PITTSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Pittsfield, Massachusetts

CAREER VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL EDUCATION ADMISSIONS POLICY

POLICY

Massachusetts state regulations (603 CMR 4.00) require all state-designated career technical education (CTE) schools and programs to develop and implement admission, recruitment, and retention policies that comply with state and federal law, as well as relevant guidelines issued by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the U.S. Department of Education.

REGULATIONS

Career/Vocational Technical Education Admissions Procedures - Pittsfield Public Schools.

INTRODUCTION

The Pittsfield Public Schools CTE programs are open to all students in grades 9-12 who demonstrate interest in career and technical education and meet basic academic eligibility requirements. Admission to CTE programs operates on an application system, with priority given to resident students, followed by non-resident applicants on a space-available basis in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 74. Prospective students will be required to submit an application between November 1 and March 1 of the prior academic year. The district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, disability, religion, sexual orientation, homelessness, or any other characteristic protected by state or federal law in its CTE admissions process, and provides equal access to all eligible students. Students accepted into CTE programs are expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress and adherence to program-specific safety requirements and professional standards throughout their enrollment. Transfer students and those wishing to change programs mid-year will be considered based on space availability, prerequisite completion, and the recommendation of program instructors and guidance counselors.

An admissions process is necessary in career vocational technical programs where the available number of openings is limited. For the purpose of safety, vocational technical shops and laboratories are designed and equipped to serve a specific maximum number of students. Therefore, a selection process is necessary and all applicants for Pittsfield Public Schools Career Technical Education programs will be evaluated using the criteria of this admission policy.

It is the responsibility of Pittsfield Public Schools' Superintendent, or designee, to supervise the administration of the policies and procedures used to admit and enroll students, consistent with all applicable laws, regulations, and guidance.

I. ADMISSIONS

If Taconic High School has more applications than it has available seats, Taconic High School will apply a lottery to determine which students it will admit. The lottery will admit resident students before admitting any non-residents seeking the same program. Pittsfield Public School's admission policy is on file at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

II. EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Pittsfield Public Schools (PPS) admits students and makes available to them its programs, privileges, and courses of study without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, sexual orientation, or disability.

If a student's primary home language is not English, Pittsfield Public Schools will provide them with an application form in their home language. Please contact your School Counselor if you have questions or need help filling out the application form.

Pittsfield Public Schools is committed to providing educational opportunities to students experiencing homelessness. Please contact Pittsfield Public Schools' liaison with any questions.

Students with disabilities may voluntarily identify themselves to Pittsfield Public Schools to request reasonable accommodations during the application and admission process. Neither a student's disability nor the primary language of their home will have any effect on their admission to CTE programming. Consistent with Massachusetts regulations, Pittsfield Public Schools has created a plan with "deliberate, specific strategies to promote equal educational opportunities."

III. ELIGIBILITY

A. The Pittsfield Public Schools serves the residents of the City of Pittsfield and the high school students from the Town of Richmond. All students who are residents of these communities are given equal consideration for admission to the Pittsfield Career Vocational Technical Programs according to the criteria contained in this policy.
B. Any student currently enrolled in 8th grade who is a resident of the City of Pittsfield or the Town of Richmond and expects to be promoted to 9th grade is eligible to apply for fall admission to the Career Exploratory program subject to the availability of openings. Admission to the Career Exploratory program is determined by the criteria contained in this policy. Applications must be submitted to the Pittsfield Public Schools by March 1.
C. Students who are not residents of Pittsfield are eligible to apply for admission to CTE programming. Admission to the Career Exploratory and overall CTE program is determined by the criteria contained in this policy and the availability of openings in the program. Resident students will be given consideration first. Students and families can find information on the Chapter 74 Non-Resident Student Tuition (NRT) Program on the Pittsfield Public Schools CTE Programs web page online or from the office of the Assistant Superintendent for College and Career Readiness located in the Mercer building at 269 First St., Pittsfield, MA.
D. Any resident 9th grade student who expects to be promoted to the 10th grade and has not enrolled in a vocational program can apply for admission to a Career Vocational Technical Education program subject to available openings in the program and the criteria contained in this policy.
   Any resident 10th grade student who expects to be promoted to the 11th grade and has not enrolled in a vocational program can apply for admission to a Career Technical Education program subject to available openings in the program and the criteria contained in this policy.
E. Any non-resident 9th grade student who expects to be promoted to the 10th grade and has not enrolled in a vocational program can apply for admission to a Career Vocational Technical Education program subject to available openings in the program and the criteria contained in this policy. Resident students will be given consideration first. Students and families can find information on the Chapter 74 Non Resident Student Tuition Program online. NRT applications must be received no later than March 1 5.
F. Any transfer student in the 10th, 1lh or 12th grade who is coming from another Chapter 74 state approved vocational technical education program is eligible to apply for admission to the corresponding grade

and trade in the Pittsfield Public Schools system. Transfer students will be evaluated according to the criteria contained in this admission policy. Admission is subject to the availability of openings.

G. Residents of Pittsfield Homeschooled applicants may apply to attend any Career Vocational Technical Education program full-time and will be subject to the same admission standards as other applicants. Students who register in PPS must enroll and attend full-time

H. Each Spring the School Committee votes which of the district's schools, including Taconic High School, will participate in the inter-district school choice program. The inter-district school choice program, M.G.L. c. 76, & 12B, allows parents/guardians to send their children to school in communities other than the city or town in which they reside.

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Career Vocational Technical Education programs offered in the Pittsfield Public Schools are housed at Taconic High School. Each program offers different or distinct career choices to the students. It is the responsibility of the Assistant Superintendent for College and Career Readiness to supervise the administration of the policies and the procedures required to admit and enroll applicants for Career Vocational Technical Education programs as outlined in this admission policy, consistent with all applicable laws, regulations and guidance.

The Assistant Superintendent for College and Career Readiness is responsible for disseminating information about the vocational technical programs through local school guidance offices to all eighth grade students and their parent(s) or guardian(s). The office of the Assistant Superintendent is responsible for collecting and maintaining applications from students.

V. RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Pittsfield Public Schools will disseminate information pertaining to its vocational technical programs and opportunities through a variety of media that will include electronic as well as printed media.

PPS maintains a calendar of events on its website:
httDs://taconic.oittsfield.net/en-US/cte-at-taconic-51 bc6955 where it provides information on the admission process, as well as other information about its programs. Students and their families can request hard copies of the calendar by calling or emailing the Taconic High School Office at 413448-9600.

PPS also shares recruitment information with potential applicants in the district by offering all students in Grade 8 the opportunity to tour and observe CTE programming during the application window.
Furthermore, when feasible, all Grade 7 students participate in a series of exploratory visits in order to learn about the different CTE pathways available. PPS offers an annual open house during the application window for all prospective applicants and their families. For more detailed information, please see the Pittsfield Public Schools Middle School CTE Pathway Exploration Policy.

For non-resident applicants, PPS offers school group tours to interested applicants. Applicants should inquire with the school counseling departments of their current school to arrange a tour.

By October 15, informational emails, calls, and postcards will occur for all current Grade 8 students in Pittsfield Public Schools.

Additionally, prior to March 1, PPS will hold at least two public information sessions each school year that will discuss the application process, available programming, and benefits of a CTE education. Information on these events will be communicated through emails, calls, mailings, and/or posted on the school and district website.

VI. ABM.1.e.e.1.e,N-APPLICATION PROCESS

All students entering CTE must complete the admissions process. The enrollment process follows strict guidelines set by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and includes the elements detailed below.

- Taconic High School Principal will determine the number of vacant seats in CTE each year.

- Throughout the school year, the minimum number of seats in each grade level will be determined by the number of students present in that grade on the first day of school. If a student withdraws from CTE in Grades 9 or 10 for any reason the school will attempt to fill that vacant seat up until September 30 of that school year.

- Pittsfield Public Schools (PPS) will publicize available openings at Taconic school via the district and school website, social media platforms and parent newsletters by November 1 .

- PPS will publicize open enrollment periods during which families may submit enrollment applications for CTE enrollment. PPS will use a variety of media and community partners to let families know about the enrollment process and deadlines.

Pittsfield Public Schools will utilize an admissions online platform. Interested applicants will apply using the online CTE Application via an online platform Instructions can be obtained from the local school counselor, or from the office of the Assistant Superintendent for College and Career Readiness located in the Mercer building at 269 First St., Pittsfield, MA.

The platform will be available via the district website, school website and via social media platforms managed by the Pittsfield Public Schools. Online applications will be made available in the applicant's home language and by request. Students may request assistance with the online application from the school counseling office or the CTE Office.

One online application is sufficient to cover all vocational technical programs offered by the Pittsfield Public School system.

To be considered in the first round of acceptance, all applications must follow the timeline below:

Application will be available: November 1
Application deadline: March 1
Applications received after March 1 will be placed on a waitlist in the order they were received.

Incomplete applications will not be considered for admissions.

NON-RESIDENT

Non-resident applicants must complete the online application for admissions by March 1 AND must submit a Non-Resident Tuition (NRT) form to Pittsfield Public Schools by March 15. NRT forms must be submitted to the District of Residence by April 1. The NRT form is located on the district and school website. The NRT form should be submitted to the office of the Assistant Superintendent for College and Career Readiness located in the Mercer building at 269 First St., Pittsfield, MA no later than March 15.

LATE APPLICATIONS

Applications from resident students received after March 1 will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this admission policy. Applications from students residing outside of the Pittsfield Public School district submitted after April 1, will not be approved by their town of residence.

Applications from Pittsfield resident students who wish to enroll in a vocational technical education program in another district who submit nonresident tuition forms after April 1 will not receive approval for such a placement.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Students already enrolled in a state-designated CTE program in another school may apply for admission to PPS. Please contact the Taconic High School guidance department (413) 448-9600 with any questions.

WITHDRAWN STUDENTS

Students who withdraw their application from consideration, decline an offered spot, transfer or withdraw from Taconic High School will need to reapply for consideration and will be subject to the criteria outlined in the admission policy.

Vil. SELECTION PROCESS

If Taconic High School has more applications than it has available seats, Taconic High School will apply a lottery to determine which students it will admit. The lottery will admit resident students before admitting any non-residents seeking the same program. Pittsfield Public School's admission policy is on file at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

If there are more applicants than allotted seats, a lottery will be held with the applicants. The school will follow the lottery and waitlist procedures as noted below. These deadlines will be publicized and available at www.pittsfield.net and by contacting the School's Counseling Department. The district will not hold any enrollment lotteries until after March 1, and shall conclude its CTE enrollment process no later than March 30 of each year.

In the event a lottery is required, the PPS online admissions system will implement a random selection process using the students LLASID numbers as identifiers and every applicant will be entered to establish the initial random lottery order. If a lottery is to be held, that fact will be publicized at least one week prior to the lottery date.

WAITLIST PROCEDURES

All students not accepted in the enrollment lottery are placed on a waiting list in the order the names were selected.

If a student previously admitted through the enrollment process declines enrollment or stops attending Taconic High School, the next available student on the waitlist for that grade will be offered admission until the vacant seat is filled.

The school shall maintain waitlists only for the school year for which the students applied. Should a student not be accepted into CTE for the school year, or withdraw for any reason, that student will need to reapply

for the subsequent school year if they remain interested in CTE. It is the responsibility of the family to update the school should contact information change while a student remains on the waiting list.

Vill. ENROLLMENT

In order to enroll in the Pittsfield Public Schools for the fall, applicants must have been promoted to the grade they seek to enter by their local school district. Students may only be admitted if they have been promoted to the grade they are seeking to enter, so students should be aware that their admission is conditional—if they are not ultimately promoted or eligible to remain with their cohort, their admission and participation in CTE programming will be rescinded.

IX. PROGRAM SPECIFIC ADMISSION

All freshmen students who enroll in the Pittsfield Public Schools Career Vocational Technical Education program in their school, will participate in a Career Exploratory program which is designed to help them learn about their talents and interests relative to a variety of career vocational technical programs. During the time spent in the Career Exploratory program, the student will be instructed in safety, professionalism, work ethic, and aspects of industry and the world of work.

The Career Exploratory students will partake in each shop offered at the school on a rotating basis. The time the student spends in a shop is referred to as a rotation and the work the student does in a rotation is graded by the instructor. The grade is scored by a rubric and the categories used to arrive at the grade are set as follows: 25% Safety Health Standards, 40% Technical and Integrated Academic Standards, 25% Employability, Entrepreneurship and Digital Literacy Standards, and 10% Attendance. 100 is the maximum grade per rotation.

At the end of the cycle of rotations, each student is asked to apply for their top three choices of the Career Vocational Technical Education programs. They will receive a composite score for placement that is arrived at by adding the number grade from all rotations together. The larger the number the more likely a student will get their choice. The roster for each program for the fall of the following year is primarily comprised of students whose first choice was that program. When the number of opening available for the program are filled a student is placed on a waiting list. I f a student who had been accepted into a program should opt not to take the program, the next student on the list will be offered the spot.

The student who did not get their first choice has the option of taking their second or third choice if space is available.

The students who did not take part in the Career Exploratory program but would like to apply for a Career Technical Vocational Education in their sophomore year can apply for available openings in their freshman or sophomore year can apply for available openings.

X. REVIEW AND APPEALS

The applicant's parent(s)/guardian(s), upon receipt of a letter from the Pittsfield Public Schools indicating that the applicant was placed on a wait list, may request a review of the decision. To do so, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must send a letter requesting a review of the decision to the Office of the Superintendent. The letter to the Superintendent must be sent within 30 days of receipt of the aforementioned letter from Pittsfield Public Schools. The Superintendent will respond in writing to the letter with the findings of the review within 15 days. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) do not agree with the Superintendent review they can appeal to the School Committee by sending a letter to the School Committee requesting a date be scheduled where they can appear before the School Committee to appeal

the Superintendent's findings. The School Committee will respond to the 5 parent(s)/guardian(s) within 15 days of receiving the request for a hearing and within 30 days after the hearing with their findings.

XI. RETENTION STRATEGIES

To ensure student success and program completion, the school implements comprehensive retention strategies that support students throughout their CTE pathway. Each CTE student is assigned a program-specific school counselor who monitors academic progress and attendance through regular check-ins and progress reviews. Additionally, there is a building-level student support team that monitors student performance and helps identify students at risk for not making progress. Students experiencing academic difficulties receive targeted interventions such as peer tutoring, after-school support sessions, and modified instructional approaches to address individual learning needs. The school maintains ongoing communication with families through progress reports, parent conferences, and program updates to foster a collaborative support network. MyCAP career exploration activities, industry partnerships, work-based learning opportunities, and recognition of student achievements help maintain engagement and motivation. Before program selection, students participating in the Career Exploratory program will conduct a student-led conference with faculty and family, which outlines their career interests and reasons for their specific program selections.

When a student expresses intent to leave their CTE program, an exit interview is conducted to identify underlying issues, explore solutions, and determine if an alternative CTE pathway might better suit their interests and goals, ensuring every effort is made to keep students on track toward credential completion and career readiness.

XII MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

Pittsfield Public Schools' Office for College and Career Readiness maintains records of all students who apply, enroll, or are waitlisted, as well as their disposition on admission criteria, to facilitate analysis of its admissions system and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Pittsfield Public Schools will provide this information to the Department upon request.

REFERENCES

603 CMR 4.03(6)(A)CAREERNOCATIONAL TECHNICAL EDUCATION ADMISSIONS

REGULATIONS INTER-DISTRICT SCHOOL CHOICE PURSUANT TO G.L. C. 761 512B

M.GL.. CH. 74. S. 37B. APPROVAL OF POSTSECONDARY PROGRAMS BY COMMISSIONER TUITION
The commissioner under the direction of the state board may approve non-degree granting vocational education programs at the postsecondary level. In making his decision, the commissioner shall take into consideration the availability of similar training opportunities at the secondary and public regional community college levels.

Upon the vote of the school committee or board of trustees of any industrial, technical, or vocational school, tuition and other related fees may be charged to students residing in its city, town, or regional school district admitted to approved postsecondary vocational education programs in an amount not to exceed fifty percent of the average per pupil cost of such programs.

M.G.L., CH. 74, S. 37C., ADMINISTRATION OF NON-RESIDENT; TUITION

A student who resides in a city or town which does not offer approved vocational education programs at the postsecondary level may, upon the approval of the commissioner under the direction of the state board be admitted to such program in another city, town or regional school district. In making his determination the commissioner shall take into consideration the opportunities for free vocational training where the applicant resides, the preparation, age, aptitude, and previous records of the applicant, and other relevant circumstances, including the level of state assistance to such program. A student admitted under this provision shall be charged tuition and fees for the full amount of the average pupil cost of such program, as approved by the commissioner under the direction of the state board. Such students shall be eligible to apply for state scholarship aid pursuant to section seven of Chapter 15A.