

Middle School Pathway Exploration Practice

Michael E. Smith Middle School South Hadley Public Schools

Purpose

This practice establishes how Michael E. Smith Middle School (MESMS) collaborates with South Hadley High School (SHHS) and other Career and Technical Education (CTE) schools and programs to inform students of educational and career opportunities available to them.

Practice Overview

MESMS is committed to providing meaningful and substantive opportunities for middle school students to explore CTE pathways as part of their secondary and post-secondary academic and career planning.

Information Access and Awareness

On-Site Information Sharing

- Road Show Program: South Hadley High School CTE instructors and students visit MESMS on multiple occasions throughout the school year to discuss CTE exploration opportunities available at SHHS
- Students from MESMS are afforded opportunities to explore the CTE programs at SHHS through a series of field trips and visits.
- CTE schools and programs are provided opportunities to share information about their programs and careers with middle school students by October 15 of each school year

School Events

- Academic Advising Night: CTE programs are discussed and highlighted at the South Hadley High School Academic Advising Night, which is open to all high school and incoming students and caregivers

Counseling Support

- The MESMS Counseling Department discusses CTE opportunities with students and families throughout the school year
- Students have access to MyCap, a career and academic planning tool to support high school and career goal planning

Written and Digital Communication

- CTE information is shared through mail and email to students and families
- CTE program information is made available on the middle school's public-facing website

Student Tours and Visits

CTE Program Tours

- Eighth grade MESMS students have the opportunity to visit SHHS CTE programs during regular middle school hours at various points throughout the school year
- Students are provided opportunities to tour other CTE schools and programs during the school day
- Student participation in CTE school and program tours will not be counted as unexcused absences when the CTE school or program confirms the student's participation
- Access to tours of CTE schools and programs during the school day will not be withheld from students

Transportation

- Transportation costs for CTE school and program tours are assumed by the school hosting the tours

Student Information Release

MESMS complies with the regulatory requirement to release the names and addresses of seventh and eighth grade students no later than October 15 of each school year to authorized school personnel of regional CTE districts in which South Hadley is a member.

- Public notice is provided to parents and eligible students regarding this information release

- Parents and eligible students are given reasonable time after such notice to request that this information not be released without prior consent

CTE Admission Support

Middle School Records

When students apply to CTE schools and programs, MESMS will provide relevant information as requested and permitted by regulations, including:

- Grade Promotion: Confirmation that students have been promoted to ninth grade
- Attendance Records: Verification of attendance data (limited to information from seventh grade forward, not exceeding 270 school days prior to application date)
- Disciplinary Records: Only confirmation of suspensions or expulsions pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H or §37H½ related to admitted or adjudicated felonies involving possession of a dangerous weapon or assault of educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored events (limited to seventh grade forward, not exceeding 270 school days prior to application date)

Student Interest Documentation

- Middle school staff may provide letters of recommendation upon student request to support CTE applications
- A process is in place within MESMS to facilitate letter writing for students applying to CTE programs

Non-Resident Applications

- MESMS counselors are familiar with the CTE Non-resident Application and Tuition Process and assist students who may apply to CTE schools and programs outside their district of residence

Coordination and Communication

Contact Information

- MESMS designates contact persons within the middle school counseling department to help students and families navigate the CTE admission process
- Contact information is made easily accessible to students and families

Planning and Collaboration

- MESMS and SHHS CTE staff hold annual planning meetings to coordinate schedules, logistics, and information sharing
- Middle school and CTE counselors coordinate to improve student access to important information, especially for students with disabilities and English learner students

Practice Availability

This Middle School Pathway Exploration Practice is:

- Available on the South Hadley Public Schools district website
- Provided in written form to students and parents upon request

Annual Implementation

The Superintendent or designee shall sign an annual attestation confirming that this Middle School Pathway Exploration Practice has been implemented.