

Board of Higher Education

June 12, 2023

MassReconnect Program



MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Higher Education

MassReconnect Overview

MassReconnect is designed to encourage Massachusetts adults, age 25 and older, to enroll in college for the first time or return to college to complete a program of study

MassReconnect will provide grants to full and part-time community college students to cover the costs of tuition, fees, books and supplies for a certificate or associate degree

MassReconnect Overview

- *MassReconnect is funded at \$20 million by all sectors under the FY24 budget process: Governor's H1, HWM and SWM. Legislative Language is consistent and stipulates that the program must:*
 - *Support community college students, age 25 and older, who*
 - *have not previously earned a college degree*
 - *Enrolled in a minimum of six credits*
 - *Cover the cost of tuition, fees, books and supplies*
 - *Awarded as a last dollar grant, after all sources of federal and state aid is considered*
 - *May be used to support summer educational programs*

MassReconnect Stakeholder Engagement

- *MassReconnect guidelines were developed in **partnership** with stakeholders*
- *DHE participated in weekly planning meetings with the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges (MACC)*
- *DHE sponsored a webinar to share MassReconnect concepts and to receive further input/feedback from community college professionals. Participants included campus presidents and key administrators (academic deans, financial aid administrators, student support service advisers, etc.)*

MassReconnect

Outreach & Communications

- **A *Strategic Communications & Outreach Plan* is underway to attract diverse adult populations, and is designed to:**
 - ***Inform*** potential adult students of opportunities available through MassReconnect
 - ***Encourage*** adults to consider college for the first time, or return to a campus to complete a program of study previously started
 - ***Emphasize*** the significance and value of earning a college credential
 - ***Focus*** on key communities and agencies for the target population
 - *Leverage key calendar dates for awareness campaign (such as Black History, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and Hispanic Heritage Months)*
 - ***Create Informative Landing Page*** - key audience engagement; connects student with campus; real stories
 - ***Connects*** MassReconnect with the DHE Equity Agenda priorities

MassReconnect Outreach & Communications

To support the approval of MassReconnect on July 1, or as soon as the FY24 budget is final, the DHE, supported by C+C, will create and share a comprehensive initial content package that includes:

- *News release*
- *One sheet program overview*
- *Landing page copy*
- *Graphics for that can be shared with key stakeholders*
- *Recommended social content*
- *Paid social media recommendations*
- *Email to students in DHE database*

MassReconnect Key Timeline

- ***MassReconnect will commence with the 2023-24 academic year***
 - *Campuses informed of funding immediately after FY24 budget is final*
- ***Concentrated Communications and Strategic Outreach:***
 - *June 2023 - September 2023, with continued outreach throughout the year and around specific semester enrollment dates*
- ***Training Workshops for stakeholders – July 11 & 12***
 - *community college staff (financial aid, admissions, etc.), with continued campus support throughout the academic year*

MassReconnect Recommendations

- *Staff will recommend that the BHE approve the MassReconnect program guidelines, contingent upon the FY24 budget*

(note: Guidelines will be amended to reflect final budget language)