

“A 21st Century Madison Park High School”

October 7, 2019

Dear Friend,

During this campaign a particular area of focus has been around what needs to be done to improve the educational environment and outcomes at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School, which many feel is not currently reaching its full potential in serving students and the city. This is why we should reorient Madison Park and make it a national leader in environmentally-focused vocational education.

As the only vocational school in Boston Public Schools Madison Park is unique. It provides students with practical, real-world training and skills, in addition to traditional academics, which helps lower their barriers to entry into the workforce. Yet, many feel that Madison Park is not doing enough to prepare students and that the school is somehow “lesser than.” Instead we should be celebrating the windows of opportunity that vocational education has the ability to provide, particularly since we know that college may not be the right career development pathway for every student – and that it should not need to be in order to build a successful life in today’s Boston. We need to value vocational education as the practical tool for meeting Boston’s challenges that it is.

As a city that will be significantly impacted by the effects of climate change we must ensure that our new buildings are constructed in the most climate-resilient, carbon neutral ways possible. We will need skilled tradespeople who can repair and retrofit our existing building stock with an eye towards future needs as the climate continues to change. For non-building trades vocational students we must incorporate environmentalism and environmentally conscious skills and techniques into how they are being taught. This training must be supplemented outside of the shops by an academic curriculum that actively speaks to the importance of responsible environmental stewardship – and the critical role that skilled tradespeople must play in making it a reality. As the next generation of cosmetologists, auto technicians, chefs and more, developing and implementing climate responsible professional training is sound educational, economic, and social policy.

We have the talent, capability, and opportunity to once again be a “shining city on a hill” and lead the way in this space – if we are willing to rethink and implement a new model of vocational education. Boston’s combination of a strong labor sector and advanced research & educational institutions make us the perfect community to take this bold step. If so, we can make sure that our graduates have 21st century skills to meet 21st century challenges, and take part in a 21st century economy.

I look forward to hearing your feedback on this important issue. Reach out to us on social media using “@VoteHalbert” and at [info@davidhalbert.com](mailto:info@davidhalbert.com)

Many Thanks,

David