

CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION RECRUITMENT, ADMISSION & RETENTION POLICY

I. PURPOSE AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY

South Hadley High School offers Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) approved Career Technical Education (CTE) programs designed to prepare students for further education, employment, industry-recognized credentials, apprenticeships, and other postsecondary opportunities.

This Recruitment, Admission & Retention Policy establishes the procedures South Hadley High School uses to recruit, inform, admit, enroll, and retain students in its Chapter 74 Career Technical Education programs.

This policy complies with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 74; 603 CMR 4.00, Career Technical Education; applicable Massachusetts equal educational opportunity requirements; applicable federal civil rights and nondiscrimination requirements; and applicable guidance issued by DESE. Where applicable law or DESE guidance is amended, the current law or regulation shall govern.

II. EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

The school does not discriminate in admission to or participation in its Career Technical Education programs based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, disability, homelessness, limited English proficiency, immigration or citizenship status, or other status protected by state or federal law.

Students and families whose primary home language is not English may request admissions materials and assistance in their primary home language. Students with disabilities may voluntarily identify themselves to request reasonable accommodations during the application and admission process. Neither a student's disability nor the primary language of the student's home shall affect the student's admission to a CTE program. South Hadley Public Schools is committed to providing educational opportunities to students experiencing homelessness. Please contact Elizabeth Cooke, South Hadley Public Schools liaison, at ecooke@shschools.com, 116 Main Street, 2nd floor, South Hadley, MA 01075, with any questions.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

South Hadley High School is a comprehensive public high school located in South Hadley, Massachusetts.

The Superintendent of South Hadley Public Schools oversees the administration of the policies and procedures used to admit and enroll students, consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and DESE guidance.

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The CTE Vocational Director is responsible for administering the CTE recruitment, admission, lottery, enrollment, and retention procedures established by this policy under the direction of the Superintendent or designee.

The Principal and other designated school personnel shall support implementation of this policy as applicable.

Superintendent of Schools: Jennifer Voyik, jvoyik@shschools.com

Principal: Elizabeth Wood, ewood@shschools.com

CTE Vocational Director: Dr. Susan Brassard, slbrassard@shschools.com

IV. CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

South Hadley High School's Career Technical Education programs accepting applications for the applicable school year will be identified annually in the Program of Studies and on the school website. The annual program listing shall identify each program's Chapter 74 approval/implementation status, grade levels served, available seats, and any program-specific eligibility requirements.

V. ELIGIBILITY

A. Resident Students

Students who reside in the Town of South Hadley and meet applicable eligibility requirements may apply. For ninth-grade admission, students enrolled in grade 8 who are expected to be promoted to grade 9 may apply. Students entering grades 10–12 may apply when seats are available, and program/grade requirements are met. Admission is conditional upon the student being promoted to the grade for which the student applied. If the student is not promoted to that grade, the offer of admission may be rescinded.

Residency shall be determined in accordance with applicable Massachusetts law and South Hadley Public Schools enrollment requirements. The district may require documentation reasonably necessary to establish residency.

B. Eligible Nonresident Students

South Hadley High School welcomes applications from eligible students who reside in Massachusetts communities other than South Hadley. Eligibility for admission by a student

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residing outside South Hadley is determined under M.G.L. c. 74 and 603 CMR 4.03 and is program specific. This process is distinct from the inter-district school choice program established under M.G.L. c. 76, §12B. Nonresident applicants must meet applicable eligibility requirements and complete required tuition documentation.

C. Transfer Students

Students transferring from another school may be considered when an appropriate seat is available, and the student meets applicable eligibility and grade-level requirements. Any selection among eligible applicants when applications exceed available seats shall be conducted in accordance with the lottery requirements of this policy.

D. Home-Schooled Students

Formally home-schooled students may apply. The parent/guardian shall provide documentation demonstrating approval of the home education program as required by Massachusetts law. When traditional grades or attendance records are unavailable, the district may request appropriate alternative documentation to establish eligibility. Students who are homeschooled may apply to attend South Hadley Public Schools full-time and will be subject to the same admissions standards as other applicants. Students who enroll in South Hadley Public Schools must enroll full-time.

E. McKinney-Vento Students

Students experiencing homelessness shall have access to the admissions process consistent with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and applicable Massachusetts requirements, including appropriate assistance in obtaining required documentation.

F. Inter-District School Choice

South Hadley Public Schools participates in the Massachusetts inter-district school choice program pursuant to M.G.L. c. 76, §12B. Admission through School Choice is separate from admission to a Chapter 74 program under the Chapter 74 nonresident tuition process. Questions regarding School Choice should be directed to the Superintendent's Office.

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VI. RECRUITMENT, CTE AWARENESS, AND EQUAL ACCESS

South Hadley High School is committed to ensuring that students and families have meaningful information about Career Technical Education before applying.

The school shall use deliberate, specific recruitment strategies to promote equal educational opportunity and attract, enroll, and retain a student population reasonably comparable to students in similar grades in the communities served.

The school shall maintain and publish an annual CTE admissions and recruitment calendar identifying key awareness, application, lottery, and enrollment dates. The annual CTE admissions and recruitment calendar shall be available on the South Hadley High School website and through the CTE Vocational Director. Hard copies shall be available upon request.

Recruitment strategies shall include, as appropriate:

- Providing CTE information to South Hadley middle school students and families;
- Providing information to eligible students and families in neighboring Massachusetts communities;
- Providing accessible CTE information through the school website, Program of Studies, information sessions, tours, open houses, and other outreach;
- Providing admissions materials and assistance in accordance with language-access requirements;
- Providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities;
- Conducting outreach to students who may be underrepresented in particular CTE programs;
- Using annual admissions, enrollment, and participation data to identify and address barriers to equitable access;
- Communicating the Chapter 74 nonresident application pathway to eligible students and families in neighboring communities.
- Applicants can request a tour of South Hadley High School and the sending district may not count such a tour as an unexcused absence.

VII. CTE AWARENESS OPPORTUNITIES

South Hadley High School shall provide meaningful opportunities for students and families to learn about Career Technical Education before applying.

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South Hadley High School shall provide at least two in-person CTE open houses and at least three virtual CTE information sessions each school year, consistent with 603 CMR 4.03.

Applicants may demonstrate CTE awareness through participation in any one of the following qualifying opportunities:

- attendance at the South Hadley High School Fall CTE Open House;
- attendance at the CTE Spring Showcase when the event includes a CTE presentation or information opportunity;
- attendance at an in-person or virtual CTE information session;
- participation in a South Hadley High School CTE program tour;
- completion of an approved CTE awareness video or online module;
- another CTE awareness activity permitted or approved by DESE.

Participation in CTE awareness activities shall not exclude an otherwise eligible student from the admissions lottery. CTE awareness activities are intended to provide students and families with information about CTE programs and the admissions process and do not, by themselves, constitute a weighted lottery criterion unless the activity also qualifies as a student-interest measure permitted under 603 CMR 4.03.

VIII. CTE EXPLORATORY PROGRAM

South Hadley High School provides a CTE exploratory program for eligible students in accordance with applicable DESE requirements. The exploratory experience gives students opportunities to explore CTE program areas, build awareness of career pathways, participate in hands-on activities, and make informed program choices. Following the exploratory experience, students shall have an opportunity to indicate their program preferences. Participation or prior exposure to a particular CTE program shall not create an admissions preference unless permitted by DESE and expressly identified as an approved admissions criterion.

For students participating in the CTE exploratory program, program preference shall be collected through the exploratory program's established program-selection process.

IX. APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications shall be made available no later than November 1 for the following school year. The application deadline shall be set annually and shall fall between January 1 and March 1.

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The school shall publish the annual application deadline on its website, in the Program of Studies, and through other appropriate recruitment and communication methods.

The application shall request only information necessary to determine eligibility, administer the admissions process, document any approved lottery criteria, and comply with state and federal reporting requirements.

Applications shall be accessible to students and families requiring language assistance or reasonable accommodations.

Applications may be submitted electronically or by another method established by the school. Applications received by the published deadline shall be included in the admission lottery when a lottery is required.

Before the lottery is conducted, the school shall notify applicants of any missing application information and, when applicable, any weighted criterion for which the applicant was determined not to qualify. The notification shall provide sufficient time for the applicant or parent/guardian to seek review under the appeals process before the lottery is conducted.

X. ADMISSION TO PARTICULAR CTE PROGRAMS

Students shall indicate their preferred CTE program(s) during the application process.

Where the number of eligible applicants for a particular program does not exceed the number of available seats, all eligible applicants shall be admitted, subject to applicable eligibility, grade-level, and enrollment requirements.

Where the number of eligible applicants exceeds the number of available seats, South Hadley High School shall conduct a random lottery consistent with 603 CMR 4.03.

XI. WEIGHTED LOTTERY

When the number of eligible applicants exceeds the number of available seats, South Hadley High School shall use a weighted lottery to select students.

The weighted lottery does not assign numerical scores or rank applicants. Every eligible applicant receives one base lottery entry. A student who satisfies an approved weighted criterion receives one additional lottery entry for each qualifying criterion.

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For example, a student who qualifies for one additional criterion has two lottery entries, while a student who qualifies for two additional criteria has three lottery entries. Additional entries increase the mathematical chance of selection but do not guarantee admission.

All eligible applicants shall be entered into the lottery. A student who does not meet a weighted criterion will remain eligible and will continue to have an opportunity to be selected.

South Hadley High School will not rank students based on grades, test scores, teacher or counselor recommendations, or other selective academic criteria.

A. Attendance Weight

A student will receive one additional lottery entry if the student has fewer than 27 unexcused, full-day absences during the 270 school days immediately preceding the application date, consistent with 603 CMR 4.03.

Attendance records from before the student's seventh-grade year will not be considered. Students who do not meet this criterion will still be entered into the lottery.

B. Discipline Weight

A student will receive one additional lottery entry if the student has not been suspended or expelled pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71 §37H or §37H½ for possession of a dangerous weapon or assault of educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored/school-related events during the 270 school days preceding application, provided that such suspension or expulsion was in connection with a felony that has been adjudicated or for which the student has made an admission of guilt in court, and provided that no data before the applicant's seventh-grade year is considered.

Discipline records from before the student's seventh-grade year will not be considered.

Students who do not meet this criterion will still be entered into the lottery.

C. CTE Student Interest Weight

A student will receive one additional lottery entry for demonstrated interest in Career Technical Education, as measured by a qualifying, non-evaluative method identified in this policy and

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permitted under 603 CMR 4.03. Qualifying measures may include attendance at a CTE open house, information session, presentation, or tour; completion of an approved CTE video or online module; a non-evaluative interview; an audio or video presentation; a personal essay; a letter of recommendation from a non-family member; or another measure proposed by the school and approved by DESE.

The purpose of this criterion is to recognize demonstrated interest in CTE without scoring or ranking students. A qualifying measure provides one additional lottery entry. Participation in CTE awareness activities is not required for a student to remain eligible to apply when the student otherwise meets the admission requirements.

Students who do not meet this criterion will still be entered into the lottery.

XII. ANNUAL APPROVAL OF LOTTERY CRITERIA

The School Committee shall annually approve the weighted lottery criteria and verification procedures the school uses, as required by 603 CMR 4.03. The standing criteria established by this policy are attendance, discipline, and CTE student interest, each of which provides one additional lottery entry when the applicant meets the applicable criterion.

The annual approval shall confirm that the criteria, verification procedures, and lottery structure remain consistent with current DESE requirements. The School Committee's annual approval does not constitute a discretionary decision regarding which eligible applicants will be admitted; all eligible applicants shall participate in the lottery.

Any revised policy shall be submitted to DESE in accordance with the required annual timeline. The Superintendent or designee shall submit the required annual attestation to DESE confirming compliance with applicable state and federal law.

XIII. LOTTERY PROCEDURE

When a program has more eligible applicants than available seats, the school shall conduct a random lottery. The lottery shall include all eligible applicants; apply approved weights consistently; use a fair and random process; provide reasonable public notice at least one week before the lottery; produce an ordered list of selected applicants; and produce a waitlist of eligible applicants who are not selected.

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The school shall maintain documentation sufficient to demonstrate that the lottery was conducted consistently with this policy. The lottery shall be conducted in a public place or electronically using a publicly disclosed, fair, and random method.

XIV. RESIDENT AND NONRESIDENT LOTTERY ORDER

South Hadley High School welcomes applications from eligible students who reside in Massachusetts communities other than South Hadley.

Nonresident students may apply to South Hadley's Chapter 74 programs in accordance with M.G.L. c. 74 and 603 CMR 4.03. Eligibility is determined on a program-specific basis and may depend on whether the student's community of residence maintains a state-designated CTE program in the program area sought.

South Hadley High School welcomes applications from eligible nonresident students who reside in Massachusetts communities other than South Hadley, subject to the eligibility and nonresident admission requirements described below.

When eligible resident applicants exceed available seats, the school will select resident applicants by lottery. Resident students who meet the minimum admission requirements shall be admitted before eligible nonresident students seeking the same CTE program.

Admission of a nonresident student is subject to the Chapter 74 nonresident tuition process and the requirements of the student's district of residence. Massachusetts law requires the student's city or town of residence to provide transportation for an eligible nonresident student.

Nonresident student process:

- applies to the receiving school by March 15;
- submits the Chapter 74 Nonresident Student Tuition Application to the district of residence by April 1;
- district superintendent approves or disapproves the application and returns it to the receiving school and parent/guardian within 10 school days;
- if disapproved, the reason for disapproval must be clearly stated;
- parent/guardian may request DESE review, generally by May 1, or within the applicable deadline following a move after April 1;

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- if approved by the district of residence and accepted by the receiving school, the district of residence is responsible for the applicable nonresident tuition and transportation requirements established by Massachusetts law;
- admission is program-specific; a student seeking to change to another Chapter 74 program must satisfy the applicable admissions and nonresident tuition requirements for that program;
- the Commissioner of DESE's decision on a requested review is final, subject to applicable law.

XV. WAITLIST

When a lottery is required, South Hadley High School shall maintain a current-year waitlist of eligible applicants who are not initially selected for admission.

The waitlist shall preserve the order established through the applicable lottery. If a seat becomes available, the next eligible applicant shall be offered admission in accordance with the established lottery and resident/nonresident priority requirements.

XVI. LATE APPLICATIONS

Applications received after the published deadline shall not displace applicants who participated in the original lottery. If additional seats become available after the initial admissions process, late applicants may be considered through a subsequent lottery in accordance with this policy and applicable DESE admissions requirements.

XVII. ENROLLMENT

An applicant offered admission must complete the enrollment process within the enrollment deadline communicated in the admission offer. Students must meet applicable Massachusetts and South Hadley Public Schools enrollment requirements. A student shall not be denied admission solely because the student has a disability, is an English learner, or requires reasonable accommodations.

XVIII. PROGRAM PLACEMENT

Students admitted to a Chapter 74 CTE program shall receive information regarding program expectations, attendance and safety requirements, shop/laboratory expectations, required uniforms or personal protective equipment, industry-recognized credentials where applicable, work-based learning opportunities, and graduation/postsecondary expectations. Students who are

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admitted directly to a specific CTE program shall be placed in the program identified in their admission offer, subject to available capacity and applicable program requirements.

XIX. RETENTION AND STUDENT SUPPORT

South Hadley High School is committed not only to admitting students but also to supporting their successful completion of Career Technical Education programs.

Retention strategies may include student orientation; academic support; CTE teacher support; counseling, special education, and English learner support; attendance interventions; career advising; work-based learning; credential preparation; mentoring; family communication; and early identification of students at risk of withdrawing from a CTE program.

The school shall monitor enrollment, participation, retention, completion, and other relevant outcomes to identify potential barriers to equitable access and program completion.

XX. APPEALS

A student or parent/guardian may appeal a decision denying admission or placing the student on a waitlist to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.

An appeal may address whether eligibility requirements were met, whether application information was considered accurately, whether an approved lottery weight was applied correctly, whether the lottery was administered consistently with this policy, or whether applicable admission procedures were followed.

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain documentation identifying the specific admission requirements, eligibility determination, and lottery criteria or weights used in the admission decision. The Superintendent shall provide such documentation to DESE or the prospective student or parent/guardian upon request. Nothing in this appeals process limits a student's or parent/guardian's right to seek review by DESE or another appropriate agency when permitted by law.

An appeal must be submitted in writing within 10 school days of the admission or waitlist notification. Appeals may be submitted by email or by delivery to the South Hadley Public Schools Superintendent's Office. The Superintendent or designee shall review the appeal and respond in writing within 10 school days.

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Appeals shall be submitted to:

Superintendent of Schools
South Hadley Public Schools
116 Main Street, 2nd floor
South Hadley, MA 01075

XXI. RECORDS AND DATA COLLECTION

South Hadley High School shall maintain documentation of lottery results, including the order in which applicants were selected, any additional lottery entries received, the final admission/waitlist status, and the admission requirements or criteria used to make each determination.

The school shall provide required admissions and waitlist data to DESE through the applicable reporting system.

Admissions data shall be reviewed periodically to identify potential barriers to equitable access and inform future recruitment, admissions, and retention practices.

XXII. PUBLICATION AND ACCESS TO THIS POLICY

South Hadley High School shall publish this policy annually in the Program of Studies, post a copy on the school website, and provide a copy to each student applicant and the applicant's parent/guardian. Admissions materials shall be provided in English and in the primary language of the home when that primary language is other than English. The school shall provide reasonable assistance to applicants who require language assistance or disability accommodations.

The school shall clearly communicate that eligible students who reside outside South Hadley may apply to South Hadley's Chapter 74 Career Technical Education programs, subject to nonresident eligibility, tuition, and transportation requirements established by Massachusetts law.

The policy shall also be made available upon request in an accessible format for individuals with disabilities.

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XXIII. ANNUAL REVIEW AND REVISION

The CTE Vocational Director, Superintendent, or designee shall review this policy annually, along with other appropriate district personnel.

The annual review shall consider changes in Massachusetts law or DESE regulations, admissions and waitlist data, nonresident participation, student retention, equitable access, recruitment effectiveness, program capacity, community and workforce needs, and feedback from students, families, staff, and community partners.

Any revised policy shall be submitted to DESE in accordance with the required annual timeline. The School Committee shall annually approve the admissions criteria and lottery structure before using them for the applicable admissions cycle.

XXIV. CONTACT INFORMATION

Direct questions regarding Career Technical Education admissions, eligibility, nonresident applications, accommodations, or the admissions lottery to the CTE Vocational Director at South Hadley High School. Current contact information and application materials shall be published on the South Hadley High School website.

XXV. ANNUAL ADMISSIONS LOTTERY CRITERIA

The following weighted lottery criteria shall apply to the applicable admissions cycle, subject to annual School Committee approval and compliance with applicable DESE requirements.

Criterion	Lottery Entry	Verification
All eligible applicants	1 base entry	Eligibility review
Attendance	+1 additional entry	School attendance record
Discipline	+1 additional entry	School discipline record
CTE Student Interest	+1 additional entry	Qualifying non-evaluative measure

The criteria listed above are the standing weighted lottery criteria for South Hadley High School. The School Committee shall review and approve them annually, as required by 603 CMR 4.03. The criteria are implemented as additional lottery entries rather than numerical scores or applicant rankings.

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The weighted lottery criteria contained in this policy are reviewed and approved annually by the School Committee in accordance with 603 CMR 4.03.

Adopted: October 21, 2026