



Annual Leadership and Planning Retreat
August 4-6, 2026
Devens Common Center, Devens, MA

PROGRAM

Booking Hotel Rooms: MAVA Group Rate (\$199 per night) at SpringHill Suites by Marriott Devens Common Center, 27 Andrews Parkway, Devens, MA 01434

To Make Reservations: [Book your Group Rate for MAVA Annual Retreat](#)

Last Day to Book at Group Rate: Wednesday, July 15, 2026

Tuesday, August 4, 2026

9:00 a.m.

MAVA Annual Golf Outing
Red Tail Golf Club
15 Bulge Road, Devens, MA



Gold Sponsor of the MAVA Annual Golf Outing
Mosse & Mosse School & Municipal Services, LLC
Host: Brian R. Fitzgerald, President & Chief Operating Officer

This Annual Golf Outing is offered to those who have registered for the Annual Retreat. Because there are only a limited number of available spots, please sign up early.

For event information, contact Mark Morris, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Administration, Southeastern Regional School District, at mmorris@sersd.org.

Tuesday, August 4, 2026

Early Bird Session

Devens Common Center

31 Andrews Parkway, Devens, MA – adjacent to
SpringHill Suites

4:00 p.m.

4:00-5:00 p.m.

AI in Action: Practical Applications for Vocational-Technical Schools

Artificial Intelligence is rapidly reshaping education, workforce development, and the future of career and technical training. But beyond the headlines, what does AI actually look like in practice inside a vocational-technical school?

In this interactive session, vocational-technical leaders from Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School will share how AI tools and emerging technologies are beginning to support teaching, learning, communication, operational efficiency, and leadership decision-making in a large regional voc-tech district.

Participants will explore practical examples involving:

- AI-assisted communication and workflow tools
- Staff and student productivity applications
- Emerging uses of Google Gemini and AI-integrated platforms
- Data-informed decision-making and stakeholder feedback systems
- Early lessons learned around implementation, guardrails, and responsible use

This session is designed as an accessible introduction for school leaders interested in understanding how AI may impact vocational-technical education now and in the future.

Presenters:

- Michael P. Watson, Superintendent
- Maciel Pais, Executive Director of Operations, Technology & Digital Learning
Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School

5:00-5:45 p.m.

Building Support for Your School: How to Do It Right

In these days when all of us are bombarded daily with constant texts, emails, social media posts, and ever-present TV news coverage, how does a vocational technical school separate itself from all the background noise?

How can school leaders build support in the community for a vocational school and its programs?

That's the question that two veteran school administrators will try to answer in this session. They will describe how they reach out to local,

state and federal elected officials; build alliances with community organizations; develop legislative goals; and deliver a unified message using both traditional and social media. They will talk frankly about both gratifying successes and painful defeats.

Presenters:

- Dr. Karen Maguire, Superintendent, Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School in Franklin
- Aaron Polansky, Superintendent, Old Rochester Regional Vocational Technical High School in Rochester
- Atty. Anthony Abdelahad, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, Ventry Associates, LLC

5:45 p.m.

BBQ Dinner on the Patio

Wednesday, August 5, 2026

MAVA Retreat Breakfast

Devens Common Center Solarium

Devens Common Center

8:00 a.m.

31 Andrews Parkway, Devens – adjacent to SpringHill Suites



Gold Sponsor of the MAVA Retreat Breakfast

Allerton Hill Communications

Host: Carrie Rankin, Director of Client Strategy

Schedule Overview

9:00 a.m.

Call to Order – MAVA President Dr. Karen Maguire

Remarks – Carrie Rankin, Allerton Hill Communications

9:10 a.m.

Artificial Intelligence: Moving from Conversation to Implementation

As Artificial Intelligence rapidly becomes part of the educational landscape, vocational-technical schools are being challenged to move beyond curiosity and begin thinking strategically about implementation, communication, and impact.

In this featured session, leaders from Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School will share how their district is approaching AI through a practical, student-centered lens focused on innovation, operational effectiveness, and instructional support.

Topics may include:

- Integrating AI tools into district operations and communication systems
- Supporting educators through emerging AI technologies and professional learning
- Leveraging platforms such as Google Gemini and AI-enhanced data systems
- Using stakeholder feedback and analytics to guide decision-making
- Balancing innovation with responsible implementation and clear expectations

This session will focus on practical applications, early implementation experiences, and the evolving role AI may play in vocational-technical education and workforce readiness.

Presenters:

- Michael P. Watson, Superintendent
- Maciel Pais, Executive Director of Operations, Technology & Digital Learning
Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School

10:00 a.m.

Scheduled Break

10:15 a.m. to
12:00 noon

MAVA Board of Directors' Business Meeting – Solarium
Superintendents and Board Designees. **See Agenda on pages 9 and 10.**

10:15 a.m. to
12:00 noon

Breakout Sessions: Summer Meetings for MAVA Leadership Groups. Led by MAVA Leadership Group chairs, vice-chairs, or designees.

- Academic Directors – Front Entry Office/VIP Room
- Admissions Directors and School Counselors (Joint Meeting) – Executive Club A, 2nd floor
- Assistant Principals – Executive Club B, 2nd floor
- Co-Op Coordinators – Patio Table Outside Main Entrance
- Educational Technology Directors – Devens Club A, 1st floor
- Facility Directors – Patio Table Outside Main Entrance
- Finance Directors – Executive Boardroom, 2nd floor
- Human Resource (HR) Directors – Executive Club C, 2nd floor
- Post-Secondary Technical Institute Directors – Piano Lounge
- Principals – Junior Ballroom Salon A, 1st floor
- Special Education Administrators – Devens Club B, 1st floor

- Vocational Directors and Comprehensive School Directors (Joint Meeting) – Junior Ballroom Salon B, 1st floor

Note: Members of all MAVA Leadership Groups will have the opportunity to meet with their peers. In the event attendance is low for a particular Leadership Group, members may choose to network with another Group or attend the MAVA Board of Directors' Business Meeting. Meeting locations are tentative and subject to change.

Wednesday, August 5, 2026

**MAVA Retreat Luncheon
Devens Common Center Solarium
Devens Common Center**

12:15 p.m.



**Gold Sponsor of the MAVA Retreat Luncheon
Construction Craft Laborers' Union –
Massachusetts & Northern New England Laborers' District Council
and the New England Laborers' Apprenticeship Program**

1:00 p.m.

Building the Future: The Vital Role of the Construction Craft Laborers' Program in CTE Schools

Leaders representing the Construction Craft Laborers' Union will discuss the role of the Chapter 74 Construction Craft Laborers' Program, its importance in Career and Technical Education, and the career opportunities it provides for graduating students within the Laborers' Union Apprenticeship Programs.

Presenters:

- Terry Camara, New England Region Pre-Apprenticeship Coordinator
- Joe Caparco, Laborers' New England Region Director of Apprenticeship
- Lou Mandarin, Jr., Educational Consultant and Retired Business Manager Laborers' Local 22
- Beverly Nelson, Educational Consultant and Retired Deputy Superintendent of Schools in Medford
- Joseph "Jay" Sabitoni, Administrator, New England Laborers' Training Fund

2:00 p.m.

Understanding Public Data in Relation to CTE School Reporting

The state publishes many data points that are used to make both specific and broad judgments about our schools and districts. This training session will help district leaders understand where the numbers come from in our own systems. It will highlight some concrete data issues that impacted both Minuteman's accountability and public perception.

Presenter: Heidi Driscoll, Superintendent of Minuteman Regional High School in Lexington.

Superintendent Driscoll previously served as Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Scituate and as co-chair of the School and District Accountability and Assistance Advisory Council.

2:50 p.m.

Scheduled Break

3:00 p.m.

Legal Issues Impacting Vocational Technical Schools

Presenter: Attorney Elizabeth “Beth” Cabral-Townson from Lyons Law Group, LLC, of Rockland, MA.

Back with us for the second year in a row, Beth will present on the outcomes related to recent state regulations requiring admission by lottery. She will also provide practical tips for ensuring compliance with special education regulations, discipline, and meeting the needs of English Language Learners.

The attorneys at Lyons Law Group practice school law exclusively, representing public school districts in special education and related general education matters. The firm's practice areas include special education, discipline, bullying and harassment, general education, civil rights, and professional development.

www.lyonseducationlaw.com. Email: beth@lyonseducationlaw.com.

3:50 p.m.

Remarks – Michael Davey, Energy Efficient Investments

4:00 p.m.

Adjourn for the Day

Wednesday, August 5, 2026

5:30 p.m.

Evening Reception

**Bandoleros Mexican Grill, 4 Ryans Way, Devens
(on the hill, roughly 100 yards away)**

Gold Sponsor of the “MAVA-ritas with Mike” Reception

Energy Efficient Investments, Inc.

Host: Michael Davey, President



This event will include drinks and a wide selection of Mexican food and appetizers.

If you are signed up for the MAVA Leadership and Planning Retreat,
you are welcome to join us.

Guests and family members attending the Retreat are also welcome.

Thursday, August 6, 2026

MAVA Retreat Final Half-Day

Devens Common Center Solarium

Devens Common Center

31 Andrews Parkway, Devens – adjacent to SpringHill Suites

7:30 a.m.



Gold Sponsor of the MAVA Retreat Thursday Breakfast

Imagine Learning

Host: Steve Burack and Tim Shaw, Account Executives – Massachusetts

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|-----------------|--|
| 7:30 a.m. | Buffet Breakfast, Devens Common Center Solarium |
| 8:15 a.m. | MAVA Board of Directors' Meeting Resumes |
| | Call to Order – MAVA President Dr. Karen Maguire |
| | Remarks – Steve Burack and Tim Shaw, Imagine Learning |
| 9:00-10:30 a.m. | Dr. Pedro Martinez, Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education , will speak to MAVA members, followed by a question-and-answer session. |
| | The session with the Commissioner will be followed by updates from Director Nicole M. Smith and staff of DESE's Office of College, Career, and Technical Education . |
| 10:30 a.m. | MAVA Board of Directors' Meeting Resumes (if needed)
Reports from MAVA Leadership Groups (if needed) |
| 12:00 noon | Wrap-up and Adjournment |

For information:

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MAVA Executive Director
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**MAVA Board of Directors' Business Meeting
Devens Common Center Solarium, Devens, MA
Wednesday, August 5, 2026 (and possibly Thursday, August 6, 2026)**

1.0 President's Greetings – MAVA President Dr. Karen Maguire

- a. Call to Order and Introductions
- b. Review of Meeting Norms
 - We will respect each other's schedules. We will start and end on time.
 - Only one person will speak at a time.
 - We will always maintain civility.
 - We will listen to others' opinions.
 - We may challenge others' ideas, but we may not attack individuals.
 - We agree there will be no recording of our meetings.
 - We agree not to discuss these meetings with others unless requested to do so.

2.0 President's Goals and Call to Action – MAVA President Dr. Karen Maguire

3.0 Secretary's Report – MAVA Secretary Heidi Driscoll

- a. Approval – Minutes of June 24, 2026 **VOTE**

4.0 Treasurer's Report – MAVA Treasurer Michael Watson

- a. Balance Sheet as of June 30, 2026 **VOTE**
- b. Profit and Loss Statement for July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 **VOTE**

5.0 Regulations and Legislation

- a. Report from Beacon Hill – Atty. Anthony Abdelahad, Ventry Associates
- b. Focused, 30-Minute Brainstorming Session on Regulatory and Legislative Changes Needed by MAVA Schools – Led by Atty. Abdelahad
- c. Next Steps

6.0 New Business

- a. Letter of March 19, 2026, from Karen Ward, Executive Director of SkillsUSA Massachusetts, requesting \$19,000 to send SkillsUSA Officers and Chaperones to the Leadership Training Institute in Washington, D.C. **VOTE**
- b. Proposed MAVA Calendar for 2026-2027 **VOTE**

7.0 Old Business

8.0 Reports/Updates

- a. Hot Work Certification Program (Christopher Faucher)
- b. MAVA Connecting for Success Conference (Bethany Botelho and Catie Tuccinardi)
- c. Annual Awards and Retiree Recognition Dinner (Steve Sharek)
- d. MAVA CTE Teacher Licensure Working Group (Aaron Polansky)
- e. Practical Nursing (Jim Brosnan)
- f. Best Practices and Innovations in CTE Conference hosted by NCLA, Sea Crest Beach Resort, North Falmouth, MA, September 21-23, 2026 (NCLA Board member Ernie Houle, Superintendent Roger Forget, and Superintendent Bob Sanborn)
- g. Other

9.0 For the Good of the Association

10.0 Adjournment

Voting at MAVA Board Meetings

Eligibility to Vote at MAVA Board meetings: While representatives from MAVA member schools are certainly welcome to attend MAVA Board meetings, only the CEO of full dues-paying member institutions is generally eligible to vote at meetings of the Board of Directors (unless the CEO has designated someone else). For more on voting eligibility, please see Article IV 3(b) in the MAVA By-Laws.