

# Worcester Public Schools Worcester Technical High School

## EMERGENCY ADMISSIONS POLICY

December 2020

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

An admission process is necessary for vocational-technical schools 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 space and flexibility to accommodate the possible needs and interests of all applicants. Therefore, a selection process is necessary to determine which applicants may most benefit from such educational opportunities. All applicants to grades nine through twelve at Worcester Technical High School have been evaluated using the criteria contained in the Worcester Public School Committee approved policy since June 1, 2017.

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. This 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 thoughtfully developed for the 2021-2022 admissions process to ensure transparency for students, families, and sending districts. The Worcester Public School Committee approved this policy on **January 7, 2021** and the policy will be in effect for the students applying for admission to enroll for the 2021-2022 school year.

### **II. EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

Worcester Technical High School admits students and makes available to them its advantages, privileges, and courses of study without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

If there is a student with limited English proficiency, a qualified representative from Worcester Technical High School will assist the applicant in completing the necessary forms and assist in interpreting during the entire application and admission process upon the request of the applicant.

Disabled students may voluntarily self-identify for the purpose of requesting reasonable accommodations during the entire application and admission process.

Information on limited English proficiency and disability submitted voluntarily by the applicant to receive assistance and accommodations during the entire application and admission process will not affect their admission to the school.

### **III. ELIGIBILITY**

Any eighth-grade student who is a resident of the Worcester Public School District who expects to be promoted to the ninth grade is eligible to apply for fall admission subject to the availability of openings to Worcester Technical High School. Resident students will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this Admission Policy.

Transfer students from other vocational-technical schools are eligible to apply for admission during the school year to grades 9-12 at Worcester Technical High School 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 Admission Policy.

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

### **IV. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Worcester Technical High School is a public vocational-technical school located in Worcester, Massachusetts. Worcester Technical High School is a member of the Worcester Public Schools District and is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Worcester Technical High School is committed to providing quality academic and vocational-technical programs.

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 Admission Policy.

Worcester Technical High School has an Admission Committee appointed by the Principal. The committee consists of a member of the Administration, Guidance, Special Needs, Vocational Technical and Academic Departments. Responsibilities of the Admissions Committee include:

- A. determination of standards for admission
- B. development and implementation of admission procedures
- C. processing of applications
- D. ranking of students
- E. acceptance of students according to the procedure and criteria in the admission policy
- F. establishment and maintenance of a waiting list of acceptable candidates

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

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

1. Worcester Technical High School disseminates information about the school through various methods during the impact of COVID-19.
  - a. All Worcester Public and Charter School eighth-graders will have access to a *virtual tour* of Worcester Technical High School on the media platforms associated with WPS. Active links to the *virtual school tour* are provided to the middle schools by Worcester Technical High School for career awareness programs. A letter

describing the admissions process will be sent via US mail to each Worcester Public School eighth-grade student in their family's home language.

- b. A Virtual Open House is scheduled for January 2021. Prospective students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) have an opportunity to visit all vocational-technical programs and request to speak with teachers and view a presentation about all offerings. WPS will provide a written translation in the district's eight most commonly spoken languages of all Open House materials.
- c. The most updated information will be available through the online platforms associated with Worcester Technical High School and Worcester Public Schools.

## **VI. APPLICATION PROCESS**

### **APPLICATION PROCESS-FOR FALL ADMISSION<sup>1\*</sup> TO THE NINTH, TENTH, ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH GRADE**

1. Students interested in applying to Worcester Technical High School for fall admission to the ninth, tenth, eleventh or twelfth grade must complete an online application.
2. It is the responsibility of the sending school Guidance Counselor/Principal to:
  - a. Facilitate the completion of the online 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 school 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 *conduct and effort* from the sending school report card or the sending school's assessment are required. For applications to grades 10, 11 & 12 admissions (fall admission), the average of the previous school year and terms 1 & 2 of the current school year assessments of behavior from the sending school report card or the sending school's assessment are required.

---

<sup>1\*</sup> applying for admission during the winter and spring to begin classes the following fall

The sending school's recommendation is required for applications to grade 9, 10, 11, and 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 Admission Office at Worcester Technical High School 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 be notified by the Worcester Technical High School Admissions Office in the event that the problem is not resolved by the sending school Guidance Counselor.
  - c. If after notifying the sending school Guidance Counselor and parent(s)/guardian(s), the application remains incomplete for ten school days, the application will be voided.

#### APPLICATION PROCESS - FOR ADMISSION TO THE NINTH, TENTH, ELEVENTH, AND TWELFTH GRADES FOR THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR<sup>2\*</sup>

1. Students interested in applying to Worcester Technical High School for admission for the current school year must:
  - a. Complete an online application.
2. It is the responsibility of the sending school Guidance Counselor to:
  - a. Complete their portion of the application form. Sending schools will receive electronic notification of action items in the application.
  - b. For applications to grades 9, 10, 11 & 12 (admission during the school year), the current school year to the date of the application marks in English language arts, social studies, math, and science from the sending school report card/transcript are required.

For applications to grades 9,10,11 & 12 (admission during the school year) the current school year to the date of the application, unexcused absences from the sending school report card/transcript are NOT required.

For applications to grades 9, 10, 11 & 12 (admission during the school year) the current school year to the date of the application assessments of behavior from the sending school report card or from the sending school's assessment are required.

For applications to grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 (admission during the school year) the sending school's recommendation is required.
3. If incomplete applications are received, the following procedures will be followed:
  - a. The Worcester Technical High School Admissions Office will notify the sending school Guidance Counselor responsible for submitting the application, that the application is incomplete and will request completion.

---

<sup>2\*</sup>Applying for admission during the school year to begin classes during the same school year, as opposed to applying for admission one school year to begin classes the next school year in the fall

- b. The applicant's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by the Worcester Technical High School Admission Office in the event the problem is not resolved by the sending school Guidance Counselor.
- c. If after notifying the sending school Guidance Counselor and parent(s)/guardian(s), the application remains incomplete for ten school days, 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 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 admission during the school year) if they relocate away from their current school and wish to pursue the same program of study at Worcester Technical High School. All transfer applicants must attend an interview at Worcester Technical 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 Technical High School will follow the procedures contained in this admission policy and will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this Admission Policy.

**WITHDRAWN STUDENTS**

Students who withdraw from Worcester Technical High School and who are attending or not attending another high school may reapply to Worcester Technical High School following the procedures contained in this admission policy and will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this Admission Policy.

**VII. SELECTION CRITERIA**

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

A. **Scholastic Achievement**: Maximum 25 points

Academic Performance (25%) (filled out by WTHS), Grade 7 final grade, Grade 8 Quarters 1 and 2..... (25 points, bonus points scale)

B. 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)

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

D. Recommendation 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)

Math, Science, History, English (or ESL)

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

For applications to grade 9 (fall admission), **grade 7 final grade, and grade 8 terms 1 & 2 marks** in English (acceptance of the highest scholastic score of ESL or ELA), social studies, mathematics and science from the sending school report card are used. For applications to grades 10, 11 and 12 (fall admission) the average of the previous school year and terms 1 & 2 of the current school year marks in English, social studies, mathematics and science from the sending school report card are used. For applications to grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 (admission during the school year) the current school year to the date of the application marks in English, social studies, mathematics and science from the local school report card/ are used.

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

Number of Unexcused Absences	Points
<b>ALL</b>	<b>25</b>

**C. Conduct and Effort: Maximum 25 points**

Conduct/Effort Rating	Points
<b>A</b>	25
<b>B</b>	20
<b>C</b>	15
<b>D</b>	10
<b>F</b>	0

For applications to grade 9 (fall admission), **the average of quarters 1, 2, and 3 of grade 7 and 8th quarters 1 & 2 conduct/effort grade. Assessment** from the sending school report card or from the sending school team assessment are used. For applications to grades 10, 11, and 12 (fall admission) the average of the previous school year and terms

1 & 2 current school year assessments from the sending school report card or from the sending school teams assessment are used. For applications to grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 (admission during the school year), the current school year to the date of the application assessments from the sending school report card/transcript or from the sending school assessment are used.

D. Teaching Team Recommendation: Maximum **25** points

The recommendation will be from a Team made up of licensed educators, guidance professionals, and/or administrators who know and have worked directly with the student.

**Proposed NEW Summary Profile Assessment**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Points per category (5=outstanding)</b>
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 vocational education	0-5

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

**VIII. SELECTION PROCESS-**

All applications will have 25 stated points for attendance.

The Admission Committee at Worcester Technical High School will examine, discuss and make recommendations for action on the applicants.

The Admission Committee considers scholastic achievement, school behavior, sending Guidance Counselor's 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 in 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.

All applicants whose applications are received by Worcester Technical High School by April 1st are notified of their status by a letter to their parents/guardians by mid-May.

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

## **IX. ENROLLMENT**

In order to enroll at Worcester Technical High School for the fall, applicants must have been promoted to the grade they wish to enter by their sending school. In addition, they must have successfully passed courses in English language arts or the equivalent and mathematics for the school year immediately preceding their enrollment at Worcester Technical High School.

## **X. VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL PROGRAM PLACEMENT**

All ninth graders who enroll in Worcester Technical High School participate in a vocational technical exploratory program designed to help them learn about their talents and interests relative to a variety of different vocational technical programs. Students initially explore each vocational program in the technical academy, during their first shop week, for one day (mini-explore). Then students have the option of changing one shop choice based on the mini-explore experience. The student's top 4 choices, taken from their original application, together with 4 choices taken from the total available shops are scheduled for the entire exploratory period which is composed of Quarter 1 and Quarter 2. Students are evaluated and scored (0-100 points) using the standardized Student Evaluation – Exploratory rubric by each shop & related teacher during the two-week shop exploratory rotation.

At the end of this eight-shop exploratory choice, half-year period, each student selects his/her program preferences on the shop selection form one through six from the programs they explored. Students are admitted into the shop of their choice based on the point total they received in all shops combined. For example, a student with a point total of 100 would be admitted before a student with a point total of 80. If a shop fills, based on the highest point total, before a student gets his/her first choice, the Director of Career Vocational Technical Education then moves to the students' second through sixth choice depending upon whether there is an opening in the shop. Again, the student is admitted based upon overall point total. If a student's point total in all shops combined is so low that they were not placed in their second through sixth choice shop because the shops were filled by students with higher point totals, the Director of Career Vocational Technical Education will meet with the student and present a list of the shops with openings which the student can explore and ask the student to choose one of them. Again, students selecting shops from among the shops with openings, which the student explored, will be admitted based on their point totals. The process continues until all students are placed.

Students who wish to transfer from one shop to another during the school year may apply for transfer using a standardized form from their guidance counselor. Transfer requests will be considered subject to the availability of openings in the requested shops, and career plan. Each transfer applicant will be interviewed and counseled individually to determine the appropriateness of the transfer for the particular student.

## **XI. REVIEW and APPEALS**

The applicant's parent(s)/guardian(s), upon receipt of a letter from Worcester Technical 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.