CAREER VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL EDUCATION ADMISSIONS POLICY

POLICY

This admission policy has been written in accordance with the Massachusetts General Law Chapter 74 (MGL Ch. 74) and the Vocational Technical Education Regulations (603 CMR 400) and has been written to respond to State Admissions Policy Guidelines for Selective Public Vocational Technical High Schools in Massachusetts.

REGULATIONS

Career/Vocational Technical Education Admissions Procedures - Pittsfield Public Schools

I. INTRODUCTION

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 Vocational Technical Education programs will be evaluated using the criteria of this admission policy.

II. EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

The Pittsfield Public Schools admits students and makes available to them its advantages, privileges and courses of study without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, genetic information, gender identity, disability or homelessness status.

If there is a student with limited English proficiency, a qualified staff member will assist the applicant in completing the necessary forms and assist in interpreting during the entire application and admission process upon request of the applicant.

Students with disabilities may voluntarily self-identify for the purpose of requesting reasonable accommodations during the entire application process.

Information on limited English proficiency and or disability submitted voluntarily by the applicant, for the purpose of receiving assistance during the entire application and admission process, will not affect the applicant's admission to the career vocational technical education program.

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 Pittsfield Vocational Technical Program 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 February 1.

C. Non-resident 8th grade students that expect to be promoted to 9th grade are eligible to apply for admission to the Career Exploratory program. Admission to the Career Exploratory 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.

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.

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. Students who reside outside the Pittsfield Public School District and are seeking admission to Pittsfield Public School’s Vocational Technical Education Program must file a Chapter 74 Vocational Technical Nonresident Student Tuition Application (located at: www.doe.mass.edu/cte/admissions) with the Superintendent of the student’s district of residence in accordance with the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Guidelines for the Vocational Technical Education Program Nonresident Student Tuition Process pursuant to M.G.L., c. 74. www.doe.mass.edu/cte/admissions/nonres_guidelines Resident students will be given consideration first.

F. Any 10th grade student transferring into the Pittsfield Public Schools in September can apply for a vocational technical program education and be admitted to that program provided he or she meets the selection criteria and there is a seat available in the vocational technical education program to which the student is seeking admission. A transfer student in the 10th, 11th, or 12th grade who is coming from another Chapter 74 state approved vocational technical education program is eligible to apply for admission to a vocational technical education program 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.

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Career Vocational Technical Education programs offered in the Pittsfield Public Schools are housed at both Taconic High School and Pittsfield High School. Each school offers different or distinct career choices to the students. Pittsfield Public School students are eligible to apply to either school that offers the vocational technical program of interest. However, a transfer is required when a student does not reside in that school's district that offers his or her desired program. For the purpose of determining the student’s eligibility for a Career Vocational Technical Education program, the career exploratory programs at each high school are considered equal.

It is the responsibility of the Assistant Superintendent for College and Career Readiness to supervise the admission policies and the procedures required to admit and enroll applicants for Career Vocational Technical Education programs as outlined in this admission policy.

The district has an Admission Selection Committee appointed annually by the Assistant Superintendent for College and Career Readiness. The committee consists of the Assistant Superintendent for College and Career Readiness, the building Principal, the School Councilor office Director, a vocational technical
teacher, a Special Education teacher, and an academic teacher. The responsibilities of the Admissions Selection Committee include:

- Assuring the standards of admission procedures
- The development and implementation of admission procedures
- Processing applications
- Ranking the students
- Accepting students according to the procedure and criteria of the admission policy
- The establishment and maintenance of a waiting list of acceptable candidates

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 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. Department heads, teachers, and student representatives will hold informational meetings at the middle schools with students in 8th grade. Students will have the opportunity to visit the vocational programs at both high schools through tours arranged by the sending middle school and the high schools. Annually, open houses are scheduled at both high schools for informational purposes. A letter will be sent home to all 7th grade parent(s)/guardian(s) of PPS students that informs them of the programs offered in the Pittsfield Public School system and explains the admission criteria.

VI. ADMISSION PROCESS

Applications can be obtained from the local school counselor, the office of the Assistant Superintendent for College and Career Readiness located in the Mercer building at 269 First St., Pittsfield, MA or by going to this link and downloading an application:

http://www.pittsfield.net/district_info/programs/careertechnical_education

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

For those students applying for the freshmen exploratory program, the application will be returned to the sending middle school where the school counselor will provide the following information to the application before forwarding it to the Assistant Superintendent’s office:

1. The final marks for grade 7 and the first semester of grade 8 for English language arts, social studies, math, and science from the local report card or transcript.

2. The sum of grade 7 and semester 1 of grade 8 unexcused absences from the local report card or transcript.

3. A report from the local report card or from the district’s student information system on the grade 7 and semester 1 of grade 8 behavior citations.

For those students applying for sophomore year admission to a specific vocational technical program, the application will be returned to the high school where the student’s school counselor will provide the following information to the application before forwarding it to the Assistant Superintendent’s office:
1. The final marks for grade 8 and the first semester of grade 9 for English language arts, social studies, math, and science from the local report card or transcript.

2. The sum of grade 8 and semester 1 of grade 9 unexcused absences from the local report card or transcript.

3. A report from the local report card or from the district’s student information system on grade 8 and semester 1 of grade 9 behavior citations.

For those students transferring into the Pittsfield Public Schools system from another district’s Chapter 74 vocational education program, the application will be returned to the sending high school where the student’s School Counselor will append the following information to the application before forwarding it to the Assistant Superintendent’s office:

1. The student’s final grades from the previous school year as well as the grades from the first semester of the year in which the student is applying. The marks required are those for English language arts, social studies, math, and science from the local report card or transcript.

2. The total number of unexcused absences for the first semester of the year the student is applying for a program as well as the prior year.

3. A report from the local report card or the School Counselor’s assessment of the student’s behavior for the first semester of the year the student is applying for a program as well as the entire previous year.

Applications from resident students must be completed and forwarded to the office of the Assistant Superintendent for College and Career Readiness with the required signatures and the necessary information on grades (marks), absenteeism, and behavior by February 1.

Applications from non-resident students must be completed and forwarded to the office of the Assistant Superintendent for College and Career Readiness with the required signatures and the necessary information on grades (marks), absenteeism, and behavior by April 1.

Applications that are sent to the Assistant Superintendent’s office that are not complete will be returned to the sending school’s School Counselor’s office to be completed. The School Counselors must notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) if the reason the application is considered incomplete is beyond the Counselor’s responsibilities. An incomplete application will become void, and the student no longer eligible to be included in the admission process after 30 days of notification. A student application may be reactivate by providing written notice to the Assistant Superintendent for College and Career Readiness.

SCHOOL CHOICE

The Pittsfield Public School Committee has voted to accept School Choice Students. The School Committee will vote by the spring of each year if changes in the School Choice Policy are to be made for the admissions cycle for the following school year. All School Choice applicants will be evaluated and ranked using the criteria set forth in this Admissions Policy.

Students who begin their enrollment as School Choice students may remain as School Choice students throughout their enrollment at Pittsfield Public Schools, providing they continue to reside outside of the District.

Students who begin their enrollment as District residents and move outside of the District during their enrollment, who request to become School Choice students at Pittsfield Public Schools will be allowed to do so providing that they are responsible for transportation to the specific high school or to a District bus stop.
All School Choice students must be able to arrange transportation to school or to a District bus stop.

Students who begin their enrollment as District residents and move outside of the District during their enrollment, who request to remain at Pittsfield Public Schools as nonresidents under M.G.L. c. 74, Sections 7 and 7C will be allowed to do so providing that such student files a Chapter 74 Vocational Technical Nonresident Student Tuition Application with the Superintendent of the student's District of Residence in accordance with the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Guidelines for the Vocational Technical Education Program Nonresident Student Tuition Process Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 74 and the Superintendent of the District of Residence approves the application. If the student's parent/guardian finds that the decision of the Superintendent of the District of Residence is contrary to law, regulations, Board of Education or Department of Elementary and Secondary Education policy, the application may be forwarded to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for review within 10 business days of its receipt from the District of Residence in accordance with the Guidelines for the Vocational Technical Education Program Nonresident Student Tuition Process pursuant to M.G.L. c. 74.

M.G.L. c. Section 8A requires that transportation be provided by the municipality of residence to students admitted to Pittsfield Public Schools as nonresidents under M.G.L. c. 74, Sections 7 and 7C.

NONRESIDENT TUITION

Nonresident students will be evaluated according to the criteria contained in this admission policy and according to M.G.L. c. 74 s. 8A. Please refer to the document “Guidelines for the Vocational Technical Education Program Nonresident Student Tuition Process Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 74” located at http://www.doe.mass.edu/cte/admissions/nonres_guidelines.html. M.G.L. c. 74 section 8A requires that the municipality of residence provide transportation to students admitted to the Chapter 74 vocational technical program of the Pittsfield Public School system as nonresidents under M.G.L. c. 74 s. 7 and 7C. Priority for admission to the Pittsfield Vocational Technical Program is given to Pittsfield Public School district residents.

LATE APPLICATIONS

Applications from resident students received after February 1st will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this admission policy and the composite score will be included in an established waiting list. Applications from students residing outside of the Pittsfield Public School district submitted after April 1st are considered late, and may or may not be approved by their town of residence.

Chapter 74 Nonresident Student Tuition Applications from Pittsfield resident students who wish to enroll in a vocational technical education program in another district (outside of Pittsfield PS), who submit nonresident tuition forms after April 1st will not receive approval for such a placement.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Applications from students who are enrolled in a state-approved Chapter 74 vocational technical program in another school will be considered for admission (including admission during the school year) if the students relocate away from their current school and wish to pursue the same vocational program of study in the Pittsfield Public School system. The applications will be evaluated according to the criteria contained in this admission policy.

WITHDRAWN STUDENTS

Students who withdraw from Pittsfield Public Schools and who are attending or not attending another high school and who reenter school the following year or later may apply for readmission to the vocational technical program they were previously enrolled in following the procedures contained in this admission
policy. Students who withdraw from and reenter Pittsfield Public Schools during the same school year will be readmitted to the vocational program in which they were previously enrolled, provided space is available.

HOME SCHOOL

Students who are home schooled or were previously home schooled may apply for admission to the Pittsfield Public Schools vocational technical education programs. The home schooled student’s parent(s) or guardian(s) must submit a copy of the Home School approval letter from the local school superintendent and core subject grades (English, math, science, social studies). If grades are not available, a representative sample portfolio of the student’s body of work in English language arts or its equivalent, math, science, and social studies may be submitted. Additionally, home school students will provide three (3) letters of recommendation from acquaintances of the applicant.

VII. SELECTION CRITERIA

Completed applications are processed using weighted admissions criteria. A maximum of 80 points can be earned for admission into a Career Vocational Technical Education program. Each applicant will be assigned a score derived from the sum of the sub-scores for the following criteria.

SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT (Grades): maximum 20 points
The average of the 7th grade and first semester of the 8th grade marks in English language arts (or its equivalent), social studies, math, and science.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Average Points</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 – 100 (A)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 – 89 (B)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 – 79 (C)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 – 69 (D)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 – 59 (F)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ATTENDANCE: maximum 20 points
The sum of the number of unexcused absences for 7th grade and the first semester of the 8th grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absences</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 – 5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 – 11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12+</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DISCIPLINE/CONDUCT: maximum of 20 points
The number of days of suspension for all of 7th grade and the first semester of grade 8. **

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suspension</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 5 days</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 8 days</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 to 12 days</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12+ days</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suspension can be considered to include out of school suspension, assignment to in school suspension, or assignment to the Student Resource Center.

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE SENDING SCHOOL COUNSELOR: maximum of 20 points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Points</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Above Average: 15 points  
Average: 10 points  
Below Average: 5 points  
Poor: 0 points

HOME SCHOOLED STUDENTS

The admissions criteria for home schooled students will use an 80 point scale. Forty points (50%) of the criteria will be determined from the applicant's portfolio/grades and forty points (50%) from letters of recommendation from three acquaintances of the applicant.

Recommendation Form Rating Points:
Excellent: 40 points  
Above Average: 30 points  
Average: 20 points  
Below Average: 10 points  
Poor: 0 points

VIII. SELECTION PROCESS

Shortly after February 1st, the Admission Committee of each high school will examine, discuss, and rate each application for Career/Vocational Technical Education program admission. The membership of the committee is determined by Paragraph 3 of Section IV of this document.

Career Exploratory Placement:

The Career Exploratory program is a program designed for entering freshmen.

All completed resident applications will be assigned a weighted value determined by the criteria in Section VII (Selection Criteria) of this document. A list of applicants will then be ordered in such a fashion that the highest application score is on the top of the list and applications scores following it are in a descending order with the lowest score at the bottom of the list. The available openings in the Career Exploratory program will be filled from this list starting with the highest score and working down the list until all available seats are filled.

All completed non-resident applications will be weighed in a similar manner and a list that ranks their results will be generated with the highest result on top and, in a descending order, the lowest score at the bottom of the list. If there are available openings in the Career Exploratory program and there are no resident applicants on the waiting list the available openings can be filled with nonresident candidates.

Tenth Grade Program Applicants

All resident students applying for a program who have not taken the career exploratory program and will be promoted to tenth grade in the fall of the following year can submit an application for a program(s) of study, which will be assigned a weighted value determined by the criteria in Section VII (Selection Criteria) of this document. A list of applicants per program will then be ordered in such a fashion that the highest application score is on the top of the list and applications scores following it are in a descending order with the lowest score at the bottom of the list. The available opening(s) in the vocational technical education program the student is applying for will be filled from this list starting with the highest score and working down the list until all available seats are filled.

All completed non-resident applications will be weighed in a similar manner and a list, that ranks their results will be generated with the highest result on top and, in a descending order, the lowest score at the bottom of the list. If there is an available opening in the vocational technical program applied for and there are no resident applicants on the waiting list the available openings can be filled with nonresident candidates.
IX. 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. In addition they must have passed courses in English language arts or its equivalent and mathematics for the school year immediately preceding their enrollment at the Pittsfield Public Schools.

X. CAREER VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL PROGRAM PLACEMENT

An eighth grade student desiring a Career Vocational Technical Education program that is offered in the high school they would not normally attend after graduation from middle school can submit a transfer request to attend the high school that offers the program they wish to explore.

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. For the purpose of program placement at either high school, when choosing a vocational program as a sophomore, the Career Exploratory programs of Pittsfield High School and Taconic High School are considered equal.

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% for safety, 25% for daily work, 40% for projects, and 10% for effort. 100 is the maximum grade per rotation.

For the students who have taken the Career Exploratory program, 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. Because the number of career options the student will rotate through in the Career Exploratory program of each high school is different, when the student applies for a program that is offered at the other high school the numbers must be adjusted to assure fairness. To do so, use the appropriate following formula:

To find the composite score for a student from PHS applying for a program at THS, Use the formula:

\[ CS (THS) = \frac{(TP (THS) \times CS (PHS))}{TP (PHS)} \]

To find the composite score for a student from THS applying for a program at PHS, Use the formula:

\[ CS (PHS) = \frac{(TP (PHS) \times CS (THS))}{TP (THS)} \]

TP (THS) is the Total Points possible for all the shops in rotation at THS.
CS (PHS) is the Composite Score the student achieved at PHS and is determined by adding the shop scores the student achieved while in rotation.
TP (PHS) is the Total Points possible for all the shops in rotation at PHS.
CS (THS) is the Composite Score the student achieved at THS and is determined by adding the shop scores the student achieved while in rotation.

The following are examples of how this calculation works.

Pittsfield High School has six shops in its career exploratory program. The TP for PHS is 600. Taconic High School has seven shops in its career exploratory program. The TP for THS is 700.
If a student at PHS finished rotations with a CS of 560 and wanted to be considered for a program at THS, the CS for THS would be determined by the first formula above.

\[
\text{CS (THS)} = \frac{(\text{TP (THS)} \times \text{CS (PHS)})}{\text{TP (PHS)}}
\]

Plugging in the values:
\[
\text{CS (THS)} = \frac{(700 \times 560)}{600} \text{ which yields a CS (THS) of 653.}
\]

If a career exploratory student from THS with a \( \text{CS (THS)} \) of 620 wanted a program at PHS the second formula is used.

\[
\text{CS (PHS)} = \frac{(\text{TP (PHS)} \times \text{CS (THS)})}{\text{TP (THS)}}
\]

Plugging in the values:
\[
\text{CS (PHS)} = \frac{(600 \times 620)}{700} \text{ which yields a CS (PHS) of 531.}
\]

The larger the number of the composite score the more likely a student will get his or her 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 openings available for the program are filled, a student is placed on a waiting list. If a student who had been accepted into a program should opt not to take the program, the next student on the list is offered that spot. The wait list is valid for one year.

Students who do not get their first choice have the option of taking their second choice if space is available. Students who do not get their first or second choice have the option of taking their third choice if space is available.

Students who did not take part in the Career Exploratory program but would like to apply for a Career Technical Vocation Education in their sophomore or junior year can apply for available openings. These students will be weighed with the same selection criteria as described in Section VII.

XI. 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 not accepted or 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 thirty 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 thirty days. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) do not agree with the Superintendent’s 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 parent(s)/guardian(s) within thirty days of receiving the request for a hearing and within thirty days after the hearing with their findings.