

SHAWSHEEN VALLEY REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

An admissions policy is necessary in vocational/technical schools where space is a limiting factor. Vocational/technical laboratories 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 grade nine through eleven at Shawsheen Valley Technical High School will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this Admissions Policy. **The Shawsheen Valley Regional Vocational Technical School District Committee approved this policy on September 24, 2024.**

INTRODUCTION

Massachusetts state regulations (603 CMR 4.00) require all state-funded career/vocational technical education (CVTE) schools and CVTE programs at public high schools to develop and implement admissions policies that comply with state and federal law, as well as relevant guidelines issued by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the U.S. Department of Education.

I. ADMISSIONS

When Shawsheen Valley Technical High School receives more applications than it has available seats, Shawsheen Valley Technical High School will apply selection criteria to determine which students to admit. The criteria Shawsheen Valley Technical High School applies has been approved by the Shawsheen Valley Regional Vocational Technical School District Committee, and the Shawsheen Valley Regional Vocational Technical School District Committee will approve the use of these criteria annually. Shawsheen Valley Technical High School's admissions policy is on file at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and is posted on the Shawsheen website, <http://www.shawsheentech.org>.

II. EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Shawsheen Valley Technical High School admits students and makes available to them its programs, privileges, and courses of study without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, marital status, familial status, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX.

If a student's primary home language is not English, Shawsheen Valley Technical High School can assist you with navigating the application website to translate the application to your home language. Please contact our Admissions Office at (978) 671-3641 or admissions@shawtech.org if you have questions or need help completing the application.

Shawsheen Valley Technical High School is committed to providing educational opportunities to students experiencing homelessness. Please contact the Shawsheen Valley Technical High School homeless liaison, Mr. James Carlson at jcarlson@shawtech.org, or by calling 978-671-3612 with any questions.

Students with disabilities may voluntarily identify themselves to Shawsheen Valley Technical High School to request reasonable accommodations during the application and admission process.

Neither a student's disability nor the primary language of their home will have any effect on their admission to Shawsheen Valley Technical High School.

Consistent with Massachusetts regulations, Shawsheen Valley Technical High School has created a plan with "deliberate, specific strategies to promote equal educational opportunities and attract, enroll, and

retain a student population that, when compared to resident students in similar grades in sending districts, has a comparable academic and demographic profile.”

In order to achieve that goal, Shawsheen Valley Technical High School asks each sending district to include information about the primary language spoken in each home, so that all information regarding Shawsheen Valley Technical High School’s programs and admissions process will be available to all resident members of our sending districts, regardless of whether or not English is the primary language spoken in the home. In addition, in the information Shawsheen Valley Technical High School provides its prospective students, care is taken to ensure that promotional materials accurately reflect the diversity of our student population.

III. ELIGIBILITY

Any rising, or current, 8th, 9th or 10th grade student who is a resident of Bedford, Billerica, Burlington, Tewksbury, or Wilmington may apply for admission to Shawsheen Valley Technical High School. The Shawsheen Valley Technical High School administrative team shall determine available annual openings for Grades 9, and 10. Any rising 11th or 12th grade student who is a resident of Bedford, Billerica, Burlington, Tewksbury, or Wilmington and has attended a comparable vocational/technical program since the beginning of grade 10 may apply for admission to Shawsheen Valley Technical High School. Students may only be admitted to Shawsheen Valley Technical High School 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 the grade they have applied for, their admission will be rescinded. Residents of Bedford, Billerica, Burlington, Tewksbury, or Wilmington who meet the minimum admission requirements are admitted before any non-residents seeking the same program.

Residency Verification: All applications from schools outside of Shawsheen’s five member districts, or whose district reports a different address than is listed on the application, must include two (2) forms of proof of residency. Failure to provide residency documentation will result in an incomplete application.

Conditional Acceptance: Due to the abundance of applications to the district, resident students’ initial offer of acceptance is conditional. Furthermore, applicants who receive conditional acceptance notifications are subject to a review of their current school year final grade report card/transcript, attendance, and suspension/expulsion records before earning final acceptance to Shawsheen Valley Technical High School. Should discrepancies in a student’s record be discovered during the year-end records review, Shawsheen Valley Technical High School reserves the right to rescore an application and not award final acceptance.

APPORTIONMENT:

The Shawsheen Valley Regional Vocational Technical School District has a regional agreement in place that identifies Bedford, Billerica, Burlington, Tewksbury, and Wilmington (hereinafter “Member Districts”) as members of the region. The initial allocation of educational seats is made on the basis of town quotas. These quotas are set by the Shawsheen Valley Regional Vocational Technical School District Committee through this policy and have been determined by historical application patterns.

The current town quotas are as follows:

<i>Bedford</i>	<i>10.00%</i>
<i>Billerica</i>	<i>32.44%</i>
<i>Burlington</i>	<i>16.32%</i>
<i>Tewksbury</i>	<i>23.71%</i>
<i>Wilmington</i>	<i>17.53%</i>

NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS:

Students who are not residents of Bedford, Billerica, Burlington, Tewksbury, or Wilmington are eligible to apply for admission to Shawsheen Valley Technical High School. Please be aware that residents of Member Districts who meet the minimum admission requirements will be admitted before any non-residents seeking the same program. Students and families can find information on the [Chapter 74](#)

Nonresident Student Tuition Program online.

HOMESCHOOLED STUDENTS:

Students who are being homeschooled and reside in a member district community may apply for admission to Shawsheen Valley Technical High School, including admission during the school year, provided all Admissions Policy criteria are followed where applicable. The homeschooled student's parent(s)/guardian(s) must submit a copy of the Homeschool Approval Letter from the local school superintendent and if official grades are not available, a portfolio of the student's body of work in English Language Arts or its equivalent, math, science and social studies must be provided. The level of work must be appropriate for the grade level being sought.

For homeschooled students, a letter from the local superintendent attesting to the successful completion of grade level standards as evidenced by student work completed must be submitted. In addition, verification of successful completion of the school year and promotion to the next grade level may be requested.

TRANSFER STUDENTS:

Students already participating in Chapter 74 programs at another school may apply for admission and will be subject to the same admissions calendar and admissions standards as other applicants.

SCHOOL CHOICE:

The Shawsheen Valley Regional Vocational Technical School District does not participate in the inter-district school choice program. The inter-district school choice program, M.G.L. c. 76, § 12B, allows parents/guardians to send their children to schools in communities other than the city or town in which they reside.

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Shawsheen Valley Technical High School is a regional vocational/technical high school located in Billerica, Massachusetts.

The Superintendent-Director of Shawsheen Valley Technical High School is:

Tony McIntosh Email: tmcintosh@shawtech.org

The Principal of Shawsheen Valley Technical High School is:

Jessica Cook Email: jcook@shawtech.org

It is the responsibility of Shawsheen Valley Technical High School's Superintendent-Director to supervise the administration of the policies and procedures used to admit and enroll students, consistent with all applicable laws, regulations, and guidance.

V. ADMISSIONS COMMUNICATION POLICIES

Shawsheen Valley Technical High School maintains a calendar of events on its website <http://www.shawsheentech.org> that provides information on the admissions process, as well as other information about its programs. Students and their families can request hard copies of the calendar by calling or emailing the Admissions Office at 978-671-3641 or by emailing admissions@shawtech.org.

It is essential that all rising 7th and 8th graders in the Shawsheen Valley Technical High School member districts are aware that they have two outstanding public high schools available to them: the high school in their town and Shawsheen Valley Technical High School. Ensuring this requires a thoughtful and well-coordinated effort to bring information about Shawsheen Valley Technical High School and its programs into the homes of these potential students, through a variety of different methods, including direct mail, email, and social media. Each fall, all 8th grade students who are residents of our member districts, and their parents, will receive information via US Mail about Shawsheen Valley Technical High School's programs and admissions process. This mailing will also include information on how to follow Shawsheen Valley Technical High School on social media. This information will be followed up with

timely and frequent information via email to parents and 8th grade students, highlighting the unique features of Shawsheen Valley Technical High School or announcing upcoming events that are part of the admissions process. This information, as well as other informational videos or photos will be posted on Shawsheen Valley Technical High School's social media pages to reach students through that critical avenue.

Shawsheen Valley Technical High School staff will visit all middle schools in the district beginning in late October and ending in early December. During these visitations, presentations are made to all 8th grade residents of the district regarding programs, educational activities, and opportunities after graduation. Information about the extensive list of extracurricular clubs, activities, and interscholastic athletic programs open to all students will be shared as part of this process. A video presentation is given followed by a question-and-answer period in which 8th grade students are encouraged to interact with Shawsheen Valley Technical High School students and staff.

Shawsheen Valley Technical High School conducts two open houses each year. A Community Open House, open to all members of the communities of Bedford, Billerica, Burlington, Tewksbury, and Wilmington along with Shawsheen Valley Technical High School alumni is scheduled each fall, preferably on a Sunday in the month of October. This event offers prospective students and their parents/guardians the opportunity to visit all vocational-technical and academic programs and to attend formal presentations regarding the operation of the school and its mission. A second Open House, focused primarily on admissions, is held in January of each year for applicants. During this Open House, students will have the opportunity to tour the school, participate in vocational-technical activities and, if available, have their admissions interview.

Shawsheen Valley Technical High School offers individual or group tours of its facilities to interested applicants. To request a tour, please call/email our Admissions Office at 978-671-3641 or by emailing admissions@shawtech.org. If the agreed-upon time slot for a tour occurs during the applicant's school day, the Admissions Office will provide confirmation to the applicant's current school that the applicant attended a tour during this time. Such tours may **not** be counted as unexcused absences by sending districts.

Shawsheen Valley Technical High School will work with member school districts to provide large group tours of our school during the school day. Round-trip bus transportation between each middle school and Shawsheen Valley Technical High School for group tours during the school day will be provided by Shawsheen Valley Technical High School. If Shawsheen Valley Technical High School and a member school district are unable to coordinate a mutually agreeable time for group tours, or if a student is absent on the day when group tours are scheduled, individual tours conducted outside the regular school day will be offered. In most cases, transportation to and from individual tours conducted outside the regular school day will be the responsibility of the student's family, however, if a hardship exists, please contact our Admissions Office at 978-671-3641 or by emailing admissions@shawtech.org to arrange for individual transportation.

VI. APPLICATION PROCESS

APPLICATION PROCESS FOR FALL ADMISSION TO THE NINTH, TENTH, ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH-GRADE

1. Students interested in applying to Shawsheen Valley Technical High School for fall admission to the 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade must:
 - A. Complete an online application on our website: Student Admissions (go2cte.com). Applications can be completed during our Open House, or at the Shawsheen Valley Technical High School Admissions Office by appointment.
 - B. Complete the application no later than the deadline listed on the application. Supportive data including report cards, recommendations, discipline records, and attendance records will be obtained by Shawsheen Valley Technical High School from the applicant's current school guidance office. An application is NOT considered complete unless it contains ALL appropriate

signatures. The parent/guardian must sign the application to indicate approval of their student's application to Shawsheen and to authorize the release of information from the student's current school.

C. Applicants will be scheduled for an interview with a member of the Shawsheen Valley Technical High School admissions and student recruitment team. Interviews will be held either face-to-face, in-person at Shawsheen Valley Technical High School or at the applicant's school, if arrangements can be made with the applicant's sending district.

D. Completed applications include all required signatures, hardcopies of grades, attendance and discipline records and guidance counselor recommendation. If an incomplete application is received, Shawsheen Valley Technical High School will notify the sending school's guidance counselor responsible for sending application material and will request that the missing information be provided. If the missing information is not provided, the applicant's parent/guardian may be notified and will be asked to contact their student's current guidance counselor to request the missing information be provided. If the application remains incomplete 10 days after notifying the local school guidance counselor and the parent/guardian, the application may be voided.

As outlined in Section II above, Shawsheen Valley Technical High School will request information from each sending district regarding the primary language spoken in the student's home. If a student's primary home language is not English, Shawsheen Valley Technical High School can assist you with navigating the application website to translate the application to your home language. Please contact our Admissions Office at (978) 671-3641 or admissions@shawtech.org if you have questions or need help completing the application.

Shawsheen Valley Technical High School and the student's current school will work cooperatively to provide two-way (English to student language and student language to English) oral translation services during the interview.

2. In order for the admissions process to work successfully, and ensure that resident students in Bedford, Billerica, Burlington, Tewksbury, and Wilmington have complete access to all of the information they need to make a well-informed decision about where they will attend high school. It is the responsibility of the sending school counselor (or other school personnel, if applicable) to work collaboratively with the Shawsheen Valley Technical High School admissions and student recruitment team during the entirety of the admissions process. This includes providing timely and accurate contact information for 7th and 8th grade resident students, scheduling the 8th grade assembly and the 8th grade visit to Shawsheen Valley Technical High School, securing space for Shawsheen Valley Technical High School staff to conduct interviews, and providing data (report cards/grades, attendance and discipline records and guidance counselor recommendation) in support of each student application in a timely manner.

LATE APPLICATIONS

Shawsheen Valley Technical High School will accept applications after the deadline, but these applications will be considered late. Once all supporting data is received at Shawsheen Valley Technical High School, a late application is considered complete. Complete late applications will be reviewed in the order received. Late applications will not be reviewed prior to July 1st. Upon review, late applications will be moved to the waitlist.

After July 1st, late applications will be integrated in rank order on the established waiting list. As seats become available to students on the integrated waiting list, students will be notified of their acceptance. The waitlist will be valid for the current school year only.

Students moving into the District from other communities may be offered admission after the established deadlines, consideration will be on a case-by-case basis.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Students already enrolled in a Chapter 74 state-approved program in another school may apply for admission to Shawsheen Valley Technical High School. Please contact the Admissions Office at 978-671-3641 or by emailing admissions@shawtech.org with any questions or to request an application form.

WITHDRAWN STUDENTS

A student who has withdrawn from Shawsheen Valley Technical High School and is attending, or not attending, another high school may apply for re-admission, subject to availability. Applications for readmission will be reviewed in accordance with this admissions policy and criteria.

VII. SELECTION PROCESS

When more students apply to Shawsheen Valley Technical High School than available seats, Shawsheen Valley Technical High School uses the following system to select students for admission:

SELECTION CRITERIA

Shawsheen Valley Technical High School has established a weighted admissions criteria that is designed to assess a student’s potential to benefit from the unique components of vocational-technical education offered by Shawsheen Valley Technical High School. Each applicant will be assigned a score derived from the sum of the sub scores from each criterion below:

1. Scholastic Achievement: Math/Science/English – Maximum Points: 15

Grade 9 fall admissions points will be calculated as follows:

- Grade 7 final average in Math, Science and English (2 points per subject)
- Grade 8 average in Math, Science, and English for the first half of the school year (3 points per subject)

Grade 10 fall admissions points will be calculated as follows:

- Grade 8 final average in Math, Science and English (2 points per subject)
- Grade 9 average in Math, Science, and English for the first half of the school year (3 points per subject)

Grade 11 fall admissions points will be calculated as follows:

- Grade 9 final average in Math, Science and English (2 points per subject)
- Grade 10 average in Math, Science, and English for the first half of the school year (3 points per subject)

Grade			Subject	Points if average grade is:		
9	10	11		Pass (80 or higher)	Pass (60-79)	Not Passing (59 or less)
7	8	9	Math	2	1	0
7	8	9	Science	2	1	0
7	8	9	English	2	1	0
8	9	10	Math	3	1.5	0
8	9	10	Science	3	1.5	0
8	9	10	English	3	1.5	0

Grade 9, 10, 11 Rolling Admissions points will be calculated as follows:

- Points will be determined based on the previous 1.5 years of transcript grades in Math, Science and English.

Year	Subject	Points if average grade is:		
		Pass (80 or higher)	Pass (60-79)	Not Passing (59 or less)

1½ to ½ year previous	Math	2	1	0
1½ to ½ year previous	Science	2	1	0
1½ to ½ year previous	English	2	1	0
Most recent ½ Year	Math	3	1.5	0
Most recent ½ Year	Science	3	1.5	0
Most recent ½ Year	English	3	1.5	0

2. Attendance – Maximum Points: 15

For applications for fall admissions to Grade 9, the sum of unexcused absences from Grade 7 and the first half of Grade 8 will be used. Points will be assigned as follows:

Number of unexcused absences	Points
0-5	15
6-10	10
11-15	5
16+	0

For applications for fall admissions to Grade 10 or Grade 11, the sum of unexcused absences from the applicant’s previous full school year and the first half of their current school year will be used.

For applications to Grades 9, 10 or 11 for during-the-school-year admissions, the sum of unexcused absences from the previous school year and a half, based on the date of application, will be used.

3. School Discipline – Maximum Points: 20

Any applicant who has been suspended or expelled pursuant to MGL Chapter 71, Section 37H or MGL Chapter 71 Section 37H1/2 or who has been suspended or expelled for greater than 10 days pursuant to MGL Chapter 71, Section 37H3/4 in either the current school year or at any time in their previous school year will receive 0 points in this category. All other applicants will receive 20 points.

4. Local Guidance Counselor/Teacher Recommendation – Maximum Points: 20

Local Guidance Counselors or a teacher selected by the applicant will be asked to assess each applicant using five (5) character traits that Shawsheen Valley Technical High School considers important in predicting the applicant’s success at Shawsheen Valley Technical High School. In addition, the local Guidance Counselor or teacher will be asked to answer (not to exceed 250 words) the following question: “In what ways do you think this student would benefit from the unique features of Shawsheen Valley Technical High School?” Local Guidance Counselor or teacher recommendation will be reviewed by a member of the Shawsheen Valley Technical High School admissions team who holds a valid license as an educator from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and assigned points as follows:

Trait Assessment:

	Guidance Counselor/Teacher Assessment
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Trait	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Poor
Achievement in Relation to Ability	3	2	1	0
Work Ethic	3	2	1	0
Contributes to a Safe and Positive Learning Environment	3	2	1	0
Character and Citizenship	3	2	1	0
Personal Responsibility	3	2	1	0

Narrative Question:

5 Points	3 Points	1 Point	0 Points
Above Average Benefit	Average Benefit	Below Average Benefit	Little/No Benefit
Counselor/teacher provides more than two specific reasons of why the student will benefit from attending Shawsheen. Counselor/teacher cites more than one unique feature of Shawsheen that will benefit student.	Counselor/teacher provides two specific reasons of why the student will benefit from attending Shawsheen. Counselor/teacher cites one unique feature of Shawsheen that will benefit the student.	Counselor/teacher provides one specific reason of why the student will benefit from attending Shawsheen. Counselor/teacher does not cite a unique feature of Shawsheen that will benefit the student.	Counselor/teacher provides no specific reason of why the student will benefit from attending Shawsheen. Counselor/teacher does not cite a unique feature of Shawsheen that will benefit the student.

5. Interview – Maximum Points: 30

Each applicant will be interviewed by a member of the Shawsheen Valley Technical High School admissions team. All interviewers must hold a valid license as an educator from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Each applicant will be asked the same questions and rated using a uniform standard. The interview is designed to gather information regarding the applicant’s: reason for seeking admission to Shawsheen Valley Technical High School and ability to benefit from the unique features of a Shawsheen Valley Technical High School education; current program interest; career goals; and interest and motivation. Interview questions will be provided to all students in advance of the interview.

All members of the Shawsheen Valley Technical High School admissions team will meet annually prior to when interviews begin to review the assessment criteria to ensure inter-rater reliability. In addition, the team should annually review both the questions and the rating standards for bias and make any adjustments deemed necessary.

Interview Questions:

1. Why do you want to attend Shawsheen Valley Technical High School?
2. What vocational program(s) offered at Shawsheen Valley Technical High School most interest you and why?
3. Assuming you attend Shawsheen Valley Technical High School, what do you see yourself doing after you graduate?
4. Tell me about a challenging situation you faced either in or out of school and how you approached it?
5. If you were to be accepted at Shawsheen Valley Technical High School what types of activities, clubs, or sports would you be interested in participating in?

6. Do you have any questions for me or anything else you'd like to add or any closing comments you'd like to make?

Shawsheen Valley Technical High School Interview: Scoring Rubric				
Question	6 Points	4Point	2 Points	0 Points
1	Student shares three or more reasons for attending Shawsheen that are directly connected to vocational programs, future career plans, additional education, and personal goals.	Student shares two reasons for attending Shawsheen that are directly connected to vocational programs, future career plans, additional education, and personal goals.	Student shares one reason for attending Shawsheen that are directly connected to vocational programs, future career plans, additional education, and personal goals.	Student has no specific reasons for wanting to attend.
2	Student shares three or more vocational programs that interests them. Student shares one example of why they are interested in each program named.	Student shares two vocational programs that interests them. Student shares one example of why they are interested in each program named.	Student shares one vocational program that interests them. Student shares one example of why they are interested in the program named.	Student cannot name one vocational program and/or does not respond.
3	Student shares two specific examples of what they plan to do after graduation and connect their plans to more than one vocational program.	Student shares one specific example of what they plan to do after graduation and connect their plans to more than one vocational program.	Student shares an example that is not connected with any of the vocational programs offered at Shawsheen.	Student does not respond.
4	Student clearly explains the challenge, their approach for handling the challenge, and how the challenge has changed them. Includes two specific examples.	Student clearly explains the challenge, and their approach to handling the challenge. Includes one specific example.	Student clearly explains the challenge.	Student does not respond.
5	Student shares three or more specific activities, clubs, or sports that they are interested in.	Student shares two specific activities, clubs or sports that they are interested in.	Student shares one specific activity, club or sport that they are interested in.	Student does not respond.
6	Unscored Response			

In summary, each applicant is assigned points in five categories as follows:

Criterion	Maximum Points Available
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Scholastic Achievement	15
Attendance	15
Discipline	20
Recommendation	20
Interview	30
Maximum Points Attainable	100

SELECTION PROCESS

Using the guidelines delineated in the Selection Criteria section above, points are assigned to each respective criterion and then points are totaled for each applicant. After a point total for each resident applicant has been determined, all resident applicants are placed in order of their point total and town of residence. If two or more applicants have the same point total, the tie will be resolved as follows:

1. The sum of each applicant's sub score in the attendance category and interview category will be calculated.
2. Tied applicants will be ranked based on the sum of their sub score in the attendance category and the interview category, from highest to lowest.
3. Any remaining ties (resulting from two or more applicants having the same total score and the same sum of their sub score in the attendance category and the interview category) will be resolved through a random selection process.

Once a fully ranked applicant list by town is created, applicants are selected in accordance with their criteria point total and the quota of seats assigned to their town of residence as outlined in the Apportionment section above. All on time applicants are accepted or put on a waiting list.

All applications for the upcoming school year must be submitted by February 1st to be considered on time.

On April 15th, any remaining, unutilized seats by town will be filled based on the ranked waitlist regardless of resident town. If two or more applicants have the same point total on the ranked waitlist regardless of resident town, ties will be resolved using the same method described above (using the sum of each applicant's attendance sub score and their interview sub score first and resolving any remaining ties through a random selection process).

Applications for the upcoming school year, received after the deadlines noted above, may be accepted. Late applications will not begin to be processed prior to July 1st. Upon review late applications will be moved to the waitlist.

After July 1st, late applications will be integrated in rank order on the established waiting list. As seats become available to students on the integrated waitlist, students will be notified of their acceptance. The waitlist will be valid for the current school year only.

Students moving into the District from other communities may be offered admission after the established deadlines, consideration will be on a case-by-case basis.

All students are notified of their status by the end of the current school year. Students who are on the waiting list may be accepted at the end of the first or second term of Grade 9.

Eligible transfer candidates will be accepted on a space available basis when vacancies occur in the vocational area of their choice. In the event there are more acceptable candidates than spaces available, a waiting list shall be maintained for each technical program. The waiting list shall be based on the rank order of the student's total criteria points.

VIII. REVIEW AND APPEALS PROCESS / ADMISSION TO SHAWSHEEN VALLEY TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

If Shawsheen Valley Technical High School does not offer an applicant admission and places them on a waitlist, the applicant or their parent/guardian may request that the Superintendent-Director of Shawsheen Valley Technical High School review that decision, providing that the request for appeal is filed no later than two (2) weeks after written receipt of the decision. These requests can be made in the following ways:

By e-mail	By hard-copy mail or hand delivery
tmcintosh@shawtech.org	Superintendent-Director, Shawsheen Tech, 100 Cook Street, Billerica, MA 01821

Parents/guardians may request an appeal of the decision if there were any extenuating circumstances that may have impacted their application point total. This appeal request, which must be accompanied by documentation from the middle school counselor or administrator, written documentation, or verification to support their request for reconsideration of an application (e.g., grade reports, attendance documentation, etc.) should be submitted in writing to the contact information above. The Superintendent-Director will respond to these requests for review in writing and indicate whether the decision to deny admission to the student, or waitlist the student, will stand or be overturned.

In making this determination, the Superintendent-Director will review the following information:

1. Appeals may be initiated by the parent/guardian.
2. The Superintendent-Director will oversee the appeals process and make the final determination as to whether the admissions decision shall be modified.
3. In making the appeal determination the Superintendent-Director may review all records placed before the Admissions Team, as well as any additional documentation deemed relevant by the Superintendent-Director and/or submitted by an educational staff member of the applicant’s current school.
4. **PROCESS FOR ADMISSIONS APPEALS:** In conducting the appeal, the Superintendent-Director will review all scores assigned to the student and assess them for accuracy. If the Superintendent-Director finds the scores to be inaccurate, he/she will assign a revised score and move the student’s place on the admissions waiting list accordingly. If the Superintendent-Director finds the score to be accurate, he/she will inform the student’s parent/guardian of that finding. The student’s parent/guardian may then request an in-person review of the scores assigned to the student. During that in-person review, the Superintendent-Director will review all the scores assigned to their student with the parent/guardian and offer the parent/guardian the opportunity to offer information that they feel supports their assertion that the scores are inaccurate. Shawsheen Valley Technical High School will provide oral translation services for the student and/or their parent/guardian during the in-person review if needed or requested. Following this meeting, the Superintendent-Director will review all relevant information and issue a final decision regarding the student’s assigned score. If the Superintendent-Director determines that the student’s assigned score was inaccurate, he/she will assign the student with a new score and the student will be placed on the admissions waiting list based on his/her revised score. In all circumstances, the decision of the Superintendent-Director is final and is not subject to review or further appeal.
5. The Superintendent-Director may take one or more of the following measures as part of the appeal:
 - a. Deny the request to change the admissions decision based on a determination, after reviewing the materials before the Admissions Team and any materials submitted

with the appeal, that the decision of the Admissions Team was consistent with the admissions criteria, there was no clear error in scoring, and the decision does not merit further review.

- b. Amend the decision of the Admissions Team only if the Superintendent-Director determines that the decision is deemed arbitrary, inequitable, or inconsistent with the goals, policies, scoring criteria, or other objectives of the Shawsheen Admissions policy. The Superintendent-Director has the discretion to consult with the Admissions Team in that process but is not required to do so.
 - c. At any point in the appeals process the Superintendent-Director may invite a student and a parent/guardian for a personal interview in order to better inform the appeals process. Such an interview is not required, and it is not anticipated it will be conducted in all cases.
6. No decision to change an original admissions decision through the appeals process shall result in a change to any previous offer of admission to another student, but the Superintendent-Director may temporarily increase the size of the incoming class to accommodate a student whose revised score should have resulted in an offer of admission.
 7. The Superintendent-Director in making appeals determination is to remain cognizant of the inherent limitations on the capacity of Shawsheen Valley Technical High School's physical plant, class sizes, program offerings, etc.

IX. EXPLORATORY PROGRAM

The Massachusetts Vocational Technical Education Regulations 603 CMR 4.03 (4)(e) state in part: "School districts that offer five or more approved vocational technical education programs shall provide a minimum of a one-half year exploratory program approved by the Department for all incoming ninth graders". Shawsheen Valley Technical High School currently offers over twenty approved Chapter 74 programs and requires all incoming ninth graders to explore numerous vocational technical education programs, including those that would prepare them for careers that are nontraditional for their gender.

From September through spring of their freshman year, ninth graders shall explore a variety of distinct Chapter 74 programs for up to one full week each during freshmen "shop week." Upon acceptance to Shawsheen Valley Technical High School, but before the school year begins, students identify and rank order twenty different programs they would like to explore. Those preferences will be considered when developing the grade-wide exploratory schedule for the school year.

At the end of each week-long exploratory session, the assigned teacher evaluates each student using a standards-based, holistic rubric specific to each vocational/technical program. Each rubric will contain a standard method to convert the student's performance against the rubric to a 100-point scale. The resulting numeric grade will be entered into the student's record and is a key variable in the selection process outlined below.

X. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC ADMISSION

Upon completion of all the freshmen exploratory cycles, students shall rank order their top three program preferences based on their interest and overall exploratory experience. To assist students in this selection process individual exploratory grades are provided. This feedback derives from a structured rating sheet "rubric" that assesses areas of performance in both competence-based activities as well as assignments from the related theory component.

Students are placed in their permanent vocational/technical program based on their interest, grade (see section VIII above), and shop capacity as follows:

- At the end of the exploratory program, each student ranks their top three choices for their permanent vocational technical program
- Students are placed into their first choice unless the number of students who chose that program exceeds capacity
- If interest exceeds program capacity, students are rank ordered by the grade they received in the exploratory cycle for that program and are offered placement in that program until capacity is reached.
 - In the event of a tie, the average exploratory grade will be used (e.g., if two students earned a 90 in the exploratory cycle for that shop but only one spot remains, the student with the higher average from the entire exploratory program will be placed into the shop)
- Students who do not get into their first choice will be placed into their second choice provided program capacity was not reached by students who ranked it as their first choice
- Students who do not get into their second choice will be placed into their third choice provided program capacity was not reached by students after satisfying each student who indicated that shop as a first or second choice
- In the instance that a student does not get placed into their top three choices, the student and their family will be provided with a list of shops that have openings so the student can select their permanent shop from that list.

Waitlists will be maintained as follows:

- Any student who does not get placed in their first choice has the option of being placed on a rank-ordered waitlist by the grade they received in the exploratory cycle for that program, should openings occur before the end of their sophomore year.
 - If a student wishes to be placed on the waitlist for their second choice, they will be rank ordered by the grade they received in the exploratory cycle for that program behind all students who are on the waitlist for that program who selected it as their first choice.
 - If a student wishes to be placed on the waitlist for their third choice, they will be rank ordered by the grade they received in the exploratory cycle for that program behind all students who are on the waitlist for that program who selected it as their first and second choice.

XI. ADMISSION TO SPECIFIC PROGRAMS WITHIN SHAWSHEEN VALLEY TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

Students who have been admitted to Shawsheen Valley Technical High School will need to apply to a specific program of study (also known as a “major” or “shop”) during the second semester of their freshman year.

If the student applies to a program and is denied or waitlisted, the student may appeal their rejection to the Superintendent-Director in the following ways:

By e-mail	By hard-copy mail or hand delivery
tmcintosh@shawtech.org	Superintendent-Director, Shawsheen Tech, 100 Cook Street, Billerica, MA 01821

In making this determination, the Superintendent-Director will review the following information:

1. Appeals may be initiated by the parent/guardian.
2. The Superintendent-Director will oversee the appeals process and make the final determination as to whether the admissions decision shall be modified.
3. In making the appeal determination, the Superintendent-Director may review all materials used to determine the student’s shop placement as well as any additional documentation deemed relevant

by the Superintendent-Director and/or submitted by the student or his/her parent/guardian.

4. **PROCESS FOR SHOP SELECTION APPEALS:** In conducting the appeal, the Superintendent-Director will review all scores assigned to the student and assess them for accuracy. If the Superintendent-Director finds the scores to be inaccurate, he/she will assign a revised score and move the student's place on the shop selection waiting list accordingly. If the Superintendent-Director finds the score to be accurate, he/she will inform the student's parent/guardian of that finding. The student's parent/guardian may request an in-person review of the scores assigned to the student. During that in-person review, the Superintendent-Director will review all the scores assigned to their student with the parent/guardian and offer the parent/guardian the opportunity to offer information that they feel supports their assertion that the scores are inaccurate. Shawsheen Valley Technical High School will provide oral translation services for the student and/or their parent/guardian during the in-person review if needed or requested. Following this meeting, the Superintendent-Director will review all relevant information and issue a final decision regarding the student's assigned score. If the Superintendent-Director determines that the student's assigned score was inaccurate, he/she will assign the student with a new score and the student will be placed on the shop waiting list based on his/her revised score. In all circumstances, the decision of the Superintendent-Director is final and is not subject to review or further appeal.
5. No decision to change an original shop selection decision through the appeals process shall result in a change to any previous offer of shop admission to another student.
6. The Superintendent-Director, in making an appeals determination, is to remain cognizant of the inherent limitations on the capacity of Shawsheen Valley Technical High School's individual shops, class sizes, program offerings, etc.

XII. MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

Shawsheen Valley Technical High School maintains records of all students who apply, enroll, or are waitlisted, as well as their score on admission criteria (if used), to facilitate analysis of its admissions system and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Shawsheen Valley Technical High School will provide this information to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education upon request.

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