**Sample Memorandum of Understanding Template**

**[Please remove blue header and replace with district or organization letterhead]**

**Memorandum of Understanding**

Between

(School Food Authority) Or (Sponsoring Organization)

and

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets the terms and understanding between the [ **Insert:** *School Food Authority* or *Sponsoring Organization*] and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to participate in “Digging Deeper: A Farm to School Comprehensive Pilot,” which aims to advance comprehensive farm to school programming, including local food system education and local sourcing in Child Nutrition Programs, through a two-year immersive pilot program.

Through participation in a goal-setting and strategic planning process, [**Insert**: *School Food Authority* or *Sponsoring Organization*] will identify two programmatic areas for farm to school intervention and will receive direct consultation and resources to execute these interventions during school years (SY) 2025-2026 and SY 2026-2027.

**“Digging Deeper” Pilot Components**

[ **Insert:** *School Food Authority* or *Sponsoring Organization*] acknowledges that participating in “Digging Deeper” will include the following activities:

* Identifying 4-5 institutional stakeholders to serve as a Farm to School Advisory Team.
* Participation in a goal setting and strategic planning process led by a Farm to School Consultant.
* Coordination of the staff capacity, staff compensation (when applicable), and administrative buy-in to integrate two of the following farm to school interventions between the start of SY 2025-2026 and the end of SY 2026-2027:
	1. Integration of a trained DTA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) educator for one food literacy series (typically 4-6 lessons) in identified classrooms
	2. Building or renovation of up to two growing spaces (e.g. school gardens or indoor growing space) and school garden professional development for educators
	3. Tailored culinary training for front-line nutrition professionals paired with local procurement consultation for nutrition managers, directors, and/or business managers to increase the integration of local food in Child Nutrition Programs
* Participation in a pre and post assessment conducted by the Farm to School Consultant which will seek to evaluate the success of the selected farm to school interventions. The assessment scope will be determined by institutional stakeholders in the goal-setting and strategic planning process.

**Institutional Background**

*Select One: Section A or Section B. Delete the other section that is not applicable (as well as these instructions) in final submission.*

Section A: Entity with existing farm to school experience

[**Insert:** *School Food Authority* or *Sponsoring Organization*] has participated in farm to school activities since [**Insert:** year]. This programming has included (select all that apply):

[ ]  **classroom activities** (including but not limited to: hosting SNAP-Ed educators in the classroom, utilizing a garden or indoor growing space during instructional time, providing food literacy professional development to educators)

[ ]  **cafeteria activities** (including but not limited to: procuring and serving local foods in a Child Nutrition Program, developing marketing resources to highlight locally sourced foods, hosting taste tests of local foods, providing professional development for nutrition professionals to integrate local, minimally processed ingredients into meals)

[ ]  **community activities** (including but not limited to: hosting before/after school programming such as a gardening or cooking club, hosting farm field trips; working with a non-profit community organization to execute farm to school activities)

[ ]  Other: [please insert any relevant activities not listed above that add additional perspective to your existing farm to school activities. *Note: an exhaustive list of all current farm to school activities is not required*]

OR

Section B: Entity new to farm to school activities

[**Insert:** *School Food Authority* or *Sponsoring Organization*] began fostering an interest in farm to school programming in [**Insert** year]. We have taken the following steps to begin farm to school programming (select all that apply):

[ ]  identified a collection of stakeholders (three or more individuals) interested in executing farm to school programming

[ ]  educated ourselves on the goals of starting a farm to school program (through attending a farm to school webinar or reviewing farm to school resources)

[ ]  connected with a farm to school resource provider such as [Massachusetts Farm to School](https://www.massfarmtoschool.org/terrific-trays/) to identify first steps for our program

[ ]  applied for a funding opportunity to support farm to school programming

[ ]  Other: [please describe any relevant steps your entity has taken in preparing for future farm to school programming not listed above. *Note: an exhaustive list is not required*]

**Funding**

This MOU is not a commitment of funds or services. The scale and number of entities able to participate in “Digging Deeper: A Farm to School Comprehensive Pilot” will be contingent on DESE receiving federal grant funding. Resources received through participation in this grant are valued at $12,000 and will be offered at no cost. Resources are not inclusive of compensation for work conducted by pilot participants outside of work hours.

**Participant Commitment**

[**Insert:** *School Food Authority* or *Sponsoring Organization*] acknowledges that participating in “Digging Deeper: A Farm to School Comprehensive Pilot” is estimated at a commitment of **30 hours** **per school year** per core participant of the pilot. We acknowledge that a minimum of **three institutional stakeholders** should serve as core participants throughout the two-year pilot. As a result, the time commitment of a participating institution is valued at a total of $5,000 for school food authorities and $4,500 for early education centers.

**Point of Contact**

[**Insert:** *School Food Authority* or *Sponsoring Organization*] acknowledges that the following individual(s) will serve as the primary point of contact and project manager, taking responsibility for adherence to the participant commitments outlined above:

Name

Title

Email Address

Phone Number

**Duration**

This MOU is at-will and may be modified by mutual consent of authorized officials from [**Insert**: *School Food Authority* or *Sponsoring Organization*] and DESE. This MOU shall become effective upon signature by the authorized officials from the [**Insert:** *School Food Authority* or *Sponsoring Organization*] and DESE and will remain in effect until modified or terminated by any one of the partners by mutual consent. In the absence of mutual agreement by the authorized officials from [**Insert:** *School Food Authority* or *Sponsoring Organization*] and DESE, this MOU shall end on September 30, 2027.

**Contact Information**

Robert M Leshin

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Director of Office for Food and Nutrition Programs

135 Santilli Highway, Everett MA, 02149

781-338-6480Nutrition@doe.mass.edu

**Contact Information**

School Food Authority or Sponsoring Organization

Authorized Signatory

Position

Address

Telephone

E-mail

Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Robert M Leshin

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Director of Office for Food and Nutrition Programs

Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

School Food Authority or Sponsoring Organization

(Name, organization, position)