

Addendum B to Gardner Public Schools Student Handbook:

CAREER VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CVTE) PROGRAM RECRUITMENT, ADMISSIONS, AND RETENTION POLICY

OVERVIEW

Massachusetts state regulations (603 CMR 4.00) require all state-designated career technical education (CTE) schools and programs to develop and implement admissions, 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.

When schools receive more applications than it has available seats, they must apply selection criteria to determine which students it will admit to its Chapter 74 CVTE programs. The criteria schools apply will be approved by their School Committee annually. Each school's admission policy is on file at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The following CTE schools and programs are available to students based on their town of residence, Gardner, Massachusetts. (Gardner High School or Gardner Academy of Learning and Technology).

- Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School
- Montachusett Vocational Partnership Program (MVP)

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

The Gardner Public Schools does not tolerate discrimination against students, parents, employees or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, homelessness, religion, age or immigration status. The Gardner Public Schools is also committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race (which includes traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length, and protective hairstyles), color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, age or disability. In addition, the District provides equal access to all designated youth groups. Consistent with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, the District also does not discriminate against students on the basis of homelessness.

The Gardner Public Schools' policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in employment, admission to a public school of Gardner or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race (which

includes traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length, and protective hairstyles), color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, homelessness, disability or immigration status.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Gardner Public Schools, including Gardner High School and Gardner Academy for Learning and Technology are public comprehensive high schools located in Gardner, Massachusetts.

The Superintendent of Gardner Public Schools is: Dr. Mark Pellegrino,
Pellegm@gardnerk12.org, 978-632-1000

The Principal of Gardner High School is: Michael Bartkus, bartkusm@gardnerk12.org,
978-632-1600

The Principal of Gardner Academy of Learning and Technology is: Carolyn Imperato,
imperatoc@gardnerk12.org, 978-632-1673

The College and Career Program Coordinator is: Paula Bolger, bolgerp@gardnerk12.org,
978-632-1600

It is the responsibility of the district'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.

ELIGIBILITY

Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School

Any rising or current 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade student who is a resident Gardner may apply for admission to Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School. Students may only be admitted to Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School if they have been promoted to the grade they are seeking to enter. Students should be aware that their admission is conditional. If they are not 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 before acceptance of any non-resident students.

Montachusett Vocational Partnership Program (MVP)

Any 10th grade student who is enrolled in Gardner Public Schools may apply for admission to the School's Chapter 74 CVTE programs. Students may only be admitted to the school's Chapter 74 CVTE programs 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 grade 11 by July 1 of the application year, their admissions will be rescinded. Students who are accepted into this program who need summer school, will be accepted conditionally, upon completion of their summer school classes.

Residency is confirmed per the Gardner Public Schools District policy.

Apportionment:

Gardner Public Schools has a local agreement with Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School that identifies the region's member cities and towns and explains how they allocate seats to their residents. The Regional Agreement can be found [here](#).

Gardner Public Schools has a local agreement in place with Montachusett Vocational Partnership Academy through a [Memorandum of Understanding](#). This agreement outlines the cities and towns that are members of the region and explains how they allocate seats to their residents.

Non-Resident Students:

Students who are not residents of Gardner are eligible to apply for admission to Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School or the Montachusett Vocational Partnership Program. Please be aware that residents of Gardner Public Schools 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 online.

Homeschooled Students:

Students who are homeschooled may apply to attend Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School or Montachusett Vocational Partnership Program full-time and will be subject to the same admissions standards as other applicants. Students who enroll in Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School or Montachusett Vocational Partnership Program must enroll full-time.

Transfer Students:

Students already participating in state-designated CTE programs at another school may apply for admission to Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School or Montachusett Vocational Partnership Program and will be subject to the same admissions standards as other applicants.

School Choice:

Students applying to Gardner Public Schools under the school choice program should contact our Superintendent's office at (978)632-1000 with any questions. More information on school choice can be found on [DESE's website](#).

RECRUITMENT POLICIES

Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School maintains a calendar of events on its website, where it provides details on the admission process and other program information. Students and their families can request hard copies of the calendar by calling or emailing the Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School Admissions Office at 978-345-9200.

Gardner Public Schools also shares recruitment information with potential applicants in the following ways:

Gardner Public Schools shares recruitment information with potential applicants on the school website, through the School Counseling Office, and through email blasts to all students and families. All 8th graders will learn about Career Vocational/Technical Education programs as part of the 8th grade school counseling curriculum, which is pushed into classrooms throughout the school year. This information is also shared with students through individual counselor meetings and during our annual 8th Grade Parent Information Nights.

Gardner Public Schools also invites representatives from Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School into our student lunches every year for further recruitment efforts. All 10th-grade students will receive program information through career exploration lessons and classroom presentations. We also hold information evening sessions for students and parents to learn about the Montachusett Vocational Partnership Program (MVP).

Gardner Public Schools' implementation of My Career and Academic Plan (MyCAP) directly connects the exploration of CTE schools and programs to a student's broader academic and career goals. MyCAP is a structured process that helps students explore their interests, skills, and values starting in 8th grade. This self-discovery process guides students as they research high school pathways and make informed decisions about which school environment, whether a traditional high school, a specialized CTE program, or vocational programs, best aligns with their emerging goals.

Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School offers additional tours of its facilities to interested applicants and families. To request a tour, please call or email their Admissions Office at 978-345-9200. If the agreed-upon time slot for a tour occurs during the applicant's school day, the Admissions Office will confirm with the applicant's current school that the applicant attended a tour during this time. Such tours may not be counted as unexcused absences by the Gardner Public Schools.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Students interested in applying for admission to the District's Chapter 74 CVTE programs for fall admission in the 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade must return the completed application form to Gardner Public Schools by the yearly established deadline. Applications will be made available on the school website, through email, and in the school counseling office. Applications received after the deadline will be accepted and reviewed only if there are fewer applications than were received on time than seats available, otherwise they will be placed on a waiting list and will be considered when/if spots become available.

Transfer Students:

Students already enrolled in a state-designated CTE program in another school may apply for admission to Montachusett Regional Vocational School or the Montachusett Vocational Partnership Program (MVP). Please contact the Montachusett Regional Vocational School or the Gardner Public Schools' high school counseling office or the College and Career Program Coordinator with any questions or to request an application form.

SELECTION PROCESS

Eligible students who applied by the designated deadline, completed all steps of the admissions process and meet eligibility requirements will be scheduled to participate in the program unless there are not enough available seats. When the number of applicants exceeds the number of seats available, then selection will be done by implementing a blind lottery process. Only eligible students will be admitted to the program. If a lottery process is needed, all applications will be entered into the lottery. After eligible students have been selected for participation, the lottery will be continued to produce an ordered waitlist.

APPEALS PROCESS

If the Gardner Public Schools does not accept an applicant, or places them on a waitlist, the applicant or their parent/guardian may request that the superintendent of the Gardner Public Schools review that decision within 15 days of the receipt of the notification. These requests can be made in the following ways:

Dr. Mark Pellegrino, Superintendent
In person by appointment at 160 Elm Street, Gardner, MA
Via email to pellegm@gardnerk12.org
By phone at (978)632-1000

The superintendent or their designee will respond to these requests for review in writing, and indicate whether the admissions decision will be upheld or overturned. The superintendent's decision in the appeals process will be final. In making this determination, the superintendent or their designee will review the following information:

- CTE Admissions Policy & Process
- All applicants received
- Application criteria
- Lottery results, including waitlist

When setting admission deadlines, CTE schools and programs should allow sufficient time between receiving applications and conducting an admission lottery to enable the appeal process. 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 consistent with the district's appeal process, allowing

students to appeal if necessary. Students experiencing homelessness may not be denied lottery weights because they cannot provide the requested records.

The application's parent(s)/guardian(s), may request a review of the process by sending a letter requesting a review to the Principal.

RETENTION STRATEGIES

It is the goal of Gardner Public Schools to support all students enrolled in our CTE programs. Ongoing communication with the Montachusett Vocational Partnership Program (MVP) is key to addressing any programming or student issues that may arise. Student check-ins by their school counselor and the College and Career Program Coordinator during students' academic weeks at Gardner High School will occur regularly. The College and Career Program Coordinator will also make regular visits to the Montachusett Vocational Partnership Program (MVP) facility to check-in with that program coordinator, vocational instructors, and the students. Shared spreadsheets with daily attendance, grades, and any instructor concerns assist with easier monitoring of student progress and enable concerns to be addressed immediately. Gardner Public Schools will ensure compliance with all rules and regulations pertaining to students with IEPs and 504 Plans and will make certain their accommodations are properly implemented. Ongoing vocational exploration and college/career post-secondary planning will also aid in supporting the students with understanding the importance of their success in the Montachusett Vocational Partnership Program (MVP).

MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

Gardner Public Schools maintains records of all students who apply, enroll, or are waitlisted, to facilitate analysis of this admissions system and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. This includes students' applications and lottery results. Gardner Public Schools will provide this information to the DESE upon request.