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# Recruitment, Admission, and Retention: Model Policy Template

## OVERVIEW

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.

DESE has included a model policy template below to help serve as a starting point for districts. CTE schools and programs should consult with their own attorneys to ensure that their policies comply with state and federal law.

## MODEL POLICY TEMPLATE

### I. Equal Educational Opportunity

[District] 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, [district] will provide them with an application form in their home language. Please contact our Admissions Office at [phone number, email] if you have questions or need help filling out the application form.

[District] is committed to providing educational opportunities to students experiencing homelessness. Please contact [district]’s liaison at [contact email, business phone number/fax and address] with any questions.

Students with disabilities may voluntarily identify themselves to [district] 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 [district]. Consistent with Massachusetts regulations, [district] has created a plan with “deliberate, specific strategies to promote equal educational opportunities.”

*Insert school or program’s specific plan information here.*

### II. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

[Name of school] is a [school type] located in [municipality], Massachusetts.

The Superintendent of [name of school] is: *Insert name and contact information*

The Principal of [name of school] is: *Insert name and contact information*

The Supervisor/Director of [name of school] is: *Insert name and contact information*

It is the responsibility of [name of school’s] Superintendent to supervise the administration of the policies and procedures used to admit and enroll students, consistent with all applicable laws, regulations, and guidance.

### III. ELIGIBILITY

Any rising or current 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade (if applicable) student who is a resident of [district name or member municipality] may apply for admission to [district]. Students may only be admitted to [district] 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 to enter the grade they have applied for, their admission will be rescinded. Resident students who meet the minimum requirements for admission shall be admitted prior to acceptance of any non-resident students.

*Insert policy for determining residency.*

#### Apportionment (If Applicable):

[District] has a regional agreement in place that identifies the cities and towns that are members of the region and explains how those cities and towns allocate seats to their residents. This agreement can be found at [insert website address and any other information needed to access the agreement].

*Insert relevant provisions of this agreement where applicable.*

##### Non-Resident Students

Students who are not residents of [district name or member municipality] are eligible to apply for admission to [district]. Please be aware that residents of [district] who meet the minimum admission requirements will be admitted before any non-resident students. Students and families can find information on the [CTE Nonresident Student Tuition Program](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/policies/admissions/default.html) online.

##### Homeschooled Students

Students who are homeschooled may apply to attend [district] full-time and will be subject to the same admissions standards as other applicants. Students who enroll in [district] must enroll full-time.

##### Transfer Students

Students already participating in state-designated CTE programs at another school may apply for admission to [district] and will be subject to the same admissions standards as other applicants.

*Insert applicable time period or clarify that they may apply at any time.*

##### School Choice

[District] [does/does not] participate in the inter-district school choice program. The inter-district school choice program, [M.G.L. c. 76, § 12B](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter76/section12B), allows parents/guardians to send their children to schools in communities other than the city or town in which they reside.

*If yes:*

Students applying to [district] under the school choice program should contact our Superintendent’s office at [phone number, email] with any questions. More information on school choice can be found on DESE’s [website](https://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/schoolchoice/).

### IV. recruitment POLICIES

[District] maintains a calendar of events on its website [insert link] 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 Admissions Office [or other office, to be identified here by the school] at [contact info].

[District] also shares recruitment information with potential applicants in the following ways:

*Insert description.*

[District] offers tours of its facilities to interested applicants. To request a tour, please call or email our Admissions Office at [contact info]. If the agreed-upon time slot for a tour occurs during the applicant’s school day, the Admissions Office will provide confirmation to the applicant’s current school that the applicant attended a tour during this time. Such tours may not be counted as unexcused absences by sending districts.

*Insert information about transportation*.

### V. APPLICATION PROCESS

##### Application Process for Fall Admission to the Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Grade

Students interested in applying to [district] for fall admission to the 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade (if applicable) must follow the timeline below:

Application will be available: [insert date, must be no later than November 1

Application deadline: [insert date, must not be before January 1 and not later than March 1]

Completed applications received by [insert application deadline date] will be entered into the lottery.

Applications received after [insert application deadline date] may be drawn from a lottery if additional seats become available.

If choosing to use awareness activities as part of a completed application explain student awareness opportunities and clarify that students need complete only one such opportunity.

When [district] requires that a completed application include an indication of student awareness in CTE, [District] will hold at least two in-person information sessions and at least two virtual information sessions each school year. [District] will allow students to demonstrate that awareness through any one of the following:

* Attendance at an open house or in-person or virtual student information session;
* Participation in a tour of a CTE school or program;
* Completion of a video module regarding CTE, created either by the CTE school or program or by DESE; or
* Another measure proposed by a CTE school or program and approved by DESE.

##### TRANSFER STUDENTS

Students already enrolled in a state-designated CTE program in another school may apply for admission to [district]. Please contact the [district] Admissions Office at [contact info] with any questions or to request an application form.

##### WITHDRAWN STUDENTS

*Schools may add language regarding admission of students who have previously withdrawn from the school and are reapplying*.

### VI. SELECTION PROCESS

##### If Using a Non-weighted Lottery

When [district] receives more applications than it has available seats, [district] applies a lottery to determine which students it will admit. The lottery will admit resident students before admitting any non-residents.

Describe lottery process

##### If Using a Weighted Lottery

When [district] receives more applications than it has available seats, [district] applies a weighted lottery to determine which students it will admit. The [school committee or board of trustees] has approved the weighted criteria [district] will apply, and the [school committee or board of trustees] will approve the use of these weights annually. The lottery will admit resident students before admitting any non-residents seeking the same program.

Describe lottery process

Insert any weights included in the lottery

See, for instance, DESE’s Career Technical Education Recruitment, Admission and Retention Policies and Practices Guide, where examples are provided.

### VII. APPEALS PROCESS

If [district] does not accept an applicant, or places them on a waitlist, the applicant or their parent/guardian may request that the [superintendent or their designee] of [district] review that decision [within a stipulated timeline]. These requests can be made in the following ways:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| By e-mail | By hard-copy mail or hand delivery |
| [insert relevant email] | [insert relevant address information] |

The [superintendent or their designee] will respond to these requests for review in writing and indicate whether the decision to deny admission to the student, or waitlist the student, will stand or be overturned. In making this determination, the [superintendent or their designee] will review the following information:

Insert applicable criteria or other information the [superintendent or their designee] will review.

Explain how prospective students and parents or guardians can appeal a decision denying a student’s admission.

In setting admission deadlines, CTE schools and programs should build in sufficient time between receiving applications and conducting an admission lottery to allow for the appeal process to take place. CTE schools and programs should notify applicants of any missing application information—including the demonstration of student awareness, if used—as well as any weights the applicant has not met, where applicable. This notification should occur before an admission lottery is drawn and within a period of time that is consistent with the district’s appeal process, so that students may appeal if necessary. Students experiencing homelessness may not be denied lottery weights because they cannot provide the requested records.[[1]](#footnote-1)

### VIII. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC ADMISSION

Students who have been admitted to [district] apply to one or more specific programs during [insert applicable year/semester]. [District] uses the following system for students to apply to a specific CTE program within the school:

Insert a detailed description of the exploratory program, if applicable, as well as the system the district uses for student program selection.

### XI. RETENTION STRATEGIES

Insert district’s plan for retaining students after enrollment, including deliberate, specific strategies to promote equal educational opportunities.

### X. MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

[District] maintains records of all students who apply, enroll, or are waitlisted, and their admission criteria weight (if used), to facilitate analysis of its admissions system and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. [District] provides this information to DESE upon request. Describe how the district will maintain documentation explaining what admission requirements were used to admit or deny a student’s admission, the lottery results including the order in which students were drawn, any weights received, and be able to provide documentation to DESE or the applicant’s families upon request.

1. 42 U.S.C. 11431(2). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)