - vi. Adult Day Health Centers (for Example, Oasis)

- vii. COVID opportunities with the vaccine being approved for children ages 5-11 and boosters for adults; explore if any school systems are hosting vaccine clinics and could use any help from students.
- 9. Elizabeth (grade 11 student) reported feeling ready to go out to clinical now that she has returned to hands-on learning and is eager to enter co-op after becoming certified.
- 10. Dr. Christen Fragala will provide industry contacts for possible clinical placements.

**Recommendations:** It was recommended that clinical and coop sites not used in years past continue to be explored given the pandemic and current local staffing shortages, in order for students to obtain their clinical hours needed to take their respective exams.

**Motion:** Dr. Christen Fragala motioned for these recommendations.

**2nd Motion:** Judi O’Hara seconded.

**Vote:** Motion Carried Unanimously.

**Agenda Item #8: (FALL ONLY) Elect Advisory Chair:**

- b. The General Advisory Meeting will take place on TBD at 5 pm.
- c. Are there any nominations for the Program Advisory Chair for the 2021-2022 school year (take nominations)?
- d. All those in favor?

**Status Report:**

- d. Previous SY 20-21 Chairperson is no longer serving on our current Advisory Board so we are seeking a current member to assume the Advisory Chair position.
- e. Requirement of Advisory Chair outlined for members.
- f. No questions from two eligible members.

**Recommendations:** It was recommended by the board that Judi O’Hara be elected to Advisory Chair.

**Motion:** Dr. Christen Fragala

**2nd Motion:** Michael Mulligan seconded.

**Vote:** Motion Carried

**Agenda Item #9: 5 Year Strategic Plan**

GLTS will be looking at creating a 5-year strategic plan for the school. We would like you to consider the following for the program:

- What is the future of the industry and job outlook? (5years, 10 years)
- Is there new technology/equipment that we should be looking at or investing in?
- Will the industry be sustainable in its current practices, or will we need to expand for future industry trends? (Ex- New bays for electric cars)
- impact climate change is having on your industries

**Status Report:** The job outlook for students entering the medical field is only going to increase in the next five years. There is a growing demand for CNAs and Medical Assistants which matches the local, state, and national hiring shortages currently being experienced in the industry. CNAs and Medical Assistants are a valuable part of the healthcare team and are being respected and paid as such. Expansion to include other trades in the healthcare industry would benefit the students at GLTS, especially given the high interest among freshmen students.

Any path students take out of Health and Medical Assisting will provide them with a solid foundation to be successful healthcare workers.

Judi O'Hara discussed a program she has recently become aware of, NH Healthcare Worker for Climate Action. She is going to reach out to a founder of the organization for any resources they have available for our high school students.

The organization consists of students, trainees, early, mid, and late-career professionals, and retirees, from a wide variety of healthcare settings, both clinical and non-clinical. Who work in independent practices, community hospitals, academic centers, laboratories, professional associations, nonprofits, local and state government, schools, long-term care facilities, and home care. They are from rural and urban NH communities, who are concerned by the impact of climate on individual and population health and see a hopeful way forward through education and advocacy in support of climate solutions.

<https://www.nhclimatehealth.org/>

**Recommendations:** It was recommended by the board that we contact NH Climate Health to see if they have any resources available for our High School Students.

**Motion:** Judy O'Hara

**2ND:** Dr. Christen Fragala

**Vote:** Motion Carried.

**ADJOURNMENT** at 7:23 PM

**Motion:** The facilitator made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Judi O'Hara

**VOTE:** Unanimous

Next Meeting: April 28, 2022

Respectfully Submitted: Brooke Leavitt