

# Bristol County Agricultural High School

## ADMISSIONS POLICY

May 8, 2018

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

An admission process is necessary in 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 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. All applicants to grades nine through eleven at Bristol County Agricultural High School will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this Admission Policy. The Board of Trustees of Bristol County Agricultural High School approved this policy on May 8, 2018.

### **II. EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY**

The Bristol County Agricultural 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, disability, gender identity, and sexual orientation.

If there is a student with limited English proficiency, a qualified representative from Bristol County Agricultural High School will assist the applicant in completing the necessary forms and assist in interpreting during the entire application and admissions process.

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, for the purpose of receiving assistance and accommodations during the entire application and admission process, will not affect their admission to the school.

### **III. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

Any eighth, ninth or tenth grade student who is a resident of Bristol County who expects to be promoted to the grade they seek to enter by his/her local school district is eligible to apply for fall admission or admission during the school year provided that space is available. Resident students will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this admission policy. Priority for admission will be given to Bristol County residents (students from Acushnet, Attleboro, Berkley, Dartmouth, Dighton, Easton, Fairhaven, Fall River, Freetown, Mansfield, New Bedford, North Attleboro, Norton, Raynham, Rehoboth, Seekonk, Somerset, Swansea, Taunton, and Westport).

Students who are not residents of Bristol County are eligible to apply and will be evaluated using the same criteria as in-district applicants. Admission of non-resident students will be entirely dependent upon the applicant's ranking.

Transfer students from other vocational technical schools are eligible to apply for fall admission or admission during the school year to grades 9-11 at Bristol County Agricultural 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.

#### **IV. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Bristol County Agricultural High School is a public, state-approved county agricultural school specializing in the study of agriculture and related occupations and is authorized by the Massachusetts Department of Education to award high school diplomas and vocational certificates to its graduates. It is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

It is the responsibility of the Bristol County Agricultural High School Superintendent to supervise the administration of the policies and procedures required to admit and enrol applicants in conformity with this Admission Policy.

Bristol County Agricultural High School has an Admission Board appointed by the Superintendent and chaired by the Assistant Principal. The committee is comprised of representatives of the administration, guidance, special education, vocational programs, academic programs, and the admissions recruiter. Responsibilities of the Admissions Board 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 Bristol County Agricultural High School Admission recruiter is responsible for disseminating information about the school through visits to local middle/junior high schools, local school assemblies and press releases, and for collecting applications from the sending schools. Bristol County Agricultural High School does not participate in the school choice program.

#### **V. RECRUITMENT PROCESS**

Bristol County Agricultural High School disseminates information about the school through a variety of methods.

- a. Visitations are scheduled between October and January and include an informational, multimedia presentation to 8th grade classes.
- b. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may schedule individual visits at a mutually convenient time.
- c. Brochures, which describe vocational technical programs, academic courses, sports, cooperative education, and special education resources, are distributed during the 8th grade visitations.

## **VI. APPLICATION PROCESS**

### **APPLICATION PROCESS-FOR FALL ADMISSION\* TO THE NINTH, TENTH, AND ELEVENTH GRADE**

- a. Students interested in applying to Bristol County Agricultural High School for fall admission to the ninth, tenth, or eleventh grades must:
  1. obtain an application from their local school guidance counselor as early in the school year as possible.
  2. return the completed application form to their local school guidance counselor by the deadline set by the guidance counselor.
  
- b. It is the responsibility of the local school guidance counselors to:
  1. complete their portion of the application form.
  2. forward the completed applications to the Admission recruiter at Bristol County by March 1<sup>st</sup>. Complete applications include:
    - i. Completed application form (including required signatures).
    - ii. For applications to grade nine (fall admission), the final averages of grade seven along with grade eight terms 1 & 2 in English language arts, social studies, math and science from the local school report card/transcript are required. For applications to grades ten & eleven (fall admission) the average of the previous school year and terms one & two of the current school year marks in English language arts, social studies, math and science from the local school report card/transcript is required.

For applications to grade nine (fall admission), the sum of grade seven and terms one & two grade eight unexcused absences from the local school report card/transcript are required.

For applications to grades ten & eleven (fall admission) the sum of the previous school year and terms one & two current school year unexcused absences from the local school report card/transcript is required.

For applications to grade nine (fall admission), the average of grade seven and terms one & two grade eight assessments of behavior from the local school report card or from the local school guidance counselor's assessment are required. For applications to grades ten & eleven (fall admission) the average of the previous school year and terms one & two of the current school year assessments of behavior from the local school report card or from the local school guidance counselor's assessment are required.

For applications to grades nine, ten, and eleven (fall admission), the local school guidance counselor's recommendation is required.

- c. If incomplete applications are received, the following procedures will be followed:
  1. The Admission Office at Bristol County Agricultural High School will notify the local school guidance counselor responsible for submitting the application and the applicant's parent(s)/guardian(s) that the application is incomplete and will request completion.
  2. If after notifying the local school guidance counselor and parent(s)/guardian(s), the problem is not resolved and the application remains incomplete for ten school days, the application may be voided.

APPLICATION PROCESS FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS - FOR ADMISSION TO THE NINTH, TENTH, AND ELEVENTH GRADES FOR THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR\*

- a. Students interested in applying to Bristol County Agricultural High School for admission for the current school year must:
  1. obtain an application from their local school guidance counselor.
  2. return the completed application form to their local school guidance counselor by the deadline set by the guidance counselor.
  3. attend an interview at the Bristol County Agricultural High School. If the applicant or parent/guardian cannot provide transportation, a representative from BCAHS will go to the local school to interview the applicant.
  4. Applications for transfer students should be completed and received by September 20<sup>th</sup>.
- b. It is the responsibility of the local school guidance counselors to:
  1. complete their portions of the application form.
  2. forward the completed applications to the admission recruiter at Bristol County Agricultural High School. Complete applications include:

- i. Completed application form (including required signatures).
- ii. For applications to grades nine, ten & eleven (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 local school report card/ transcript are required.

For applications to grades nine, ten & eleven (admission during the school year), the current school year to the date of the application unexcused absences from the local school report card/transcript are required.

For applications to grades nine, ten, & eleven (admission during the school year), the current school year to the date of the application assessments of behavior from the local school report card or from the local school report card/transcript are required.

For applications to grades nine, ten and eleven (admission during the school year), the local school guidance counselor's recommendation is required.

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

1. The Admission Office at Bristol County Agricultural High School will notify the local school guidance counselor responsible for submitting the application and the applicant's parent(s)/guardian(s) that the application is incomplete and will request completion.
2. If after notifying the local school guidance counselor and parent(s)/guardian(s), the problem is not resolved and the application remains incomplete for ten school days, the application may be voided.

### LATE APPLICATIONS

Applications received after March 1<sup>st</sup> will be evaluated using the same criteria as other applications and their composite scores will be integrated in rank order on the established waiting list.

### 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 Bristol County Agricultural High School. All transfer applicants must attend an informational meeting at BCAHS. If the applicant

or parent/guardian cannot provide transportation, an official from BCAHS may arrange to go to the local school to meet with the applicant. Transfer applications will be evaluated according to the provisions of this Admission Policy.

### WITHDRAWN STUDENTS

Students who withdraw from Bristol County Agricultural High School and who are attending or not attending another high school may re-apply following the procedures contained in this Admission Policy and will be evaluated using the criteria contained herein.

\*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.

### VII. SELECTION CRITERIA

The Admission Board will use weighted admissions criteria to process completed applications. Each applicant will be assigned a score derived from the sum of the sub scores of the following criteria:

- A. Attendance: Cumulative Unexcused Absences - Maximum 15 points
  - 15 points - 0 to 5 days absent
  - 10 points - 6 to 10 days absent
  - 5 points - 11 to 15 days absent
  - 0 points - 16 or more days absent
  
- B. Conduct: Maximum 20 points (*previous year 10 pts/current year 10 pts*)
  - 10 points - 0-2 minor disciplinary incidents, no suspensions
  - 8 points - 3-4 minor disciplinary incidents, no suspensions
  - 6 points - 5 or more disciplinary incidents, no suspensions
  - 4 points - disciplinary incidents involving one suspension
  - 2 points - two or more disciplinary incidents, including suspensions
  
- C. Letters of recommendation: Guidance Counselor, Teacher, Other (5 points per recommendation)
  - Maximum 3 letters for a total of 15 points
  - 5 points - Excellent candidate
  - 4 points - Above average candidate
  - 3 points - Average candidate
  - 2 points - Below average candidate
  - 0 points - Poor candidate/Not recommended
  
- D. Academic Record: Maximum 25 points (*3:2 ratio - previous year: current year*)
  - [taken from English, Math, Social Studies and Science grades]
  - 15 points previous/10 points current                      A average (90-100%)

12 points previous/ 8 points current	B average (80-89%)
9 points previous/ 6 points current	C average (70-79%)
3 points previous/ 2 points current	D average (60-69%)
0 points previous/ 0 points current	F average (below 60%)

E. Interview: Maximum 25 points

- 21 - 25 points – Excellent candidate
- 16 - 20 points – Above average candidate
- 11 - 15 points – Average candidate
- 6 - 10 points – Below average candidate
- 0 - 5 points – Poor candidate

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. In the event that scores for acceptance and waitlist are the same point total, high scores in the following areas will be utilized as tie-breakers: 1<sup>st</sup> Interview, 2<sup>nd</sup> Academic Record, 3<sup>rd</sup> Conduct, 4<sup>th</sup> Attendance, 5<sup>th</sup> Letters of recommendation.

**VIII. SELECTION PROCESS**

The Admission Board at Bristol County Agricultural High School will examine, discuss, and make recommendations for action on the applicants. The Board considers scholastic achievement, attendance, conduct, local guidance counselor's recommendation, and interview 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 descending order based on 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 are accepted in the order of their positions on the waiting list as determined by the total points given according to the selection criteria.

Applications received after March 1<sup>st</sup> will be evaluated using the same criteria as all other applications and their composite scores will be integrated in rank order on the established waiting list.

**IX. ACCEPTANCE, REVIEW, and APPEALS**

Upon notification from Bristol County Agricultural High School indicating that the applicant was not accepted, may request a review of the decision by sending a letter to the Principal within ten working days of the notification. The principal will respond in writing to the letter with the

findings of the review within ten working days. If after the review, the parent(s)/guardian(s) wishes to appeal the findings of the review, he/she can do so by submitting a request in writing to the superintendent/director within ten working days. The superintendent/director's decision will be final and will be communicated in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s) within ten working days of the notification of the appeal.

#### **X. ENROLLMENT**

In order to enroll at Bristol County Agricultural High School for the fall, applicants must have been promoted to the grade they wish to enter by their local school district. In addition, they must have passed all academic courses as required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for the school year immediately preceding their enrollment at BCAHS. Students who are accepted and intend to enroll must notify BCAHS of their intention by June 1<sup>st</sup>. Students who do not respond by the June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline may be placed on the waiting list.

#### **XI. VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL PROGRAM PLACEMENT**

All ninth graders are exposed to an exploratory program during their freshman year. Each student rotates through all vocational programs. The rotations allow for opportunities during the course of the school year to experience each vocational area.

Prior to the end of the school year, each ninth grade student will complete their Vocational Major Selection sheet. At that time, each student will be asked to rank all the vocational majors in order of interest.

The major choices are assigned based on the score that each student has earned. The Vocational grade average is multiplied by two and added to the academic grade. The total is then divided by three. This formula gives added weight to the vocational grade.

In addition to the grade averages, attendance and discipline are factored into the ranking score. Points are subtracted from the score for excessive unexcused absences or excessive disciplinary infractions. Once the ranking score has been determined, students are placed according to their choices. Once a major is filled, students are given their second choices, then third choices, etc. until all vocational majors are filled.

If students have ranking scores that do not qualify them for any of their choices, they are counseled and asked where they would like to be placed. They are allowed to choose any major that has a vacancy. These choices are, however, totally dependent on the ranking score.

All incoming tenth grade, eleventh grade, and transfer students are placed in vocational areas based on available space. The availability of vocational spots is a major factor in accepting/placing these students. Transfer requests are accepted from all students. Students are encouraged to place their names on waiting lists. After enrolling, any transfer student may request that his/her name be added to an existing waiting list for a given major.

## **XII. VOCATIONAL PLACEMENT AND APPEALS**

The applicant's parent(s)/guardian(s), upon notification from Bristol County Agricultural High School indicating that the applicant was not accepted in a particular major or placed on a waiting list for a particular vocational major, may request a review of the decision by sending a letter to the principal within ten working days of the notification. The principal will respond in writing to the letter with the findings of the review within ten working days. The principal's decision will be final.