

Worcester Public School District  
Doherty Memorial High School  
North High School  
South High Community School

CHAPTER 74  
EMERGENCY ADMISSION POLICY  
January 2021

**INTRODUCTION**

An admissions process is necessary for the Worcester Public School (WPS) District in the area of vocational technical education where space is a limiting factor. Vocational technical laboratories (shops) are designed and equipped to serve a specific maximum number of students safely. Consequently, a complex of such laboratories lacks both the space and flexibility to accommodate the possible needs and/or interests of all applicants. Therefore, a selection process is necessary to determine which applicants may most benefit from such educational opportunities.

On March 12, 2020, Charlie Baker, the Governor of Massachusetts, declared a state of emergency and issued no travel and physical school closure directive due to Coronavirus (COVID-19). Schools were directed to move to an online learning platform. The move to online learning was molded by District, Municipal, and School Committee officials with input from the community to best serve the students and families and minimize the barriers due to COVID-19 for equitable access to all educational programs.

The impact of COVID-19 on the educational process is exhaustive. The policy specifically outlines the impact and subsequent new guidance on the admissions process for Chapter 74 vocational programming within the District. An emergency policy was developed for the 2021-2022 admissions process to ensure transparency for students and families. The Worcester Public School Committee approved this policy on January 7, 2021 and the policy will be in effect for the admissions process for the school year 2021-2022.

**EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

Worcester Public Schools admit students and makes available to them its advantages, privileges and courses of study without discrimination against on the basis of their status as members of special populations or race, color, sex, gender-identity, religion, national origin, English language proficiency, disability, or sexual orientation.

If there is a student with limited English proficiency, a qualified representative from The Worcester Public School and/or the sending middle school will assist the applicant in completing the necessary forms and assists in interpreting during the entire application and admissions process upon the request of the applicant. Students with disabilities may voluntarily self-identify for the purpose of requesting reasonable accommodations during the entire application and admissions process. Information on limited English proficiency and disability submitted voluntarily by the applicant, for the purpose of receiving assistance and accommodations during the entire application and admissions process, will not affect their admissions to the programs.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Any eighth grade student who is a resident of the Worcester Public School District who expects to be promoted to the grade they seek to enter is eligible to apply for fall admissions subject to the availability of openings to the Chapter 74 Programs. Resident students will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this Admissions Policy.

Transfer students from Chapter 74 programs are eligible to apply for fall admission or admissions to the same Chapter 74 program during the school year to grades 9 through 12 at Worcester Public Schools provided they expect to be promoted to the grade they seek to enter by their current school. Transfer students will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this Admissions Policy.

Worcester Public Schools is a school choice district. Please refer to Worcester Public Schools School Choice Policy.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

The Worcester Public School District has approved Chapter 74 vocational technical programs at Doherty Memorial High School, North High School, and South High Community School. The Worcester Public Schools are committed to providing a quality academic and vocational technical program.

It is the responsibility of the Worcester Public Schools Superintendent to supervise the administration of the policies and procedures required to admit and enroll applicants in conformity with this Admissions Policy.

Doherty Memorial High School, North High School and South High Community School have an Admissions Committee appointed by the Principal. The committee consists of a member of the Administration, Guidance, Special Needs (if necessary), Vocational Technical and Academic Departments. Responsibilities of the Admissions Committee include:

- determination of standards for admissions
- development and implementation of admissions procedures
- processing of applications

- ranking of students
- acceptance of students according to the procedure and criteria in the admissions policy
- establishment and maintenance of a waiting list of acceptable candidates

The Worcester Public Schools does participate in the School Choice Program.

### **RECRUITMENT PROCESS (COVID-19 NEW GUIDANCE)**

Doherty Memorial High School, North High School and South High Community School disseminate information about the school through a variety of methods during the impact of COVID-19.

- All Worcester Public School and Charter School eighth-graders will have access to a *virtual tour* of the Chapter 74 Programs on the media platforms associated with WPS. Active links to the *virtual tour* are provided to the middle schools for career awareness programs. A letter describing the admissions process will be sent to each Worcester Public School eighth-grade student in their family's home language.
- A Virtual Open House is scheduled for January 2021. Prospective students and their parent(s), guardian(s) have an opportunity to visit the vocational-technical programs and request to speak with teachers and view a presentation about the offerings. WPS will provide a written translation in the District's eight most commonly spoken languages of all Open House materials.
- The most updated information will be available through the online platforms associated with Worcester Public Schools.

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

- Students interested in applying to the Chapter 74 programs at Doherty Memorial High School, North High School, or South High Community School for fall admissions to the ninth grade must:
  - Complete an electronic application or request a paper application from their sending school Guidance Counselor.
  - Submit the electronic application or return the completed paper application form to their sending school Guidance Counselor by March 1, 2021 based on the admissions details explained below.
- It is the responsibility of the sending school Principal/Guidance Counselor to:
  - Facilitate the completion of the application by the student's teaching

team by April 1st. Complete applications include:

(i) Completed application form (including required elements).

(ii) For applications to grade 9 (fall admission), the average of grade 7 final grade and terms 1 and 2 of grade 8 marks in English language arts (or ESL whichever is higher), social studies, math, and science from the sending school report card/transcript are required. For applications to grades 10, 11, & 12 (fall admission), the average of the previous school year and terms 1 & 2 of the current school year marks in English language arts, social studies, math, and science from the sending school report card/transcript is required.

For applications to grade 9 (fall admission), the sum of grade 7 and terms 1 & 2 grade 8 absences from the sending school report card/transcript **are not** required.

For applications to grades 10, 11 & 12 (fall admission), the sum of the previous year and terms 1 & 2 current school year unexcused absences from the sending school report card/transcript **are not** required.

For applications to grade 9 (fall admission), the average of grade 7 quarters 1, 2, & 3 and terms 1 & 2 grade 8 assessments of behavior from the sending school report card or the sending school's assessment are required. For applications to grades 10, 11, & 12 admissions (fall admissions), the average of the previous school year and terms 1 & 2 of the current school year or the sending school's assessment are required.

The sending school's recommendation is required for applications to grade 9, 10, 11, & 12 (fall admission). The recommendation will be from a team of educators to include guidance professionals, teachers, and/or administrators who know and have worked directly with the student.

3. If incomplete applications are received, the following procedures will be followed:

a. The Admissions/Guidance Office will notify the sending school Guidance Counselor responsible for submitting the application that the application is incomplete and will request completion.

b. The applicant's parent(s)/guardian(s) will also be notified in the event that the sending school Guidance Counselor does not resolve the problem.

c. If after notifying the sending school Guidance Counselor and parent(s), guardian(s) the application remains incomplete for ten school days, the

The application will be voided.

### **LATE APPLICATIONS**

Applications received after April 1st will be considered in the order received using the same criteria, but only after other applicants on the established waiting list have been offered admission.

### **TRANSFER STUDENTS**

Applications from students who are enrolled in a state-approved (Chapter 74) vocational-technical high school program in another school (transfer students) will be considered for admission (including admissions during the school year) if they relocate away from their current school and wish to pursue the same program of study at Doherty Memorial High School, North High School, or South High Community School. All transfer applicants must attend an interview at the high school. Their applications will be evaluated according to the provisions of this Admission Policy.

### **HOME-SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Applications from resident students that are enrolled in an approved Home-School program who apply to Worcester Public School Chapter 74 programs will follow procedures contained in this admission policy and will be evaluated using criteria contained in this Admission Policy.

### **WITHDRAWN STUDENTS**

Students who withdraw from Worcester Public Schools and who are attending or not attending another high school may reapply to the Chapter 74 program following the procedures contained in this admissions policy and will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this Admissions Policy.

### **SELECTION CRITERIA**

The mission of Worcester Public Schools is to educate all students. The faculty and staff of the Chapter 74 Programs promote high academic and technical standards for all students.

Admissions to the Chapter 74 Programs is determined using an application. All completed applications will be collected and date/time stamped when received. The Massachusetts Department of Education provides recommended maximum teacher-student ratios and minimum square footage per pupil requirements for approved Chapter 74 programs. The maximum number of students enrolled into any of Chapter 74 Programs will comply with Chapter 74 requirements.

Completed applications are processed by the Admissions Committee using weighted admissions criteria. Each applicant will be assigned a score derived from the sum of the sub scores of the following criteria:

**Academic Performance (25%)** (filled out by the high school). Grade 7 final grade, Grade 8 Quarters 1 & 2 .....(25 points, bonus points scale):

Math, Science, History, English (or ESL)

A= 3.5, B= 3, C= 2.5, D= 2, F= 0 Total Points = 25, bonus points scale

**Conduct and Effort grades** for four core subjects ( the average of 5 quarters, 3 Quarters from 7th grade and quarters 1 and 2 from 8th grade.....(25 points)

Conduct Rating: Points:

A 25

B 20

C 15

D 10

F 0

**School attendance record** (due to pandemic impact, **ALL** students will be granted the full point value .....(25 points)

**Attendance: 25 points will be granted for all applicants**

**Recommendations by the Teaching Team**, facilitated by guidance counselor/principal (guidance professionals, licensed educators or administrators who know and have worked directly with the student).....(25 points)

**NEW Summary Profile Assessment:**

A. Achievement in relation to ability	0-5
B. Classroom Involvement	0-5
C. Motivation	0-5
D. Personal Responsibility	0-5
E. Interest in Career Technical Education	0-5

After points are given in each area, the points are totaled for each applicant. A maximum of one hundred (100) points can be earned.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

The Admissions Committee will examine, discuss and make recommendations for action on the applicants. The Admissions Committee considers scholastic achievement, school behavior, and the sending School Team recommendation results. Applications are reviewed, processed and assigned points by grade level.

After a point total for each applicant has been determined, all applicants are placed in order of their "point total". Applicants are then accepted into the Chapter 74 programs in the order of the point total they have achieved. The applicant with the highest point total is accepted first, the applicant with the second highest point total is accepted second, and so on until all seats are filled. All applicants are accepted, declined, or placed on a waiting list. If openings occur, the seats are filled by accepting applicants from the waiting list. These applicants, like those accepted earlier, are accepted in order of their place on the waiting list determined by the total points given according to the selection criteria.

Applications are collected and processed by **April 1st**. Applications received after April 1st will be evaluated using the same criteria, but only after applicants on the established waiting list have been offered admission.

All applicants whose completed applications have been processed are notified of their status in a letter to the parents/guardians by mid May.

## **ENROLLMENT**

In order to enroll in Chapter 74 programs for the fall, applicants must have been promoted to the grade they wish to enter by their sending school. In addition, they must have courses in English language arts or the equivalent and mathematics for the school year immediately preceding their enrollment.

## **REVIEW AND APPEALS**

The applicant's parent(s)/guardian(s), upon receipt of a letter from the high School indicating that the applicant was not accepted or placed on a waiting list, may request a review of the decision by sending a letter requesting a review to the Principal within thirty days of the receipt of the letter. The Principal will respond in writing to the letter with the findings of the review within thirty days. If after the review, the parent/guardian wishes to appeal the findings of the review they may do so by sending a letter requesting that they be scheduled to appear before the

Worcester Public Schools Secondary Manager for Instruction and School Leadership to appeal the Principal's findings. The Secondary Manager for Instruction and School Leadership will respond in writing to the parent/guardian with a scheduled date for the appeal within thirty days of the receipt of the letter. The Secondary Manager for Instruction and School Leadership will respond in writing to the letter with their decision on the appeal within thirty days of the Secondary Manager for Instruction and School Leadership meeting when the appeal was presented.